

Section 5.13  
SCHOOLS/EDUCATION

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## 5.13 SCHOOLS/EDUCATION

The project site is within the Newhall School District (Newhall District) and the William S. Hart Union High School District (Hart District). This section of the EIR evaluates impacts of the proposed project on schools in those districts that currently provide public elementary, junior high, and high school education in the project area.

### 5.13.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Newhall District provides elementary school service (grades K through 6), while the Hart District serves the project area for junior high education (grades 7 and 8) and high school education (grades 9 through 12).

#### NEWHALL SCHOOL DISTRICT

There are a total of ten elementary schools within the Newhall District, with a total enrollment 6,964 students as of September 4, 2007.<sup>1</sup> State School Construction Bonds were approved by the California electorate in November 2002 authorizing \$13.2 billion of school facility construction funding which eliminated a backlog of approximately \$4 billion, and provides substantial additional funds for new construction. In addition, the Newhall District has voted to incur debt in order to fund future school construction.

As illustrated in *Table 5.13-1, Newhall District Enrollment/Capacity*, four elementary schools within the Newhall District are currently over capacity and the remaining six elementary schools have between 17 and 298 spaces available before reaching capacity. In October 2005, the Newhall District was 102 percent over capacity.<sup>2</sup> However, in September 2005, Oak Hills Elementary School opened for full enrollment for kindergarten through six grades and increased the total capacity available within the Newhall District.<sup>3</sup> Overall, enrollments at the elementary schools have varied from 2005 to present.

#### WILLIAM S. HART UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

There are a total of six junior high schools and six high schools within the William S. Hart Union High School District (Hart District). Total student capacity within the District is 23,298 students. Total student enrollment in the District as of October 2007 was 21,673 students.

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<sup>1</sup> Per phone communication with Stephanie Leclair, Attendance Department for the Newhall School District, on September 5, 2007.  
<sup>2</sup> Per written communication with Mike Clear, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services for the Newhall School District, on October 4, 2005.  
<sup>3</sup> Per phone communication with Carrie Deardorff, Office Manager, Oak Hills School, on September 6, 2007.



**Table 5.13-1  
Newhall District Enrollment/Capacity**

School	Capacity <sup>1</sup>	Current Enrollment <sup>2</sup>
J. Michael McGrath Elementary School	624	<b>643</b>
Meadows Elementary School	624	<b>656</b>
Newhall Elementary School	744	671
Oak Hills Elementary School	950 <sup>3</sup>	565
Old Orchard Elementary School	600	555
Peachland Avenue Elementary School	576	563
Pico Canyon Elementary School	816	<b>938</b>
Stevenson Ranch Elementary School	888	<b>991</b>
Valencia Valley Elementary School	696	655
Wiley Canyon Elementary School	792	757
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,310</b>	<b>6,994</b>

1 Source: Per written communication with Mike Clear, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services for the Newhall School District, on October 4, 2005.  
 2 Source: Per phone communication with Dr. Marc Winger, Ed.D., Superintendent, Newhall School District, on September 20, 2007.  
 3 Source: Per phone communication with Carrie Deardorff, Office Manager, Oak Hills School, on September 7, 2007.  
 Current enrollment numbers in bold indicate schools that are over capacity.

The most current enrollment information for the Hart District provided below reflects enrollment levels for the 2006-2007 school year. As illustrated in *Table 5.13-2, Hart District Enrollment/Capacity*, one junior high and three high schools are over capacity. The Hart District also intends to construct a new high school (Castaic High School), which will have a design capacity of 2,600 students or 3,000 students including temporary classrooms. These schools are being funded through SB 50 (discussed below) and Hardship funds under SB 50. In addition, the Hart District has voted to incur debt in order to fund future school construction.

**Table 5.13-2  
Hart District Enrollment/Capacity**

School	Capacity	Current Enrollment <sup>2</sup>
Arroyo Seco Junior High School	1,589 <sup>1</sup>	1,196
La Mesa Junior High School	1,394 <sup>1</sup>	1,262
Placerita Junior High School	1,236 <sup>1</sup>	1,023
Rancho Pico Junior High School	1,200	902
Rio Norte Junior High School	1,568 <sup>1</sup>	1,335
Sierra Vista Junior High School	1,221 <sup>1</sup>	<b>1,343</b>
Canyon High School	2,538 <sup>1</sup>	<b>2,683</b>
Golden Valley High School	2,600	1,924
Hart High School	2,315 <sup>1</sup>	<b>2,476</b>
Saugus High School	2,273 <sup>1</sup>	<b>2,638</b>
Valencia High School	2,764 <sup>1</sup>	2,624
West Ranch High School	2,600	2,267
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23,298</b>	<b>21,673(93 percent of capacity)</b>

Source: Per communication with Lorna Burrill, William S. Hart Union High School District. October 10, 2005.  
 1. Capacity includes temporary capacity provided by relocatable classrooms.  
 2. William S. Hart Union High School District website, accessed on June 6, 2008, <http://hart.schoolwisepress.com/home/>  
 Current enrollment numbers in bold indicate schools that are over capacity.



## **SCHOOL FUNDING**

Senate Bill 50 (SB 50) and Proposition 1A (both of which passed in 1998) 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. Specifically, the bond funds are to provide \$2.9 billion for new construction and \$2.1 billion for reconstruction/modernization needs. The provisions of SB 50 prohibit local agencies from denying either legislative or adjudicative land use approvals on the basis that school facilities are inadequate and reinstate the school facility fee cap for legislative actions (e.g., general plan amendments, specific plan adoption, zoning plan amendments) as was allowed under the Mira, Hart, and Murrieta court cases. According to Government Code Section 65996, the development fees authorized by SB 50 are deemed to be “full and complete school facilities mitigation.” These provisions are in effect and will remain in place as long as subsequent state bonds are approved and available.

SB 50 establishes three levels of Developer Fees that may be imposed upon new development by the governing board of a school district depending upon certain conditions within a district. School Developer Fees may be updated annually. Level 1 fees are the base statutory fees imposed upon new additions to residential development projects and new commercial and industrial development projects by a school district unless the district qualifies for a higher level of funding. Currently, Level 1 fees assessed by the Newhall District and Hart District are \$1.18 and \$1.45, respectively, per square foot for additions to residential development \$0.19 and \$0.23, respectively, per square foot of chargeable, covered and enclosed floor space for new commercial/industrial development. Level 2 fees allow school districts to impose developer fees up to 50 percent above the statutory levels and up to 50 percent of the new school construction cost. In order to qualify for Level 2 funding a district must satisfy at least two of the following four requirements: (1) Multi Track Year Round Education (MTYRE) requirements, (2) Place a local bond measure on the ballot within four years that received at least 50 percent plus 1 of the votes, (3) District has issued debt or incurred obligations for capital outlay equal to a specified (under Government Code 65995.5(b)(3)(C)) percentage of its local bonding capacity, and (4) At least 20 percent of teaching stations within the district are portable classrooms. Currently, Level 2 fees assessed by the Newhall District and Hart District are \$4.52 and \$3.18, respectively, per square foot for new residential development. Level 3 fees apply if the state runs out of bond funds and allows a school district to impose 100 percent of the new school construction cost or mitigation minus any local dedicated school moneys. Currently, Level 3 fees assessed by the Newhall District and Hart District are \$9.04 and \$6.36, respectively, per square feet of residential development.

To accommodate students from new development projects, school districts may alternatively finance new schools through special school construction funding resolutions and/or agreements between developers, the affected school districts and, occasionally, other local governmental agencies. These special resolutions and agreements often allow school districts to realize school mitigation funds in excess of the developer fees allowed under SB 50.



### 5.13.2 SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLD CRITERIA

The City of Santa Clarita Local CEQA Guidelines (Resolution 05-38) adopted on April 26, 2005, as well as the City's General Plan and Municipal Code serve as the basis for identifying thresholds determining the significance of the environmental effects of a projects. Where thresholds are not specifically identified, the Initial Study checklist contained in Appendix A of this EIR relating to schools have been utilized to formulate additional significance criteria in this section. Accordingly, a project may create a significant environmental impact the following occurs:

- Substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or expanded school services or facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives.

The proposed HMNMH Master Plan has been evaluated based on this standard. Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant unavoidable impact.

### 5.13.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

#### NEWHALL SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:* Potentially Significant Impact.

*Impact Analysis:* As discussed in Section 5.2, Population and Employment, the proposed project would generate an additional 571 employees. The projected employees and any associated population increase are consistent with the growth forecasts for the City. The specific number of students that could result from employees relocating into the City is unknown, as is the specific elementary school that potential students would attend. However, as also illustrated in Table 5.13-1, four elementary schools within the Newhall District are currently over capacity. In addition, the Newhall District has stated that they would not displace currently assigned neighborhoods to accommodate new students, resulting in significant impacts.<sup>4</sup>

Pursuant to SB 50, payment of fees to the Newhall District is considered full mitigation for project impacts on school facilities (Government Code Section 65996(a)). Therefore, the project applicant would be required to pay the statutory fees to accommodate the impact of project-generated students, reducing impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, impacts to Newhall District schools would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria identified above. SB 50 deems payment of the fees "to provide full and complete school facilities mitigation." (Government Code Section 65996(b)).

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



*Mitigation Measures:*

- SE1** The project applicant shall pay the required mitigation fees in place at time of payment to the Newhall District, prior to issuance of building permit as full mitigation of project impacts on this district.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Pursuant to state law, with payment of mitigation fees specified in Mitigation Measure SE1, impacts would be considered Less Than Significant.

**WILLIAM S. HART UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

*Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:* Potentially Significant Impact.

*Impact Analysis:* As discussed in Section 5.2, Population, Employment, and Housing, the proposed project would generate an additional 571 employees. The projected employees and any associated population increase are consistent with the growth forecasts for the City. The specific number of students that could result from employees relocating into the City is unknown, as is the specific junior high or high school that potential students would attend. However, as illustrated in Table 5.13-2, most of the schools in the Hart District are currently either near or over capacity. In addition, the Hart District has stated that they would not displace currently assigned neighborhoods to accommodate new students, resulting in significant impacts.

Pursuant to SB 50, payment of fees to the Hart District is considered full mitigation for project impacts on school facilities (Government Code Section 65996(a)). Therefore, the project applicant would be required to pay the statutory fees to accommodate the impact of project-generated students, reducing impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, impacts to Hart District schools would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria identified above. SB 50 deems payment of the fees “to provide full and complete school facilities mitigation.”

*Mitigation Measures:*

- SE2** The project applicant shall pay the required mitigation fees in place at time of payment to the Hart District, prior to issuance of building permit as full mitigation of project impacts on this district.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Pursuant to state law, with payment of mitigation fees specified in Mitigation Measure SE2, impacts would be considered Less Than Significant.

**5.13.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

*Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:* Potentially Significant Impact.

*Impact Analysis:* A significant cumulative impact could occur if a project does not contribute its fair share to mitigate adverse effects on school facilities. Cumulative impacts on schools can be mitigated through the school facilities funding agreements between the districts and proposed project applicant, or through other mechanisms, such as SB 50 and/or future facilities funding



agreements between the districts and the developers of new projects. Assuming such mechanisms are implemented for each new development included in the related projects, cumulative impacts on schools caused by other future development would be mitigated to less than significant. Therefore, cumulative school impacts would not result in an exceedance of the significance threshold criteria identified above. SB 50 deems payment of the fees “to provide full and complete school facilities mitigation.” (Government Code Section 65996(b)).

*Mitigation Measures:* Refer to Mitigation Measures SE1 and SE2. No additional mitigation measures are required.

*Level of Significance After Mitigation:* Pursuant to state law, with payment of mitigation fees specified in Mitigation Measure SE1 and SE2, impacts would be considered Less Than Significant.

### **5.13.5 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS**

With imposition of the required mitigation measures, implementation of the proposed project would be considered less than significant project and cumulative impacts to the Newhall School District and the William S. Hart Union High School District. As such, no significant unavoidable impacts would result from implementation of the Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital Master Plan.