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**FILED**  
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

MAR 08 2024

E. Escobedo

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12 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
13 COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

14 ERIC HARROLD, an individual, on behalf of  
15 himself, and on behalf of all persons similarly  
16 situated,

17 Plaintiffs,

18 v.

19 SPARTAN EDUCATION GROUP, LLC, a  
20 Limited Liability Corporation, and DOES 1  
21 through 50, inclusive,

22 Defendants.

CASE NO.: CVRI2300320

~~REVISED PROPOSED~~ PRELIMINARY  
APPROVAL ORDER

Hearing Date: March 8, 2024  
Hearing Time: 1:30 p.m.

Judge: Hon. Harold W. Hopp  
Dept.: 1

Action Filed: January 19, 2023  
Trial Date: Not set

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28 PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

1 This matter came on for a noticed motion hearing before the Honorable Harold Hopp of  
2 the Superior Court of the State of California, in and for the County Riverside, on March 8, 2024,  
3 for the motion by Plaintiff Eric Harrold ("Plaintiff") for preliminary approval of the Class and  
4 PAGA Settlement with Defendant Spartan Education Group, LLC ("Defendant"). The Court,  
5 having considered the briefs, argument of counsel and all matters presented to the Court and good  
6 cause appearing, hereby GRANTS Plaintiff's Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action  
7 and PAGA Settlement.

8 **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:**

9 1. The Court preliminarily approves the Class Action and PAGA Settlement  
10 Agreement ("Agreement") submitted as Exhibit #1 to Declaration of Kyle Nordrehaug in Support  
11 of Plaintiff's Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action and PAGA Settlement filed on  
12 January 25, 2024. This is based on the Court's determination that the Settlement set forth in the  
13 Agreement is within the range of possible final approval, pursuant to the provisions of Section 382  
14 of the California Code of Civil Procedure and California Rules of Court, rule 3.769.

15 2. This Order incorporates by reference the definitions in the Agreement, and all  
16 terms defined therein shall have the same meaning in this Order as set forth in the Agreement.

17 3. The Gross Settlement Amount is Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$400,000.00).  
18 It appears to the Court on a preliminary basis that the settlement amount and terms are fair,  
19 adequate and reasonable as to all potential Class Members, when balanced against the probable  
20 outcome of further litigation and the significant risks relating to certification, liability and damages  
21 issues. It further appears that investigation and research have been conducted such that counsel  
22 for the Parties are able to reasonably evaluate their respective positions and that settlement at this  
23 time will avoid substantial additional costs by all Parties, as well as avoid the delay and risks that  
24 would be presented by the further prosecution of the Action. The Settlement appears to have been  
25 reached as the result of serious and non-collusive, arms-length negotiations. The Court therefore  
26 preliminarily finds that the Settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable when balanced against the

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PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

1 probable outcome of further litigation and the significant risks relating to certification, liability,  
2 and damages issues.

3 4. The Court preliminarily finds that the Settlement appears to be within the range of  
4 reasonableness of a settlement that could ultimately be given final approval by this Court. The  
5 Court has reviewed the monetary recovery that is being granted as part of the Settlement and  
6 preliminarily finds that the monetary settlement awards made available to the Class is fair,  
7 adequate, and reasonable when balanced against the probable outcome of further litigation and the  
8 significant risks relating to certification, liability, and damages issues.

9 5. The Agreement specifies for an attorneys' fees award not to exceed one-third of the  
10 Gross Settlement Amount, an award of litigation expenses incurred, not to exceed \$25,000, and  
11 proposed Class Representative Service Payment to the Plaintiff in an amount not to exceed  
12 \$15,000. The Court will not approve the amount of attorneys' fees and costs, nor the amount of  
13 any service award, until the Final Approval Hearing. Plaintiff will be required to present evidence  
14 supporting these requests, including lodestar, prior to final approval.

15 6. The Court recognizes that Plaintiff and Defendant stipulate and agree to  
16 certification of a class for settlement purposes only. This stipulation will not be deemed  
17 admissible in this or any other proceeding should this Settlement not become final. For settlement  
18 purposes only, the Court conditionally certifies the following Class: "all individuals who were  
19 employed by Defendant in California and classified as a non-exempt employee at any time during  
20 the Class Period, excluding those employees who signed severance agreements." The Class  
21 Period is January 19, 2019 through January 5, 2024.

22 7. The Court concludes that, for settlement purposes only, the Class meets the  
23 requirements for certification under section 382 of the California Code of Civil Procedure in that:  
24 (a) the Class is ascertainable and so numerous that joinder of all members of the Class is  
25 impracticable; (b) common questions of law and fact predominate, and there is a well-defined  
26 community of interest amongst the members of the Class with respect to the subject matter of the  
27 litigation; (c) the claims of the Plaintiff are typical of the claims of the members of the Class; (d)

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1 the Plaintiff can fairly and adequately protect the interests of the members of the Class; (e) a class  
2 action is superior to other available methods for the efficient resolution of this controversy; and (f)  
3 counsel for the Class is qualified to act as counsel for the Class and the Plaintiff are adequate  
4 representatives of the Class.

5 8. The Court provisionally appoints Plaintiff as the representatives of the Class. The  
6 Court provisionally appoints Norman B. Blumenthal, Kyle R. Nordrehaug, Aparajit Bhowmik,  
7 Nicholas J. De Blouw, Jeffrey S. Herman, Sergio J. Puche, and Trevor G. Moran of Blumenthal  
8 Nordrehaug Bhowmik De Blouw LLP as Class Counsel.

9 9. The Agreement provides for a PAGA Penalties out of the Gross Settlement  
10 Amount of \$10,000, which shall be allocated \$7,500 to the Labor & Workforce Development  
11 Agency (“LWDA”) as the LWDA’s 75% share of the settlement of civil penalties paid under this  
12 Agreement pursuant to the PAGA and \$2,500 to the Aggrieved Employees. “Aggrieved  
13 Employees” are all individuals who were employed by Defendants in California and classified as a  
14 nonexempt employee at any time during the PAGA Period (November 1, 2021 through January 5,  
15 2024). Pursuant to Labor Code section 2699, subdivision (1)(2), the LWDA will be provided  
16 notice of the Agreement and these settlement terms. The Court finds the PAGA Penalties to be  
17 reasonable.

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19 10. The Court hereby approves, as to form and content, the Court Approved Notice of  
20 Class Action Settlement and Hearing Date for Final Court Approval (“Class Notice”) along with  
21 the Objection Form and Request for Exclusion Form, attached to this Order as Exhibit #1. The  
22 Court finds that the Class Notice appears to fully and accurately inform the Class Members of all  
23 material elements of the proposed Settlement, of the Class Members’ right to be excluded from the  
24 Class by submitting a written opt-out request, and of each member’s right and opportunity to  
25 object to the Settlement. The Court further finds that the distribution of the Class Notice  
26 substantially in the manner and form set forth in the Agreement and this Order meets the  
27 requirements of due process, is the best notice practicable under the circumstances, and shall  
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PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

1 constitute due and sufficient notice to all persons entitled thereto. The Court orders the mailing of  
2 the Class Notice Packet by first class mail pursuant to the terms set forth in the Agreement. If a  
3 Class Notice Packet is returned because of an incorrect address, the Administrator will promptly  
4 search for a more current address and re-mail the Notice Packet no later than fourteen days after  
5 the receipt of the undelivered Class Notice Packet. The Administrator shall provide a declaration  
6 detailing the notice process and authenticating a copy of every exclusion form received by the  
7 Administrator. Class Counsel shall file this declaration of the Administrator concurrently with the  
8 filing of any motion for final approval.

9       11. The Court hereby appoints Apex Class Action Administration as Administrator.  
10 No later than twenty-one (21) calendar days after preliminary approval of the Settlement by the  
11 Court, Defendant shall provide to the Administrator an electronic spreadsheet with the Class Data  
12 and the information for any Allegedly Aggrieved Employee. The Administrator will perform  
13 address updates and verifications as necessary prior to the mailing of the Class Notice. Using best  
14 efforts to mail it as soon as possible, and in no event later than 14 days after receiving the Class  
15 information spreadsheet, the Administrator will mail the Class Notice to all Class Members via  
16 first-class U.S. Mail.

17       12. The Court hereby preliminarily approves the proposed procedure for exclusion  
18 from the Settlement. Any Class Member may individually choose to opt out of and be excluded  
19 from the Class as provided in the Class Notice by following the instructions for requesting  
20 exclusion from the Class that are set forth in the Class Notice. All requests for exclusion must be  
21 sent to the Administrator and postmarked by no later than the Response Deadline, which is sixty  
22 (60) calendar days after the date of the mailing of the Class Notice Packet. If the Notice Packet is  
23 re-mailed, the Response Deadline will be extended an additional 14 days. The Administrator will  
24 then authenticate and provide any requests for exclusion to the Court. Any such person who  
25 chooses to opt out of and be excluded from the Class will not be entitled to any recovery under the  
26 Settlement and will not be bound by the Settlement or have any right to object, appeal or comment  
27 thereon. Class Members who have not requested exclusion shall be bound by all determinations

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PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

1 of the Court, the Agreement and the Judgment. A request for exclusion may only opt out that  
2 particular individual, and any attempt to effect an opt out of a group, class, or subclass of  
3 individuals is not permitted and will be deemed invalid.

4 13. Any Class Member who has not opted out may appear at the final approval hearing  
5 and may object or express the Member's views regarding the Settlement and may present evidence  
6 and file briefs or other papers that may be proper and relevant to the issues to be heard and  
7 determined by the Court as provided in the Notice. Class Members will have until the Response  
8 Deadline to submit their written objections to the Administrator in accordance with the  
9 instructions in the Class Notice. If the Class Notice Packet is re-mailed, the Response Deadline  
10 for written objections will be extended an additional 14 days. The Administrator will then  
11 authenticate and provide any written objections to the Court. Alternatively, Class Members may  
12 appear at the Final Approval Hearing to make an oral objection.

13 14. A Final Approval Hearing shall be held before this Court on July 30, 2024 at 8:30  
14 a.m. a.m. in Department 1 at the Riverside Historic Courthouse of the Riverside County Superior  
15 Court located at 4050 Main Street, Riverside, California, to determine all necessary matters  
16 concerning the Settlement, including: whether the proposed settlement of the Action on the terms  
17 and conditions provided for in the Agreement is fair, adequate and reasonable and should be  
18 finally approved by the Court; whether the Final Approval Order and Judgment should be entered  
19 herein; whether the plan of allocation contained in the Agreement should be approved as fair,  
20 adequate and reasonable to the Class Members; and to finally approve attorneys' fees and costs,  
21 the service award, and the expenses of the Administrator. All papers in support of the motion for  
22 final approval and the motion for attorneys' fees, costs and service awards shall be filed with the  
23 Court and served on all counsel no later than sixteen (16) court days before the Final Approval  
24 Hearing and both motions shall be heard at the Final Approval Hearing. Class Counsel shall  
25 provide service of these motions on any objecting party and notice to any objecting party of any  
26 continuance of the hearing on the motion for final approval.

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1           15. Neither the Settlement nor any exhibit, document, or instrument delivered  
2 thereunder shall be construed as a concession or admission by Defendant in any way that the  
3 claims asserted have any merit or that this Action was properly brought as a class or representative  
4 action, and shall not be used as evidence of, or used against Defendant as, an admission or  
5 indication in any way, including with respect to any claim of any liability, wrongdoing, fault or  
6 omission by Defendant or with respect to the truth of any allegation asserted by any person.  
7 Whether or not the Settlement is finally approved, neither the Settlement, nor any exhibit,  
8 document, statement, proceeding or conduct related to the Settlement, nor any reports or accounts  
9 thereof, shall in any event be construed as, offered or admitted in evidence as, received as or  
10 deemed to be evidence for any purpose adverse to the Defendant, including, but not limited to,  
11 evidence of a presumption, concession, indication or admission by Defendant of any liability,  
12 fault, wrongdoing, omission, concession or damage.

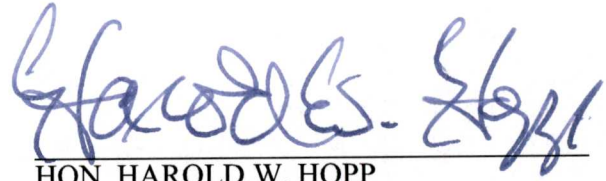
13           16. In the event the Settlement does not become effective in accordance with the terms  
14 of the Agreement, or the Settlement is not finally approved, or is terminated, canceled or fails to  
15 become effective for any reason, this Order shall be rendered null and void and shall be vacated,  
16 and the Parties shall revert to their respective positions as of before entering into the Agreement,  
17 and expressly reserve their respective rights regarding the prosecution and defense of this Action,  
18 including all available defenses and affirmative defenses, and arguments that any claim in the  
19 Action could not be certified as a class action and/or managed as a representative action. In such  
20 an event, the Court's orders regarding the Settlement, including this Order, shall not be used or  
21 referred to in litigation for any purpose. Nothing in this paragraph is intended to alter the terms of  
22 the Agreement with respect to the effect of the Agreement if it is not approved.

23           17. The Court reserves the right to adjourn or continue the date of the final approval  
24 hearing and all dates provided for in the Agreement without further notice to Class Members and  
25 retains jurisdiction to consider all further applications arising out of or connected with the  
26 proposed Settlement.

1           18.    The Action is stayed and all trial and related pre-trial dates are vacated, subject to  
2 further orders of the Court at the Final Approval Hearing.

3           **IT IS SO ORDERED.**

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5 Dated: 3/8/24



HON. HAROLD W. HOPP  
JUDGE, SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

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PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER



**EXHIBIT #1**

**NOTICE OF PROPOSED SETTLEMENT OF CLASS AND PAGA ACTION  
AND HEARING DATE FOR FINAL COURT APPROVAL**

***Harrold v. Spartan Education Group, LLC, Superior Court of the  
State of California, County of Riverside, Case No. CVRI2300320  
(consolidated with Case No. CVRI2300285)***

***The Superior Court for the State of California authorized this Notice. Read it carefully!  
It's not junk mail, spam, an advertisement, or solicitation by a lawyer. You are not being sued.***

**YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS MAY BE AFFECTED WHETHER YOU ACT OR DO NOT  
ACT. PLEASE READ THIS CLASS NOTICE CAREFULLY.**

**You may be eligible to receive money** from an employee class action lawsuit (“Action”) against Defendant Spartan Education Group, LLC (“Defendant”) for alleged wage and hour violations. The Action was filed by Plaintiff Eric Harrold (“Plaintiff”) and seeks payment of (1) wages and other relief on behalf of all individuals who were employed by Defendant in California and classified as a non-exempt employee at any time during the California Class Period (January 19, 2019 through January 5, 2024) (“Class Members”), and (2) penalties under the California Private Attorney General Act (“PAGA”) for all individuals who were employed by Defendants in California and classified as a non-exempt employee at any time during the PAGA Period (November 1, 2021 through January 5, 2024) (“Allegedly Aggrieved Employees”). Non-exempt means employees who are entitled to overtime, meal and rest periods and other protections under California law, such as hourly employees.

The proposed Settlement has two main parts: (1) a Class Settlement requiring Defendant to fund Individual Class Payment payments to Class Members, and (2) a PAGA Settlement requiring Defendant to fund the PAGA Penalties to pay penalties to the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”) and to Allegedly Aggrieved Employees.

Based on Defendant’s records, and the Parties’ current assumptions, **your Individual Class Payment is estimated to be <<\$ \_\_\_\_\_>> (less withholding), and your share of the PAGA Penalties is estimated to be <<\$ \_\_\_\_\_>>**. The actual amount you may receive likely will be different and will depend on a number of factors. (If no amount is stated for your share of the PAGA Penalties, then according to Defendant’s records you are not eligible for a share of the PAGA Penalties under the Settlement because you did not work during the PAGA Period.)

The above estimates are based on Defendant’s records showing that **you worked << \_\_\_\_\_>> workweeks** during the Class Period and **you worked << \_\_\_\_\_>> pay periods** during the PAGA Period. If you believe that you worked more workweeks and/or pay periods during either period, you can submit a challenge by the deadline date. See Section 5 of this Class Notice below.

The Court has already preliminarily approved the proposed Settlement and approved this Class Notice. The Court has not yet decided whether to grant final approval. Your legal rights are affected whether you act or do not act. Read this Notice carefully. You will be deemed to have carefully read and understood it. At the Final Approval Hearing, the Court will decide whether to finally approve the Settlement and how much of the Settlement will be paid to Plaintiff and Plaintiff’s attorneys (“Class Counsel”). The Court will also decide whether to enter a judgment

that requires Defendant to make payments under the Settlement and in exchange requires Class Members to give up their rights to assert certain claims against Defendant.

If you worked for Defendant during the Class Period and/or the PAGA Period, you have two basic options under the Settlement:

- (1) **Do Nothing.** You don't have to do anything to participate in the proposed Settlement and be eligible for an Individual Class Payment and/or a share of the PAGA Penalties. As a Participating Class Member, though, you will give up your right to assert Released Class Claims against Defendant as described below in Section 4 below.
- (2) **Opt-Out of the Class Settlement.** You can exclude yourself from the Class Settlement (opt-out) by submitting the written Request for Exclusion or otherwise notifying the Administrator in writing. If you opt-out of the Settlement, you will not receive an Individual Class Payment; however, you will preserve your right to personally pursue Class Claims against Defendant. If you are an Aggrieved Employee, you remain eligible for a share of the PAGA Penalties. You cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the proposed Settlement.

**Defendant will not retaliate against you for any actions you take with respect to the proposed Settlement.**

<b>SUMMARY OF YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND OPTIONS IN THIS SETTLEMENT:</b>	
<b>You Don't Have to Do Anything to Receive a Payment</b>	<p>If you do nothing, you will be a Participating Class Member, eligible for an Individual Class Payment and a share of the PAGA Penalties (if any). In exchange, you will give up your right to assert the wage claims against Defendant that are covered by this Settlement (Released Class Claims and Released PAGA claims).</p> <p>Additional information is set forth below.</p>
<p><b>You Can Opt-out of the Class Settlement but not the PAGA Settlement</b></p> <p><b>The Response Deadline is _____.</b></p>	<p>If you don't want to fully participate in the proposed Settlement, you can opt-out of the Class Settlement by sending the Administrator a written Request for Exclusion. <b>If you request exclusion, you will receive no money from the Class Settlement and you will not be bound by the Class Settlement.</b> Once excluded, you will be a Non-Participating Class Member and no longer eligible for an Individual Class Payment. Non-Participating Class Members cannot object to any portion of the proposed Settlement. See Section 7 of this Class Notice.</p> <p>However, you cannot opt-out of the PAGA portion of the proposed Settlement. If you are an Aggrieved Employee and exclude yourself, you will still be paid your share of the PAGA Penalties and will remain subject to the release of the Released PAGA Claims regardless of whether you submit a request for exclusion.</p>
<b>Participating Class Members Can Object to the Class</b>	<p>All Class Members who do not opt-out ("Participating Class Members") can object to any aspect of the proposed Settlement. The Court's decision whether to finally approve the Settlement will include a determination of how much will be paid to Class Counsel and Plaintiff</p>

<p><b>Settlement but not the PAGA Settlement</b></p> <p><b>Written Objections Must be Submitted by the Response Deadline</b> ( _____ )</p>	<p>who pursued the Action on behalf of the Class. You can object to the amounts requested by Class Counsel or Plaintiff if you think they are unreasonable.</p> <p>See Section 8 of this Class Notice.</p>
<p><b>You Can Participate in the Final Approval Hearing</b></p>	<p>The Court will hold a Final Approval Hearing at _____ on _____, 2024 at the Riverside County Superior Court, located at 4050 Main Street, Riverside, California, in Department 1 before Judge Harold Hopp. The hearing may be rescheduled by the Court without further notice to you.</p> <p>You don't have to attend but you do have the right to appear (or hire an attorney to appear on your behalf at your own cost), in person, by telephone or by using the Court's virtual appearance platform. Participating Class Members can verbally object to the Settlement at the Final Approval Hearing. See Section 9 of this Class Notice.</p>

**1. Why did I get this Notice?**

A proposed class and PAGA action settlement (the "Settlement") of the above-captioned action pending in the Superior Court of the State of California, in and for the County of Riverside (the "Court") has been reached between Plaintiff Eric Harrold ("Plaintiff") and Defendant Spartan Education Group, LLC ("Defendant") and has been granted preliminary approval by the Court. You may be entitled to receive money from this Settlement.

You have received this Class Notice because you have been identified as a member of the Class, which is defined as:

All individuals who were employed by Defendant in California and classified as a non-exempt employee at any time during the Class Period, excluding those employees who signed severance agreements ("Class Members" or "Class").

The "Class Period" is January 19, 2019 through January 5, 2024.

**2. What is this class action lawsuit about?**

On January 19, 2023, Plaintiff initiated a class action against Defendant, entitled *Harrold v. Spartan Education Group, LLC*, Riverside Superior Court, Case No. CVRI2300320 ("Class Action"). The Class Action asserted the following class claims against Defendant: unfair competition, failure to pay minimum wages, failure to pay overtime wages, failure to provide meal period, failure to provide rest periods, failure to provide expense reimbursement, failure to provide accurate itemized wage statements, failure to pay wages timely at termination, and failure to pay

sick pay wages. On March 24, 2023, Defendant filed an Answer to Plaintiff's Class Action Complaint, asserting fifty (50) affirmative defenses.

On January 19, 2023, Plaintiff filed a separate Representative Action Complaint against Defendant (the "PAGA Action"). Plaintiff's Representative Action Complaint asserted a representative claim seeking civil penalties for the violation of the Private Attorney General Act, California Labor Code section 2698 ("PAGA"). On March 24, 2023, Defendant filed an Answer to Plaintiff's PAGA Action Complaint, asserting fifty-four (54) affirmative defenses.

On December 7, 2023, Plaintiff filed a First Amended Complaint which added the PAGA claims from the PAGA Action into the Class Action. The First Amended Complaint is the operative complaint in the Action (the "Operative Complaint").

Defendant denies and disputes all such claims. Specifically, Defendant contends Plaintiff and the Class Members were properly compensated for all wages under California law; Plaintiff and the Class Members were provided with meal and rest periods in compliance with California law; Defendant did not fail to provide required reimbursement of expenses; Defendant did not fail to timely pay Plaintiff or any Class Members any wages allegedly due at the time of their termination; Defendant complied with California wage statement requirements; Defendant did not engage in unlawful or unfair business practices; Defendant is not liable for any of the penalties claimed or that could be claimed in the Action; and the Action cannot be maintained as a class action or a PAGA action.

The Court granted preliminary approval of the Settlement on <<INSERT PRELIMINARY APPROVAL DATE>>. At that time, the Court also preliminarily approved the Plaintiff to serve as the Class Representative, and the law firm Blumenthal Nordrehaug Bhowmik De Blouw LLP to serve as Class Counsel.

The Court has not ruled on the merits of Plaintiff's claims. However, to avoid additional expense, inconvenience, and interference with the business operations of Defendant, the Parties concluded that it is in their best interests and the interests of the Class to settle the Action now on the terms summarized in this Class Notice. The Settlement was reached after mediation and arm's-length negotiations between the Parties. The Plaintiff and Class Counsel think the settlement is in the best interest of all Class Members.

Accordingly, the Settlement constitutes a compromise of disputed claims and should not be construed as an admission of liability on the part of Defendant, who expressly deny all liability.

**3. What are the terms of the Settlement?**

Gross Settlement Amount. Defendant has agreed to pay an "all in" amount of Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$400,000) (the "Gross Settlement Amount") to fund the settlement of the Action. The Gross Settlement Amount includes all payments of Individual Class Payments to Class Members, the Administration Expenses Payment, the Class Representative Service Payment, Class Counsel Fees Payment, Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, and the PAGA Penalties for civil penalties. Any employer-side payroll taxes on the portion of the Individual Class Payments allocated to wages shall be separately paid by Defendant.

Within twenty-one (21) days of the Effective Date, Defendant will fund the Gross Settlement Amount by depositing the money with the Administrator. The "Effective Date" means the date

the Judgment is entered by the Court, or if there are objections or any appeal of the Judgment, the date when any appeal of the Judgment has been resolved (i.e. when the Judgment is no longer subject to appeal). Fourteen (14) days after the settlement is funded, the Administrator will mail checks for the Individual Class Payments to Participating Class Members.

Court Approved Deductions from Gross Settlement Amount. The proposed payments, subject to Court approval, will be deducted from the Gross Settlement Amount before payments of Individual Class Payments are made to Class Members who do not request exclusion (“Participating Class Members”). At the Final Approval Hearing, Plaintiff and/or Class Counsel will ask the Court to approve the following deductions from the Gross Settlement Amount, the amounts of which will be decided by the Court at the Final Approval Hearing:

- Administration Expenses Payment. Payment to the Administrator, estimated not to exceed \$10,000, for expenses, including without limitation expenses of notifying the Class Members of the Settlement, processing opt outs, and distributing settlement funds and tax forms, and handling inquiries and uncashed checks. The Administrator estimates that the actual expenses will be \$6,500.
- Class Counsel Fees Payment and Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment. Payment to Class Counsel of reasonable attorneys’ fees not to exceed one-third (1/3) of the Gross Settlement Amount, which is presently \$133,333, and an additional amount to reimburse actual litigation costs incurred by Class Counsel not to exceed \$25,000. Class Counsel has been prosecuting the Action on behalf of Plaintiff and the Class and Allegedly Aggrieved Employees on a contingency fee basis (that is, without being paid any money) and has been paying all litigation costs and expenses.
- Class Representative Service Payment. A Class Representative Service Payment in an amount not to exceed Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00) to the Plaintiff or such lesser amount as may be approved by the Court, to compensate him for services on behalf of the Class in initiating and prosecuting the Action, and for the risks he undertook.
- PAGA Penalties. A PAGA Penalties payment of \$10,000 to resolve the claim for civil penalties under PAGA, \$7,500 of which will be paid to the State of California’s Labor and Workforce Development Agency. The remaining \$2,500 will be distributed to the Allegedly Aggrieved Employees based on their respective pay periods worked during the PAGA Period, which is November 1, 2021 to January 5, 2024. “Allegedly Aggrieved Employees” are all individuals who were employed by Defendant in California and classified as a non-exempt employee at any time during the PAGA Period. All Allegedly Aggrieved Employees will be sent their Individual PAGA Payment and be subject to the release of the Released PAGA Claims as set forth below, whether or not they opt out of the class portion of the Settlement.

Participating Class Members have the right to object to any of these deductions. The Court will consider all objections.

