

Los Angeles Unified School District

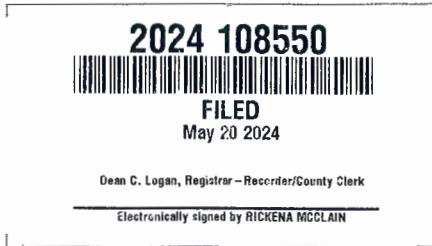
Office of Environmental Health and Safety

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



THIS NOTICE WAS POSTED
ON May 20 2024
UNTIL June 19 2024
REGISTRAR - RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

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:

Porter Ranch Community School Phase 2 Classroom Addition

Project Location – Specific:

Porter Ranch Community School – 12450 Mason Avenue, Porter Ranch, CA 91326

Project Location – City:

Los Angeles

Project Location – County:

Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The proposed Project will install three 48-foot by 40-foot, one-story portable buildings to accommodate six classrooms at Porter Ranch Community School (Campus). The Project also includes the demolition of an existing grass area, concrete curb, and irrigation as well as the installation of new asphalt, solar reflective coating, fencing, tree wells, concrete seating, irrigation, and connections to existing utilities, as necessary. The Board of Education approved the Project's budget of \$2,898,919 on May 7, 2024.

Minor work will include improvements 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).

The Project will be implemented per all applicable State, federal, and local regulations, as well as all District Standards and Specifications; such as those provided in the updated Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects (SCs) as adopted by the Board of Education in December 2023.¹ LAUSD's SCs, design guidelines, and best management practices are designed to be

¹ LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report," <https://www.lausd.org/CEQA>, adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.

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.



incorporated into the Project design in order to avoid or limit potential adverse impacts associated with the District’s projects. The beneficiaries of this Project are the students, faculty, staff, families, school supporters, and the community at large who may request access to the facilities and grounds of the Campus pursuant to the Civic Center act (CA Ed. Code Sections 38130-38139).

Name of Public Agency Approving the Project:

Los Angeles Unified School District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

Los Angeles Unified School District

Exempt Status: (check one below)

- Ministerial [Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines Section 15268²];
- 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*
 - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15314 – Minor Additions to Schools*

Statutory Exemption:

Reasons why project is exempt:

Section 15301 Existing Facilities

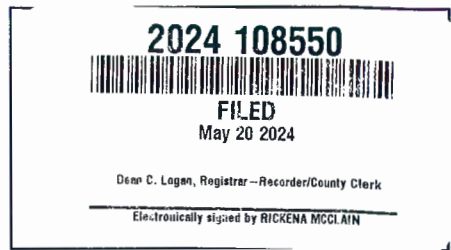
Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency’s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

The proposed Project will install three 48-foot by 40-foot, one-story portable buildings to accommodate six classrooms at Porter Ranch Community School (Campus). The Project also includes the demolition of an existing grass area, concrete curb, and irrigation as well as the installation of new asphalt, solar reflective coating, fencing, tree wells, concrete seating, irrigation, and connections to existing utilities, as necessary. 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.

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



The proposed Project will install three 48-foot by 40-foot, one-story portable buildings to accommodate six classrooms. The Project also includes the demolition of an existing grass area, concrete curb, and irrigation as well as the installation of new asphalt, solar reflective coating, fencing, tree wells, concrete seating, irrigation, and connections to existing utilities, as necessary. The proposed 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 proposed Project will install three 48-foot by 40-foot, one-story portable buildings to accommodate six classrooms 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 proposed Project will install three 48-foot by 40-foot, one-story portable buildings to accommodate six classrooms. These components of the Project qualify as the construction or replacement of minor structures accessory to existing school facilities. These structures are minor accessories to the existing Campus. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15311.

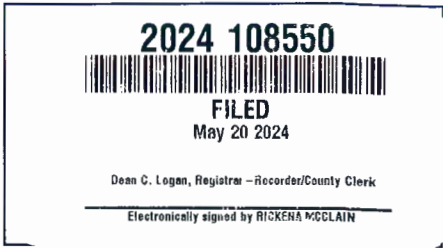
Section 15314 – Minor Additions to Schools

Class 14 consists of minor additions to existing schools within existing school grounds where the addition does not increase original student capacity by more than 25% or ten classrooms, whichever is less. The addition of portable classrooms is included in this exemption.

