

## IV.I.3 Public Schools

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the Draft EIR addresses education and the location of public schools and their student capacities. Where impacts are identified, mitigation measures are recommended to reduce such impacts to acceptable levels. Sources utilized in the preparation of this section include correspondence with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and consultation of the LAUSD website.

### 2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Herald Examiner project sites are located within the boundary of the LAUSD. **Table IV.I.3-1**, below, includes the types and numbers of schools in the LAUSD.

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**Table IV.I.3-1**  
**Los Angeles Unified School District's Number of School Types**

Year Round Schools: 206	Title I Schools: 618
Elementary Schools: 431	Elementary Magnet Centers: 44
Elementary Magnet Schools: 44	Primary Centers: 26
Span Schools: 10	Special Education Schools: 19
Middle Schools: 73	Middle School Magnet Centers: 43
Continuation Schools: 45	Senior High Schools: 53
Senior High School Magnet Schools: 4	Senior High Newcomer Schools: 1
Senior High School Magnet Centers: 51	Span Magnets: 7
Opportunity School & Programs: 5	Community Day Schools: 9
Senior High Academics: 2	

Source: <http://search.lausd.k12.ca.us/cgi-bin/fccgi.exe>

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Downtown also has a number of adult, technical and trade school facilities and ample opportunities to capitalize on its wide array of industries to expand the concept of education. These schools include the UCLA extension school at the World Trade Center, the Fashion Institute of Design Merchandising (FIDM) located in South Park, the Los Angeles Trade and Technical School located south of the project along Washington Boulevard and the Abraham Friedman Occupational Center located in South Park. The City of Los Angeles General Plan recommends that a number of magnet community college or trade school facilities related to Downtown industries be pursued.

The project consists of three separate addresses, all with the same LAUSD attendance boundaries. The attendance boundaries define which school's project residents enrolled in LAUSD schools will attend

within Local District 4. All three project components lie within the attendance boundaries of Local District 4 and the schools that would serve the project are listed below in **Table IV.I.3-2**.

**Table IV.I.3-2**  
**Attendance Boundaries for the Herald Examiner Project**

District	School Name	School Address
4	9 <sup>th</sup> Street Elementary	820 Towne Avenue, Los Angeles
4	Berendo Middle School	1157 South Berendo Street, Los Angeles
4	Belmont High School	1575 West 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street, Los Angeles

*Source: Los Angeles Unified School District, September 2005. (www.lausd.net: School Finder)*

**Table IV.I.3-3**, below, lists the schools within the attendance boundaries of the Herald Examiner project along with their Operating Capacities. Berendo Middle School is the only school that is currently operating over capacity.

**Table IV.I.3-3**  
**Herald Examiner Project Attendance Boundary School's Operating Capacity  
for the 2004–2005 School Year**

School	Current Capacity	Eligible Enrollment	Actual Enrollment	Current Seating over/(short)	Percent over/(short)	Currently Overcrowded
9 <sup>th</sup> Street Elementary	526	214	484	(42)	(7.98%)	No
Berendo Middle School	3,216	4,088	3,307	91	2.83%	Yes
Belmont High School	4,915	6,764	4,799	(116)	(2.36%)	No

*Source: Written correspondence with Rena Perez, Director, Master Planning and Demographics, September 23, 2005.*

As shown in **Table IV.I.3-3**, most of the schools serving the project are operating under capacity. One school, Berendo Middle School, is operating 2.83 percent over capacity.

As shown in **Table IV.I.3-4, Los Angeles Unified School District Growth by Local District 4 and the District Total from Fiscal Year 2000–2001 to Fiscal Year 2005–2005**, LAUSD experienced a slight increase in total enrollment from fiscal year 2000–2001 to fiscal year 2004–2005. During the 2004–2005 school year, Local District 4 experienced a slight decrease in total enrollment of 0.85 percent.

**Table IV.I.3-4  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
Growth by Local District 4 and the District Total from Fiscal Year 2000–2001 to Fiscal Year 2004–2005**

	2000–2001	2001–2002	2002–2003	2003–2004	2004–2005	Incremental Change	
						# of Students	Percent
LAUSD Total	722,727	736,675	746,831	746,610	742,090	19,363	2.68%
Local District 4	102,517	104,153	104,240	104,131	101,649	-868	-0.85%

Source: California Department of Education, September 2005.

For planning purposes, a school district's projected student generation rates are based on dwelling units. **Table IV.I.3-5**, below, provides the student generation rates used by LAUSD to estimate student generation by dwelling unit type and grade level.

**Table IV.I.3-5  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
Student Generation Ratio by Dwelling Type and Grade Level**

Dwelling Unit Type in Higher Income Area	# of Bedrooms	Student Generation Factors					# of units in Herald Examiner Project	Total Student Generation
		K–6	K–5	7–9 & 7–8	10–12	9–12		
Multiple Condominium	1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	364	0.0
Multiple Condominium	2	0.03	0.026	0.02	0.02	0.027	211	25.95

Source: LAUSD, School Facilities Fee Plan, March 2002.

The LAUSD has projected the future capacities of the schools that would serve the Herald Examiner project and are listed below in **Table IV.I.3-6, Herald Examiner Project Attendance Boundary School's Projected Operating Capacity for the 2009–2010 School Year.**

**Table IV.I.3-6  
Herald Examiner Project Attendance Boundary School's  
Projected Operating Capacity for the 2009–2010 School Year**

School	Projected Capacity	Projected Enrollment	Projected Seating over/(short)	Percent over/(short)	Overcrowding Projected
9 <sup>th</sup> Street Elementary	438	327	(111)	(25.3%)	No
Berendo Middle School	2,184	3,358	1,174	53.8%	Yes
Belmont High School	3,042	7,953	4,911	161.4%	Yes

*Source: Written correspondence with Rena Perez, Director, Master Planning and Demographics, September 23, 2005.*

As shown above in **Table IV.I.3-6**, two of the schools that would serve the project, the Berendo Middle School and the Belmont High School, are projected to operate over capacity by 53.8 percent and 161.4 percent, respectively, by the 2009–2010 school year.

There are eight new schools that are planned for construction in the project area to help relieve known overcrowding. The capacity of new schools planned for the Herald Examiner project area is listed below in **Table IV.I.3-7**. While the new seats will help offset projected overcrowding at the existing schools serving the project, there are many other overcrowded schools not mentioned in this EIR that are also targeted to be relieved by the new schools listed below. Therefore, it should not be assumed that the planned school capacities would be allocated solely towards offsetting overcrowding at the existing schools serving the project.

**Table IV.I.3-7  
Schools Planned to Relieve Known Overcrowding in the Herald Examiner Project Area**

School Name	Projected Capacity
Central LA new Middle School #1	1,701
Central LA new Middle School #3	810
Central LA New Learning Center #1	4,240
Central Region Belmont SPAN Reconfiguration	1,971
Central LA High School #9	1,728
Central LA High School #10	1,944
Central LA High School #11	2,835
Central LA High School #12	513

*Source: Written correspondence with Rena Perez, Director, Master Planning and Demographics, September 23, 2005.*

### 3. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The State of California has traditionally been responsible for the funding of local public schools. To assist in providing facilities to serve students generated by new development projects, the state passed Assembly Bill 2926 in 1986. This bill allowed school districts to collect impact fees from developers of new residential and commercial/industrial building space. Development impact fees were also addressed in the 1987 Leroy Greene Lease-Purchase Act, which required school districts to contribute a matching share of project costs for construction, modernization or reconstruction.

In 1998, the passage of Senate Bill 50 and Proposition 1A provided a comprehensive school facilities financing and reform program by, among other methods, authorizing a \$9.2 billion school facilities bond issue, school construction cost containment provisions and an eight-year suspension of the *Mira, Hart* and *Murrieta* court cases. The *Mira, Hart* and *Murrieta* court cases ruled that cities and counties under their legislative authority could impose additional fees for school construction to mitigate the effect of new construction. Specifically, the bond funds are to provide \$2.9 billion for new construction and \$2.1 billion for reconstruction/modernization needs. The provisions of Senate Bill 50 prohibit local agencies from denying either legislative or adjudicative land use approvals on the basis that school facilities are inadequate. The reinstatement of the school facility fee cap for legislative actions (e.g., general plan amendments, specific plan adoption, zoning plan amendments) as allowed under the *Mira, Hart* and *Murrieta* decisions, provided school districts and other local agencies the legal authority under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to require new development to fully mitigate school impacts.

According to Government Code Section 65996, the development fees authorized by Senate Bill 50 are deemed to be “full and complete school facilities mitigation” for impact caused by new development. The legislation also recognized the need for the fee to be adjusted periodically to keep pace with inflation. The legislation indicated that in January 2000, and every two years thereafter, the State Allocation Board will increase the maximum fees according to the adjustment for inflation in the statewide index for school construction. Currently, the State Allocation Board’s developer fees are \$3.60 per square foot for residential construction and \$0.34 per square foot for commercial/industrial construction, as of January 2005.<sup>1</sup> The next update will occur in 2006. The LAUSD collects the maximum fee for new construction.

In addition, as stated in the City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework Element, schools are funded through state tax revenues funneled through the County. Funds for the development of additional school

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<sup>1</sup> Phone conversation with LAUSD Developer Fee Office, Sonia White, January 20, 2006.

facilities are derived from state-mandated fees paid by projects constructed within the City as described above.

There are goals and policies set forth by the City of Los Angeles in the General Plan Central City Community Element that relate to public school services. A description of applicable goals and policies is provided in **Section IV.A, Land Use**. As discussed in **Section IV.A**, the project does not conflict with applicable General Plan goals and policies relating to police protection services.

## 4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

### a. Significance Criteria

The *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide* indicates that the determination of significance shall be made on a case-by-case basis, considering the following factors:<sup>2</sup>

- The population increase resulting from the proposed project, based on the increase in residential units or square footage of non-residential floor area;
- The demand for school services anticipated at the time of project buildout compared to the expected level of service available. Consider as applicable, scheduled improvements to LAUSD services (facilities, equipment and personnel) and the project's proportional contribution to the demand;
- Whether (and the degree to which) accommodation of the increased demand would require construction of new facilities, a major re-organization of students or classrooms, major revisions to the school calendar (such as year-round sessions) or other actions which would create a temporary or permanent impact on the school (s); and
- Whether the project includes features that would reduce the demand for school services (e.g., on-site school facilities or direct support to LAUSD).

### *Methodology*

Potential project impacts on the LAUSD were evaluated by applying current district student generation ratios for multi-family dwelling units by grade level to units proposed by the Herald Examiner project. The number of students generated directly by the proposed project was applied to individual schools serving the project sites to determine if these facilities could accommodate an increase in students. The number of students indirectly generated by the proposed project was applied to school facilities district wide to determine if the district could accommodate the projected increase.

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<sup>2</sup> *L.A. CEQA Thresholds Guide*, City of Los Angeles, Environmental Affairs Department, May 14, 1998. p. J.3-3.

## b. Project Impacts

- *The population increase resulting from the proposed project, based on the increase in residential units or square footage of non-residential floor area.*

Implementation of the proposed project would provide 575 new multi-family units in Downtown Los Angeles. Associated with the construction of 575 new residential units would be a population increase of approximately 1,087 residents. As described above, children from these new households would likely attend LAUSD schools in Local District 4. Therefore, the Herald Examiner project could have both a direct and indirect impact on the schools within the district boundary.

The 575 units associated with the project would generate approximately 6.33 students grades K–6, 5.486 students grades K–5, 4.22 students grades 7–8 and 7–9, 4.22 students grades 10–12 and 5.697 students grades 9–12 for a total of 25.95 students. These figures are based on LAUSD’s student generation ratios listed in **Table IV.I.3-5**.

- *Impacts related to schools are considered significant based on the demand for school services anticipated at the time of project buildout compared to the expected level of service available.*

The construction of 575 new residential units would generate approximately 25.95 new students in LAUSD’s Local District 4, as discussed above. Presently, one of the three schools that would serve the student population generated by the proposed project is operating above capacity and is considered over crowded. However, the LAUSD is planning eight additional LAUSD campuses to be constructed in Local District 4 and, thus, in the project vicinity to help relieve known overcrowding, as listed in **Table IV.I.3-7**. Therefore, through the construction of these new schools, as planned by LAUSD, implementation of the proposed project and the resulting student population increase of approximately 26 students, is not expected to result in significant impacts associated with the provision of school services. No significant impacts related to the demand for school services are anticipated.

- *Impacts related to schools are considered significant based on whether (and the degree to which) accommodation of the increased demand would require construction of new facilities, a major re-organization of students or classrooms, major revisions to the school calendar (such as year round sessions), or other actions which would create a temporary or permanent impact on the school(s).*

The construction of 575 new residential units would generate approximately 25.95 new students in LAUSD’s Local District 4, as discussed above. The introduction of approximately 26 new students through the buildout of the proposed project is not expected to require the construction of new school facilities, necessitate a major reorganization of the district or result in revisions to the school calendar. The LAUSD is already planning eight additional LAUSD campuses to be constructed in Local District 4 and, thus, in the project vicinity to help relieve existing overcrowding throughout the district, as listed in **Table IV.I.3-7**. Therefore, through the construction of these new schools, as planned by LAUSD,

implementation of the proposed project and the resulting student population increase of approximately 26 students, is not expected to result in significant impacts associated with the provision of school services. However, to further reduce any impacts associated with the provision of school services, the project applicant is required to contribute school fees, as discussed in **MM-SCH-1**. Implementation of this mitigation measure would further reduce impacts to schools.

- *Impacts related to schools are considered significant based on whether the project includes features that would reduce the demand for school services (e.g., on-site school facilities or direct support to LAUSD).*

The proposed project would not include any features that would reduce the demand for school services. Instead, implementation of the proposed project would generate approximately 26 additional students and could result in a need to alter existing bus routes to accommodate transporting these new students. School bus routes in the project area would be subject to change routes to serve the students from the proposed project and increase the capacity to carry larger student loads with operation of the proposed project. During construction, the bus routes in the project area may be impacted by the proposed project. Construction activities for the proposed project could potentially obstruct existing bus routes in the project area through road and/or lane closures and could cause delays in student drop-off and pick-up.

Additionally, during project construction, existing students passing by the construction sites could potentially be affected by construction activities. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project could introduce new features that could affect existing and future students in the project vicinity. However, impacts associated with the provision of school services can be reduced to less than significant levels through the implementation of mitigation measures identified and listed below to ensure student safety during both project operation and project construction. Therefore, with implementation of mitigation measures, the project does not have the potential to significantly affect the provision of school services.

### **c. Cumulative Impacts**

As discussed in **Section IV.B, Population and Housing**, in the area immediately surrounding the project sites, 5,351 additional multi-family residences are either being constructed or proposed. As such, an associated student enrollment increase is likely. This increase could be considered to be potentially significant. Additionally, using the projected data from **Table IV.I.3-6**, two of the schools that would serve the project, and thus, the related projects, are projected to operate over capacity by 53.8 percent and 161.4 percent by the 2009–2010 school year.

LAUSD recognizes the overcrowding problem at their schools and is in the process of implementing its New School Construction Program, which would result in the provision of 79 new schools, 60 on-site building additions and 20 playground-expansion projects district wide. Eight of these schools will be



constructed within the project vicinity, shown above in **Table IV.I.3-7**. The new seats at these schools would help offset projected overcrowding at the existing schools serving the proposed project and related projects.

Additionally, according to Government Code Section 65995, the payment of school impact fees authorized by Senate Bill 50, and the fees required for residential and commercial development by the LAUSD by each project, would mitigate the impact of the proposed project as well as the related projects on local schools from cumulative development. Therefore, after payment of these fees, and through the provision of new schools proposed by LAUSD, the cumulative impact of the proposed project and the list of related projects would be reduced to a less than significant level.

#### **d. Mitigation Measures**

- MM-SCH-1. As authorized by Senate Bill 50, the project applicant shall pay school impact fees to the LAUSD prior to the issuance of building permits. The current fee schedule for residential and commercial/industrial development is \$3.60 per square foot and \$0.34 per square foot, respectively.<sup>3</sup>
- MM-SCH-2. LAUSD Transportation Branch at (323) 342-1400 shall be contacted regarding the potential impact upon existing school bus routes.
- School buses shall have unrestricted access to schools.
  - During the construction phase, truck traffic and construction vehicles shall not cause traffic delays for LAUSD-transported students.
  - During and after construction, changed traffic patterns, lane adjustments, traffic light patterns and altered bus stops shall not affect school buses' on-time performance and passenger safety.
  - Because of provisions in the California Vehicle Code, during construction, any trucks and/or construction vehicles that encounter school buses using red-flashing-lights-must-stop-indicators must stop.
  - The project applicant or its designee will have to notify the LAUSD Transportation Branch of the expected start and ending dates for various portions of project construction and/or operation that may affect traffic in the vicinity of school areas.
- MM-SCH-3. Contractors shall maintain safe and convenient pedestrian routes to all nearby schools. The District will provide School Pedestrian Route Maps upon request.

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<sup>3</sup> Phone conversation with LAUSD Developer Fee Office, Sonia White, November 17, 2005.

- MM-SCH-4. Contractors shall maintain ongoing communication with LAUSD school administrators, providing sufficient notice to forewarn children and parents when existing pedestrian and vehicle routes may be impacted.
- MM-SCH-5. Installation and maintenance of appropriate traffic controls (signs and signals) to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety must be provided by the project applicant during project construction and operation.
- MM-SCH-6. No staging or parking of construction-related vehicles, including worker-transport vehicles, will occur on or adjacent to a school property during project construction or operation.
- MM-SCH-7. Funding for crossing guards, at contractor's expense, will be required if and when the safety of children is comprised by construction-related activities at impacted school crossings.
- MM-SCH-8. Barriers and/or fencing must be installed to secure construction equipment and to minimize trespassing, vandalism, short-cut attractions and attractive nuisance from school students passing by the project sites.
- MM-SCH-9. Contractors are required to provide security patrols, at their own expense to minimize trespassing, vandalism and short-cut attractions from school students passing by the project sites.

**e. Adverse Effects**

With the implementation of the mitigation measures listed above, construction and operation of the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to the provision of school services, affect the operation of existing schools, affect the transport of students to and from schools or result in a cumulatively considerable impact to LAUSD schools. Therefore, no adverse impacts would result from the proposed project.