

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk

County of: Orange

801 N. Rose Street

Santa Ana, CA 92701

From: (Public Agency): Anaheim Union High School District
501 N. Crescent Way
Anaheim, CA 92801

(Address)

Project Title: Katella High School Track & Field Project

Project Applicant: Anaheim Union High School District

Project Location - Specific:

Katella High School - 2200 E Wagner Ave, Anaheim, CA 92806

Project Location - City: Anaheim

Project Location - County: Orange

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Anaheim Union High School District (District) proposes recreational and athletic improvements to Katella High School by enhancing the existing track and field consisting of a new turf and striping, and installing new field lighting and bleachers (Proposed Project). The upgraded track and field area will offer enhanced exterior learning opportunities and increased safety for sports and student assemblies.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Anaheim Union High School District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Anaheim Union High School District

Exempt Status: (check one):

☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);

☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));

☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));

☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: \$15301, \$15302, \$15311[a], \$15314

☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

None of the exceptions specified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply.
See Attachment A.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Patricia Neely

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 714 999 3505

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.

2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Nancy C. Nien, Ph.D.

Date: 6/12/2026

Title: Asst. Superintendent, Business

■ Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

FILED

JUN 15 2026

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: LT DEPUTY

Resolution No. 2025/26-F-09

**Katella High School Track & Field Project
Notice of Exemption (NOE)**

The Anaheim Union High School District (District), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), proposes recreational and athletic upgrades to Katella High School (HS) by enhancing the existing track and field consisting of a new turf and striping, and installing new field lighting and bleachers (Proposed Project). The upgraded track and field area will offer enhanced exterior learning opportunities and increased safety for sports and student assemblies.

Project Location

Katella High School (HS) is located at 2200 E Wagner Ave, Anaheim, CA 92806. The school is located on a 39-acre property comprising 13 permanent buildings, a swimming pool, hardcourts, playfields, tennis courts, and a parking lot. The football/soccer practice field is located on the southern portion of campus.

Description of Project

The Proposed Project will consist of the following upgrades:

- Modular restrooms
- Provide utility infrastructure for future sound system
- Extend the existing campus PA system to the track and field
- Replace the existing natural turf football/soccer field with a new synthetic field
- Replace the existing decomposed granite (DG) track with a new all-weather track, with a new stormwater management system
- Add field lighting and score board
- Install new path of travel improvements, concrete paving, sound walls, and fencing
- New bleachers with approximately 900 seats

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt:

The proposed activity is a project subject to CEQA. However, it is exempt from further environmental analysis under Class 1, *Existing Facilities* (CEQA Guidelines §15301), Class 2, *Replacement or Reconstruction* (CEQA Guidelines §15302), Class 11 *Accessory Structures* (CEQA Guidelines §15311) and Class 14 *Minor Additions to Schools* (CEQA Guidelines §15314).

- Class 1 categorical exemption 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.
- Class 2 consists of the replacement or reconstruction of 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 of the structure replaced.
- Class 11 consists of construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to existing commercial, industrial, or institutional facilities.
- 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 Proposed Project will result in the improvement of the existing practice field area at the existing high school. The improvements will not involve an increase in student capacity, and will include repairs, maintenance, reconstruction, and minor additions to an existing school campus. The Proposed Project will not result in significant environmental impacts and is exempt from further review under the conditions in Article 19.

Therefore, the application of Class 1, Class 2, Class 11, and Class 14 categorical exemptions is appropriate for the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project does not have the potential to trigger any of the exceptions identified in CEQA Guidelines §15300.2. Consequently, as documented below, the Proposed Project is exempt from further CEQA review.

- (a) **Location.** The improvements will occur entirely within the existing Katella HS campus, which is located within an urbanized community. The existing conditions on and around Katella HS are disturbed, paved ground and are not considered environmentally sensitive. Ground disturbance would occur during construction but will be limited to the existing school property on previously disturbed surfaces. The Proposed Project will not impact environmentally sensitive areas or an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern. This exception does not apply to the Proposed Project.
- (b) **Cumulative Impact.** Once the Proposed Project has been approved by the District's Board of Education, project construction activities would occur over a 12-month period, approximately between the 4th Quarter of 2026 and the 4th Quarter of 2027. The majority of impacts associated with the Proposed Project will be temporary (the construction timeframe) and are limited to the immediate vicinity of Katella HS. In addition, the area around the Project site is completely built-out, and no known projects have been identified in the area that would cause potential impacts. As such, no other cumulatively considerable projects have been identified that could incrementally contribute to the impacts associated with the Proposed Project. This exception does not apply to the Proposed Project.
- (c) **Significant Effect.** The activities associated with the upgrading of the existing track and field are not considered an unusual circumstance as campus updates are not unusual for school sites. All upgrades associated with the Proposed Project would be installed on or within the existing developed site. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not appear visually incompatible with existing equipment and accessories on the Project site. Normal operations will be similar and consistent with current uses within the Project boundary.

