

BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF:
PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT,

v.

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT.

OAH CASE NUMBER 2026050998

CONTINUANCE ORDER SETTING PREHEARING
CONFERENCE AND DUE PROCESS HEARING

AUGUST 6, 2026

In July 2024, Administrative Law Judge Kara Hatfield, from the Office of Administrative Hearings, called OAH, presided over the hearing in OAH case number 2024020026 and issued a Decision. On May 14, 2026, the United States District Court for the Central District of California reversed ALJ Hatfield's decision and remanded the case back to the ALJ for a determination regarding appropriate relief in light of the Court's Order.

On May 26, 2026, Student filed with OAH a Notice of Remand and Request to Reinstate Due Process Hearing. OAH issued a scheduling order and set the prehearing conference for June 5, 2026, and the due process hearing for June 16, through 18, 2026.

On June 3, 2026, OAH granted the parties' joint request to schedule mediation and continue the hearing. The parties participated in mediation on July 29, 2026. The prehearing conference is scheduled for August 7, 2026, and the due process hearing for August 18, through 20, 2026.

OAH must conduct a due process hearing and issue a decision within 45 days of receiving the due process complaint, unless an extension is granted. (34 C.F.R. § 300.515(a); Ed. Code, §§ 56502, subd. (f), 56505, subd. (f)(3).) Resolving the due process hearing quickly is legally required. Hearings may only be continued if "good cause" is established. (Ed. Code, § 56505, subd. (f)(3).) OAH is guided by the Administrative Procedure Act and the California Rules of Court when ruling on continuance motions. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 1, § 1020; Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.1332.)

Good cause to continue a hearing may include:

- An essential lay or expert witness is unavailable because of death, illness, or other excusable circumstances;
- A party is unavailable because of death, illness, or other excusable circumstances;
- A party's attorney is unavailable because of death, illness, or other excusable circumstances;
- A new attorney substitutes in, but only if the party establishes that the substitution is required in the interests of justice;
- A new party is added, and the new party has not had a reasonable opportunity to prepare for trial, or other parties have not had a reasonable opportunity to prepare for trial regarding the new party's involvement;

- A party is unable to obtain essential testimony, documents, or other material evidence despite diligent efforts; or
- The case has a significant and unexpected change which makes the case not ready for trial.

Generally, continuances are disfavored. (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.1332(c).)

OAH is further continuing the prehearing conference and due process hearing in this case to ensure that ALJ Hatfield presides over the remand hearing as indicated in the District Court's Order. Due to current work assignments, ALJ Hatfield is unavailable to preside over the remand hearing on the scheduled dates. Further, maintaining ALJ Hatfield as the remand hearing judge supports judicial efficiency and economy as she issued the Decision at issue and is familiar with the facts and evidence of the case. This is a significant and unexpected change which makes the case not ready for hearing.

All previously scheduled dates are vacated. The new dates are:

PREHEARING CONFERENCE will be held on September 4, 2026, at 10:00 AM.

DUE PROCESS HEARING will be held on September 15, through 17, 2026.

The prehearing conference and due process hearing will be held by videoconference or telephone, unless otherwise ordered. The due process hearing will begin at 9:30 AM on all days, and generally end at 3:30 PM, unless otherwise ordered. The hearing will continue day to day, as needed, Mondays and Fridays included, at the discretion of the ALJ. Prehearing conference statements and motions are due to OAH no later than three business days before the prehearing conference. Late motions will only be considered if good cause is established for the late filing.

The parties must immediately give potential witnesses the hearing dates, and must subpoena witnesses, if necessary, so they are available to testify. Failing to properly notify or subpoena a witness is not good cause to delay the hearing.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Tara Doss

Tara Doss

Presiding Administrative Law Judge

Office of Administrative Hearings