

BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Consolidated Matters of:

PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT.

v.

WHITTIER UNION HIGH SCHOOL
DISTRICT.

OAH Case No. 2016080467

WHITTIER UNION HIGH SCHOOL
DISTRICT,

v.

PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT

OAH Case No. 2016080034 and
OAH Case No. 2016081197

ORDER FOLLOWING PREHEARING
CONFERENCE

On December 2, 2016, Administrative Law Judge Adrienne L. Krikorian, Office of Administrative Hearings held a telephonic prehearing conference. Nelson Chu appeared on Student's behalf. Darin Barber appeared on behalf of Whittier Union High School District (District.) The PHC was recorded. Based upon discussion with the parties, the ALJ issues the following order.

1. Hearing Dates, Times, and Location. The hearing shall take place on December 13, 14 and 15, 2016, and continuing day to day Monday through Thursday, at the ALJ's discretion, at District's office located at 8036 Ocean View Avenue, Whittier, California 90602. The hearing shall begin at 9:30 a.m. on the first hearing day, and at 9:00 a.m. on all other hearing days unless otherwise ordered.

As ordered in the scheduling order, the named local educational agency was to provide a facility for the hearing that fully complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794 et seq.), the Unruh Civil Rights Act (Civ. Code, § 51 et seq.), and all laws governing accessibility of government facilities to persons with disabilities. The named local educational agency failed to certify that it would provide a facility for this case that complied with the law. The local educational agency shall inform OAH within two days of the date of this order it is able to certify that it will provide a facility that complies with the law.

The same hearing room shall be used for each day of hearing and shall be available at least one hour prior to the commencement of the hearing each day. The hearing room shall be locked following the hearing each night. Prior to the beginning of the hearing, District shall assist the ALJ to ensure that the hearing room is configured into a courtroom setting, including (1) a table for Student and his representatives; (2) a table for District's legal representative and special education representative; (3) a table for the witness; and (4) a table for the ALJ, near an electrical outlet. District shall also make reasonable effort to ensure that drinking water and tissue are available to all parties, witnesses and the ALJ. District shall also ensure that parking is available for Student, Student's attorney, the ALJ and District's attorney.

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, and the proposed resolutions, are listed below.

Student's Issues:

1) Did District deny Student a free appropriate public education by failing to conduct an appropriate triennial assessment in 2015, including by:

- a) Failing to conduct an appropriate psychoeducational assessment;
- b) Failing to conduct an appropriate occupational therapy assessment;
- c) Failing to conduct a physical therapy assessment;
- d) Failing to conduct a social skills and recreational therapy assessment?

2) Did District deny Student a FAPE from August 10, 2014 to August 10, 2016, specifically in the April 28, 2015 and November 9, 2015 IEP's, by:

a) Failing to accurately determine and report Student's present levels of performance to enable the individualized education program team to develop an appropriate program for Student; and

b) Failing to develop appropriate goals and objectives to address all of Student's unique needs;

c) Failing to conduct an occupational therapy assessment before decreasing occupational therapy services?

- 3) Did District deny Student a FAPE from August 10, 2014 to August 10, 2016, by;
- a) Failing to offer and provide an appropriate amount of occupational therapy services;
 - b) Failing to offer Student social skills support;
 - c) Failing to offer an appropriate placement?
- 4) Did District deny Student a FAPE in the November 9, 2015 IEP, by;
- a) Failing to offer and provide a transition plan to assist Student in transferring from a non-public school to a special day class in a public school;
 - b) Failing to offer appropriate speech and language therapy services;
 - c) Failing to offer Student a one-to-one aide;
 - d) Failing to offer adaptive physical education?
- 5) Did District procedurally violate the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act after the November 9, 2015 IEP by failing to provide Parents with prior written notice regarding the reasons for the IEP team's proposal to reduce speech and language and occupational therapy services?

Student's proposed resolutions include: placement in a non-public school; intensive one-to-one behavior intervention by a non-public agency provider trained in Applied Behavior Analysis; supervision for the one-to-one aide; social skills training and recreational therapy; speech and language, occupational therapy and adaptive physical education services through a non-public agency; a transition plan; an independent psychoeducational evaluation; independent educational evaluations in occupational therapy, physical therapy and social skills; compensatory education; reimbursement out-of-pocket educationally related expenses; and development of an appropriate IEP.

District's Issues:

- 6) Did District offer Student a FAPE in the least restrictive environment in his November 9, 2015 IEP such that District may implement the IEP without parental consent?
- 7) Was District's 2015 triennial psychoeducational assessment of Student appropriate such that Student is not entitled to an independent psychoeducational evaluation at public expense?

8) Was District's 2015 triennial occupational therapy assessment of Student appropriate such that Student is not entitled to an independent educational evaluation at public expense?

9) Was District's 2015 triennial social skills assessment of Student, including the speech and language and assistive technology/augmentative alternate communication evaluations, appropriate such that Student is not entitled to an independent educational evaluation at public expense?

