



Jared Blumenfeld
Secretary for
Environmental Protection



Department of Toxic Substances Control

Meredith Williams, Ph.D., Director
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, California 90630



Gavin Newsom
Governor

May 16, 2022



SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Ms. Julie Arthur
Executive Director
Facilities Planning & Development Department
Palm Springs Unified School District
150 District Center Drive
Palm Springs, California 92264
facilitiesplanning@psusd.us

MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION / INITIAL STUDY FOR THE SUNNY SANDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MODERNIZATION PROJECT (SCH #2022040444)

Dear Ms. Arthur:

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has received your Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Sunny Sands Elementary School (SSES) Modernization Project. The SSES campus is a 11.2-acre rectangular lot, located at 69310 McCallum Way, Cathedral City, in Riverside County. The SSES campus is bound by Kemper Road to the north, residential developments to the east, McCallum Way to the south, and San Eljay Avenue to the west.

The SSES campus was initially constructed in 1989 and serves approximately 710 students from transitional kindergarten through fifth grade with a maximum serving capacity of 1,279 students. The Palm Springs Unified School District proposes modernizing SSES campus, including replacing existing portable and permanent classroom buildings with permanent buildings, renovating, and modernizing the existing interior and exterior of the multipurpose building, and improving the hardscape around the school buildings.

DTSC recommends the following items be addressed in the IS/MND:

1. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment is necessary to identify any recognized environmental conditions. If state funding is anticipated, then DTSC review/approval is required pursuant to California Education Code. For school projects that do not require state funding, DTSC recommends environmental review under the DTSC school program oversight to ensure the school is safe for students and staff.
2. Identify the mechanism to initiate any required investigation and/or remediation, if needed, and the government agency to provide appropriate regulatory oversight.
3. Identify whether the site was previously used for agriculture. If the site was used for agricultural or related activities, residual pesticides may be present in onsite soil. DTSC recommends investigation and mitigation, as necessary, to address potential impact to human health and environment from residual pesticides.
4. Discuss potential presence of hazardous chemicals related to building materials, such as lead-based paints, mercury, asbestos containing materials, and polychlorinated biphenyl caulking materials. If these chemicals are identified, removal and disposal should be conducted in accordance with applicable local, state and federal regulations and policies.
5. If there are any recognized environmental conditions in the project area, then proper investigation, sampling and remedial actions overseen by the appropriate regulatory agencies should be conducted prior to the new development or any construction. DTSC recommends environmental review under the DTSC schools program oversight prior to construction to ensure the school is safe for students and staff.
6. Discuss whether project may require soil excavation or backfill in certain areas. If soil is contaminated, it must be properly characterized and disposed of. If the project proposes to import soil to backfill the areas excavated, DTSC recommends sampling be conducted in accordance with DTSC's Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material (https://dtsc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2018/09/SMP_FS_Cleanfill-Schools.pdf)
7. Discuss procedures to be taken if the soil and/or groundwater contamination is suspected during construction/demolition in the project area.

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If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Johnson P. Abraham, Project Manager, at (714) 484-5380 or Johnson.Abraham@dtsc.ca.gov or me at (714) 484-5368 or Shahir.Haddad@dtsc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Shahir Haddad, P.E.
Supervising Engineer
Brownfields Restoration and School Evaluation Branch
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program

mv/ja/sh

cc: (via e-mail)

Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 3044
Sacramento, California 95812-3044
State.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov

Mr. Dave Kereazis
Office of Planning & Environmental Analysis
Department of Toxic Substances Control – Sacramento Office
Dave.Kereazis@dtsc.ca.gov

Mr. Robert Romero
Hazardous Substances Engineer
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program - Cypress Office
Robert.Romero@dtsc.ca.gov

Mr. Johnson Abraham
Project Manager
Brownfields Restoration and School Evaluation Branch – Cypress Office
Johnson.Abraham@dtsc.ca.gov

Brownfields Restoration and School Evaluation Branch Reading File – Cypress