BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of: LUCIA MAR UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, v. PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT.	OAH Case No. 2017020299 ORDER FOLLOWING PREHEARING CONFERENCE

On February 27, 2017, a telephonic prehearing conference was held before Administrative Law Judge Rita Defilippis, Office of Administrative Hearings. Peter Sansom, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of District. Parents appeared on behalf of Student. 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 March 7, 2017, and March 8, 2017, continuing day to day, Monday through Thursday, at the discretion of the ALJ. The hearing shall take place at the Lucia Mar Unified School District offices located at 227 Bridge Street, Arroyo Grande, California, 93420. The hearing shall begin at 9:30 a.m. the first day of the hearing and at 9:00 a.m. all other days, unless otherwise ordered.

As ordered in the scheduling order, Lucia Mar Unified School District shall provide a facility for the hearing that fully complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.A. § 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 certified that the facilities used for this case comply with the law. The local educational agency shall inform OAH within two days of the date of this order if it is unable to comply with this order.

Prior to the beginning of the hearing, District shall ensure that the hearing room is configured into a courtroom setting and shall have at a minimum (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 provide drinking water and tissue to all parties, witnesses and the ALJ. 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. District shall ensure that the hearing room and access to it are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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.

Issues

1. May Lucia Mar Unified School District evaluate Student pursuant to the August 31, 2016, and October 13, 2016, assessment plans over objection of his parents?

2. May Lucia Mar Unified School District implement the December 2, 2016, individualized education program (IEP) addendum with Student despite a lack of consent to that IEP from Parents[1]?

Resolutions

1. Lucia Mar Unified School District seeks an order permitting the District to evaluate Student pursuant to the August 31, 2016 and October 13, 2016 assessment plans without parent consent.

2. Lucia Mar Unified School District seeks an order permitting the District to implement the December 2, 2016, individualized Educational Program (IEP) addendum despite lack of parental consent.

3. Lucia Mar seeks an order that if Parents want Student to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE):

    a. Parents must cooperate with the District and sign the August 21, 2016 and October 13, 2016, assessment plans.

[1] The District, when asked for clarification, stated that the addendum IEP, dated December 2, 2016, was made to the June 1, 2016 IEP. The District clarified that Issue 2 seeks to implement the addendum because the parents specifically consented to the IEP dated June 1, 2016, prior to the addendum.

b. Parents must cooperate with the District and permit the implementation of Student's December 2, 2016, IEP.

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 shall generally be one document (i.e. an IEP or assessment) and multiple documents should not generally be placed behind one exhibit tab. Each exhibit binder shall contain a detailed table of contents. 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 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 timely exchanged shall not be admitted into evidence at the hearing unless 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 timely disclosed except for good cause shown, and at the discretion of the ALJ.

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 attempt to reach agreement on a witness list for the first day of hearing. The District shall have witnesses available in case agreement on a witness list is not reached. Prior to the commencement of the due process hearing, the ALJ and the parties will discuss the length of time anticipated for direct and cross-examination of each witness and scheduling issues for individual witnesses, and the ALJ will finalize the witness schedule. Additionally, 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. 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. Lucia Mar Unified School District requested that witness, Cynthia Ravalin, District's previous Director of Student Services, be allowed to provide telephonic testimony if called as a witness. Ms. Ravalin is employed in Lompoc Unified School district, which the District represented to be approximately 90 miles away from the place of hearing. 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.

Lucia Mar Unified School District's motion to allow Ms. Cynthia Ravalin to testify telephonically is granted. Lucia Mar Unified School District shall provide Ms. Cynthia Ravalin 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. Electronic Recording of Hearing.

a. Neither party requested to record the 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, Lucia Mar Unified School District is the petitioning party. Accordingly, Lucia Mar Unified School District shall present its case-in-chief, followed by Student.

9. Motions. Lucia Mar Unified made a motion to continue the prehearing conference in light of information that Student planned to file a due process complaint against Lucia Mar Unified School District. The motion was denied. As of the time of the prehearing conference, parent had not yet filed a due process complaint against Lucia Mar Unified School District with the Office of Administrative Hearings. At present no other prehearing 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.

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. An accommodation is required for Student to attend the due process hearing. Student requires breaks to meet his need for food and to use the restroom. One parent will be available at hearing to attend to the needs of Student while the other parent stays in hearing. The District had no objection to the need for these Student accommodations. The requested accommodation was reasonable and will be provided for Student at hearing

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 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.

DATE: February 27, 2017

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Rita Defilippis
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RITA DEFILIPPIS
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings