Los Angeles Unified School District

Office of Environmental Health and Safety

ANDRES E. CHAIT
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 October 27 2026
UNTIL November 30 2026
REGISTRAR – RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

2026 227331
FILED
Oct 27 2026
Dean C. Logan, Registrar – Recorder/County Clerk
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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:
Madison Middle School Classroom Replacement Project

Project Location – Specific:
The Madison Middle School Classroom Replacement Project (Project) will be located on the 19.3-acre Madison Middle School (Madison MS) campus. The Madison MS campus (Campus) is located at 13000 Hart Street in the North Hollywood neighborhood of the City of Los Angeles. It is bound by Hart Street to the north, Van Noord Avenue to the east, Hartland Street to the south, and Ethel Avenue to the west. The Campus is located in an urbanized community primarily consisting of residential and commercial uses.

Project Location – City:
Los Angeles

Project Location – County:
Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:
Relocatable classroom replacement projects will reduce Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD or District) reliance on relocatable buildings, restore play space, increase green schoolyards, eliminate health and safety concerns, and/or reduce Maintenance and Operations costs. Madison MS was prioritized due to the site wide reliance on relocatable classroom buildings.

The Project will remove aging relocatable buildings at Madison MS, which includes 17 relocatable buildings, 14 of which are not certified by the Division of State Architect (DSA), containing 28 classrooms and support spaces. To replace them, the Project will construct a new one-story permanent classroom building containing 9 classrooms and support and administrative spaces. Site improvements include a new outdoor student gathering courtyard; new parking; utility upgrades; new playground areas; reconfiguration of physical education courts; landscaping; hardscaping; fencing and gates; security enhancements; accessibility upgrades; exterior painting of existing buildings and structures; and interim

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facilities necessary to support school programs during construction (Figure 1). The Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education approved the Project's budget of $60,750,961 on March 12, 2024.

The Project will be implemented pursuant to all applicable State, federal, and local regulations, and all applicable LAUSD specifications, standards, and/or guidelines, including those in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and 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 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 Madison MS 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 15268[2]]:
- ☐ 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 or Conversion of Small 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 Project will remove aging relocatable buildings at Madison MS, which includes 17 relocatable buildings, containing 28 classrooms and support spaces. To replace them, the Project will construct a new one-story permanent classroom building containing 9 classrooms and support and administrative spaces. Site improvements include a new outdoor student gathering courtyard; new parking; utility upgrades; new playground areas; reconfiguration of physical education courts;

[1] LAUSD OEHS, "Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects," Adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.
[2] CEQA Guidelines can be found at California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 - Section 15387.

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landscaping; hardscaping; fencing and gates; security enhancements; accessibility upgrades; exterior painting of existing buildings and structures; and interim facilities necessary to support school programs during construction. The Project would constitute operation, repair, maintenance, and minor alteration of existing public structures involving no expansion of the facilities' use. Therefore, the Project constitutes minor alterations to an existing school site that result in no expansion of use and meets 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.

As previously noted, the Project will remove aging relocatable buildings at Madison MS, which includes 17 relocatable buildings, containing 28 classrooms and support spaces. To replace them, the Project will construct a new one-story permanent classroom building containing 9 classrooms and support and administrative spaces. Site improvements include a new outdoor student gathering courtyard; new parking; utility upgrades; new playground areas; reconfiguration of physical education courts; landscaping; hardscaping; fencing and gates; security enhancements; accessibility upgrades; exterior painting of existing buildings and structures; and interim facilities necessary to support school programs during construction. The Project will not result in an increase or alteration of the current use, function, or capacity of the existing Campus. Therefore, the Project meets 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 Project consists of site improvements include a new outdoor student gathering courtyard; new parking; utility upgrades; new playground areas; reconfiguration of physical education courts; landscaping; hardscaping; fencing and gates; security enhancements; accessibility upgrades; exterior painting of existing buildings and structures; and interim facilities necessary to support school programs during construction. These improvements constitute operation, repair, maintenance and minor alteration of an existing campus involving no expansion in enrollment or of the facilities' use. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15303.

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 Project entails the removal of 17 existing relocatable buildings containing 28 classrooms and the construction of a new one-story permanent classroom building containing a total of 9 classrooms and support and administrative spaces on an existing campus. The Project will not increase the original student capacity by more than 25% or 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 they would not violate any of the exceptions, as described below.

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

The Project site is a fully developed Campus within an urbanized community.[3] The Project site is not designated as a biologically sensitive location. The nearest significant ecological area to the Project site is the Tujunga Valley/Hansen Dam located 3.6 miles northeast of Madison MS and the nearest critical habitat is for the Southwestern willow flycatcher, located approximately 4.8 miles northeast of the Campus.[4,5] As such, the Project will not impact sensitive environments or locations.

2. *Cumulative impacts would 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. 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.

