

## 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: San Joaquin  
44 N San Joaquin St, #260

Stockton, CA 95202

From: (Public Agency): San Joaquin County Office of Education  
2901 Arch Airport Road  
Stockton, CA 95206-3974

(Address)

Project Title: John J. McFall School Campus Improvements

Project Applicant: San Joaquin Office of Education

Project Location - Specific:

McFall School, 1810 Hoyt Lane, Manteca, CA 95336

Project Location - City: Manteca

Project Location - County: San Joaquin

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Campus improvements to upgrade and modernize school campus. Improvements include: demolition and replacement of existing parking lot, installation of new fencing, replacement of fire panel and related devices, construction of a new multi-purpose building, a new kindergarten play structure, etc.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: San Joaquin County Office of Education

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: San Joaquin County Office of Education

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: Cal. Code Reg.s tit. 14 14 § 15301 and 15314
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons why project is exempt:

Project would not result in a significant environmental impact and is not disqualified by any of the exceptions to CEQA Exemptions.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Warren Sun

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (209) 468-4800

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: Warren Sun Date: 11/18/25 Title: Division Director

• Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

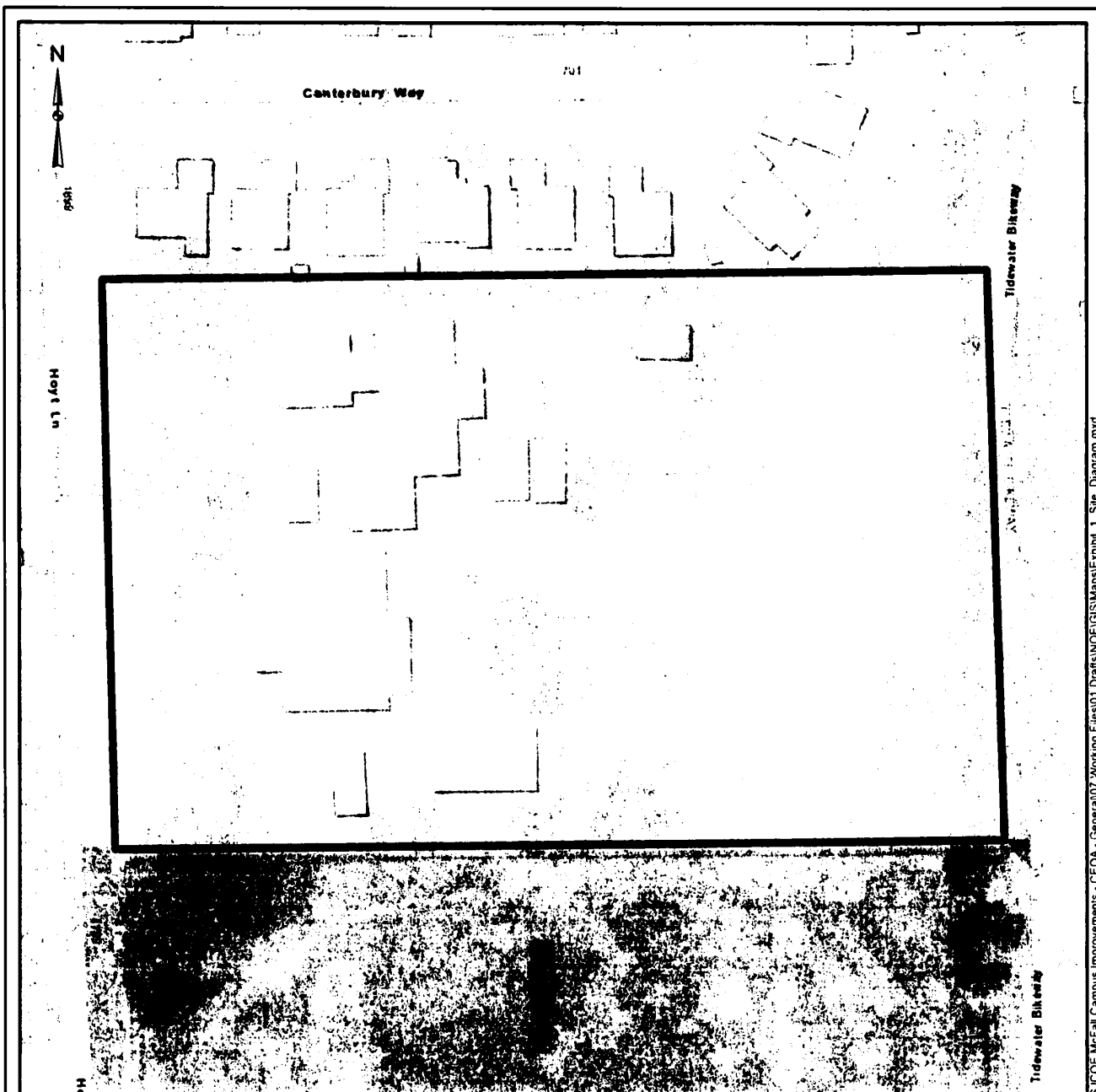
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Filed Doc #: 39-11182025-338  
Tue Nov 18 11:54:29 PST 2025  
Page: 1 of 8 Fee: \$50.00  
Steve J. Bestolarides  
San Joaquin County Clerk

By Deputy: rosaa

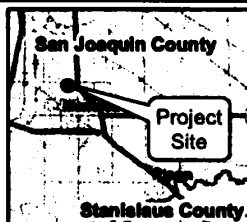


Revised 2011



# Legend

 Site Boundary



0 50 100 200 Feet

1:1,200 1 inch equals 100 feet

DATA SOURCES:  
ESRI WMS - World Aerial Imagery, OpenStreetMap

Project No.:  
NB257321  
Date:  
Sep 2025  
Drawn By:  
AAG  
Reviewed By:  
JHW

**Terracon**  
Explore with us

50 Goldenland Ct, Suite 100 Sacramento, CA 95834  
PH. (916) 928-4890 terracon.com

## SITE DIAGRAM

John J. McFall School  
Campus Improvements Project

## Exhibit

1

would stop immediately, and a qualified archaeologist would be consulted with before work were to resume.

Considering the data summarized in this memorandum, it is Terracon's opinion that the John J. McFall School Campus Improvements Project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA documentation.

Sincerely,  
**Terracon Consultants, Inc.**



Andrea Gonzalez  
Staff Biologist



J. Hunter Watkins  
Authorized Project Reviewer

**Enclosures:**

Exhibit 1 – Project Location  
Notice of Exemption (NOE) Form

except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.

*(b) Cumulative Impact.* All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

*(c) Significant Effect.* A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

*(d) Scenic Highways.* A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which 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. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.

*(e) Hazardous Waste Sites.* A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

*(f) Historical Resources.* A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

**Categorical Exemption Class I – Existing Facilities (Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14 § 15301)**

Class 1 projects are described in § 15301 as 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 existing or former use.*” The campus improvements within John J. McFall School’s existing property qualifies as alteration of an existing facility and therefore fits the description provided in Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14 § 15301.

**Categorical Exemption Class XIV – Minor Additions to Schools (Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14 § 15314)**

Class 14 projects are described in § 15314 as “*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 campus improvements would take place entirely within John J. McFall School’s existing property. It would not involve the addition of ten or more classrooms, nor would it increase the school’s student capacity by more than 25%. The proposed project fits the description provided in Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14 § 15314.

**Summary:**

The proposed project would not result in any significant impacts on the environment (please see **Table 1**). Campus improvements for the John J. McFall School meet both the description of a Class 1 and Class 14-exempt project as well as the criteria listed in the Exceptions to CEQA Categorical Exemptions. The project area is not located on a hazard waste site or other environmental features of critical concern. The proposed project would not result in a significant impact, nor would it result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact.

The long-term effects of the project are likely to improve the school’s ability to accommodate school staff and students and improve the flow of school traffic. The project site is not in the vicinity of a Scenic Highway, and the project would not be expected to impact historical resources. No historic properties are known to exist in the project area however, if artifacts were to be found during construction, work

concluded that construction and operational noise impacts from the proposed project are anticipated to occur at less-than-significant levels.

**Population and  
Housing**

The proposed project would not involve housing or population growth.

**Public Services**

The proposed project would not negatively affect public services but instead would improve the school's ability to accommodate staff and students and improve the flow of school traffic.

**Recreation**

The proposed project would not lead to the deterioration of other existing recreational facilities on campus, nor would it involve the construction of new facilities that would result in an adverse physical environmental consequence.

**Transportation**

While the school is not located near a main thoroughfare, it is located across from East Union High School and construction-related traffic for McFall may affect the high school's traffic. However, the proposed project is not anticipated to have a significant effect on transportation since construction will largely be confined to campus. Furthermore, construction will occur outside of the school year when student traffic patterns will not be affected by the work. A Traffic Study-Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Assessment was conducted to confirm the accuracy of these findings. The assessment concluded that the VMT impact from the proposed project is anticipated to be less-than-significant.

**Tribal Cultural  
Resources**

The proposed project would not have a significant adverse impact as the school is an eligible resource; however, if resources are discovered during any ground disturbing activities, work will cease immediately and both federally and state recognized tribes will be contacted.

**Wildfire**

The proposed project does not involve Wildfire Hazards since the project will not increase fire loading.

**Mandatory  
Findings of  
Significance**

The proposed project does not have the potential to substantially degrade or reduce the habitat of a species or impact known resources. The project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a cumulative impact.

**Exceptions (Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14 § 15300.2)**

It should be noted that six (6) exceptions are described, which if applicable to a project, would disqualify the project from the usage of a Categorical Exemption. These exceptions are:

(a) *Location*. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply to all instances,

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|--|---|
|  | <p>immediately until consultation and approval to continue work was provided by a qualified archaeologist. A Cultural Resources Desktop Review was completed to confirm the accuracy of these findings. The review concluded that there are no archaeological sites or above-ground historic resources within the Project Area Limits.</p>  |
| <b>Energy</b>                          | <p>The proposed project would not result in an impact related to the wasteful or inefficient use of energy since the project will not require the use of equipment with excessively high energy requirements during its operations. The project will additionally only use equipment strictly as needed.</p>  |
| <b>Geology and Soils</b>               | <p>The proposed project would not result in geological impacts. Construction would take place on previously developed and disturbed land and would not result in new construction in unsafe soils.</p>  |
| <b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</b>        | <p>Although greenhouse gases would be emitted during project construction, it would not result in a significant impact on the environment, nor would it conflict with a plan, policy, or regulation aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p>   |
| <b>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</b> | <p>The proposed project would not involve the use or release of potentially hazardous substances. Abatement of Hazardous Materials Plan (AHMP) will be created prior to project construction to handle potential unexpected encounters with hazardous materials.</p>  |
| <b>Hydrology and Water Quality</b>     | <p>Local water quality impacts would be avoided by the usage of routing stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction and material staging activities.</p>  |
| <b>Land Use and Planning</b>           | <p>The proposed project would not divide an established community, nor would it result in a conflict with a land use plan or zoning ordinance as the project does not modify existing land use.</p>   |
| <b>Mineral Resources</b>               | <p>The proposed project would not require the extraction of Mineral Resources.</p>  |
| <b>Noise</b>                           | <p>The proposed project would not result in the exposure of excessive noise levels. Construction would not take place during the school year. Furthermore, measures such as limiting construction to daytime hours and complying with County noise ordinances would avoid temporary construction-related noise impacts. The project would not result in any permanent noise impacts. A Sound Analysis was completed to confirm the accuracy of these findings. The analysis</p> |

**Table 1. Abbreviated CEQA Environmental Checklist**

| <b>Aesthetics</b>                         | The proposed project would not result in impacts related to scenic vistas or state-listed scenic highways as the nearest scenic location is the California Interstate 580, approximately 15.8 miles southwest of campus. Further, it would not require the installation of equipment that would be inconsistent with previous conditions; and would not result in an impact on Aesthetics.   |
|---|--|
| <b>Agriculture and Forestry Resources</b> | The proposed project would not involve agricultural lands or Prime Farmland.   |
| <b>Air Quality</b>                        | The proposed project would not result in the exposure of pollutants or odors to sensitive receptors. Although San Joaquin County is in nonattainment status for PM-2.5 (2006) and 8-Hour Ozone (2015) criteria pollutants, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in a significant net increase of such pollutants, nor is it anticipated that the project will conflict with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Valley Air District)'s ability to comply with any applicable State Implementation Plan (SIP) as the emissions would be associated with the limited use of construction equipment. The equipment required for the campus improvements would be operated as needed for a limited amount of time. An Air Quality Impact Analysis was completed to confirm the accuracy of these findings. The analysis concluded that there would be no regional or localized impacts from construction and operational-source emissions. |
| <b>Biological Resources</b>               | Terracon biologist Andrea Gonzalez conducted a biological survey on September 16, 2025. The project area does not provide habitat for federally- or state-listed species, nor would it affect the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan (SJMSCP), or other sensitive biological resources. However, Terracon recommends a pre-construction nesting bird survey prior to construction work scheduled during the California nesting bird season (February 1 through August 31) and as needed, due to a historic hawk nest on the school campus. The nest may be removed while inactive, unless it belongs to a Swainson's hawk pair because of its protection under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). However, the likelihood of the nest being a Swainson's hawk nest are low due to the lack of preferred nesting habitat on the school campus.  |
| <b>Cultural Resources</b>                 | The project does not contain known historic properties. The project is not anticipated to have a significant adverse impact and is not suspected of containing archeological artifacts as the general area is previously developed. If archaeological or cultural resources are discovered onsite, work would cease  |

# Memorandum



**TO:** Katie Dominguez  
c/o Diana Rovens  
P: (209) 468-9122  
E: Kadominguez@sjcoe.net

San Joaquin County Office of Education  
2901 Arch Airport Road  
Stockton, California 95206-3974

**FROM:** Terracon Consultants, Inc.

**DATE:** November 17, 2025

**RE:** John J. McFall School Campus Improvements Project  
CEQA Notice of Exemption and Categorical Exemption Memorandum  
Terracon Project No: **NB257321**

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## Project Information:

The proposed project is located entirely within John J. McFall School's campus at 1810 Hoyt Lane (APN: 21612002), in Manteca, California. The project area spans approximately 5.78 acres of a preexisting development within the school's boundaries (**Exhibit 1**). The project scope includes various campus improvements, such as demolition and replacement of existing parking lot, installation of new fencing, replacement of fire panel and related devices, construction of a new multi-purpose building, a new kindergarten play structure, etc.

As the actions associated with the proposed project are not expected to result in a significant environmental impact, it is expected that this project is exempt under the Class I Categorical (Existing Facilities) and Class XIV Categorical Exemption (Minor Additions to Schools), as described in the California Code of Regulations, Title 15, Section 15300 et seq.

## Legal Setting:

### Categorical Exemptions (Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14 § 15300)

Projects that are not expected to result in a significant environmental impact may be Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review. As described in Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14 § 15300, *Section 21084 of the Public Resources Code requires these guidelines to include a list of classes of projects which have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment and which shall, therefore, be exempt from the provisions of CEQA. In response to that mandate, the Secretary for Resources has found that the following classes of projects listed in this article do not have a significant effect on the environment, and they are declared to be categorically exempt from the requirement for the preparation of environmental documents.*

Like many school-renovation projects, the proposed project is not expected to result in any significant environmental impacts under CEQA. **Table 1** provides an abbreviated CEQA checklist, explaining why the implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant environmental impacts.