Calculation of Individual Class Payments to Class Members. After all of the payments of the court-approved Class Representative Service Payment, the Class Counsel Fees Payment, the Class Counsel Litigation Expenses Payment, the PAGA Penalties, and the Administration Expenses Payment are deducted from the Gross Settlement Amount, the remaining portion, called the “Net Settlement Amount”, shall be distributed as Individual Class Payments to Participating Class

Members (meaning those Class Members who do not opt out or exclude themselves from the Class). The Net Settlement Amount is estimated to be at least \$\_\_\_\_\_. The Administrator will pay an Individual Class Payment from the Net Settlement Amount to each Participating Class Member. The Individual Class Payment for each Participating Class Member will be calculated by (a) dividing the Net Settlement Amount by the total number of Workweeks worked by all Participating Class Members during the Class Period and (b) multiplying the result by each Participating Class Member's Workweeks. "Workweek" means any week during the Class Period in which a Class Member worked for Defendant as a Class Member for at least one day. The number of Workweeks will be based on Defendant's records, however, Class Members may challenge the number of Workweeks as explained below. A Class Member who worked only one Workweek is estimated to recover approximately \$16.11 for that single Workweek, minus applicable withholdings and deductions. A Class Member who worked every Workweek during the Class Period (259 weeks) could recover \$4,172, minus applicable withholdings and deductions. The average Individual Class Payment is estimated to be \$1,111.11. These amounts are subject to change, however, depending on the number of Class Members and Workweeks involved, among other factors. Your estimated Individual Class Payment is set forth in Section 5 below.

Calculation of Individual PAGA Payments to Allegedly Aggrieved Employees: The Individual PAGA Payment for each Allegedly Aggrieved Employee will be calculated by (a) dividing the amount of the Allegedly Aggrieved Employees' 25% share of PAGA Penalties (\$2,500) by the total number of PAGA Pay Periods worked by all Allegedly Aggrieved Employees during the PAGA Period and (b) multiplying the result by each Allegedly Aggrieved Employee's PAGA Pay Periods. "PAGA Pay Period" means any Pay Period during which an Allegedly Aggrieved Employee worked for Defendant for at least one day during the PAGA Period. The number of PAGA Pay Periods will be based on Defendant's records, however, Allegedly Aggrieved Employees have the right to challenge the number of PAGA Pay Periods worked as explained below. Your estimated Individual PAGA Payment is set forth in Section 5 below. You will receive your Individual PAGA Payment (if any) even if you opt out or exclude yourself from the Class.

Tax Matters. Twenty percent (20%) of each Individual Class Payment is in settlement of wage claims which are subject to wage withholdings and will be reported on IRS Form W-2. Eighty percent (80%) of each Individual Class Payment is in settlement of claims non-wages, expense reimbursement, interest and penalties, which are not subject to wage withholdings and will be reported on IRS Form 1099. Your Individual PAGA Payment (if any) is also not subject to wage withholdings and will be reported on IRS Form 1099. The employee portion of all applicable income and payroll taxes will be the responsibility of the Participating Class Members and Allegedly Aggrieved Employees. Neither Class Counsel nor Defendant's Counsel intend anything contained in this Notice to constitute advice regarding taxes or taxability. Your tax issues are unique to you, and you may want to consult a tax advisor concerning the tax consequences of the payments received under the Settlement.

Conditions of Settlement. This Settlement is conditioned upon the Court entering an order granting final approval of the Settlement and entering judgment.

**If the Settlement is approved by the Court and you do not exclude yourself, you will automatically be mailed a check for your Individual Class Payment to the same address as this Class Notice. You do not have to do anything to receive a payment. If your address has changed, you must contact the Administrator to inform them of your correct address to ensure you receive your payment.**

#### 4. What Do I Release Under the Settlement?

Released Class Claims. Effective on the date when Defendant fully funds the entire Gross Settlement Amount and funds all employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portion of the Individual Class Payments, all Participating Class Members, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, release Released Parties from the Released Class Claims. The “Released Class Claims” are all claims that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged, based on the facts stated in the Operative Complaint which occurred during the Class Period. Participating Class Members do not release any other claims, including claims for vested benefits, wrongful termination, violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act, unemployment insurance, disability, social security, workers’ compensation, or claims based on facts occurring outside the Class Period.

This means that, if you do not timely and formally exclude yourself from the Settlement, you cannot sue, continue to sue, or be part of any other lawsuit against Defendant or any other Released Party about the Released Class Claims resolved by this Settlement. It also means that all of the Court’s orders in the Actions will apply to you and legally bind you.

Released PAGA Claims. Effective on the date when Defendant fully funds the entire Gross Settlement Amount and funds all employer payroll taxes owed on the Wage Portion of the Individual Class Payments, Plaintiff and the LWDA are deemed to release, on behalf of themselves and their respective former and present representatives, agents, attorneys, heirs, administrators, successors, and assigns, the Released Parties from the Released PAGA Claims. The “Released PAGA Claims” are all claims for PAGA penalties that were alleged, or reasonably could have been alleged, based on the facts stated in the Operative Complaint and the PAGA Notice, which occurred during the PAGA Period. The Released PAGA Claims do not include other PAGA claims, any Allegedly Aggrieved Employees’ claim for individual wages or damages, claims for wrongful termination, discrimination, unemployment insurance, disability, social security, workers’ compensation, and PAGA claims outside of the PAGA Period.

Released Parties. The Released Parties are: Defendant and Defendant’s officers, directors, employees, shareholders, and agents.

#### 5. How much will my payment be?

**Your Individual Class Payment:** Defendant’s records reflect that you have << \_\_\_\_ >> Workweeks during the Class Period (January 19, 2019 through January 5, 2024). **Based on this information, your estimated Individual Class Payment is << \_\_\_\_\_ >>**, minus applicable withholdings and deductions.

**Your Individual PAGA Payment:** Defendant’s records reflect that you have << \_\_\_\_ >> PAGA Pay Periods during the PAGA Period (November 1, 2021 to January 5, 2024). **Based on this information, your estimated Individual PAGA Payment is << \_\_\_\_\_ >>**.

Your Individual Class Payment and Individual PAGA Payments may be paid together in a single check, at the discretion of the Administrator.

If you wish to challenge the information set forth above, then you must submit a written, signed dispute challenging the information along with supporting documents, to the Administrator at the



address provided in this Notice no later than the Response Deadline, which is \_\_\_\_\_ [sixty (60) days after the mailing of the Notice or 74 days in the event of a re-mailing]. You may also fax the dispute to \_\_\_\_\_ or email the dispute to \_\_\_\_\_ by no later than the Response Deadline. Any dispute should include credible written evidence and will be resolved by the Administrator.

#### **6. How can I get a payment?**

To get money from the settlement, you do not have to do anything. A check for your share of the Settlement will be mailed automatically to the same address as this Class Notice. If your address is incorrect or has changed, you must notify the Administrator. The Administrator is: Apex Class Action Administration, \_\_\_\_\_, (800) \_\_\_\_\_.

The Court will hold a Final Approval Hearing on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ to decide whether to approve the Settlement. Please note the hearing could be rescheduled by the Court without further notice to you. If the Court approves the Settlement and there are no objections or appeals, the settlement payments will be mailed approximately two months after this hearing. If there are objections or appeals the payments will be delayed because resolving them can take time, usually more than a year. Please be patient.

Your settlement check must be cashed within 180 days after it is mailed. If your check is lost or misplaced, you should contact the Administrator immediately by phone to request a replacement (800) \_\_\_\_\_. For any Class Member whose Individual Class Payment check or Individual PAGA Payment check is uncashed and cancelled after the void date, the Administrator shall transmit the funds represented by such checks to the California Controller's Unclaimed Property Fund in the name of the Class Member.

#### **7. What if I don't want to be a part of the Settlement?**

If you do not wish to participate in the Settlement, you may exclude yourself from the Class or "opt out." **If you opt out, you will NOT receive your Individual Class Payment and you will not be bound by the release of Released Class Claims.** However, Allegedly Aggrieved Employees who opt out of the Class will still be paid their Individual PAGA Payment and will remain subject to the release of the Released PAGA Claims, regardless of their request for exclusion from the Class.

To opt out of the Class, you must mail to the Administrator, by First Class Mail, a written, signed and dated request to opt-out postmarked no later than the Response Deadline which is \_\_\_\_\_ [sixty (60) days after the mailing of the Notice or 74 days in the event of a re-mailing]. You may also fax your request to opt out to \_\_\_\_\_ or email the dispute to \_\_\_\_\_ by no later than the Response Deadline. A Request for Exclusion form is included with this Notice. The Request for Exclusion should state in substance: "I wish to be excluded from the Class in the *Harrold v. Spartan Education Group* lawsuit." The Request for Exclusion must state the Class Member's full name, address, telephone number, last four digits of social security number for verification purposes, the approximate dates of employment in California by Defendant, and the name and number of the case, which is *Harrold v. Spartan Education Group*, Case No. CVRI2300320. The request to opt-out must be completed and signed by you. No other person may opt-out for a living member of the Class.

The address for the Administrator is *Harrold v. Spartan Education Group* Administrator, c/o Apex Class Action Administration, \_\_\_\_\_. Absent good cause found by the Court, written requests for exclusion that are postmarked after \_\_\_\_\_, or are incomplete or unsigned will be rejected, and those Class Members will remain bound by the Settlement and the release described above.

**8. How do I tell the Court that I don't agree with the Settlement?**

Any Class Member who has not opted out and believes that the Settlement should not be finally approved by the Court for any reason may object to the proposed Settlement, the attorneys' fees, the costs and/or the service awards, either in writing or in person. Objections that are in writing should include the Class Member's name, current address, telephone number, and the dates of employment in California by Defendant, and describe why you believe the Settlement is unfair. All written objections or other correspondence should also state the name and number of the case, which is *Harrold v. Spartan Education Group*, in the Superior Court of the State of California, County of Riverside, Case No. CVRI2300320. An Objection form is included with this Class Notice.

All written objections must be mailed to the *Harrold v. Spartan Education Group* Administrator, c/o Apex Class Action Administration, \_\_\_\_\_, no later than the Response Deadline which is \_\_\_\_\_ [sixty (60) days after the mailing of the Notice or 74 days in the event of a re-mailing]. You may also fax the dispute to \_\_\_\_\_ or email the dispute to \_\_\_\_\_ by no later than this Response Deadline.

Alternatively, Class Members may appear at the Final Approval Hearing on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ to make an oral objection without submitting a written objection. At this time, all hearings will be held remotely. The hearing may also be rescheduled by the Court without further notice to you. If you need assistance, you may contact Class Counsel. Please check the Court's tentative ruling website for current information concerning appearances and how to attend Court proceedings remotely:

<https://www.riverside.courts.ca.gov/OnlineServices/TentativeRulings/tentative-rulings.php>.

To object to the Settlement, you must not opt out, and if the Court approves the Settlement despite your objection, you will be bound by the terms of the Settlement in the same way as Class Members who do not object and you will still be mailed a check for your Individual Class Payment. Absent good cause found by the Court, any Class Member who does not object in the manner provided in this Notice shall have waived any objection to the Settlement, whether by appeal or otherwise.

The addresses for Parties' counsel are as follows:

**Class Counsel:**

Norman Blumenthal  
Kyle Nordrehaug  
Blumenthal Nordrehaug Bhowmik De Blouw LLP  
2255 Calle Clara  
La Jolla, CA 92037  
Tel: 858-551-1223 / Fax: 858-551-1232  
Email: [kyle@bamlawca.com](mailto:kyle@bamlawca.com)  
Website: [www.bamlawca.com](http://www.bamlawca.com)

**Counsel for Defendant:**

Tracie Childs  
Cameron J. Davila  
Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.  
4660 La Jolla Village Drive, Suite 900  
San Diego, CA 92122  
Tel: 858-652-3100 / Fax: 858-652-3101  
Email: [cameron.davila@ogletree.com](mailto:cameron.davila@ogletree.com)  
Website: [www.ogletree.com](http://www.ogletree.com)

**9. When and where will the Court decide whether to approve the Settlement?**

The Court will hold a Final Approval Hearing at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_, in Department 1 of the Superior Court of California, County of Riverside, located at 4050 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92501, before Judge Harold W. Hopp. While the Court determined at preliminary approval that there is sufficient evidence to suggest the proposed settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable, the Court will make a final determination on these issues at the Final Approval Hearing. The purpose of this hearing is for the Court to determine whether to grant final approval to the Settlement and to approve the amount of attorneys’ fees, costs and service awards to be awarded. If there are objections, the Court will consider them. This hearing may be rescheduled by the Court without further notice to you. **You are not required to attend the Final Approval Hearing, although any Class Member is welcome to attend the hearing.**

**10. How do I get more information about the Settlement?**

You may call the Administrator at \_\_\_\_\_ or write *Harrold v. Spartan Education Group*, c/o Apex Class Action Administration, \_\_\_\_\_; or contact Class Counsel.

This Class Notice summarizes the proposed settlement. More details are in the Class Action and PAGA Settlement Agreement (“Agreement”). You may receive a copy of the Settlement Agreement, the Judgment, the motion for attorneys’ fees, costs and service awards, the motion for final approval or other Settlement documents by going to [ADMINISTRATOR WEBSITE]. You may also get more details by examining the Court’s file via the Public Access site for the California Superior Court for the County of Riverside (<https://ecomm1.riverside.courts.ca.gov/>) and entering the Case No. CVRI2300320. The Agreement can be found in the Court file located at 4050 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92501 as Exhibit #1 to the Declaration of Kyle Nordrehaug, filed on \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

**PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE COURT ABOUT THIS NOTICE.**

**IMPORTANT:**

- You must inform the Administrator of any change of address to ensure receipt of your settlement payment.
- Settlement checks will be null and void 180 days after issuance if not deposited or cashed.

- If your check is lost or misplaced, you should contact the Administrator immediately to request a replacement.

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

ERIC HARROLD, an individual, on behalf of himself, and on behalf of all persons similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

SPARTAN EDUCATION GROUP, LLC, a Limited Liability Corporation, and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive,

Defendants.

CASE NO.: CVRI2300320

**OBJECTION FORM**

Hearing Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Hearing Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Judge: Hon. Harold W. Hopp

Dept.: 1

**OBJECTION FORM**

**USE THIS FORM ONLY IF YOU WANT TO OBJECT TO THE SETTLEMENT. TO OBJECT TO THE TERMS OF THE SETTLEMENT, YOU MUST SIGN AND COMPLETE THIS FORM ACCURATELY AND IN ITS ENTIRETY, AND YOU MUST MAIL IT BY FIRST CLASS U.S. MAIL TO THE ADMINISTRATOR (ILYM GROUP) AT THE ADDRESS BELOW SO THAT IT IS POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE \_\_\_\_\_.**

The Court will consider your objection at the Final Approval Hearing if you submit a timely and valid written statement of objection.

[ ] I OBJECT to the *Harrold v. Spartan Education Group, LLC* Settlement for the following reasons:

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*[Form continues on reverse side]*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Your Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Your Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Your Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Last Four Digits of Social Security Number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City/State/Zip Code)

Submit your fully completed and signed Objection Form as follows:

**MAIL TO THE ADMINISTRATOR, BY U.S. MAIL, POSTMARKED NOT LATER THAN**  
\_\_\_\_\_, 2024:

*Harrold v. Spartan Education Group, LLC* Administrator  
c/o Apex Class Action Administration

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**REQUEST FOR EXCLUSION FORM**

*Harrold v. Spartan Education Group, LLC*, Case No. CVRI2300320  
California Superior Court for the County of Riverside

To exclude yourself or “opt out” from the Class, complete, sign, and date this form, and then mail it on or before -----, 2024 to the Administrator at the following address:

*Harrold v. Spartan Education Group, LLC*  
c/o Apex Class Action Administration  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS**

A. Only complete and return this form if you do **NOT** want to be included in the class action portion of the Settlement. You will **NOT** receive an Individual Class Payment Share if you return this form and you will not be bound by the release of Released Class Claims, as described in the settlement notice. However, Allegedly Aggrieved Employees who opt-out of the Class will still be paid their Individual PAGA Payment and will remain subject to the release of the Released PAGA Claims regardless of their request for exclusion.

B. To exclude yourself or “opt out”, complete, sign, date and return this form. To be effective, this form should be filled out completely and postmarked on or before \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

C. You are responsible for maintaining a copy of the fully completed form and proof of mailing.

**I want to OPT-OUT of the Class in the lawsuit entitled *Harrold v. Spartan Education Group, LLC*, Superior Court of the State of California, County of Riverside, Case No. CVRI2300320. I understand that by requesting to be excluded from the Class, I will not receive an Individual Class Payment, as described in the accompanying Class Notice.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Last 4 Digits of SSN: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Employment with Defendant Spartan Education Group, LLC:  
\_\_\_\_\_

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Sign your name here)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date