

Los Angeles Unified School District

Office of Environmental Health and Safety

ALBERTO M. CARVALHO
Superintendent of Schools

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Director, Environmental Health and Safety

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Deputy Director, Environmental Health and Safety

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION



To: County Clerk and Registrar-Recorder
County of Los Angeles
12400 Imperial Highway
Norwalk, CA 90650

From: LAUSD OEHS
333 S. Beaudry Avenue
21st Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Project Title:

Outdoor Learning Environment and Campus Upgrades at Six LAUSD Campuses

Project Location – Specific:

- 52nd Street Elementary School, 816 W. 51st Street, Los Angeles, CA 90037
- Birdielee V. Bright Elementary School, 1771 W. 36th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90018
- Commonwealth Avenue Elementary School, 215 S. Commonwealth Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90004
- Humphreys Avenue Elementary School, 500 S. Humphreys Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90022
- Lockwood Avenue Elementary School, 4345 Lockwood Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90029
- San Fernando Early Education Center, 1204 Woodworth Street, San Fernando, CA 91340

Project Location – City:

Los Angeles

Project Location – County:

Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The intent of the Outdoor Learning Environment (OLE) projects are to provide a safe, welcoming, and sustainable outdoor learning space at schools most in need of greening resources (Project). Each OLE will serve as a gathering/classroom space as well as an active hands-on/lab space to create a natural learning environment for students. The Project scope of work at each of the six (6) campuses includes the following components:

- Removal of one (1) 2-classroom bungalow-type building and adjacent asphalt ground cover.
- Construction of a 2,000-4,000 square foot outdoor learning space with a new shade structure, outdoor sink, internet connectivity, and irrigation piping.
- OLE landscape to include trees, pavers, decomposed granite, shaded seating areas, etc.

333 South Beaudry Avenue, 21st Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90017 • Telephone (213) 241-3199 • Fax (213) 241-6816

Our Mission: To ensure a safe and healthy environment for students to learn, teachers to teach, and employees to work.

Our Vision: To eliminate all environmental health and safety risks at schools.

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existing school sites that result in no expansion of use and meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land

Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.

The Project will involve minor alterations to land including the removal of asphalt and its replacement with green features (i.e., trees, plants, etc.), outdoor seating, and shade structures on the campuses. The Project also incorporates ADA features to improve accessibility on the campuses. The Project areas within the campuses do not contain any trees or vegetation. As such, the removal of trees will not be required as a part of the Project. The Project will include the installation of trees and plants. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15304.

Section 15300.2 – Exceptions

Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines, Exceptions, provides conditions under which categorical exemptions are inapplicable. Review of these projects indicates that they would not violate any of the exceptions, as described below.

1. *The projects would occur in certain specified sensitive environments or locations;*

The Project sites are fully developed campuses within urbanized communities.³ None of the Project sites have been designated as biologically sensitive locations. The nearest threatened or endangered species is the Southwestern willow flycatcher located approximately 3.3 miles east of the San Fernando Early Education Center. The nearest sensitive environment to the Project site is the Tujunga Valley/Hansen Dam Significant Ecological Area, located approximately 3 mile east of the San Fernando Early Education Center.^{4,5} As such, the Project will not impact sensitive environments or locations.

2. *Cumulative impacts would be considerable because successive projects of the same type would occur at the same place over time;*

The campuses are active school sites and there will likely be ongoing maintenance activities and minor Projects on the Campuses to keep the schools operational. As the Project will not result in any lasting impacts once construction of the Project is complete, the Project will not contribute to cumulative impacts when considered with expected successive projects.

3. *There is a reasonable possibility that the activity would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

There are no known unusual circumstances that would have a significant effect on the environment. The upgrades associated with the Project are comparable to other modernizations and

³ City of Los Angeles Planning Department, *Zoning and Information Management System*, <http://zimas.lacity.org/>, accessed February 2023.

⁴ United States Fish and Wildlife Service Critical Habitat Portal, <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/table/critical-habitat.html> accessed February 2023.

⁵ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public/Viewer.html, accessed February 2023.

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None of the Project sites are located on sites that are included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.¹¹ Therefore, the Project will have no impacts related to being located on a hazardous waste site.

6. *The project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource.*

LAUSD has identified both 52 Street ES and Lockwood ES as eligible for listing as a historic resource per Section 18955 of the California State Historical Building Code (CHBC).¹² Specifically, LAUSD assigned the campuses with California Historic Resources status codes of 3S;3CS;5S3, noting that the Campus appears individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (and the California Register of Historic Resources) as a result of survey evaluation.^{13,14} It should be noted that on both campuses, only the Main/Administration Building were considered eligible historic resources, and the proposed Projects would not result in adverse impacts to these buildings. As with all LAUSD-owned properties that are considered historic resources under CEQA, LAUSD would assess the proposed Project in accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines and further ensure that the proposed Project is evaluated for conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI's) *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (Standards) by a Qualified Architectural Historian or professional who meets the SOI's Professional Qualifications Standards and would further ensure that the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource. LAUSD's proposed improvements would be designed with the support and input of a Qualified Architectural Historian and reviewed by DSA to ensure that there would be no potential adverse impacts on the character defining features associated of these Campuses. As such, the proposed Project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource.

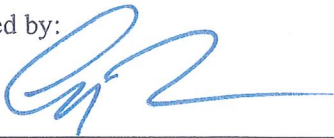
Prepared By:

Julian Capata
CEQA Project Manager/Contract Professional

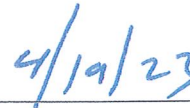
Phone and Email:

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Signed by:



Date:



Carlos A. Torres,
CEQA Officer of the Los Angeles Unified School District

¹¹ http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese_List.cfm, accessed February 2023.

¹² State of California. 2003. State Historical Building Code, Health and Safety Code, Division 13, Part 2.7, Section 18955. Available at: http://www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/AboutUs/shbsb/shbsb_health_safety.aspx. Also see California Building Standards Commission. 2014. California Code of Regulations, Title 24, California Historical Building Code, Section 8-101.2. Washington, DC. p. 4.

¹³ LAUSD. 2014. Historic Resources Survey Report. Available online at: <http://achieve.lausd.net/Page/2799>.

¹⁴ LAUSD. 2002. DPR 523 A, Primary Record for Thomas Jefferson High School. Los Angeles, CA.