

BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of:

PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT,

v.

COMPTON UNIFIED SCHOOL
DISTRICT.

OAH CASE NO. 2013040076

ORDER FOLLOWING PRE-HEARING
CONFERENCE

On September 6, 2013, a telephonic pre-hearing conference (PHC) was held before Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) June R. Lehrman, Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH). Marcy Tiffany, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of Student. Carlos Gonzales, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of District. The PHC was recorded.

Based on discussion of the parties, the ALJ issues the following order:

1. Hearing Dates, Times, and Location. The hearing shall take place on September 10, 11, 12, and 19, 2013, at the District's offices located at 2300 West Caldwell Street, Compton, CA 90221. The hearing shall begin at 9:00 a.m. on all days, and conclude at 4:00 p.m., unless otherwise ordered.

The parties shall immediately notify all potential witnesses of the hearing dates, and shall subpoena witnesses if necessary, to ensure that the witnesses will be available to testify. A witness will not be regarded as unavailable for purposes of showing good cause to continue the hearing if the witness is not properly notified of the hearing date or properly subpoenaed, as applicable.

2. Issues and Proposed Resolutions. The issues at the due process hearing are listed below.

Did District deny Student a free appropriate public education (FAPE) by:

1. Failing to develop an appropriate transition plan?
2. Failing to conduct appropriate behavioral assessments?
3. Failing to offer Student appropriate behavioral supports?
4. Failing to implement Student's individualized education program (IEP) by providing him with additional adult assistant support?

5. Unilaterally changing Student's placement by:

- a. routinely and excessively removing Student from class at McKinley Elementary?
- b. routinely and excessively removing Student from class at Martin Luther King Elementary School?
- c. improperly suspending and transferring Student without conducting a manifestation determination or informing Parents of Student's right to a manifestation determination?

3. Exhibits. Exhibits shall be pre-marked and placed in three-ring exhibit binders prior to the hearing. The parties shall use numbers to identify exhibits, but shall place the letter "S" or "D" in front of the exhibit to designate if it is a Student or District exhibit (for example, "S-5, S-6, or D-1, D-2"). Each exhibit shall be internally paginated by exhibit, or all of a party's exhibits shall be Bates-stamped. Each exhibit binder shall contain a detailed table of contents. At the hearing, each party shall supply an exhibit binder containing its exhibits for use by the ALJ, and a second exhibit binder for use by witnesses. The parties may not serve exhibits on OAH prior to the hearing. In the event of duplicate exhibits, the most legible version will be used. The parties are ordered to meet and confer by September 9, 2013, in order to delete duplicates.

Except for good cause shown, or unless used solely for rebuttal or impeachment, any exhibit not included in the exhibit lists and not previously exchanged shall not be admitted into evidence at the hearing unless it is supported by written declaration under penalty of perjury, and the ALJ rules that it is admissible.

4. Witnesses. Each party is responsible for procuring the attendance at hearing of its own witnesses. Each party shall make witnesses under its control reasonably available. The parties shall schedule their witnesses to avoid delays in the hearing and to minimize or eliminate the need for calling witnesses out of order. Neither party shall be permitted to call any witnesses not disclosed in the party's prehearing conference statement except for good cause shown, supported by written declaration under penalty of perjury, and at the discretion of the ALJ.

The parties are ordered to meet and confer by September 9, 2013, as to the schedule of witnesses, to coordinate the availability and order of testimony of witnesses, to ensure that there is a witness available to testify at all times during the hearing, and to ensure that the hearing is completed as scheduled.

The parties are encouraged to review and shorten their witness lists prior to the hearing, bearing in mind that evidence will be excluded if it is repetitive, cumulative, or insufficiently probative to justify the time it would take to hear.

5. Scope of Witness Examination. After the first direct and cross-examinations, each party shall be limited in examining the witness to only those matters raised in the immediately preceding examination.

6. Telephonic Testimony. Whether a witness may appear by telephone is a matter within the discretion of the ALJ. Cal. Code Regs., tit. 5, § 3082, subd. (g). Any party seeking to present a witness by telephone shall move in advance for leave to do so, unless the opposing party has stipulated that the witness may appear by telephone. The proponent of the witness shall provide the proposed witness with a complete set of exhibit binders from all parties, containing all of each party's exhibits, prior to the hearing; and shall ensure that the hearing room has sound equipment that allows everyone in the room to hear the witness, and the witness to hear objections and rulings. No witness will be heard by telephone unless all these requirements have been fulfilled.

District's motion to allow Susan Day to testify telephonically is granted. District shall provide the witness with a complete exhibit binder from each party, containing all of each party's exhibits, prior to the hearing, and shall ensure that the hearing room has sound equipment that allows everyone in the room to hear the witness.

7. Timely Disclosure of Witnesses/Exhibits. Education Code section 56505, subdivision (e)(7), provides for disclosure of witnesses and exhibits at least five business days prior to the hearing.

8. Order of Presentation of Evidence. The order of presentation of evidence shall be as follows: Student's evidence followed by District's evidence, however witnesses to be called by both sides shall be examined by both parties on all issues whenever first called to the stand.

9. Motions. Student's motion for reconsideration of the September 5, 2013, order of ALJ Robert Martin, denying Student's motion to amend the complaint, is denied. OAH will generally reconsider a ruling upon a showing of new or different facts, circumstances, or law justifying reconsideration, when the party seeks reconsideration within a reasonable period of time. (See, e.g., Gov. Code, § 11521; Code Civ. Proc., § 1008.) The party seeking reconsideration may also be required to provide an explanation for its failure to previously provide the different facts, circumstances or law. (See *Baldwin v. Home Savings of America* (1997) 59 Cal.App.4th 1192, 1199-1200.) Student presented no new law, and insufficient additional facts, to justify reconsideration of the September 5, 2013, order.

On September 6, 2013, by order of Presiding ALJ Richard Breen, OAH granted Student's peremptory challenge to disqualify ALJ Martin as the hearing ALJ. A party is entitled to one peremptory challenge (disqualification without cause) to an ALJ assigned to an Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) hearing. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 1, § 1034, subds. (a) & (b); Gov. Code, § 11425.40, subd. (d).) In no event will a peremptory challenge be allowed if it is made after the hearing has commenced. In addition, if at the time of a scheduled PHC, an ALJ has been assigned to the Hearing, any challenge to the assigned ALJ

shall be made no later than commencement of that PHC. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 1, § 1034, subd. (c).) A peremptory challenge is not allowed on reconsideration or remand, and cannot be made after a hearing has begun. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 1, § 1034, subd. (a).)

Subsequent to the issuance of Presiding ALJ Breen's order, District filed an opposition to Student's peremptory challenge, arguing that the PHC before ALJ Martin had already begun, and that it was inappropriate to perempt him as the hearing ALJ while his September 5, 2013, order was under reconsideration. District's opposition was moot when filed, as Presiding ALJ Breen had already granted the peremptory; moreover the PHC had not yet begun before ALJ Martin, and the pendency of the motion for reconsideration of his ruling on a prehearing motion did not prohibit a peremptory challenge to him as the hearing ALJ.

10. Stipulations. Stipulations to pertinent facts, contentions or resolutions are encouraged. Any proposed stipulation shall be submitted to the assigned ALJ in written form.

11. Conduct of Counsel and Hearing Room Decorum. Counsel, all parties, and all witnesses shall conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times. Cellular phones, pagers, recorders, and other noisemaking electronic devices shall be shut off or set to vibrate during the hearing unless permission to the contrary is obtained from the ALJ.

12. Compensatory Education/Reimbursement. Any party seeking reimbursement of expenditures shall present admissible evidence of these expenditures, or a stipulation to the amount of expenditures, as part of its case in chief. A party seeking compensatory education should provide evidence regarding the type, amount, duration, and need for any requested compensatory education.

13. Special Needs and Accommodations. At present neither party anticipates the need for special accommodation for any witness or party, or for translation services.

14. Hearing Closed To the Public.

15. Settlement. The parties are encouraged to continue working together to reach an agreement before the due process hearing. The parties shall inform OAH in writing immediately should they reach a settlement or otherwise resolve the dispute before the scheduled hearing. In addition, if a settlement is reached within five days of the scheduled start of the due process hearing, the parties shall also inform OAH of the settlement by telephone at (916) 263-0880.

IF A FULL AND FINAL WRITTEN SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT IS REACHED AFTER 5:00 P.M. THE DAY PRIOR TO HEARING, THE PARTIES SHALL LEAVE A VOICEMAIL MESSAGE REGARDING THE SETTLEMENT AT (916) 274-6035. THE PARTIES SHOULD ALSO LEAVE CONTACT INFORMATION SUCH AS CELLULAR

PHONE NUMBERS OF EACH PARTY OR COUNSEL FOR EACH PARTY. THE PARTIES SHOULD SIMULTANEOUSLY FAX THE SIGNATURE PAGE OF THE SIGNED AGREEMENT OR A LETTER WITHDRAWING THE CASE TO THE OAH AT THE FAXINATION LINE at 916-376-6319.

Dates for hearing will not be cancelled until the letter of withdrawal or signature page of the signed agreement has been received by OAH. If an agreement in principle is reached, the parties should plan to attend the scheduled hearing unless different arrangements have been agreed upon by the assigned ALJ. The assigned ALJ will check for messages the evening prior to the hearing or the morning of the hearing.

16. Failure to comply with this order may result in the exclusion of evidence or other sanctions.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: September 06, 2013

/s/

JUNE R. LEHRMAN
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings