



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **ICLS Overturns a District-Wide Policy in the 16<sup>th</sup> Largest School District in CA, Riverside Unified School District**

**[Riverside, CA, January 10, 2019]** – Inland Counties Legal Services, Inc. (“ICLS”) is excited to announce that it has overturned a district-wide policy in the Riverside Unified School District (“RUSD”). RUSD is the 16<sup>th</sup> largest school district out of 1,037 districts in California with nearly 5,000 special education students reported in 2017.

**Eulalio Castellanos, Esq., Lead Attorney**, spearheaded the effort to overturn a policy that required parents of adult special education students to have a conservatorship in place before allowing them to make any educational decisions.

In January of 2019, RUSD did not accept an informal written authorization from one of their adult special education students appointing their parents to make decisions regarding their education. The parents of the student came to ICLS, seeking legal assistance to ensure their child was receiving quality education, as required by federal and state law.

As the lead education attorney, Eulalio took on the case and ensured that the California Department of Education (“CDE”) become involved and that RUSD remedy the situation in order to improve the services received by RUSD Special Education Students. The CDE found RUSD to be out of compliance and ordered them to immediately adjust their policies and provide trainings for District and School Special Education Staff. RUSD is to review all of its policies regarding development, review, and revision of Individual Education Plans (“IEP”).

A parent's ability to assist their special education child without having a conservatorship is extremely important. Requiring a conservatorship before giving parents any authority creates a barrier based on their ability to pay for such a service and also delays the expediency of services delivered. With this policy being overturned, other special education students will collaterally benefit. This decision provides support to dispute the need for a conservatorship when transferring the decision-making authority to their parents or another adult.

Inland Counties Legal Services, Inc. is a nonprofit organization providing legal services to low-income persons residing in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. ICLS provides free legal service in the area of Consumer Law (Including Tax and Bankruptcy), Family Law, Education, Health Law, Housing, Immigration, Public Benefits, Systemic/Impact Litigation, and we also have an Intake and Outreach team which focuses on issues affecting senior citizens.

If you would like more information about this topic, please call Gabriela Perez at 951-774-4407, or send an email to [gperez@icls.org](mailto:gperez@icls.org).