3. *There is a reasonable possibility that the activity would 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 removal of trees is anticipated as part of the proposed scope of work. District procedure requires that all tree trimming and removals conducted on District property adhere to the procedures outlined in the District's Tree Trimming and Removal Procedure. District policy requires consultation with an arborist to determine if the trees are a protected native species. The removal of protected native trees or shrubs on District property requires a 4:1 replacement ratio. Additionally, written approval from the school principal will be required before any trees can be removed.[6] 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 of Approval (SC) SC-BIO-3 of the Subsequent Program Environmental Impact Report (SPEIR).[7,8]

The Project may 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.[9] Furthermore, as set forth in SC-CUL-6, SC-CUL-7, SC-CUL-9, SC-CUL-10, and SC-GEO-2 of the SPEIR, construction activities must be stopped immediately and OEHS notified upon discovery of subsurface

[3] City of Los Angeles Planning Department, *Zoning and Information Management System*, http://zimas.lacity.org/, accessed September 2026.
[4] United States Fish and Wildlife Service Critical Habitat Portal, https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/table/critical-habitat.html accessed September 2026.
[5] Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, https://arcgis.gis.lacounty.gov/arcgis/rest/services/DRP/Open_Data/MapServer/12, accessed September 2026.
[6] LAUSD OEHS, "Tree Trimming and Removal Procedure", *https://www.lausd.org/cega*.
[7] LAUSD OEHS, "Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects," Adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023
[8] LAUSD OEHS, "Tree Trimming and Removal Procedure", *https://www.lausd.org/cega*.
[9] LAUSD OEHS, "Section 01 4524 Environmental Import/Export Materials Testing", http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t

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features, such as buried resources (i.e., paleontological resources, archaeological resources), tanks or seepage pits, or stained/odoriferous soils.[10] Lastly, any construction and demolition waste shall be recycled to the maximum extent feasible per SC-USS-1 of the SPEIR.[11] 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 Madison MS is Topanga Canyon Boulevard (State Route 27), which is located approximately 13 miles southwest of the Campus.[12] In addition, the Project would not result in the removal of historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or other scenic resources. 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 Project site is not listed on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.[13] Therefore, the Project would 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 historical resource.*

The District has determined Madison MS as eligible for listing as a historic resource per Section 18955 of the California State Historical Building Code (CHBC). The Campus is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monuments under both Criteria 1 as a postwar school and under Criteria 3 as an excellent example of a midcentury LAUSD combination finger-plan and cluster-plan school campus designed according to postwar modern functionalist principles.[14] Character defining features include one-story finger-like wings; arrangement on an axis; easily identifiable indoor-outdoor spaces; Midcentury Modern buildings with low-scaled rectangular massing to increase an informal, domestic scale; and strong relationships between buildings and outdoor spaces.[15]

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3), a project that conforms to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (Secretary's Standards) is generally considered to be a project that will not cause a significant adverse impact. (14 CCR Section 15126.4(b)(1)). If a project meets the Secretary's Standards, the project can, in most cases, be considered categorically exempt from CEQA (14 CCR Section 15331) and qualify for a Notice of Exemption.

OEHS' Historic Preservation Specialist review found no potential for significant impacts on a historical resource for Madison MS. The Project conforms with the applicable guidelines; the Secretary's Standards and Los Angeles Unified School District Design Guidelines and Treatment Approaches for Historic Schools (LAUSD Design

[10] LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report," http://www.lausd.org/ceqa, Adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, https://arcgis.gis.lacounty.gov/arcgis/rest/services/DRP/Open_Data/MapServer/12, accessed September 2026.
[13] http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Cortese_List.cfm, accessed September 2026.
[14] Los Angeles Unified School District. (2026, September 17). *LAUSD Madison Middle School Classroom Replacement Project: Secretary of the Interior's Standards Review* (50% Construction Documents Submission).
[15] *Ibid.*

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Guidelines). Upon Project Completion, the primary historic features of the Campus core would remain intact and unobscured, including preserving all nineteen contributing buildings and their principal exterior character-defining features, including the historic canopied walkways and historic central courtyard. The new Classroom Building is located outside the Historic District and does not require alterations to the contributing buildings. The new Classroom Building does not replicate the Historic District's character defining features, but reinterprets them through contemporary materials, proportions, and detailing. Its canted parapets, an elliptical cut-out at the east parapet, and an askew shade structure extension at the southeast corner are contemporary design elements that differentiate the new construction from the Historic District's Midcentury Modern design. The new landscape and site improvements are primarily outside the Historic District and will not have an impact on the historic character.[16] As the work at the school shall conform with the Secretary's Standards and the LAUSD Design Guidelines, OEHS' Historic Preservation Specialist has determined that the Project meets the requirements specified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3) and will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Should the scope of the Project activities be altered from the components that are described above, standard District procedure requires that OEHS must be notified immediately to ensure that these activities are conducted in compliance with the Secretary's Standards and would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Prepared By:

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Signed by:

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

Date:

10/14/26

[16] *Ibid.*

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Figure 1. Proposed Site Plan