The proposed Project will install three 48-foot by 40-foot, one-story portable buildings to accommodate six classrooms. Porter Ranch is one of Los Angeles’ fastest growing neighborhoods due to the construction of new residential subdivisions. Porter Ranch Community School serves grades K-8 students and reached its maximum capacity for the 2023-2024 school year and was not able to enroll 67 students due to capacity limitations. Total enrollment at the school is projected to increase to 1,434 students by the 2024-2025 school year, based on enrollment trends and additional housing development. The proposed Project will increase the total classroom count from 57 to 63, enabling the School to serve additional neighborhood students. The Project will not increase original student capacity by more than 25% or add ten classrooms. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15314.

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.



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

The Project site is a fully-developed Campus within an urbanized area of Los Angeles in the neighborhood of Porter Ranch surrounded by residential communities on all sides. The site is not designated as a biologically sensitive location. The nearest significant ecological area (SEA) is the Santa Susana Mountains/Simi Hills SEA located approximately 2,500 feet west of the Project site.³ A 0.37-acre portion of the Campus is in the Coastal California gnatcatcher habitat and located approximately 500 feet from the Project's area of work.^{4,5} 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 Project does not include removal of trees. Should the Project be altered to include the removal of trees, LAUSD's Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) must be notified immediately. 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.⁶ 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 standard condition (SC) of approval SC-BIO-3.

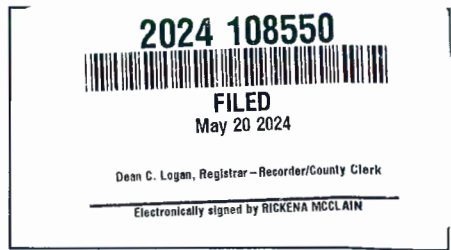
The Project will include minor ground-disturbing activities. These activities are not considered unusual circumstances for the classes of projects under which an exemption is claimed. Nevertheless, consideration must be given to the management of pavement removal and excavated soils associated with earthwork activities for the Project. As the Project involves the removal of pavement, soil sampling and testing for characterization is required prior to demolition and removal of the paving materials. If construction or earthmoving activities require import or export of soils

³ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, https://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public/Viewer.html, accessed May 2024.

⁴ United States Fish and Wildlife Service Critical Habitat Portal, <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/table/critical-habitat.html> accessed May 2024.

⁵ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public/Viewer.html, accessed May 2024.

⁶ LAUSD OEHS, "Tree Trimming and Removal Procedure," <https://www.lausd.org/ceqa>



and 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 applicable environmental agency rules and requirements.⁷ 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.⁸ Lastly, any construction and demolition waste shall be recycled to the maximum extent feasible per SC-USS-1.⁹ 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 the Topanga Canyon State Scenic Highway, a 2.5-mile portion of State Route 27 (SR-27), which is located approximately 14.6 miles south of the Campus.¹⁰ 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 65962.5.¹¹ 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.*

Porter Ranch Community School opened in 2012 and does not meet the state of California's threshold for review as potential historic resources and requiring evaluations for historic eligibility. Therefore, the Project will not cause substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource.

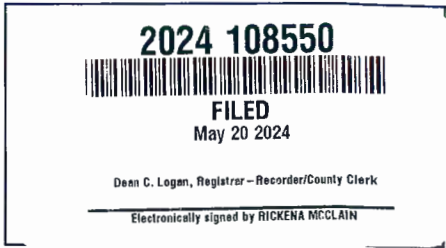
⁷ LAUSD OEHS, "Section 01 4524 Environmental Import/Export Materials Testing", http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t

⁸ LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Environmental Impact Report," <https://www.lausd.org/CEQA>, adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, http://gis.planning.lacounty.gov/GIS-NET3_Public/Viewer.html, May 2024.

¹¹ California Department of Toxic Substances, http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese_List.cfm, May 2024.



