BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Consolidated Matters of: PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT, v. TUSTIN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT,	OAH Case No. 2018010512
TUSTIN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, v. PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT.	OAH Case No. 2018010057 ORDER FOLLOWING PREHEARING CONFERENCE

On March 5, 2018, a telephonic prehearing conference was held before Administrative Law Judge Judith L. Pasewark, Office of Administrative Hearings. Ushma K. Vyas, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of Student. Melissa Hatch, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of Tustin Unified School 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 March 13, 14, 15, and 16, 2018, and continue day to day, Monday through Thursday, at the discretion of the ALJ. The hearing shall take place at the District's offices located at 300 South C Street, Board Room, Tustin, California 92780. 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, 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.

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.

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 are:

a. Did District deny Student a free appropriate public education by failing to appropriately assess Student in the areas of psychoeducation, including academic achievement, in its November 30, 2017 multi-disciplinary assessment of Student'

b. Did District deny student a FAPE in its November 30, 2017 individualized education program by failing to make an appropropriate offer of goals and placement?

Student's requested remedies are:

a. Determination that Student prevailed on all issues;

b. An order requiring District to fund independent educational evaluations in the area of psychoeducation, including academic achievement and academic instruction, speech and language, and sensory processing; and

c. Compensatory education and related services in the areas of speech and language, and academic instruction, provided by a non-public agency of Parent's choice.

District's Issue and remedy requested:

a.. Did District's November 30, 2017 multi-disciplinary assessment of Student appropriately assess Student, so that Student is not entitled to an independent educational evaluation at public expense.

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 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.

Each exhibit shall consist of one document; separate documents may not be combined into one exhibit. To the extent practicable, exhibits in the exhibit binders shall be in chronological order.

In the event of duplicate exhibits, the most legible version will be used. The parties shall meet and confer by March 8, 2018, to delete duplicate exhibits from the exhibit binders. The parties are encouraged, if the total number of documents is not too large, to place the exhibits for both parties into one binder.

District shall include as part of its exhibits the school calendar(s) for all of the years at issue. Notwithstanding the requirements of Education Code section 56505, subdivision. (e)(7), District shall include the school calendar(s) in the binders provided for use by the witnesses and the ALJ.

If the parties intend to rely on IEP’s, the parties shall include 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). Excerpts of an audio record of an IEP team meeting, if any, should, in addition to the audio record offered, be transcribed and offered as documentary evidence; that portion of the audio record transcribed shall be provided to the opposing party along with the transcript to allow an opportunity to verify the accuracy of the transcription. Transcriptions need not be prepared by a certified court reporter. 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 it is supported by written declaration under penalty of perjury, and the ALJ rules that it is admissible. Education Code section 56505, subdivision (e)(8), affords each party the right to prohibit the introduction of any evidence at the hearing that has not been disclosed at least five business days before the hearing.

4. Witnesses. Each party is responsible for procuring the attendance at hearing of its own witnesses, and shall subpoena witnesses if necessary, to ensure that the witnesses will be available to testify. 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.

The parties shall comply with Education Code section 56505, subdivision (e)(7). No party shall be permitted to call any witnesses not timely disclosed except for good cause

shown, supported by written declaration under penalty of perjury, and at the discretion of the ALJ. Education Code section 56505, subdivision (e)(8), affords each party the right to prohibit the introduction of any evidence at the hearing that has not been disclosed at least five business days before the hearing.

The parties shall meet and confer by March 8, 2018 to schedule witnesses and coordinate the availability and order of witnesses to ensure that there is a witness available to testify at all times during the hearing and to ensure that the hearing is completed as scheduled.

On the first day of hearing before the first witness testifies, the parties shall provide the ALJ with one joint detailed hour-by-hour schedule of all witnesses expected to testify at hearing, which list shall also include an estimate of time for each party's direct and cross examination. Counsel shall meet and confer each day of hearing to revise the witness schedule as needed.

Each witness will only be called once to testify, except for rebuttal purposes, and all parties shall examine the witness when the witness is first called. District shall have witnesses available in case 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

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 such evidence. The ALJ has discretion to limit the number of witnesses who testify and the time allowed for witnesses' testimony. Education Code, section 56505.1, subdivision. (h), empowers the ALJ presiding at a due process hearing to set a reasonable limit on the length of the hearing after consideration of all of the following: (i) issues to be heard, (ii) complexity of facts to be proven, (iii) ability of the parties or their representatives to present their respective cases, and (iv) estimates of the parties as to the time needed to present their respective cases.

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 unless otherwise permitted by the ALJ. 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. Neither party has requested 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. Prior to the hearing, the proponent of the witness shall provide the proposed witness with a complete set of duplicate physical copies of the

exhibit binders from all parties, containing all of each party's exhibits and shall instruct the witness not to remove any documents from the exhibit binders. Faxed or electronic copies are unacceptable. The hearing room shall have sound equipment that allows everyone in the room to hear the witness, and the witness to hear objections and rulings. Unless otherwise ordered, the witness shall testify on a land-line telephone while alone in a private room. No witness will be heard by telephone unless all these requirements have been fulfilled.

7. Electronic Recording of Hearing.

a. Audio Recording. Each party may make an audio recording of the hearing. subject to the following conditions: 1) that OAH's recording is the only official recording; 2) that the recording will be turned on and off at the same time as the ALJ's recording, to avoid recording conversations while off the record; and 3) that operation of the party's recording mechanism will not be allowed to delay 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, Student is the primary party. Accordingly, Student shall present his case-in-chief, followed by District.

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 March 5, 2018.

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 during the hearing unless permission to the contrary is obtained from the ALJ. There shall be no texting permitted while the hearing is in session.

13. Special Needs and Accommodations. At present neither party anticipates the need for special accommodation for any witness or party, or for translation services. 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/Accommodations.aspx

14. Hearing will be Closed to the Public. At the request of Student, the hearing will be closed to the public. With the exception of Parents, Student and District's representative, all witnesses shall be excluded from the hearing room until such time as the witnesses' testimony, including rebuttal testimony, has been completed.

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 EMAIL THE SIGNATURE PAGE OF THE SIGNED AGREEMENT OR A LETTER WITHDRAWING THE CASE TO THE OAH AT https://www.dgsapps.dgs.ca.gov/oah/oahsftweb .

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: March 6, 2018

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Judith Pasewark
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JUDITH PASEWARK
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings