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## 5.15 EDUCATION

### 5.15.1 INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose

The County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning Environmental Checklist Form, which has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), requires that public service issues, including schools, be evaluated as part of the environmental documentation process. The Project's impacts on schools are analyzed at a project-level of detail; direct and indirect impacts are addressed for each threshold criterion for both the on-site and off-site Project features. Growth-inducing impacts and cumulative impacts are described in Sections 6.0 and 7.0, respectively. Other sections of this EIR evaluate the potential environmental impacts (e.g., traffic, air quality, utilities) associated with the development of the seven schools proposed on the Project site.

#### Summary

The Project would increase the resident population of the area and would therefore result in the generation of new students. These new students would be served by one of the three respective school districts that encompass the Project site. The Project includes locations for one Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade (K-5) school; five Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade (K-8) schools (mitigation measure [MM] 15-1); and one high school (MM 15-3). The designation of school sites allows the respective school districts to plan for the provision of school facilities to serve the Project as needed. In addition, the Project Applicant/Developer shall finalize and sign agreements with the school districts for a contribution to facilitate the financing, construction, and operation of new school facilities in the Project area, as an alternative to the payment of school impact fees and as allowed under Section 65996(b) of the *California Government Code*. The Project Applicant/Developer shall demonstrate to the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning that they have complied with all applicable School Facilities and Funding Agreements with the school districts (MM 15-2). In addition, compliance with California Department of Education Title 5 requirements for school site selection and school design and construction would reduce impacts to public schools to a less than significant level.

Because school facilities would be centrally located within the planning areas on the Project site, a majority of the Project site would not require busing. It is anticipated that the first K-8 school (initially a K-12 facility) would be opened by the Gorman Joint School District at occupancy of the first residential units. The planned approach is to initially construct a K-12 campus in order to provide public school accommodations at all education levels at Project opening. As Project buildout occurs, this school would revert to a K-8 school when the high school is constructed. There would be no impacts related to school transportation and no mitigation would be required.

There would be no impacts to education services associated with the proposed off-site access roads, and utilities would not result in any uses or activities that would generate additional students or otherwise create an increased demand for schools.

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## Section Format

As described in Section 5.0, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation, and in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Article 9 (Contents of Environmental Impact Reports), each topical environmental analysis includes a description of the existing setting; identification of thresholds of significance; analysis of potential Project effects and identification of significant impacts; identification of mitigation measures, if required, to reduce significant impacts; and level of significance after mitigation, if any. This information is presented in the following format (please refer to Section 2.0, Introduction, and Section 5.0, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation, for descriptions of each of these topics):

- Introduction
  - Purpose
  - Summary
  - Section Format
  - References
- Relevant Plans, Policies, and Regulations
- Environmental Setting
- Project Design Features
- Threshold Criteria
- Environmental Impacts—A separate analysis is provided for each of the following categories of potential impacts:
  - On-Site Impacts
  - Off-Site Impacts
- Mitigation Measures
- Level of Significance After Mitigation
- References

## References

Although all references cited for preparation of this analysis are listed in Section 5.15.9, the primary technical references for this section are listed below.

1. Antelope Valley Community College District (AVCCD). 2009 (October 2). Letter from J.L. Fisher, Sr., Superintendent/President (Antelope Valley College) to S. Dea, Supervisor of Regional Planning (County of Los Angeles, Department of Regional Planning) (Appendix 5.15-A).
2. Gorman Joint School District and Centennial Founders LLC. 2009 (July 15). School Facilities and Funding Agreement (Appendix 5.15-B).
3. Antelope Valley Union High School District and Centennial Founders, LLC. 2009 (February 18). School Facilities and Funding Agreement (Appendix 5.15-C).

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## 5.15.2 RELEVANT PLANS, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS

### Federal

No federal plans and policies have been identified related to education.

### State

#### *School Facilities Construction*

Title 5 of the *California Code of Regulations* contains general standards for school site selection, site planning, and construction of school facilities in the State of California. Educational facilities planned by school districts are required to meet minimum standards, and districts must ensure that school sites provide safety and support learning as they relate to site location and size; school layout; building design and construction; playgrounds and field areas; classroom sizes and specialized areas/classrooms; and other standards that are used by the California Department of Education and the District Architect in the review and approval of school sites and school construction plans.

#### *Assembly Bill 2926*

The State has traditionally been responsible for funding local public schools. To assist in providing facilities to serve students generated by new development projects, the State passed Assembly Bill (AB) 2926 in 1986. This bill allows school districts to collect impact fees from developers of new residential and commercial/industrial building space to fund school construction and reconstruction. AB 2926 also established maximum fees (adjusted for inflation) which can be collected under this and any other school fee authorization.

#### *Senate Bill 50*

Senate Bill (SB) 50 (or “Leroy Greene School Facilities Act”) and Proposition 1A (both of which passed in 1998) provide a comprehensive school facilities financing and reform program by, among other methods, authorizing both a \$9.2 billion school facilities bond issue and school construction cost containment provisions. Specifically, the bond funds are to provide for new construction and for reconstruction/modernization needs. The provisions of SB 50 (1) prohibit local agencies from denying either legislative or adjudicative land use approvals on the basis that school facilities are inadequate and (2) reinstate the school facility fee cap for legislative actions (e.g., general plan amendments, specific plan adoption, zoning plan amendments). According to Section 65996 of the *California Government Code*, the development fees authorized by SB 50 are deemed to be “full and complete school facilities mitigation”. In January 2007, the State Allocation Board proposed to update the provisions of SB 50 to reflect adjustments to current cost of school construction and modernization. The action was approved on January 30, 2008. The State Allocation Board approved increases in 2012 and 2014. Subsequent biannual review by the State Allocation Board will evaluate future updates and changes to fee schedules. Currently, the maximum fees allowed under SB 50 are \$3.36 per square foot (sf) for new residential development and \$0.54 per sf for commercial/industrial development (California Allocation Board 2014).

SB 50 establishes three levels of developer fees that may be imposed upon new development by a school district's governing board. These fee levels depend upon certain conditions within a district. These three levels include:

**Level 1:** Level 1 fees are the base statutory fees. As of January 2014, Level 1 fees are \$3.36 per square foot (sf) for new residential development and \$0.54 per sf of chargeable, covered, and enclosed floor space for new commercial/industrial development. These amounts represent the maximum that can currently be legally imposed upon new development projects by a school district unless the district qualifies for a higher level of funding. Payment of this fee is deemed to constitute full, complete, and adequate mitigation of a project's impacts on school facilities.

**Level 2:** Level 2 fees allow the school district to impose developer fees above the statutory levels up to 50 percent of school construction costs under designated circumstances. The State provides grant amounts for new school construction, if funds are available.

**Level 3:** Level 3 fees apply if the State runs out of bond funds, allowing the school district to impose 100 percent of the cost of the school facility or mitigation on the developer minus any local dedicated school monies.

In order to qualify for Level 2 funding, the district must satisfy at least two of the four requirements stated below.

1. Multi-Track Year-Round Education (MTYRE) should be imposed with:
  - at least 30 percent of K-6 enrollment in the high school attendance area on MTYRE for unified and elementary school districts; or
  - at least 30 percent of high school district enrollment on MTYRE; or
  - at least 40 percent of K-12 enrollment on MTYRE within boundaries of the high school attendance area for which the district is applying for funding.
2. A local bond measure should have been placed on the ballot in the last four years that received at least 50 percent plus 1 of the votes.
3. Issued debt or incurred obligations for capital outlay are equal to a specified (under *California Government Code*, Section 65995.5[b][3][C]) percentage of its local bonding capacity.
4. At least 20 percent of teaching stations within the district are relocatable classrooms.

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.

The California Public Education Facilities Bond Initiative was approved in the November 2016 ballot. This measure would provide \$9 billion bonding authority for new school construction, renovation, and upgrades for elementary, secondary, and community college districts.

## County

### *County of Los Angeles General Plan and Antelope Valley Area General Plan*

The *County of Los Angeles General Plan* and *Antelope Valley Area Plan* address education issues that affect the County and the Antelope Valley. Relevant goals and policies in the Antelope Valley Area Plan include those listed below.

#### Mobility Element

**Goal M 11:** A continuous, integrated system of safe and attractive pedestrian routes linking residents to rural town center areas, schools, services, transit, parks, and open space areas.

**Policy M 11.5:** Implement traffic calming methods in areas with high pedestrian usage, such as school zones.

#### Conservation and Open Space Element

**Policy COS 6.6:** Provide educational resources to farmers.

**Policy COS 11.3:** Promote the use of renewable energy systems in public facilities, such as hospitals, libraries, and schools, to ensure access to power in the case of major disasters.

#### Public Safety, Services and Facilities Element

**Policy PS 8.5:** Encourage the use of school playgrounds and sporting fields for community recreation (“joint use”) when school is not in session.

**Goal PS 10:** A wide range of educational opportunities for Antelope Valley residents.

**Policy PS 10.1:** Coordinate with all Antelope Valley school districts to ensure that new schools are provided as additional development occurs or as the population grows.

**Policy PS 10.2:** Encourage new schools to locate in rural town center areas, rural town areas, and economic opportunity areas, where they will be accessible by pedestrian walkways, trails, bikeways, and bicycle routes.

**Policy PS 10.3:** Encourage new schools to locate near parks and recreational facilities.

**Policy PS 10.4:** Encourage the use of school playgrounds and sporting fields for community recreation (“joint use”) when school is not in session.

**Policy PS 10.5:** Promote the creation of a four-year public university in the Antelope Valley to provide opportunities for continuing education and workforce development.

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## Economic Development Element

**Policy ED 1.19:** Promote the creation of a four-year public university in the Antelope Valley to provide opportunities for continuing education and workforce development.

A consistency analysis of the Project's specific goals and policies with the County's relevant plans, policies, and regulations is provided in the Land Use, Entitlements, and Planning section (Section 5.8) of this document.

### 5.15.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Project site is within the jurisdiction of two public elementary school districts and one public high school district.

- **Gorman Joint School District (Gorman District):** provides K–8 education (which includes elementary and junior/middle school grades) to the western and central sections of the site.
- **Westside Union Elementary School District (WUSD):** provides K–8 education (which includes elementary and junior/middle school grades) to the eastern section of the site.
- **Antelope Valley Union High School District (AVUHSD):** provides high school education (grades 9–12) to the Project site.

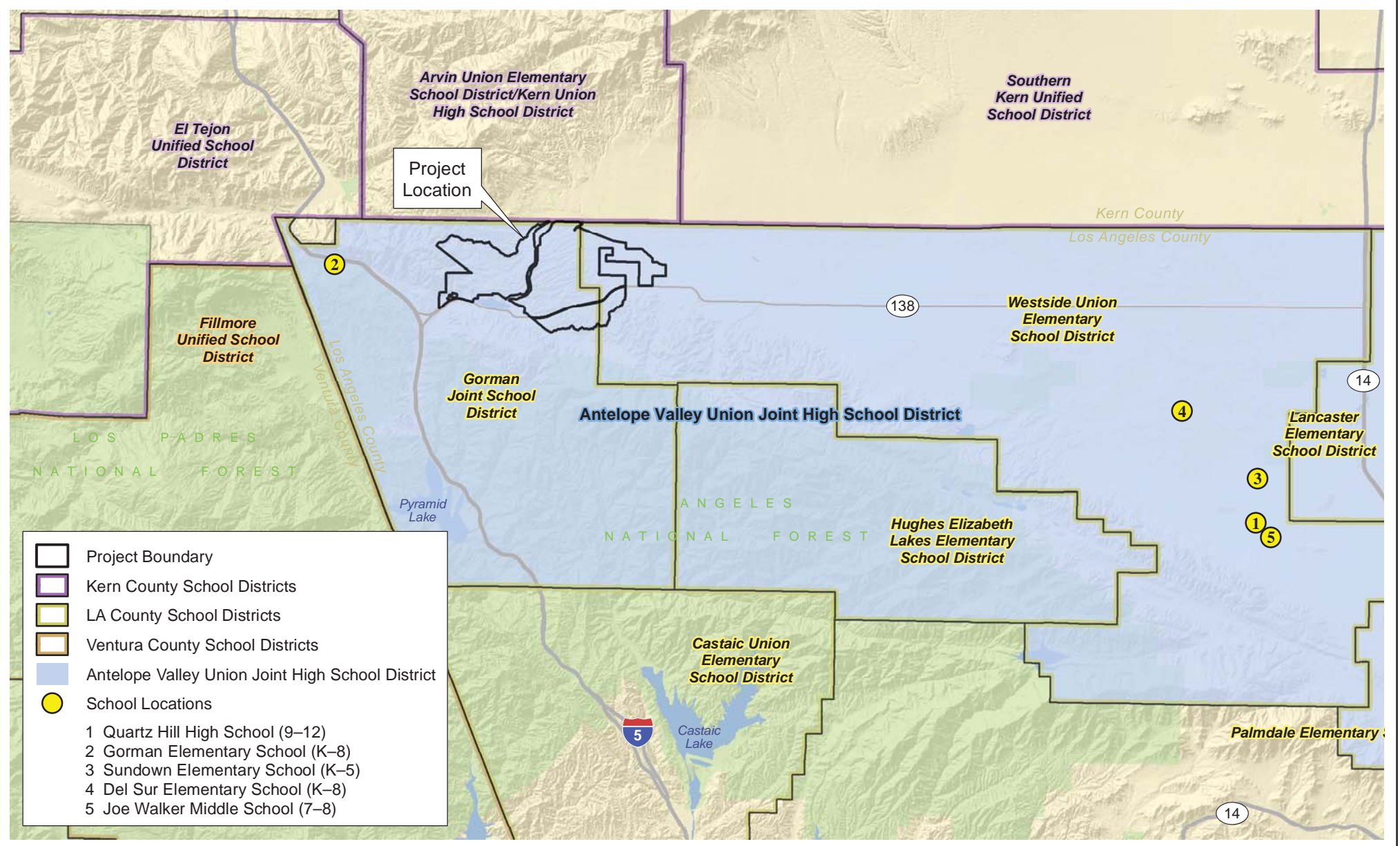
Exhibit 5.15-1, Local School Districts, identifies the local school districts in the Project area. There are no existing schools on the Project site. Within the school districts serving the site, the nearest elementary schools to the Project site are Gorman Elementary School (K–8), Sundown Elementary School (K–5), and Del Sur Elementary School (K–8). The nearest middle schools to the Project site is Joe Walker Middle School (7–8). The nearest high school of the AVUHSD to the Project site is Quartz Hill High School (9–12).

### **K–8 Schools**

As shown in Exhibit 5.15-1, the western portion of the Project site lies within the Gorman District. The Gorman District has one K–8 school, Gorman Elementary School, which is located at 49847 Gorman School Road in Gorman. This school served 103 students from the communities of Gorman, Frazier Park, Neenach, Lebec, and Lake of the Woods in the 2015–2016 school year (CDE 2017). It has five teachers in split level classes, two teacher aides, one accountant, one receptionist, one maintenance person, and one superintendent/principal (Gorman Joint School District 2015b, 2016).

In addition, the Gorman Learning Center, chartered by the Gorman District, serves grades K–12 at three resource centers and offices at 1826 Orange Tree Lane in Redlands, California. Charter schools are non-sectarian public schools of choice and can provide education in any

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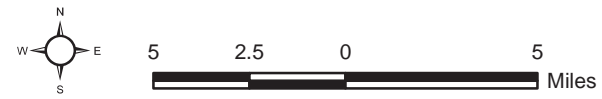
- Project Boundary
- Kern County School Districts
- LA County School Districts
- Ventura County School Districts
- Antelope Valley Union Joint High School District
- School Locations

- 1 Quartz Hill High School (9–12)
- 2 Gorman Elementary School (K–8)
- 3 Sundown Elementary School (K–5)
- 4 Del Sur Elementary School (K–8)
- 5 Joe Walker Middle School (7–8)

### Local School Districts

Centennial Project

### Exhibit 5.15-1



of the grades kindergarten through 12.<sup>1</sup> Gorman Learning Center had 2,236 K–12 students during the 2015–2016 school year. Table 5.15-1 provides district-wide enrollment in the Gorman District. For the 2015–2016 school year, the District had a total of 2,339 students (CDE 2017).

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<sup>1</sup> A charter school is generally exempt from most laws governing school districts, except where specifically noted in the law. California public charter schools are required to participate in the statewide assessment test, STAR (Standardized Testing and Reporting). A charter school is usually created or organized by a group of teachers, parents, and community leaders or a community-based organization, and it is usually sponsored by an existing local public school board or county board of education. Specific goals and operating procedures for the charter school are detailed in an agreement (or “charter”) between the sponsoring board and charter organizers.



**TABLE 5.15-1  
GORMAN JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
FACILITIES, ENROLLMENT, AND CAPACITY**

<b>School (Grade Level)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2004–2005)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2005–2006)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2006–2007)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2007–2008)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2008–2009)</b>		<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2009–2010)</b>
Gorman Elementary (K–8)	56	52	48	50	44		68
Gorman Learning Center (K–12)	1,926	2,169	2,022	848	971		1,198
<b>Gorman District Total</b>	<b>1,982</b>	<b>2,221</b>	<b>2,070</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>1,015</b>		<b>1,266</b>
<b>School (Grade Level)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2010–2011)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2011–2012)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2012–2013)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2013–2014)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>b</sup> (2014–2015)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>b</sup> (2015–2016)</b>	<b>Capacity (2016)*</b>
Gorman Elementary (K–8)	96	98	99	104	103	103	N/A <sup>c</sup>
Gorman Learning Center (K–12)	1,415	1,539	1,641	1,788	1,947	2,236	Unlimited <sup>d</sup>
<b>Gorman District Total</b>	<b>1,511</b>	<b>1,637</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>1,892</b>	<b>2,050</b>	<b>2,339</b>	<b>N/A</b>
* Historic capacities and changes in capacity over the years are not available.							
Sources:							
<sup>a</sup> CDE 2015.							
<sup>b</sup> CDE 2017.							
<sup>c</sup> School has no set capacity							
<sup>d</sup> GLC 2016.							

Gorman Elementary School serves both elementary and middle school students. It is located at 49847 Gorman School Road in Gorman, approximately 3.5 miles west of the Project site. As shown in Table 5.15-1, enrollment at Gorman Elementary School for the 2015–2016 school year is 103 students but the school has not set capacity (CDE 2017).

The Gorman Learning Center, chartered by the Gorman District, serves five counties (Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties) and offers independent study/home schooling and special education studies. It has resource centers in the Cities of Lancaster, Santa Clarita and Redlands. As shown in Table 5.15-1, enrollment for the 2015–2016 school year is 2,236 students (CDE 2017). Due to the nature of independent studies, the Gorman Learning Center has unlimited capacity (GLC 2016).

As shown in Table 5.15-1, student enrollment at the Gorman District increased slightly in the school years from 2004–2005 to 2005–2006 and decreased in the school years from 2006–2007 to 2007–2008. The decrease in district-wide enrollment is due to a decrease in enrollment at the Gorman Learning Center. District-wide enrollment increased again in years 2007–2008 and 2014–2015. Enrollment at Gorman Elementary School decreased from 2004–2005 to 2006–2007 and increased from 2006–2007 to 2007–2008, decreased from 2007–2008 to 2008–2009 and was increasing from 2009 to 2014, but has recently decreased. Student enrollment in the Gorman District (K–8) does not exceed existing capacity on a district-wide basis. Again, student capacity is unlimited for the Gorman Learning Center (GLC 2016).

As shown in Exhibit 5.15-1, the eastern portion of the Project site falls within the boundary of the WUSD. The WUSD is responsible for serving K–8 grade levels, and currently serves the communities of West Lancaster, Quartz Hill, West Palmdale, and Leona Valley with six elementary schools that serve grades K–6, two middle schools that serve grades 7 and 8, and three schools that serve grades K–8. Sundown Elementary School (K–5), Del Sur Elementary School (K–8), and Joe Walker Middle School (7–8) are located closest to the eastern boundary of the Project site. Sundown Elementary School is located at 6151 West Avenue J-8 in Lancaster and is approximately 25 miles southeast of the eastern boundary of the Project site; Del Sur Elementary School is located at 9023 West Avenue H in Lancaster and is approximately 21 miles southeast of the Project site; and Joe Walker Middle School is located at 5632 West Avenue L-8 in Quartz Hill and is approximately 25 miles from the eastern boundary of the Project site.

As shown in Table 5.15-2, Westside Union Elementary District School Enrollment and Capacity, the WUSD’s enrollment is 9,070 students in 2015–2016 and current permanent capacity is 8,123 seats. Student enrollment in WUSD exceeds existing permanent capacity at all school levels on a district-wide basis. The WUSD is currently meeting school facility needs through the use of portable classrooms (WUSD 2015, 2016).

**TABLE 5.15-2  
WESTSIDE UNION ELEMENTARY DISTRICT  
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND CAPACITY**

<b>School (Grade Level)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2004-2005)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2005-2006)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2006-2007)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2007-2008)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2008-2009)</b>		<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2009-2010)</b>
Elementary (K-6)	5,716	6,269	6,227	6,712	6,522		6,462
Middle School (7-8)	2,121	2,259	2,829	2,403	2,311		2,253
<b>WUSD Total</b>	<b>7,837</b>	<b>8,528</b>	<b>9,056</b>	<b>9,115</b>	<b>8,833</b>		<b>8,715</b>
<b>School (Grade Level)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2010-2011)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2011-2012)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2012-2013)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2013-2014)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2014-2015)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>b</sup> (2015-2016)</b>	<b>Capacity<sup>c</sup> (2015)</b>
Elementary (K-6)	6,364	6,367	6,569	6,778	6,780	6,949	6,381
Middle School (7-8)	2,241	2,158	2,076	2,173	2,161	2,121	1,742
<b>WUSD Total</b>	<b>8,605</b>	<b>8,525</b>	<b>8,645</b>	<b>8,951</b>	<b>8,941</b>	<b>9,070</b>	<b>8,123</b>
Sources:							
a CDE 2015.							
b CDE 2017.							
c WUSD 2015, 2016.							

## High School

As shown in Exhibit 5.15-1, the AVUHSD is responsible for serving students in grades 9 through 12 in the Project area. The AVUHSD operates 16 schools located throughout the Antelope Valley, including 2 continuation high schools, a community day school, 2 alternative education (independent charter) schools, 2 adult education schools, 1 early college high school, and 8 comprehensive high schools. Quartz Hill High School is the closest comprehensive high school to the Project site and is located approximately 25 miles from the southeastern portion of the Project site.

As shown in Table 5.15-3, the 2015–2016 school year enrollment for Quartz Hill High School was 3,063 students. Currently, there are 54 portable classrooms at the campus. Student capacity at Quartz Hill High School is a maximum of 3,500 students; therefore, with an occupancy rate of 87.5 percent, Quartz Hill High School operates within the limits of its available capacity. As shown in Table 5.15-4, Antelope Valley Union High School District School Enrollment and Capacity, the current enrollment (2015–2016) in the AVUHSD is 24,127 students with capacity for 25,778 students.

**TABLE 5.15-3  
ANTELOPE VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND CAPACITY**

<b>School (Grade Level)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2004–2005)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2005–2006)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2006–2007)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2007–2008)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2008–2009)</b>		<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2009–2010)</b>
Quartz Hill High School	3,379	3,692	3,590	3,408	3,193		3,118
<b>AVUHSD Total</b>	<b>23,900</b>	<b>25,312</b>	<b>26,341</b>	<b>26,453</b>	<b>26,159</b>		<b>26,255</b>
<b>School (Grade Level)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2010–2011)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2011–2012)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2012–2013)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2013–2014)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>a</sup> (2014–2015)</b>	<b>Enrollment<sup>b</sup> (2015–2016)</b>	<b>Capacity<sup>c</sup> (2015)</b>
Quartz Hill High School	3,154	<b>3,146</b>	<b>3,198</b>	<b>3,135</b>	<b>3,133</b>	<b>3,063</b>	3,500
<b>AVUHSD Total</b>	<b>26,084</b>	<b>25,537</b>	<b>24,816</b>	<b>24,468</b>	<b>24,619</b>	<b>24,127</b>	<b>25,778</b>
Sources:							
a CDE 2015.							
b CDE 2017.							
c AVUHSD 2015, 2016.							

## School Transportation

The Antelope Valley Schools Transportation Agency (AVSTA) provides busing for all K–12 students in the Antelope Valley area. The AVSTA is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that currently serves four school districts, including the AVUHSD; the WUSD; the Lancaster School District; and the Keppel Union School District. The AVSTA provides home-to-school transportation for regular education, special needs education, and field trips (AVSTA 2015).

## Community College

The Antelope Valley Community College District (AVCCD) serves northern Los Angeles County and southern Kern County. Communities served by the AVCCD include Acton, Antelope Acres, Lake Hughes, Lake Los Angeles, Lancaster, Leona Valley, Llano, Palmdale, Pearblossom, Quartz Hill, Rosamond, and Sun Village. The AVCCD's single college, Antelope Valley College, is located on 135 acres at 3401 West Avenue K in Lancaster, approximately 28 miles from the southeastern corner of the Project site. A second campus is located at 1529 East Palmdale Boulevard in the Palmdale area to better meet the needs of residents of the southern portion of the Antelope Valley. Classes are held at other locations as well, including a Federal Aviation Administration certification program in airframe manufacturing technology at Fox Field in Lancaster.

The AVCCD worked with the AVUHSD to open a high school campus on the main college campus, known as Students on the Academic Rise (SOAR) High School. This high school integrates college courses into the high school curriculum and allows students to work towards a high school diploma and an associate's degree concurrently.

California State University, Bakersfield's (CSUB's) Antelope Valley Regional Center offers classes at their facility in Lancaster, providing educational opportunities for residents of Inyo, southeast Kern, and northern Los Angeles County to obtain bachelor's and master's degrees. The AVCCD has also established a dual admission agreement with CSUB, which allows freshman students who have been admitted to CSUB to complete 56 lower division units and Antelope Valley College and transfer without requiring a second application (AVCCD 2009) (see Appendix 5.15-A).

### 5.15.4 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

No project design features have been identified.

### 5.15.5 THRESHOLD CRITERIA

The following significance threshold criterion is derived from the County of Los Angeles Environmental Checklist. The Project would have a significant impact related to school services if it would:

**Threshold 15-1** Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the

construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable performance objectives for any of the public services: schools.

## 5.15.6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

**Threshold 15-1** **Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable performance objectives for any of the public services: schools?**

### On-Site Impacts

#### *K-8 Public Schools*

Implementation of the Project would result in the generation of new students to be served by the Gorman District and the WUSD, which could result in a significant impact to these school districts without mitigation.

At buildout, the Project site would include as many as 14,098 single-family detached units, 2,643 single-family attached units,<sup>2</sup> and 2,592 multi-family units. In order to estimate the number of new students who would be occupying these housing units, student generation factors for each housing type were obtained from the school districts. In addition, the K-8 school facility needs are based on an assumed standard classroom size of 20 students per classroom for grades K-3 and 30 students per classroom for grades 4-8 and corresponding school capacity of 1,380 students per school.<sup>3</sup>

As described in Section 4.0, Project Description, the Project includes generalized locations for a one K-5 school and five K-8 schools (essentially about 5.5 elementary schools) (MM 15-1); each K-8 school is expected to have a capacity of 1,380 students and the K-5 school would have a capacity of 840 students (based on 7 classrooms for each grade and 20 students in each classroom) for a total elementary school capacity for approximately 7,740 students.

A number of goals and policies in the AVAP address schools and the provision of educational services. In compliance with these goals and policies, the Project Applicant/Developer has coordinated with the school districts serving the site, including K-8 and high school districts, and the Project would provide schools sites to serve residents of the Project. These school sites would be located adjacent to parks and open spaces and would be accessible to planned residential areas or Villages. As discussed in Section 5.8, Land Use, Entitlements, and Planning, the Project would not conflict with goals and policies in the Antelope Valley Area

<sup>2</sup> Single-family attached units are typically defined by school districts as units that share a common wall and are not for rental purposes.

<sup>3</sup> This assumes 6 classrooms for each grade, with 20 students in each classroom for grades K-3 and 30 students in each classroom for grades 4-8.

Plan that address the provision of schools and educational services. An analysis of elementary school facility for the Gorman District and WUSD, separately, is provided below.

### Gorman Joint School District

The School Facilities and Funding Agreement between the Gorman District and the Developer (see Appendix 5.15-B) sets the initial student generation rates for residential land uses and a maximum of 19,000 dwelling units within the service boundaries of the Gorman District. Up to approximately 13,249 dwelling units are proposed within the Gorman District, which is less than the maximum of 19,000 units in the agreement. Table 5.15-4, Centennial Buildout Demand for Gorman District Facilities Based on the School Facilities and Funding Agreement, provides an estimate of student generation using the factors defined in the agreement and shows that slightly more than three K–8 schools would be needed within the Gorman District to serve future residential development on the site.

**TABLE 5.15-4  
CENTENNIAL BUILDOUT DEMAND FOR GORMAN DISTRICT FACILITIES  
BASED ON THE SCHOOL FACILITIES AND FUNDING AGREEMENT**

<b>Residential Use</b>	<b>Full-Time Dwelling Units<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Generation Rates<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Total Estimated Students</b>	<b>Required Classrooms<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Required Schools<sup>c</sup></b>
Single-Family Detached	8,519	0.4778	4,070	160	2.95
Single-Family Attached	2,540	0.1453	369	14	0.27
Apartment	2,190	0.1227	269	11	0.19
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13,249</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,708</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>3.41</b>
Formula to calculate required classrooms and required schools (3 steps): 1. Dwelling units x generation rate = estimated number of students 2. Estimated number of students ÷ 25.5 students per classroom = required classrooms 3. Estimated number of students ÷ 1,380 school capacity = required schools.					
<sup>a</sup> Source: Gorman Joint School District (see Appendix 5.15-B).					
<sup>b</sup> Based on an average of 25.5 students per classroom.					
<sup>c</sup> Based on an average K–8 school capacity of 1,380 students.					

The one proposed K–5 and three proposed K–8 schools in the western section of the site within the Gorman District boundaries would have a total capacity for 4,980 students, which would be adequate to accommodate the estimated 4,708 students who would reside within the Gorman District service area. Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of MM 15-1.

While the first school is planned to be open in the same or nearby residential village within the school year that the first occupancy permit is issued, prior to completion of the first K–8 school on site, students from the Project have the option to attend Gorman Elementary School, based on the District's agreement with the Developer. The agreement generally outlines the mitigation for Project impacts to the Gorman District, in lieu of payment of school impact fees. It includes the formation of a community facilities district (CFD) and the issuance of bonds by the CFD; the use of federal, State, and local funds; the approximate location of school sites; the initial student generation rates; a minimum capacity of 1,248



students in permanent facilities and 8 modular classrooms for 256 students in each school; interim use of relocatable classrooms in existing and new schools; 20-acre school sites; and Developer advances, staffing needs, funding thresholds, school facilities plan, and other terms related to the construction of schools on the Project site. The agreement provides for an amendment process to reflect final changes to the Project, the school site locations, and other related terms of the agreement.

Regarding initial school facilities on the Project site, with the consent of the Gorman District (which includes the first phase of Project implementation), the AVUHSD, and the AVCCD, the first K-8 school campus could provide pre-school through high school classes during the day and offer community college classes in the evenings. As Project buildout occurs, this school would revert to a K-8 school as other schools are constructed and become operational. The proposed K-8 schools would be located in Villages 1, 3, and 5, and the K-5 school would be located in Village 9. One of these schools would open within the first year of occupancy of the first residential units within each Village and adjacent Villages, with the second K-8 school opening in compliance with the school district mitigation agreements. The remaining elementary schools are projected to open during future phases, in compliance with the school district mitigation agreements. The need for school facilities is based on the conceptual plan for the Project, and the timing of school facilities construction would depend on the rate of Project development and the actual demand for school facilities, as determined by the respective school districts. Therefore, with implementation of MM 15-1 and MM 15-2, which requires the Project Applicant/Developer to demonstrate to the County that it has complied with all applicable school district agreements, impacts related to elementary school facilities in the Gorman District would be less than significant.

#### Westside Union Elementary School District

The WUSD has provided student generation factors to estimate the number of students that may be generated by development. Use of these student generation rates for the Project is provided in Table 5.15-5, Centennial Buildout Demand for WUSD Facilities Based on WUSD Rates, below. As shown, as many as 2,551 students are expected from the residential development proposed within the WUSD boundaries on the site, resulting in the need for slightly less than 2 elementary (K-8) schools based on an average school size of 1,380 students.

**TABLE 5.15-5  
CENTENNIAL BUILDOUT DEMAND FOR WUSD FACILITIES BASED ON WUSD RATES**

<b>Residential Use</b>	<b>Full-Time Dwelling Units</b>	<b>Generation Rates<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Total Estimated Students</b>	<b>Required Classrooms<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Required Schools<sup>c</sup></b>
Single-Family Units	5,435	0.4407	2,395	94	1.74
Multi-Family Units*	649	0.2411	156	6	0.11
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6,084</b>	-	<b>2,551</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1.85</b>
<p>* This includes single-family attached and apartment units            Formula to calculate required classrooms and required schools (3 steps): 1. Dwelling units x generation rate = estimated number of students 2. Estimated number of students ÷ 25.50 students per classroom = required classrooms 3. Estimated number of students ÷ 1,380 school capacity = required schools.</p> <p><sup>a</sup> WUSD 2015.  <sup>b</sup> Based on an average of 25.5 students per classroom.  <sup>c</sup> Based on an average K-8 school capacity of 1,380 students.</p>					

The Project has included generalized locations for two K-8 schools in the WUSD. These schools would have a total capacity for 2,760 students, which would be adequate to accommodate the estimated 2,551 students who would reside within the WUSD service area. Two K-8 schools to be located in Villages 7 and 8 would serve students within the WUSD service area. Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of MM 15-1.

As per MM 15-2, the facilities and funding mitigation agreement with WUSD, to be executed in accordance with Section 65996 of the *California Government Code*, will be completed once planning begins for new development in areas within the WUSD service area. Therefore, with implementation of MM 15-1 and MM 15-2, impacts related to elementary school facilities in the WUSD would be less than significant.

### K-8 School Sites

As discussed previously, the Project has included generalized locations for one K-5 school and five K-8 schools to accommodate the demand for elementary school facilities generated by future residents (see Exhibit 4-1, Centennial Project – Conceptual Land Use Plan). Final school site locations would be determined as future tract maps are prepared and in coordination with the respective school districts (e.g., through interdistrict transfers so that students from the same neighborhood go to the same schools if they choose).

According to the California Department of Education's (CDE's) *Guide to School Site Analysis and Development*, the amount of land recommended to serve a 1,200 student elementary or middle school would generally range from 17.6 to 23.1 acres per school, although the guide allows each school district to tailor its schools to specific needs and as necessary to accommodate unusual conditions. The sizing of school sites would also depend on the grade breakdown of students, the implementation of classroom size reduction, building layout/configuration, and the outdoor facilities that would be provided (CDE 2000). As shown in Table 5.15-6, K-8 School Location/Acres, each of the proposed school sites would occupy between 11 to 15 acres. The purchase of additional land to meet CDE recommendations is at the school district's discretion.

**TABLE 5.15-6  
K-8 SCHOOL LOCATIONS/ACRES**

<b>Village</b>	<b>Acres</b>
1	15
3	15
5	15
7	15
8	15
9	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>
Source: Placeworks 2017.	

The designation of school sites on the Project site, as each future tract map is developed, will allow the school districts to acquire the sites and provide school facilities as needed. The Project Applicant/Developer has a signed agreement with the Gorman District to facilitate the financing, construction, and operation of new school facilities in the Project area to ensure the timely provision of schools that correspond to the phasing of development on the Project site within its service area. This agreement will be amended to reflect the Project and needed school facilities. The Agreement with WUSD will be completed when planning begins for new development in areas within the WUSD service area (refer to MM 15-3). School site location, sizing, and other details would be subject to Title 5 of the *California Code of Regulations* and will be determined in consultation with the affected school district pursuant to the executed agreement(s). Therefore, with implementation of MMs 15-1 and 15-2, there would be less than significant impacts related to school site selection.

### Public High Schools

Implementation of the Project would result in the generation of new high school students to be served by the AVUHSD, which could result in a significant impact to the school district. Table 5.15-7, Centennial Buildout Demand for High Schools Based on AVUHSD Rates, presents the estimated student generation based on current (2015) AVUHSD student generation rates. As shown, the Project would generate 2,885 students at buildout and would need one high school.

**TABLE 5.15-7  
CENTENNIAL BUILDOUT DEMAND FOR HIGH SCHOOLS BASED ON AVUHSD RATES**

<b>Residential Use</b>	<b>Full-Time Dwelling Units</b>	<b>Generation Rates<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Total Estimated Students</b>	<b>Required Classrooms<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Required Schools<sup>c</sup></b>
Single-Family Detached	13,954	0.180	2,512	84	0.88
Single-Family Attached	3,024	0.067	203	7	0.07
Apartment	2,355	0.072	170	6	0.06
<b>Totals</b>	<b>19,333</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>2,885</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1.01</b>
Formula to calculate required classrooms and required schools (3 steps): 1. dwelling units x generation rate = estimated number of students 2. estimated number of students ÷ 30 students per classroom = required classrooms 3. estimated number of students ÷ 2,850 school capacity = required schools. <sup>a</sup> AVUHSD 2015. <sup>b</sup> Based on an average of 30 students per classroom. <sup>c</sup> The Project provides a high school site to accommodate a school ranging in capacity size of 2,850 to 3,350 students. The required school factor in this table assumes an average high school capacity of 2,850 students.					

The Project has included a generalized location, in the central portion of the development area, for one high school (grades 9–12). The planned high school site, which would be refined during preparation of the future tract map that encompasses the proposed location or an alternate location agreed upon by AVUHSD (MM 15-3), would have a minimum size of 60 acres and be capable of accommodating up to 3,350 students. Thus, the total Project-generated high school students (i.e., 2,885 students) could be fully accommodated within the one high school proposed with the Project.

The first school will be built and operational prior to the first certificate of occupancy. It is anticipated that the K–8 school (initially a K–12 facility) would be opened by the Gorman District at occupancy of the first residential units. The planned approach is to initially construct a K–12 campus in order to provide public school accommodations at all education levels at Project opening. As Project buildout occurs, this school would revert to a K–8 school when the high school is constructed. Students from the Project would also have the option of attending Quartz Hill High School (by busing through AVSTA) or applying for an interdistrict transfer to attend the El Tejon Unified School District’s Frazier Mountain High School, which is located approximately ten miles northwest of the site. Frazier Mountain High School 2015- 2016 enrollment was 286 students (CDE 2017) and has capacity for additional students (ETUSD 2016). The El Tejon Unified School District also allows interdistrict transfers subject to approval of the student’s home district (ETUSD 2015).

The on-site high school (grades 9–12) is anticipated to open in compliance with the school district mitigation agreements required under MM 15-3. This schedule was anticipated on the basis that there would not be enough high school students to justify, on an operational basis, the opening of a comprehensive high school on the site until there would be enough students. The actual development of the high school would depend on the Project’s rate of development, and according to the School Facilities and Funding Agreement between the AVUHSD and the Project Applicant/Developer, with the construction of the high school coinciding with the development of residential uses as specified in the Agreement. The Agreement also includes the construction of interim and permanent facilities, to serve as

mitigation for Project impacts to AVUHSD, in lieu of payment of school impact fees. It includes the formation of a CFD and the issuance of bonds by the CFD; the use of federal, State and local funds; approximate school site locations; initial student generation rates; a minimum capacity of 2,860 students in permanent facilities and 17 modular classrooms for 500 students in each school; 60-acre school sites; Developer advances, interim facilities at a K-8 school site, staffing needs, school facilities plan, and other terms related to the construction of high schools on the Project site. The agreement provides for an amendment process to reflect final changes to the Project, the high school site locations, and other related terms of the agreement. Therefore, with implementation of MM 15-2 and MM 15-3, impacts related to high school facilities in the AVUHSD would be less than significant.

### High School Sites

The CDE has developed a “functional approach” for determining the size of a school site. The approach was based on the amount of area required to support the functions or activities of the proposed educational program. According to the CDEs *Guide to School Site Analysis and Development*, the recommended acreage for a 2,400-student high school is generally 52.7 net usable acres, with sizes of 58.3 to 61.5 acres for 2,401 to 2,600 students and up to 75.1 to 79.8 acres for 3,601 to 3,800 students. The Centennial Project includes a 60-acre high school site in Village 6. The actual sizing of school facilities is ultimately the decision of the school district. However, the Project’s current preliminary sizing of school facilities (i.e., 60 acres minimum) is considered adequate. School site location, sizing, and other details would be subject to Title 5 of the *California Code of Regulations* and determined in consultation with the affected school district pursuant to the executed agreement (MM 15-3). Therefore, with implementation of MMs 15-2 and 15-3, there would be less than significant impacts related to high school site selection.

### ***Student Transportation***

Exhibit 4-1 identifies the conceptual locations for the school sites designated in the Project site. Each of the school sites would be centrally located among the Villages and pedestrian trails (i.e., greenways/paseos) are generally near the school sites. Because these school facilities would be centrally located, a majority of the students on the Project site would not require busing. However, busing would be available to the expected limited number of students outside the Transportation Agency’s established “walk-in” areas (i.e., farther than three miles from the school). Therefore, the increase in the student population would not create transportation problems for anticipated school trips internal to the Project site. No impact would occur and no mitigation would be required.

### ***College (Secondary Education)***

The residents of the Project would be expected to seek higher education that would be provided by various public and private colleges and universities through the County, the State and the nation. As discussed, the Project site is within the service boundaries of the AVCCD and its Antelope Valley College campus. This campus would provide Project residents with educational opportunities to earn a high school diploma and various associates’, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees at their Antelope Valley College campuses in Lancaster, Palmdale and at Fox Field. The AVCCD has indicated that they support the Project and will

provide similar programs and services to the Project in both a traditional classroom setting and using the latest technology (e.g., distance learning supported by broadband internet access). Impacts on AVCCD facilities and other higher education facilities in the County and elsewhere would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

### **Off-site Impacts**

The proposed off-site Project features, including intersection improvements with SR-138, utility connections, water wells, and California Aqueduct crossings, do not include residential uses that would directly generate additional students or otherwise create an increased demand for schools. There would be no impact and no mitigation is required.

**Impact Summary:** The Project would increase the population and would result in the generation of new students to be served by the respective school districts. The Project includes generalized locations for one K–5 school site, five K–8 school sites (MM 15-1), and one high school site (MM 15-3). In addition, the Project Applicant/Developer has signed agreements with the Gorman District and AVUHSD, and will sign an agreement with the WUSD to facilitate the financing, construction, and operation of new school facilities on the Project site (MM 15-2). With implementation of MM 15-1, MM 15-2, and MM 15-3, impacts related to public school facilities would be less than significant. With compliance with State regulations, all school sites would be located, sized, and otherwise meet California Department of Education Title 5 requirements and there would be a less than significant impact.

### **5.15.7 MITIGATION MEASURES**

- MM 15-1** The Project Applicant/Developer shall designate one K–5 and five K–8 school sites in the Project area in accordance with the conceptual land use plan or alternate location(s) that shall be agreed upon by the authorized school districts.
- MM 15-2** The Project Applicant/Developer shall demonstrate to the County that they have an executed agreement with all school districts that operate within the boundaries of the Project site.
- MM 15-3** The Project Applicant/Developer shall designate one high school site in the Project area in accordance with the conceptual land use plan or alternate location(s) that shall be agreed upon by the authorized school district.

### **5.15.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION**

Implementation of MMs 15-1, 15-2, and 15-3 would reduce potentially significant impacts related to education to levels that are less than significant.

## 5.15.9 REFERENCES

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