BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of: PALOS VERDES PENINSULA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, v. STUDENT.	OAH Case No. 2015050838 ORDER FOLLOWING PREHEARING CONFERENCE

On October 16, 2015, telephonic prehearing conference was held before Administrative Law Judge Caroline A. Zuk, Office of Administrative Hearings. Carlos Gonzales, Attorney at Law, appeared on behalf of Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District. Student did not appear for the PHC.[1] 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 October 27 and 28, 2015, 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 3801 Via La Selva, Palos Verdes Estates, California 90274. 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.

[1] The ALJ attempted to contact Student, an unrepresented, non-conserved adult, to participate in the PHC at 10:00 a.m. but was unable to reach Student. The ALJ called Student and Student's mother at their shared, last known phone number, but the call went to voicemail. The ALJ left a message, stating that the PHC was rescheduled to 2:00 p.m. to provide another opportunity for Student to participate in the PHC. The ALJ also spoke with Student's father at a different telephone number, who stated that he did not know Student's current whereabouts, and declined to participate in a PHC. When the ALJ contacted District's attorney for the PHC, he answered the call on a cell phone while commuting. Based on the inability to reach Student, as well as District's attorney's lack of access to a private landline during the morning, the ALJ rescheduled the PHC from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on October 16, 2015. At 2:00 p.m., the ALJ attempted to reach Student and Student's mother, but the call went to voicemail. The ALJ left a message, stating that the PHC was proceeding at 2:00 p.m., and if Student or Student's mother wanted to participate in the PHC, they should contact OAH at (916) 263-0880.

The named local educational agency 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 was unable to certify that the facilities used for this case comply with the law as District's attorney needed to consult with District's representatives before certifying compliance. The named local educational agency shall inform OAH within two days of the date of this order if 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 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. 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.

Did District's April 15, 2015 individualized education program amendment to the November 18, 2014 IEP offer Student a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment?

District's proposed resolution is an order, declaring that District's IEP amendment, dated April 15, 2015, offered Student a FAPE.

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 included in the exhibit lists and not previously 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.

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, supported by written declaration under penalty of perjury, and at the discretion of the ALJ.

District is encouraged to review and shorten its witness list 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.

Prior to the commencement of the due process hearing, the ALJ 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. 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. No party requested telephonic testimony and no witness will be heard by telephone unless all these requirements have been fulfilled.

7. Electronic Recording of Hearing.

a. Audio Recording. No party requested to make an audio recording of 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, District is the petitioning party. Accordingly, District shall present its case-in-chief, followed by Student.

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 October 16, 2015.

10. Stipulations. Stipulations to pertinent facts, contentions or resolutions are encouraged. Any proposed stipulation shall be submitted to the assigned ALJ in written form.

11. 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.

12. Special Needs and Accommodations. No request for reasonable accommodations was requested for the 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/Accommodations.aspx

13. Hearing Closed To the Public.

14. 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.

15. Failure to comply with this order may result in the exclusion of evidence or other sanctions.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATE: October 19, 2015

/s/

CAROLINE A. ZUK
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings