



August 3, 2023

112G-SBA-T42347.03

Mr. Douglas Sorum, Assistant Superintendent Business Services
Lompoc Unified School District
1301 North A Street
Lompoc, California 93436

Subject: California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Categorical Exemption for the
Clarence Ruth Elementary School Kindergarten Classroom Construction Project

Dear Mr. Sorum,

Please find as follows our findings that the proposed Clarence Ruth Elementary School Kindergarten Classroom Construction Project, located at the existing Clarence Ruth Elementary School campus (at 501 North W Street in Lompoc, California), is exempt from further environmental review based on a Class 14 exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In addition, attached is a completed Notice of Exemption form to be filed with the Santa Barbara County Clerk and Recorder's office.

Table 1 Project Summary

Project Title:	Clarence Ruth Elementary School Kindergarten Classrooms Construction Project
Project Applicant (Public Agency Approving Project):	Lompoc Unified School District
CEQA Exemption Recommendation:	Categorical Exemption
Location:	501 North W Street, Lompoc, CA 93436
Assessor Parcel Number (APN):	093-070-040
Site Size:	11 Acres
Site Access:	North W Street
General Plan Land Use Designation:	Community Facility (CF)
Zoning Designation:	Public Facility (PF)
Current Use of Project Site:	Public Elementary School
Proposed Use of Project Site:	Public Elementary School
Surrounding Land Uses:	North: Residential / Church South: Residential East: Residential West: Residential



Project Location and Environmental Setting:

The project site is located at 501 North W Street, in Lompoc, California. The 11-acre site is located on assessor parcel number (APN) 093-070-040¹. The project site is located within a developed residential neighborhood and is surrounded by residential development on four sides, as shown on Figure 1, Local Vicinity Map. The First Christian Church is located adjacent the northeast corner of the school property. The project site has a General Plan Land Use Designation of Community Facility (CF).

The project site is currently used as a public elementary school. Clarence Ruth Elementary School was initially constructed in 1960 and consists of nineteen (19) permanent and nineteen (19) portable classrooms. Vehicular access to the school is provided from North W Street.

Project Description:

The Lompoc Unified School District (District) wishes to undergo the construction of two (2) new kindergarten classrooms on the existing school campus. The proposed project includes the construction and operation of two (2) new permanent modular classrooms that comply with Title 5 requirements for Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and Kindergarten (K) programs. The proposed location for the new TK/K classrooms would be in the front of the school bordering North W Street as shown in Figure 2, Conceptual Site Plan. A new drop off and pick up area would be constructed within the existing school footprint along North W Street to accommodate both TK and K students and parents. The addition of the two permanent TK/K classrooms to the site will also assist in meeting the LUSD's adopted educational specification for elementary schools at the site as well as provide the necessary space to accommodate the anticipated increase in TK enrollment.

The two new classrooms would be 1,350 square feet each including storage, prep areas, and kindergarten restrooms as identified in Figure 3, Floor Plans.

CEQA Exemption Recommendation: Categorical Exemption, CEQA Guidelines Section 15314 – Existing Facilities:

CEQA Guidelines Section 15314, Minor Additions to Schools, defines a Class 14 Exemption as 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.

Reasons to support exemption findings:

The Project consists of the construction of two (2) new modular classrooms on the existing Clarence Ruth Elementary School Campus. The proposed project would not increase student capacity by more than 25% nor would it add more than ten (10) classrooms as identified in Table 2. Therefore, the proposed project would qualify for a Class 14 Exemption.

¹ Santa Barbara County. Assessor Parcel Viewer. Accessed August 2023, URL: <https://sbcassessor.com/Assessor/details.aspx?apn=087060007>

Table 2: Comparison of Existing and Proposed Clarence Ruth Configuration

	Existing Configuration	Proposed Configuration	Percent Increase
Permanent Classrooms	19	21	10.5%
Portable Classrooms	19	19	0.0%
Total Classrooms	38	40	5.3%
Student Capacity	475	529	11.4%
Permanent Square Footage	17,388	20,088	15.5%
Portable Square Footage	17,400	17,400	0.0%
Total Building Square Footage	34,788	37,488	7.8%
Total Site Area (Acres)	11	11	0.0%

Exceptions:

CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, Exceptions, details six exceptions to the exemptions. Each of the six exceptions are discussed below together with the reasons why they are not applicable to this project.

- a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located—a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.**

The Clarence Ruth Elementary School Kindergarten Classroom Construction Project would occur on the existing campus. The proposed project qualifies for a Class 14 exemption and therefore this criterion is not applicable to this project.

- b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.**

Cumulative impacts are defined in the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 as two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.

The school was originally built in 1960. A single portable classroom was constructed in 2003 and three (3) portable classrooms were constructed in 2005. The proposed project includes the construction and operation of two (2) new modular classrooms on the existing Clarence Ruth Elementary School campus. There are no known future plans to increase student capacity or add additional classrooms in the future beyond the proposed project. Therefore, with implementation of the proposed project a total of six new classrooms (four portable and two permanent) would be added to the campus over a 20-year timespan, which combined is less than the 10 classrooms threshold allowed under a Class 14 Exemption. Therefore, no cumulative impacts are anticipated.

c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

There is no evidence to indicate that the proposed project would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. The proposed project includes the construction and operation of two (2) new modular classrooms on the existing Clarence Ruth Elementary School campus. The campus is located within a developed residential neighborhood and would continue to be used as a public school with implementation of the proposed project. Access to the site is currently from North W Street. The proposed project would include a new turnout along North W Street, north of the existing parking lot, but no increase in parking capacity or expansion of the existing school footprint is proposed. The proposed project would be implemented in compliance with all relevant regulations and District specifications, including construction best management practices. Therefore, no impacts due to unusual circumstances are anticipated.

d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which 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. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.

The proposed project includes the construction and operation of two (2) new modular classrooms on the existing Clarence Ruth Elementary School campus. The closest officially designated State Scenic Highway, Cabrillo Highway (CA State HWY 1), terminates approximately 2.6 miles southeast of the project site, based on a review of the California State Scenic Highway System Map.² Therefore, no adverse impacts to scenic resources within a designated state scenic highway would result.

e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

² California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). California State Scenic Highway System Map. Accessed August 2023, URL: <https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aaca>



The project site address was searched on the Envirostor database compiled and updated by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and GeoTracker databases compiled and updated by the California State Water Resources Control Board. Envirostor is the DTSC's data management system for tracking cleanup, permitting, enforcement, and investigation efforts at hazardous waste facilities and sites with known contamination or sites where there may be reason to investigate further.³ GeoTracker contains records for sites that required cleanup, such as Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Sites, Department of Defense Sites, and Cleanup Program Sites. GeoTracker also contains records for various unregulated projects as well as permitted facilities including: Irrigated Lands, Oil and Gas production, operating Permitted USTs, and Land Disposal Sites.⁴ No previous or existing hazardous waste sites were located on or in the vicinity of the project site. No further environmental assessment of the site appears to be warranted at this time. Therefore, no hazardous waste impacts are anticipated.

f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Clarence Ruth Elementary School is 63 years old. The campus was initially constructed in 1960 and underwent a renovation in 2004. The school consists of nineteen (19) permanent and nineteen (19) portable classrooms on a 11-acre lot. There is no demolition of structures proposed as part of the project. Therefore, no adverse impacts to known historic resources are anticipated.

The Clarence Ruth Elementary School Kindergarten Classroom Construction Project ("project") described above is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of CEQA of 1970, as defined in the State CEQA Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

Please contact Mr. Dave Romero (805) 797-0003 or dave.romero@tetrattech.com if you have any questions regarding this analysis or need additional information.

Sincerely,

TETRA TECH

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Dave Romero'.

Dave Romero
Project Manager

³ Envirostor Database was accessed in August 2023:
<https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/map/?myaddress=501+North+W+Street%2C+Lompoc%2C+ca>

⁴ GeoTracker Database was accessed in August 2023:
<https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/map/?CMD=runreport&myaddress=501+North+W+Street%2C+lompoc+ca>

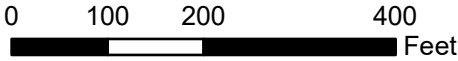
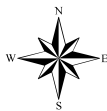


Attachments: Figure 1 – Local Vicinity Map
Figure 2 – Conceptual Site Plan
Figure 3 – Floor Plans



Legend

- Project Work Area
- Project Site



Sources: ESRI, Tetra Tech

Lompoc Unified School District

Local Vicinity Map

Clarence Ruth Elementary School
Kindergarten Classrooms Construction Project



5383 Hollister Avenue
Suite 130
Santa Barbara, CA 93111

TC NO. 42347	DATE 07/08/2022	DRAWN BY BURSON	MAP NO. 10980	FIGURE 1
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