The Proposed Project is located within a disturbed, urbanized environment in Anaheim. The campus vegetation is limited to ornamental landscaping, and it is anticipated that no candidate, sensitive, or special status species are anticipated to exist on or around the school. The majority of work associated with the Proposed Project would occur on the existing track and field area and would result in minor ground disturbing activities. Thus, the Proposed Project will not involve the removal of any native vegetation or scenic trees, nor would it impact any scenic vistas within the immediate area.

Therefore, no reasonable possibility exists that the Proposed Project would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Therefore, this exception does not apply to this Project. Please refer to the Initial Study Checklist (IS Checklist) for further details on potential impacts.

- (d) **Scenic Highways.** The City's Circulation Element identifies designated scenic highways and expressways along segments of State Route 91 and Santa Ana Canyon Road, located approximately 3.5 miles east of the site (City 2004). No rock outcroppings, historic buildings,

or trees would be impacted by the Proposed Project. The Project site is not within the viewshed of any scenic highway or expressway due to intervening development, distance and topography. Therefore, no impact to scenic highways would occur, and this exception does not apply to the Project.

- (e) **Hazardous Waste Sites.** The Proposed Project will not include any significant structural renovations that would result in the accidental release of hazardous materials to the environment. According to the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database, Katella HS was identified in 2003 as a potentially contaminated site due to historical agricultural use dating back to at least 1947, continuing through the early 1960s (DTSC 2003). Potential contaminants of concern included Methoxychlor, Trifluralin, hexachlorobenzene, arsenic, lead, mercury, organochlorine pesticides, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Katella HS was initially constructed between 1953 and 1968, during which time the surrounding area was predominantly residential. Adjacent properties consist of single- and multi-family dwellings, with two other school facilities located to the east. Past land uses contributing to potential contamination included agricultural row crops, residential development, and the high school itself.

In 2003, DTSC approved a Preliminary Endangerment Assessment (PEA) and concluded that neither an actual nor potential release of hazardous materials, nor naturally occurring hazardous substances, posed a threat to human health or the environment under any land use scenario. As a result, DTSC determined that no further environmental investigation or cleanup was required and issued a No Further Action determination.

The Proposed Project would involve improvements to the existing Katella HS track and field, including new turf, track replacement, lighting, bleachers, restrooms, and utility upgrades. Given DTSC's determination that there are no human health or environment threats under any land use scenario, impacts would be less than significant. This exception does not apply to the Project.

- (f) **Historical Resources.** On January 21st, 2026, a Cultural Resources Record Search Results memo (Cultural Memo) was prepared by Chambers Group in support of the Proposed Project (see Appendix B of the IS Checklist). As discussed in the Cultural Memo, Chambers Group requested a records search from the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at Cal State Fullerton, on November 26, 2025. A records search of the Project site and surrounding 0.5-mile radius was requested to provide context and additional information regarding types and extent of resources recorded within the study area. The SCCIC returned the records search results on January 16, 2026, providing information on all documented cultural resources and previous archaeological investigations within the Project site and study area. Based on the records search conducted by the SCCIC, one previously recorded cultural resource is recorded within the study area. No resources are mapped within the Project site. Additionally, seven cultural resource studies have previously been completed within the study area. Of these seven reports, none are mapped within the Project site.

In addition, Chambers Group requested a Sacred Lands File (SLF) records search from the NAHC on November 26, 2025. The purpose of the request is to determine if any sacred lands or other resources important to local tribal groups have been recorded within the Project site or adjacent areas. The results of the SLF search, provided by the NAHC on December 8, 2025,

were negative, and included a list of 26 tribal government contacts representing 12 tribes was provided to seek additional information.

Accordingly, the Project site does not contain any known historical resources as defined by CEQA Guidelines §15064.5, and no such resources are anticipated to be present based on the results of the records searches and prior studies. Because no historical resources would be adversely affected, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, and no impact would occur.

Katella HS is located on 39-acre property comprising 13 permanent buildings, a swimming pool, hardcourts, playfields, tennis courts, and a parking lot. Katella HS was established in 1966; however, modifications and additional buildings were added to the site. The HS has undergone multiple modernizations, including in 2003 and 2016. These changes reflect typical ongoing maintenance and reinvestment in an active school campus and have resulted in a campus that has been substantially altered from its original condition; therefore, the campus does not retain sufficient integrity to be considered a historic resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Given the multiple school modernizations, and that ground disturbance of any native soils or soils not previously disturbed would not occur as part of Project Implementation, impacts to historical and archaeological resources would be less than significant, and this exception does not apply to the Project.

References:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

2026 Scenic Highway Mapper. Available at:
<https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46c8e8057116f1aaca>

City of Anaheim (City)

2004 General Plan. Available at: <https://www.anaheim.net/712/General-Plan>

California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)

2003 Envirostor. Available at:
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report.asp?global_id=30820018

CEQAnet

2003 Katella High School Expansion Plan. Available at:
<https://ceqanet.lci.ca.gov/2003071071/2>.

2016 Katella High School DROPS – Site Improvement Project. Available at:
<https://ceqanet.lci.ca.gov/2016038371>.