

# Los Angeles Unified School District

## Office of Environmental Health and Safety

ANDRÉS E. CHAIT  
Superintendent of Schools

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### NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

THIS NOTICE WAS POSTED

ON September 08 2026

UNTIL October 08 2026

REGISTRAR – RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

2026 191943



FILED  
Sep 08 2026

Dean C. Logan Registrar – Recorder/County Clerk

Electronically signed by TODD TRAN

**To:** County Clerk and Registrar-Recorder  
County of Los Angeles  
12400 Imperial Highway  
Norwalk, CA 90650

**From:** LAUSD OEHS  
333 South Beaudry Avenue  
21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

#### Project Title:

Lawrence Middle School Plumbing Project

#### Project Location – Specific:

The Lawrence Middle School Plumbing Project (Project) will occur on the 19.52-acre Lawrence Middle School campus (Lawrence MS or Campus). The Campus is located at 10100 Variel Avenue in the neighborhood of Chatsworth in the City of Los Angeles. The Campus is situated in an urban area and is surrounded by single-family residential homes.

#### Project Location – City:

Los Angeles

#### Project Location – County:

Los Angeles

#### Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Project will replace deteriorated underground sanitary sewer system, domestic water, gas, fire protection, irrigation water, and storm drain lines serving the entire Campus. The Project includes abandoning all existing underground piping, providing new underground water and sewer piping, and testing/commissioning of the entire system. Replacement of some utility lines, such as the gravity storm drain and sewer lines, will impact existing trees and may require their removal. The budget for the Project is \$6,995,662.

The Project will be implemented per all applicable local and State regulations, as well as all District Standards and Specifications; such as those provided in LAUSD's Program Environmental Impact Report for the School Upgrade Program (Program EIR) as adopted by the Board of Education in December 2023.<sup>1</sup> LAUSD's Standard Conditions of Approval (SCs), design guidelines, and best management practices are designed to be incorporated into the Project design in order to avoid or limit potential adverse impacts associated with the District's Projects. The primary purpose of the Project is to upgrade the Campus's water infrastructure. The beneficiaries of the Project include the Lawrence MS

<sup>1</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects," Adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.

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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 Section 38130-38139).

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**Name of Public Agency Approving the Project:**

Los Angeles Unified School District

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**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:**

Los Angeles Unified School District

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**Exempt Status: (check one below)**

- ☐ Ministerial [Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines Section 15268<sup>2</sup>]:
- ☐ 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*
- ☐ Statutory Exemption:

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**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.

Implementation of the proposed Project would replace deteriorated underground piping systems with a new in-kind system throughout the Campus. The Project components would not present a new or expanded use of the Project site. Therefore, the Project constitutes minor alterations to an existing LAUSD campus that results in no expansion of use and meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

Section 15302 Replacement or Reconstruction

Class 2 consists of 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 as the structure replaced.

The installation of the new water and sewer piping will replace the existing system and replace fire sprinkler, gas, and irrigation lines. The Project would not result in an increase or alteration of the current use, function, or capacity of the existing Campus. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15302.

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 described below.

1. *The project would occur in certain specified sensitive environments or locations:*

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<sup>2</sup> CEQA Guidelines can be found at California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 – Section 15387.



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This exception only applies to Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11; therefore it is not applicable for the purposes of this Notice of Exemption.

2. *Cumulative impacts would be considerable because successive projects of the same type would occur at the same place over time;*

Currently, there are no other successive projects of the same type planned at the Campus during the same construction period. Additionally, this Project would not increase the student enrollment capacity of the Campus. Therefore, no cumulative impacts will result from the Project and successive projects of the same type occurring at the same place over time.

3. *There is a reasonable possibility that the activity would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstance;*

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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

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 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.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, as set forth in SC-CUL-6, SC-CUL-7, SC-CUL-10, and SC-GEO-2, 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.<sup>6</sup> Lastly, any construction and demolition waste shall be recycled to the maximum extent feasible per SC-USS-1.<sup>7</sup> 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 scenic highway;*

<sup>3</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "Tree Trimming and Removal Procedure," <https://www.lausd.org/ceqa>

<sup>4</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report," <https://www.lausd.org/CEQA>, Adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.

<sup>5</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "Section 01 4524 Environmental Import/Export Materials Testing", [http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file\\_id=219798234&show\\_all\\_versions\\_p=t](http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t)

<sup>6</sup> LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report," <https://www.lausd.org/CEQA>, Adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*



The closest designated scenic highway to the Project is the State Route 27, located approximately 11.75 miles south of Lawrence MS.<sup>8</sup> This is a sufficient distance from this resource to be outside of the view shed, so the Project will not degrade the characteristics that contribute to its scenic eligibility. Therefore, the Project would 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 Campus associated with the Project is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the Project will not be expected to result in 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.*

Lawrence MS is over 45 years old, meeting LAUSD's threshold for review as a potential historic resource and requiring evaluation for historic eligibility. LAUSD's Historic Preservation Specialist has determined that Lawrence MS is ineligible for federal, State, or local listing under any of the applicable criteria and is therefore not considered a historical resource pursuant to CEQA.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, the Project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Prepared By:

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Signed by:

Date:

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

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic\\_highways/index.htm](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic_highways/index.htm). August 2026.

<sup>9</sup> California Department of Toxic Substances Control. DTSC Databases. Available at: <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/database/index.cfm>. Accessed August 2026.

<sup>10</sup> LAUSD. 2020. Historic Resources Inventory. Los Angeles, CA, last accessed August 2026.

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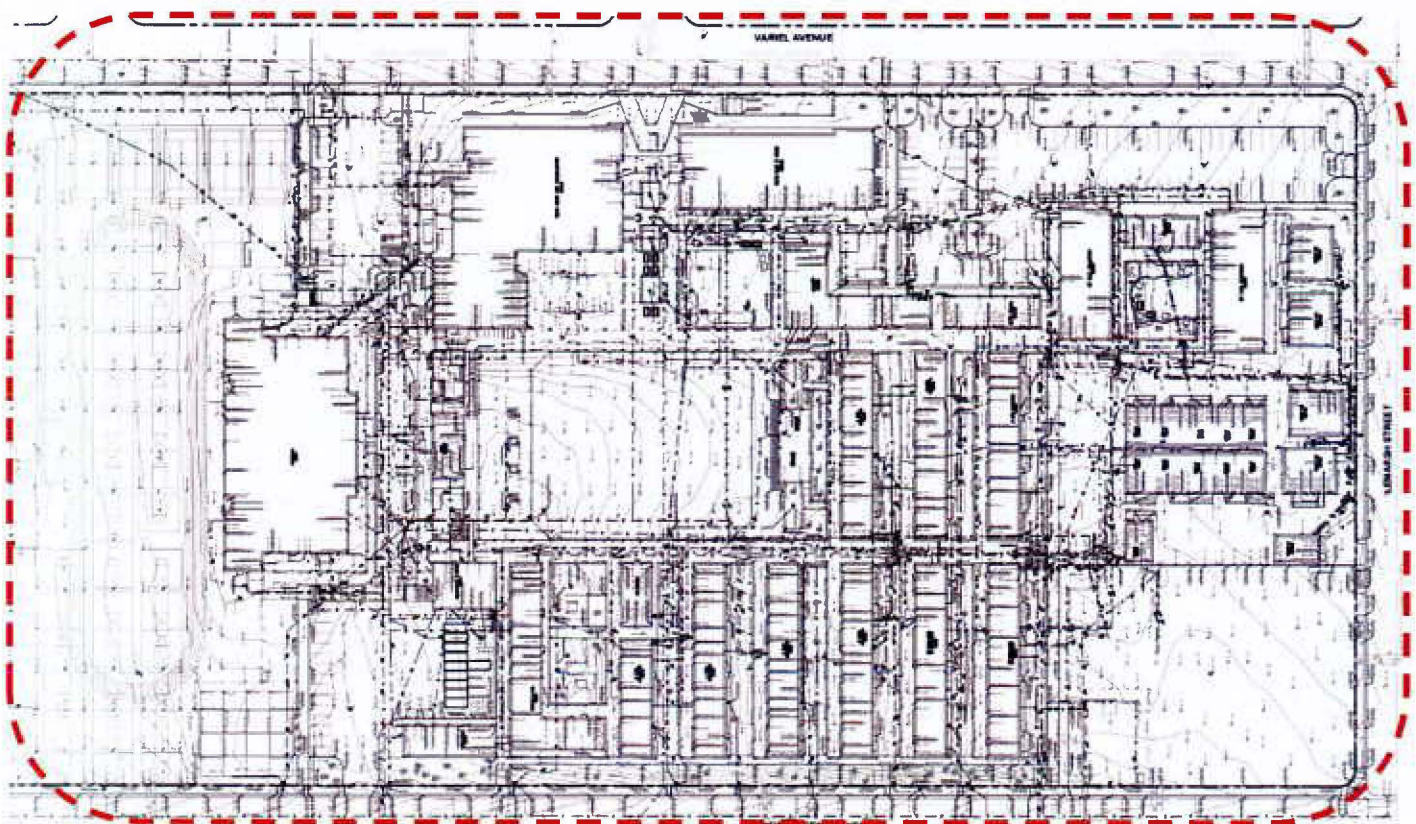


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## EXHIBIT A – Ernest Lawrence Middle School Site Plan (not to scale)



 PROJECT SITE