BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE MATTER OF:

PARENTS ON BEHALF OF STUDENT,

v.

WOODLAND JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT.

OAH CASE NUMBER 2026060454

ORDER DETERMINING DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT PARTIALLY SUFFICIENT

JUNE 19, 2026

On June 4, 2026, Student filed a Due Process Hearing Request, called a complaint, with the Office of Administrative Hearings, referred to as OAH, naming Woodland Joint Unified School District. On June 18, 2026, Woodland 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 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 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; *Sammons v. Polk County School Bd.* (M.D. Fla., Oct. 28, 2005, 8:04CV2657T24EAJ) 2005 WL 2850076 [nonpub. Opn.]; but cf. *M.S.-G v. Lenape Regional High School Dist. Bd. Of Educ.* (3d Cir. 2009) 306 Fed.Appx. 772, 775 [nonpub. Opn.].) 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 FR 46,540-46541, 46699.)

DISCUSSION

Student's complaint alleges eight claims, some of which are sufficient and some which are insufficient. The issues are discussed below. Student's complaint is eleven pages, the narrative appears to be written by Parents and provides details of Student's educational journey since 2017 when he enrolled in Woodland until he disenrolled and enrolled in another school district. Student's Issues 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 are sufficiently pled to put Woodland on notice as to the basis of Student's claims.

Woodland further argues Parents fail to identify specific IEPs at issue. However, Student's complaint alleges he believes he was denied a FAPE during the 2021-2024 school years. Given the liberal pleading standard of the IDEA, the facts presented in Student's complaint are sufficient to provide Woodland, "an awareness and understanding of the issues forming the basis of the complaint," and allow it to participate in the resolution session and mediation.

Student's issue 7 is insufficient and confusing. Student alleges an unnamed charter school, a county office of education, and Woodland denied Student a FAPE during the 2021-2024 school year. This issue is unclear and insufficient to provide Woodland an awareness and understanding of the issues forming the basis of the complaint," or Student is seeking to hold the other unidentified entities were responsible for the allegations in issue 7.

Parents acknowledge they are seeking to extend the statute of limitations in this matter beyond the two-year period in their statement of facts. Student's basis for extending the statute of limitations is misrepresentation. Whether Student may extend the statute of limitation is a mixed question of law and fact. This issue will be addressed at the prehearing conference.

ORDER

1. Issues 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 8, in Student's complaint are sufficient under title 20 U.S.C. section 1415(b)(7)(A)(ii).
2. Issue 7 of Student's complaint is insufficiently pled under title 20 United States Code section 1415(c)(2)(D).
3. Student shall be permitted to file an amended complaint under title 20 United States Code section 1415(c)(2)(E)(i)(II).
4. The amended complaint shall comply with the requirements of title 20 U.S.C. section 1415(b)(7)(A)(ii), and shall be filed not later than 14 days from the date of this order. The filing of an amended complaint will restart the applicable timelines for a due process hearing.
5. If Student fails to file a timely amended complaint, the hearing shall proceed only on Issues 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 8, in Student's complaint.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Tiffany Gilmartin

Tiffany Gilmartin

Administrative Law Judge

Office of Administrative Hearings