BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of: PARENT ON BEHALF OF STUDENT, v. LOS ALTOS SCHOOL DISTRICT.	OAH Case No. 2017051355 ORDER FOLLOWING PREHEARING CONFERENCE

On August 18, 2017, a telephonic prehearing conference was held before Administrative Law Judge Penelope Pahl, Office of Administrative Hearings. Peter Sturges, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of Student. Sterling Elmore, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of Los Altos 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 August 29, 2017 at 9:30 a.m., and on Wednesday and Thursday, August 30 and 31, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. and continuing day to day, Monday through Thursday, at the discretion of the ALJ. The hearing shall take place at the District's offices located at 201 Covington Avenue, Los Altos, California.

As ordered in the scheduling order, Los Altos 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. Los Altos has filed the required certification of ADA with OAH. Los Altos shall inform OAH no later than two days prior to the date of this hearing if it is unable to provide ADA compliant facilities for the scheduled hearing.

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.

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.

2. Issues and Proposed Resolutions. Counsel for Student stated on the record that he had reviewed the issues prior to filing a Prehearing Conference Statement and had decided to withdraw all but the issues listed below. The issues were restated with the assistance of Student's counsel for clarity and Student's counsel approved the wording of each one listed. The issues to be determined at the due process hearing, and the proposed resolutions, are:

Issues:

1. Did Los Altos deny Student a FAPE by:

   a. Failure to assess Student from May 30, 2015 to February 4, 2016.

   b. Fail to conduct a sufficient psychoeducational, speech and language assessment in March of 2016.

2. Did the District deny Student a FAPE by failing to find him eligible for special education during the IEP process beginning on or about April 4, 2016.

3. Did the district deny Student a FAPE by failing to provide him special education placement, supports and services from May 30, 2015 to May 30, 2017.

4. Did the District deny Student a FAPE by failing to provide him with the special education discipline processes and/or protections to which he was entitled **during** the course of his suspension on January 28, 2016; a suspension review meeting with Los Altos administration on or about March 4, 2016; the continuation of the suspension on or about March 9, 2016; a report to law enforcement on or about March 9, 2016; and an involuntary transfer to the Almond School on or about March 15, 2016.

All issues above raised in the complaint, other than those listed above, were dismissed by Student at the time of the Prehearing Conference.

Proposed Resolutions:

Student proposes that the office of Administrative Hearings find in favor of Student and against the District with respect to all issues presented. Student also seeks an order declaring that Student is eligible for special education and related services under the any eligibility category for which he qualifies; an order declaring that the District denied Student a FAPE by failing to assess him and by failing to conduct sufficient assessments, an order declaring district denied Student a FAPE by failing to provide appropriate placement, special education, and related services; an order

declaring that District denied Student FAPE by failing to provide him with special education discipline processes and protections to which he was entitled and by transferring Student to a different school without implementing those protections. Student also seeks independent education evaluations in all areas of suspected disability and an order that an IEP meeting be convened within 30 days of conclusion of the assessment process; for compensatory education in the form of an educational fund of $40,000 and for an additional amount to reimburse parents for special education supports and services provided by Parents as well as for reimbursement for the assessments of Dr. Jocelyn Pan and Dr. Alice Ruzicka. Student also seeks an order forbidding transfer of Student to another placement unless determined appropriate by the IEP team including Parents and that district be required to provide training to district staff regarding child find obligations. Student also seeks costs of suit and attorney fees and all other relief deemed just and proper.

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.

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.

Parties are encouraged to present resumes or curriculum vitae for each professional witness.

The District shall include a color copy of the school calendar for each school year in question and shall have witnesses available to testify as to any legend notations that might be unique to Los Altos.

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.

5. Meet and Confer

The parties are encouraged to review and shorten their witness lists and lists of Exhibits 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. To that end, parties are ordered to meet and confer no later than 3 p.m. on August 24, 2017 to discuss whether routine information can be the subject of stipulations to shorten the hearing by avoiding the necessity of testimony, particularly as to routine matters, and/or exhibits. The parties shall also discuss the order of witnesses and the length of witness testimony and be prepared to present the ALJ with a written joint witness list with time estimates and dates of expected testimony on the first day of hearing.

Should agreement on a list not be reached, each party shall prepare separate lists and Student shall have witnesses available so the hearing can proceed promptly. 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. 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. 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 requested the hearing and shall present his case-in-chief first, followed by District**.**

7. Telephonic Testimony. Neither party has requested that a witness appear by telephone at this time. 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.

8. Electronic Recording of Hearing.

a. Audio Recording. Both parties' motions to make an audio recording of the hearing are granted, 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, in order to avoid recording conversations while off the record; 3) the recording device will be removed by the party recording during any recess where the party leaves the room; and 4) 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.

9. Motions. At present no 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 why the motion was not made prior to or during this 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 and Exhibits. Stipulations to pertinent facts, contentions or resolutions are encouraged to promote hearing efficiency. Stipulations to routine foundational facts and avoiding duplicative exhibits are particularly favored. 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. At present neither party anticipates the need for special accommodation for any witness or party, or for the services of an interpreter. A party or participant to this case, such as a witness, requiring reasonable accommodation to participate in the hearing may contact the assigned calendar clerk identified in the scheduling order, at (916) 263-0880, or the OAH ADA Coordinator at OAHADA@dgs.ca.gov or 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 Closed To the Public. At the request of Student, 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: August 21, 2017

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Penelope S. Pahl
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PENELOPE S. PAHL
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings