

BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF:
PARENTS ON BEHALF OF STUDENT,

v.

WILLIAM S. HART UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT.

OAH CASE NUMBER 2026061278

ORDER DETERMINING DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT
SUFFICIENT

JULY 8, 2026

On June 25, 2026 Parent, on behalf of Student, filed a request for due process hearing, also called a complaint, with the Office of Administrative Hearings, called OAH, naming William S. Hart Union High School District, in this order called Hart, as respondent.

On July 8th, Hart filed a Notice of Insufficiency as to the complaint.

APPLICABLE LAW

The named parties have the right to challenge the complaint's sufficiency. (20 U.S.C. § 1415(b) & (c).) The party filing the complaint is not entitled to a hearing

unless the complaint meets the requirements of title 20 United States Code section 1415(b)(7)(A).

A party has the right to file a notice asserting a complaint is insufficient within 15 days of receiving a request for due process hearing. (20 U.S.C. § 1415 (c)(2)(C); Ed. Code § 56502, subd. ((d)(1).) A complaint is sufficient if it: (1) describes the problem relating to the proposed change regarding the Student's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, or providing the Student a free appropriate public education; (2) includes facts about the problem; and (3) includes a proposed resolution to the extent known and available to the party at the time. (20 U.S.C. § 1415(b)(7)(A)(ii)(III) & (IV).) These requirements prevent vague and confusing complaints, and promote fairness by providing the named parties with sufficient information to know how to prepare for the hearing and how to participate in resolution sessions and mediation. (See H.R. Rep. No. 108-77, 1st Sess. (2003), p. 115; Sen. Rep. No. 108-185, 1st Sess. (2003), pp. 34-35.)

The complaint provides enough information when it provides "an awareness and understanding of the issues forming the basis of the complaint." (Sen. Rep. No. 108-185, *supra*, at p. 34.) The pleading requirements should be liberally construed in light of the broad remedial purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, and the relative informality of the due process hearings it authorizes. (*Alexandra R. ex rel. Burke v. Brookline School Dist.* (D.N.H., Sept. 10, 2009, CIV. 06-CV-0215-JL) 2009 WL 2957991[nonpub. Opn.]; *Escambia County Bd. of Educ. v. Benton* (S.D. Ala. 2005) 406 F.Supp.2d 1248, 1259-1260.] Whether the complaint is sufficient is a matter within the sound discretion of the Administrative Law Judge. (*Assistance to States for the Educ. of Children with Disabilities & Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities* (Aug. 14, 2006) 71 Fed. Reg. 46541, 46699.)

DISCUSSION

The facts alleged in Student's complaint are sufficient. Student's complaint is succinct, not vague, and identifies adequate facts supporting the single issue alleged. The information provided permits Hart to respond and participate in a resolution session and mediation.

Student's complaint identifies the timeframe at issue as "the past two years," which is the time between August 26, 2024 and Student's August 26, 2026 filing date. It alleges student's middle school eligibility and increasing behavior challenges, and the impact they are having on Student's ability to access his education and make academic progress. The requested resolution Student seeks is funding for an appropriate nonpublic school with a small therapeutic setting that has a program to address Student's needs. Student also requests compensatory education.

Hart offers no legal authority requiring the level of evidentiary detail it argues is not included in the complaint. The IDEA requires that Student describe the problem related, in this case, to placement, and propose a resolution. Student has done this. Student does not, as District claims, allege solely a disability. Instead, he states several facts describing how the disability is impeding his ability to access his education.

ORDER

1. The complaint is sufficient under title 20 United States Code section 1415(b)(7)(A)(ii).
2. All mediation, prehearing conference, and hearing dates in this matter are confirmed.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Penelope Pahl

Penelope S. Pahl

Administrative Law Judge

Office of Administrative Hearings