BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of:	
TRACY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT,	OAH Case No. 2018010790
v.	ORDER OF DETERMINATION OF SUFFICIENCY OF DUE PROCESS COMPLAINT
PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT.	

On January 19, 2018 Tracy Unified School District filed a Due Process Hearing Request[1] (complaint) with the Office of Administrative Hearings naming Student. On January 29, 2018, Student filed a Notice of Insufficiency as to District's complaint.

APPLICABLE LAW

The named parties to a due process hearing request have the right to challenge the sufficiency of the complaint. (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 contains: (1) a description of the nature of the problem of the child relating to the proposed initiation or change concerning the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child, or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the child; (2) facts relating to the problem; and (3) a proposed resolution of the problem 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

[1] A request for a due process hearing under Education Code section 56502 is the due process complaint notice required under title 20 U.S.C. section 1415(b)(7)(A).

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

The facts alleged in District's complaint are sufficient to put Student on notice of the issues forming the basis of the complaint. District's complaint identifies the issues and adequate related facts about the problem to permit Student to respond to the complaint and participate in mediation. Specifically, District alleges Student made a request for independent educational evaluations which was confirmed by Student's advocate on January 16, 2018. District contends (1) the request for independent assessments was requested prematurely, meaning before the completion of the IEP team meeting scheduled for January 23, 2018; and (2) in any event, District's assessments were appropriate under state and federal law. District's requested remedy is a determination that District assessments are valid, and therefore Student is not entitled to independent assessments at public expense. As stated in its complaint, District's issue contained in its complaint is sufficient.

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.

DATE: January 30, 2018

DocuSigned by:
Judith Pasewark
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JUDITH PASEWARK
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings