

# Los Angeles Unified School District

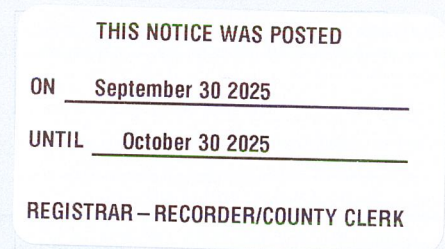
## Office of Environmental Health and Safety

ALBERTO M. CARVALHO  
Superintendent of Schools

CARLOS A. TORRES  
Director, Environmental Health and Safety

JENNIFER FLORES  
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  
21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

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**Project Title:**

Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnets Field Upgrades with Natural Turf & Synthetic Track

**Project Location – Specific:**

The Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnets Field Upgrades with Natural Turf & Synthetic Track (Project) is located at 7400 West Manchester Avenue in the Westchester neighborhood of the City of Los Angeles. It is bound by West Manchester Avenue to the north, Park Hill Drive to the east, West 91st Street to the south, and Redlands Street to the west. The Project will occur on approximately 9.1 acres on the existing track and field, baseball field, and softball field areas of the Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnets campus (Westchester HS or Campus). The Campus is located in an urbanized community primarily consisting of residential, recreational, and institutional uses.

**Project Location – City:**

Los Angeles

**Project Location – County:**

Los Angeles

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**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:**

The Project will demolish and remove the existing decomposed granite track; install a new synthetic track, scoreboard, and goal posts; reseed the existing natural grass field; relocate existing batting cages at the existing track and field; install new dugouts and bullpens, backstops, protective netting, scoreboard, portable bleachers, benches, and signage; and reseed the existing grass areas on the softball and baseball fields (Exhibit A). The Board of Education approved the Project's budget of \$9,158,454 on March 12, 2024.

Minor work will include improvements within the Project area to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal requirements including those of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), Division of State Architect (DSA), California Environmental Quality (CEQA), and Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

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333 South Beaudry Avenue, 21<sup>st</sup> 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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The Project will be implemented pursuant to all applicable State, federal, and local regulations and all applicable Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) specifications, standards, and/or guidelines, including those in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the updated Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects (SC) as adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.<sup>1</sup> LAUSD's SCs, design guidelines, and best management practices are designed to be incorporated into the Project design in order to avoid or limit potential adverse impacts associated with the District's projects.

The beneficiaries of the Project include Westchester HS students, faculty, staff, families, school supporters, and the community at large who may request access to the Campus pursuant to the Civic Center Act (CA Ed. Code Sections 38130 - 38139). The proposed athletic facilities upgrade will support the school's physical education program, competitive athletic programs and allow the school to host athletic events and other school community events. The upgraded athletic facilities, once completed, will provide modern high-performance athletic facilities that support physical educational programs, student athletic achievement, and competitive athletic programs. In 2023-24, the athletic program of Westchester HS included 295 athletes and 13 sports.

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**Name of Public Agency Approving the Project:**

Los Angeles Unified School District

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**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:**

Los Angeles Unified School District

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**Exempt Status: (check one below)**

- Ministerial [Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines Section 15268<sup>2</sup>]:
- Declared Emergency [PRC Section 21080(b)(3); CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(a)]:
- Emergency Project [PRC Section 21080(b)(4); CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(b)(c)]:
- Categorical Exemption (PRC Section 21084; CEQA Guidelines Sections 15300 - 15333):
- *CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities*
  - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15302 – Replacement or Reconstruction*
  - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 – New Construction Minor Alterations*
  - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15311 – Accessory Structures*
- Statutory Exemption:

**Reasons why project is exempt:**Section 15301 – Existing Facilities

Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination.

The Project will demolish and remove the existing decomposed granite track; install a new synthetic track, scoreboard, and goal posts; reseed the existing natural grass field; relocate existing batting cages at the existing

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<sup>1</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvement Projects (SCs)" [https://www.lausd.org/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/domain/135/ceqa/2023\\_Standard\\_Conditions\\_UPDATE\\_Fina](https://www.lausd.org/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/domain/135/ceqa/2023_Standard_Conditions_UPDATE_Fina)

<sup>2</sup> CEQA Guidelines can be found at California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 - Section 15387.



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track and field; install new dugouts and bullpens, backstops, protective netting, scoreboard, portable bleachers, benches, and signage; and reseed the existing grass areas on the softball and baseball fields of the existing Campus. The Project will not generate growth or require the addition or construction of new or expanded facilities. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

### Section 15302 – Replacement or Reconstruction

Class 2 consists of replacing or reconstructing existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.

The Project will demolish and remove the existing decomposed granite track; install a new synthetic track, scoreboard, and goal posts; reseed the existing natural grass field; relocate existing batting cages at the existing track and field; install new dugouts and bullpens, backstops, protective netting, scoreboard, portable bleachers, benches, and signage; and reseed the existing grass areas on the softball and baseball fields of the existing Campus. The Project will not result in an increase or alteration of the current use, function, or capacity of the existing Campus. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15302.

### Section 15303 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures

Class 3 consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made to the structure.

The Project will demolish and remove the existing decomposed granite track; install a new synthetic track, scoreboard, and goal posts; reseed the existing natural grass field; relocate existing batting cages at the existing track and field; install new dugouts and bullpens, backstops, protective netting, scoreboard, portable bleachers, benches, and signage; and reseed the existing grass areas on the softball and baseball fields of the existing Campus that qualify as small facilities or structures. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15303.

### Section 15311 – Accessory Structures

Class 11 consists of construction or replacement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities, including, but not limited to, on-premise signs and small parking lots.

The Project will demolish and remove the existing decomposed granite track; install a new synthetic track, scoreboard, and goal posts; reseed the existing natural grass field; relocate existing batting cages at the existing track and field; install new dugouts and bullpens, backstops, protective netting, scoreboard, portable bleachers, benches, and signage; and reseed the existing grass areas on the softball and baseball fields of the existing Campus. These structures are minor accessories to the existing Campus. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15311.

### Section 15300.2 – Exceptions

Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines, Exceptions, provides conditions under which categorical exemptions are inapplicable. Review of the Project indicates that it will not violate any of the exceptions, as described in the following section.



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1. *The project will occur in certain specified sensitive environments or locations;*

The Project site is a fully-developed Campus within a heavily urbanized neighborhood of Westchester in the City of Los Angeles, surrounded by residences, schools, and parks. The site is not designated as a biologically sensitive location. The nearest significant ecological area (SEA) is the Santa Monica Mountains SEA in Los Angeles located approximately 8.2 miles north of the Project site.<sup>3</sup> The nearest sensitive environment to the Project site is the Western Snowy Plover habitat at Dockweiler Beach located approximately 0.9 miles west of the Project site.<sup>4</sup> As such, the Project will not impact sensitive environments or locations.

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

The Campus is an active school site and there will likely be ongoing maintenance activities and minor projects on the Campus to keep the school operational. There are currently no known successive projects of the same type or scale planned for the Campus. As the Project would not result in any lasting impacts once construction of the Project is complete, the Project would not contribute to cumulative impacts when considered with expected successive projects. Therefore, no cumulative impacts will result from the Project and successive projects of the same type and at the same place over time.

3. *There is a reasonable possibility that the activity will 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 proposed scope of work includes removal of trees. District policy requires consultation with an arborist to determine if the trees are a protected native species. All tree trimming and removal conducted on District property is required to adhere to the procedures described in the LAUSD OEHS Tree Trimming and Removal Procedure.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, written approval from the school principal will be required before any trees can be removed. If tree removal is scheduled to occur between February 1 and August 31, a nesting bird survey would be performed prior to removal activities, per SC-BIO-3.

The Project will include minor ground-disturbing activities. These activities are not considered unusual circumstances for the classes of projects under which an exemption is claimed. Nevertheless, consideration must be given to the management of pavement removal and excavated soils associated with earthwork activities for the Project. As the Project involves the removal of concrete pavement, soil sampling and testing for characterization is required prior to earth moving work and removal of soil materials. OEHS must be notified to provide oversight to ensure that these activities are conducted in compliance with the requirements of District Specification 01 4524, relevant provisions of South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 1466, and other

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<sup>3</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, [http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3\\_Public/Viewer.html](http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public/Viewer.html)

<sup>4</sup> United States Fish and Wildlife Service Critical Habitat Portal, <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/table/>

<sup>5</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "Tree Trimming and Removal Procedure," <https://www.lausd.org/ceqa>



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Sep 30 2025

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applicable environmental agency rules and requirements.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, as set forth in SC-CUL-6, SC-CUL-7, SC-CUL-10, and SC-CUL-11, construction activities must be stopped immediately and OEHS notified upon discovery of subsurface features, such as buried resources (i.e., paleontological resources, archaeological resources), tanks or seepage pits, or stained/odoriferous soils. Lastly, any construction and demolition waste shall be recycled to the maximum extent feasible per SC-USS-1. Therefore, the Project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

4. *The project may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway;*

The closest designated state scenic highway to the Project site is a 2.5-mile portion of State Route 27 (SR-27), which is located approximately 10.7 miles northwest of the Campus.<sup>7</sup> The Project will not result in the removal of historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or other scenic resources. Therefore, the Project will not result in damage to scenic resources or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway.

5. *The project is located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code; or*

The Project site is not located on any sites that are included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.<sup>8</sup> 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.*

Westchester HS opened in 1948. In 2013, a historic survey of Westchester HS was conducted by Survey LA. As a result of this survey, the Campus appears eligible at the federal, state, and local level as an example of mid-century school campus planning (finger-/cluster-plan school campus). However, the Project is not affecting character defining features of the Campus. The Project at Westchester HS was reviewed by LA Unified's Historic Preservation Specialist and Coordinator to ensure compliance with applicable guidelines (*the Secretary's Standards and Los Angeles Unified School District Design Guidelines and Treatment Approaches for Historic Schools (LAUSD Design Guidelines)*). This review found that the Project components are limited to modifications to the athletic field area, which is not a contributing element to a historic district. The Historical Preservation Specialist and Coordinator has determined that the Project meets the requirements specified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3) and will not cause substantial adverse changes in the significance of a historic resource.

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<sup>6</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "Section 01 4524 Environmental Import/Export Materials Testing", [http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file\\_id=219798234&show\\_all\\_versions\\_p=t](http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t)

<sup>7</sup> Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, [http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3\\_Public](http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public)

<sup>8</sup> California Department of Toxic Substances, [http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese\\_List.cfm](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese_List.cfm), access



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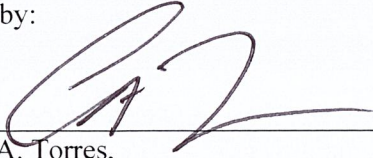
Prepared By:

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CEQA Project Manager/Contract Professional

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Signed by:



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

Date:

9/23/25

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## EXHIBIT A – CAMPUS SITE PLAN (not to scale)



**PROJECT SITE**



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