

BEFORE THE  
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of:

PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT,

v.

WILLIAM S. HART UNION HIGH  
SCHOOL DISTRICT.

OAH CASE NO. 2013090170

ORDER FOLLOWING PRE-HEARING  
CONFERENCE

On October 21, 2013, a telephonic prehearing conference (PHC) was held before Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Sabrina Kong, Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH). Tracy Gambino, District's Supervisor of Special Services, and Jennifer Nicholson, District's Program Specialist, appeared on District's behalf. Sharon Hill, Mother, appeared on Student's behalf. 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 October 31, November 4 and November 5, 2013 and continue day to day, Monday through Thursday, until completed, at the discretion of the ALJ, at the District's offices located at 21515 Centre Pointe Parkway, Santa Clarita, CA 91350. The hearing shall begin each day at 9:30 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. on all days unless otherwise ordered, with the exception of the first day of hearing, on which day the hearing shall begin at 10:00 a.m.

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. The issues at the due process hearing are listed below.

Whether District denied Student a free and appropriate public education (FAPE)<sup>1</sup> by:  
(a) failing to provide a bus aide after Student was bullied on the bus on August 22, 2013?  
(b) requiring Student to take an alternate school bus with a two hour daily round trip?

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<sup>1</sup> Parent abandoned the issue of "Whether District denied Student a FAPE by failing to hold an individualized education program (IEP) team meeting after Parent requested one in, or around, August 2013." Parent represented at the PHC that an IEP team meeting was held on September 11, 2013.

(c) failing to provide Student safe transportation to school after the August 22, 2013 school bus incident?

The issue of “Whether Student was discriminated against by the District” because other parents received a bus aide is not within OAH’s jurisdiction, and to the extent it is, it is contained in the FAPE issue. Therefore, this issue is hereby dismissed on OAH’s own motion.

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”). [If there are other parties, give then an alphabet designation as well, M for Mental Health, etc.). 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. The parties represent that they have served their evidence binders on each other in compliance with Education Code section 56505, subdivision (e)(7). 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.

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 October 24, 2013, as to the schedule of witnesses. The parties have agreed 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.

The parties shall be prepared at the end of each day of hearing to discuss the witnesses to be presented the next day and the time the testimony of each such witness is expected to take.

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.

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, October 24, 2013.

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 questioned on all issues when first called.

9. Motions. No pretrial motions are pending or contemplated. Any motion filed after this date shall be supported by a declaration under penalty of perjury establishing good cause as to why the motion was not made prior to or during the prehearing conference of October 21, 2013.

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 Open/Closed To the Public. The hearing will be 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: October 21, 2013

/s/

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SABRINA KONG  
Administrative Law Judge  
Office of Administrative Hearings