

**ZONING EXEMPTION FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE RANCHO SONADO
SITE FROM THE COUNTY OF ORANGE ZONING REQUIREMENTS**

RESOLUTION NO. 15-25

WHEREAS, the Orange County Board of Education ("Board") owns real property known as Rancho Sonado, located at 8755 Santiago Canyon Road, Silverado, California, more particularly described in Exhibit "A", attached hereto and incorporated herein ("Rancho Sonado");

WHEREAS, for approximately 18 years, the County Superintendent has used the Rancho Sonado site for its Inside the Outdoors Environmental Education and Science program. The Rancho Sonado site hosts students from Orange County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County, and Los Angeles school districts for instruction on environmental and scientific field programs. Overall, over 110,000 students utilize the Rancho Sonado facilities every year;

WHEREAS, in 2020, the Bond Fire destroyed almost all of the buildings and structures on the Rancho Sonado property;

WHEREAS, Government Code section 53094 provides that a school district, by a vote of two-thirds of its members, may render city or county zoning ordinances inapplicable to a proposed use of property by a school district, unless the proposed use of the property is for non-classroom facilities;

WHEREAS, the provision of public education in California is a matter of statewide concern, and the purpose of Government Code section 53094 is to ensure that state-sanctioned school construction and school location is unimpeded;

WHEREAS, Education Code section 8763 authorizes county offices of education to "provide programs and classes in outdoor science education and conservation education for pupils," and therefore, when county offices of education construct instructional facilities for these purposes, they are conducting sovereign activities on behalf of the state;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Donation Agreement by which the Board acquired the Rancho Sonado property, the County Superintendent must conduct environmental and scientific field programs and educational opportunities for Orange County public school students;

WHEREAS, there are no equivalent sites at which County Superintendent can conduct environmental and scientific field programs in the vicinity of Rancho Sonado, and it is important for Orange County schools to use the Rancho Sonado as a site for outdoor science education and conservation education in Orange County;

WHEREAS, the County Superintendent wishes to reconstruct Rancho Sonado (the "Project") so that the County Superintendent is again able to offer environmental education and science programs at Rancho Sonado, such as County Superintendent's Inside the Outdoors Environmental Education and Science program;

WHEREAS, the Project reconstruction encompasses new indoor and outdoor instructional spaces, including a new multipurpose building for both indoor and outdoor education, pavilion/barn structure, amphitheater for large group instruction, covered lunch area that will be set up for outdoor education, and seven (7) outdoor teaching pavilions along Rancho Sonado's hiking trails;

WHEREAS, Rancho Sonado is located within the boundaries of the County of Orange, California ("County");

WHEREAS, the Project is subject to the Division of the State Architect's ("DSA") jurisdiction, and DSA will be reviewing the Project for compliance with the law governing the construction of school buildings;

WHEREAS, County Superintendent has balanced the interests of the public, including those of the County Superintendent and the County of Orange, and determined that the interests of the public are best served by Board exercising its rights under Government Code section 53094 in order to exempt the Project from the County of Orange's zoning, and commencing and completing the school buildings and classrooms Project under DSA review.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE GOVERNING BOARD OF THE ORANGE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS DOES HEREBY RESOLVE, DETERMINE, DECLARE AND ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. That the above recitals are all true and correct.

Section 2. That, pursuant to Government Code section 53094, subdivision (b), the Orange County Board of Education ("Board") declares the Project exempt from County of Orange's zoning requirements.

Section 3. The Board adopts each ground and each statement in the Recitals and as set forth herein as a separate finding in support of its action and reserves the right to establish, expand upon, and include additional documentation not already referenced in support of this Resolution.

Section 4. Any and all unprivileged written documents, communications and resolutions, including all planning documents with respect to the proposed Project, are incorporated by reference as evidence in support of the findings set forth herein, including any and all staff reports relating to this Resolution.

Section 5. County Superintendent, or his designee, is directed to notify the County of Orange of this action within ten (10) days of the Board's approval of this Resolution by delivering a copy of this Resolution to the County of Orange.

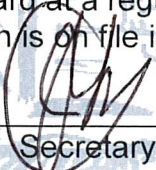
Section 6. County Superintendent, or his designee, is authorized and directed to take such further action(s) as may be necessary and appropriate to carry out the intent of this Resolution.

Section 7. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Governing Board of the Orange County Superintendent of Schools on May 7, 2025 by the following vote:

AYES: 4 (Barke, Williams, Valdes, Shaw)
NOES: 0
ABSENT: 1 (Sparks)
ABSTAIN: 0

I, Jorge Valdes, Secretary of the Orange County Board of Education, the Board, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of a resolution passed and adopted by said Board at a regularly scheduled and conducted meeting held on May 7, 2025, which resolution is on file in the office of said Board.



Secretary