District's proposed resolutions are as stated in the issues.

3. Exhibits. Exhibits shall be pre-marked and placed in three-ring exhibit binders prior to the hearing. Except as permitted in this order or otherwise ordered by the ALJ, 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. Each exhibit shall consist of one document; separate documents may not be combined into one exhibit.

Excerpts of an audio record of an individualized education program team meeting, if any, should be transcribed and offered as documentary evidence; that portion of the audio record transcribed shall be provided to the opposing party with the transcript to allow an opportunity to verify the accuracy of the transcription. Transcription need not be done by a certified court reporter. If the parties intend to rely on individualized education programs, the parties shall attach all pages of the IEP(s), including copies of all actual signatures on the IEP(s) and any typewritten or handwritten notes or comments, if any, written on the IEP(s).

The parties shall exchange resumes for each witness who is expected to testify as to their professional credentials. Notwithstanding the requirements of Education Code section 56505, subdivision (e)(7), the parties shall exchange resumes and curriculum vitae not later than 24 hours before the witness is scheduled to testify.

District shall include as part of its exhibits the school calendar(s) for the years at issue. Notwithstanding the requirements of Education Code section 56505, subdivision (e)(7), District shall serve a copy of the school calendar(s) and include the school calendar(s) in the binders provided for use by the witnesses and the ALJ not later than the first day of hearing.

The parties shall meet and confer before the first day of hearing in order to delete duplicate exhibits from the exhibit binders and to consolidate exhibits where possible. The parties are not required to renumber exhibits if exhibits are removed from their binders.

The parties shall serve 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 shall not serve exhibits on OAH prior to the hearing.

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. District shall cooperate with Student's counsel for the purpose of issuing a subpoena by providing Student's counsel the last known address of any former employee whom District cannot otherwise make available for hearing.

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 before the first day of hearing as to the schedule of witnesses. On the first day of hearing, the parties shall provide the ALJ with a detailed hour by hour joint witness schedule which shall include a reasonable estimate of time for each side's direct and cross examination for the entire hearing. The District shall have witnesses available if an agreement on a witness list is not reached. 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.

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.

Prior to the commencement of the due process hearing, the ALJ and the parties will discuss the length of time anticipated for cross-examination of each witness and scheduling issues for individual witnesses, and the ALJ will finalize the witness schedule. The ALJ has discretion to limit the number of witnesses who testify and the time allowed for witnesses' testimony.

5. Scope of Witness Examination. Each witness shall be called to testify only once, except for rebuttal purposes, and all parties shall examine the witness on all issues when the witness is first called. 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. The order in which the parties present their cases in chief shall be subordinate to the need for each witness to appear only once.

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. Electronic Recording of Hearing.

a. Audio Recording. Either party may make an audio recording of the hearing as a courtesy and subject to the following conditions: 1) OAH's recording is the only official recording; 2) the recording will be turned on and off at the same time as the ALJ's recording, in order to avoid recording conversations while off the record; 3) operation of the party's recording mechanism will not be allowed to delay the hearing; 4) the recording shall not be played or published for a prospective witness; 5) the recording shall not be used for any purpose other than assisting in the representation and presentation of this due process hearing; 6) the parties shall erase, or otherwise destroy, the recording after the hearing and all opportunities for appeal from any decision herein has been exhausted; and 7) the parties shall not use this recording in any subsequent due process hearing.

b. Video Recording. No party, witness or anyone else present may make any video recording of any part of the proceedings. Any person doing so shall be subject to sanctions.

8. Order of Presentation of Evidence. In an administrative proceeding, the burden of proof is ordinarily on the party requesting the hearing. (*Schaffer v. Weast* (2005) 546 U.S. 49, 56-62 [126 S.Ct. 528, 163 L.Ed.2d 387].) Here, both parties are the petitioning party in their respective cases. Accordingly, Student shall present its case-in-chief, followed by District, subject to Paragraph 5 of this Order.

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 December 2, 2016.

10. 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.

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

12. 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.

13. Special Needs and Accommodations. A Spanish language is required for all hearing days.

A party or participant to this case, such as a witness, requiring reasonable accommodation to participate in the mediation or hearing may contact the assigned calendar staff, identified in the scheduling order, at (916) 263-0880, as soon as the need is known. Additional information concerning requests for reasonable accommodation is available on OAH's website at: <http://www.dgs.ca.gov/oah/Home/Accessibility.aspx>.

14. Hearing Closed To the Public. The hearing will be closed at Student's request.

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.

If the parties settle the matter subject to board approval, in addition to a signed copy of the signature page of the settlement agreement as noted above, the parties shall submit a request for a status conference and provide the date of the next board meeting. OAH will not cancel the hearing dates without this information.

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

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATE: December 2, 2016

DocuSigned by:

Adrienne L. Krikorian

ADRIENNE L. KRIKORIAN

Administrative Law Judge

Office of Administrative Hearings