Prepared By:

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cp-bryan.fernandez@LAUSD.net

Signed by:

Date:

5/13/24

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

Attachment: Exhibit A – Site Plan

2024 108550

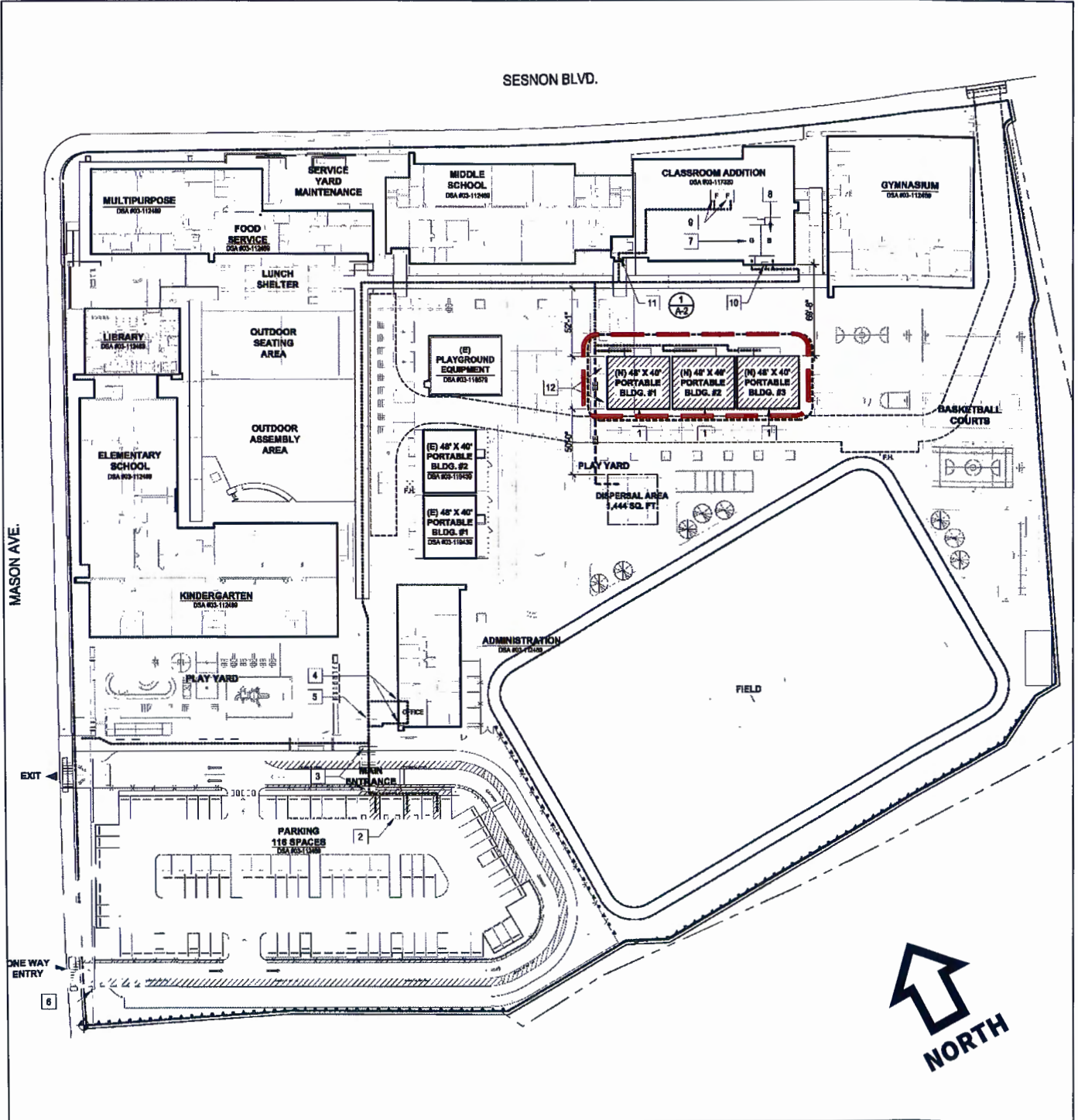


FILED
May 20 2024

Dean C. Logan, Registrar - Recorder/County Clerk

Electronically signed by RICKENA MCCLAIN

EXHIBIT A – SITE PLAN (not to scale)



PROJECT SITE