



Yana Garcia
Secretary for
Environmental Protection



Department of Toxic Substances Control

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Gavin Newsom
Governor

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

March 25, 2026

Heidi Heltne
Project Manager
Fresno Unified School District
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Fresno, CA 93722
heidi.heltne@fresnounified.org

RE: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE CALWA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RECONSTRUCTION DATED MARCH 20, 2026, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER [2026030919](#)

Dear Heidi Heltne,

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) reviewed the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Calwa Elementary School Reconstruction (Project). The Fresno Unified School District (District) proposes implementing the Project using Measure H bond funds. The Project would demolish and reconstruct the entire Calwa Elementary School campus in three phases to replace facilities that no longer meet current building, accessibility, and educational standards. The Project would reconstruct the campus at the same educational capacity with modern facilities and site improvements. The new campus would include, approximately:

- A 47,300 square-foot, two-story classroom/administration/library building;
- A 9,500 square-foot MPR building (totaling 64,800 square feet of new building area);
- A 58-stall parking lot and parent drop-off loop
- A staff parking lot (33 stalls) on the west side of the campus;
- Bus drop-off lane and loading area;

- New blacktop, playgrounds, backstop, and turf playfields in the campus interior and southern portion.

DTSC recommends and requests consideration of the following comments:

1. If the District plans to use California Department of Education (CDE) State funds for the Project, then the District shall comply with the requirements of Education Code (EDC), [§17210](#), [§17213.1](#), and [§17213.2](#), unless otherwise specifically exempted under [§17268](#). If the District is not using CDE State funds for the Project, or is otherwise specifically exempt under [§17268](#), DTSC recommends the District continue to investigate, clean up the Site under the oversight of Fresno County and in concurrence with all applicable DTSC guidance documents, if necessary. For more information on the CDE State funding, please visit the [Office of Public-School Construction](#) webpage. A local education agency may also voluntarily request the CDE site/plan approval for locally funded site acquisitions and new construction projects. In these cases, CDE will require DTSC to review and approve prior to its final approval, except when exempt under section 17268.
2. DTSC recommends all imported soil/fill material be tested to ensure all COCs meet screening levels as outlined in [DTSC's Preliminary Endangerment Assessment Guidance Manual](#). Furthermore, DTSC advises referencing the [DTSC Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material Fact Sheet](#) if importing fill is necessary. To minimize the possibility of introducing contaminated soil/fill material there should be documentation of the origins of the soil/fill material and, if applicable, sampling be conducted to ensure that the imported soil/fill material are suitable for the intended land use. The soil sampling should include analysis based on the source of the soil/fill and knowledge of prior land use.

DTSC would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the NOP of a DEIR for the Calwa Elementary School Reconstruction. Thank you for your assistance in protecting California's people and environment from the harmful effects of toxic substances. If you have any questions or would like clarification on DTSC's comments, please respond to this letter or via our [CEQA Review email](#) for additional guidance.

Heidi Heltne
March 25, 2026
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Sincerely,

Tamara Purvis

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cc: (via email)

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