

BEFORE THE
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of:

PARENT(S) ON BEHALF OF STUDENT,

v.

WHITTIER UNION HIGH SCHOOL
DISTRICT, WHITTIER AREA SELPA
AND ALHAMBRA UNIFIED SCHOOL
DISTRICT.

OAH CASE NO. 2013031150

ORDER DENYING REQUEST FOR
CONTINUANCE

On May 6, 2013, Student filed a request to reschedule the previously canceled mediation, and to set a status conference for purposes of setting new prehearing conference (PHC) and hearing dates. The motion is based upon (i) the parties' desire to reschedule the mediation to June 11, 2013, (ii) the unavailability of Student's counsel for hearing on the currently scheduled hearing date of May 22, 2013, and (iii) the inability of the parties to agree on new hearing dates. The motion is supported by the sworn declaration of Student's counsel, explaining that the case is complex, with multiple respondents. No opposition has been received.

A due process hearing must be conducted and a decision rendered within 45 days of receipt of the due process notice unless an extension is granted for good cause. (34 C.F.R. § 300.515(a) & (c) (2006); Ed. Code, §§ 56502, subd. (f), 56505, subd. (f)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 1, § 1020.) As a result, continuances are disfavored. Good cause may include the unavailability of a party, counsel, or an essential witness due to death, illness or other excusable circumstances; substitution of an attorney when the substitution is required in the interests of justice; a party's excused inability to obtain essential testimony or other material evidence despite diligent efforts; or another significant, unanticipated change in the status of the case as a result of which the case is not ready for hearing. (See Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.1332(c).) OAH considers all relevant facts and circumstances, including the proximity of the hearing date; previous continuances or delays; the length of continuance requested; the availability of other means to address the problem giving rise to the request; prejudice to a party or witness as a result of a continuance; the impact of granting a continuance on other pending hearings; whether trial counsel is engaged in another trial; whether the parties have stipulated to a continuance; whether the interests of justice are served by the continuance; and any other relevant fact or circumstance. (See Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.1332(d).)

OAH has reviewed the request for good cause and considered all relevant facts and circumstances. The request is:

Denied. All hearing dates and timelines shall proceed as calendared. Here, the parties have requested a continuance of the hearing dates, and OAH is inclined to grant the continuance. However, the parties did not discuss and confer regarding new hearing dates as required by OAH. Forms are available on the OAH website that explain the procedure. Trial setting conferences are set only in unusual cases. The parties may re-submit the request to continue after they have agreed upon hearing dates. If the parties are unable to agree on hearing dates, they may request OAH to select dates.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: May 08, 2013

/s/

ALEXA J. HOHENSEE
Administrative Law Judge
Office of Administrative Hearings