

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR REAL ESTATE OUTGRANT FOR A CHARTER SCHOOL AT JOINT BASE ANACOSTIA-BOLLING, WASHINGTON, DC**

**Introduction**

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 United States Code 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500–1508), and Department of the Navy procedures for implementing NEPA (32 CFR Part 775), the United States Department of the Navy (Navy) gives notice that an Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required for a real estate outgrant to accommodate the construction and operation of a public charter school on Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling (JBAB) in Washington, DC.

**Description of the Proposed Action**

The Proposed Action is to accommodate the construction and operation of a public charter school on JBAB property serving DC and JBAB military families. To establish the school on installation property, the Navy would retain ownership of the property and enter into a real estate outgrant with the Lawndale Educational and Regional Network (LEARN) Charter School Network. The proposed charter school would be approximately 70,000 square feet with 31 classrooms. Construction would occur in phases; the school would be completed in 2028 with 550 students and 64 staff members.

**Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to accommodate the construction and operation of a public charter school on JBAB property. The need for the Proposed Action is to provide additional educational opportunities for military families. Currently, there are limited available charter school opportunities around JBAB for the approximately 500 school-age military dependents. The lottery application deadline for existing DC charter schools is typically between February and March. Military families usually move to JBAB over the summer months, which is past the DC school lottery deadline. As a result, approximately 300 children are bused to 33 schools throughout DC with commutes up to 60 minutes each way. In addition, approximately 200 JBAB dependents are homeschooled.

**Alternatives**

Alternatives were developed for analysis based upon the following screening factors:

- Given that approximately 50 percent of the students would likely be non-military, the site must be at a location where non-military parents can access the school without being vetted and going through security. Consequently, alternative sites must be along the installation perimeter.
- The site must be a minimum of 4.5 acres.
- The site cannot be within JBAB operational constraints to include Air Installation Compatible Use Zones, explosive safety quantity distance arcs, fuel storage and pipelines, hazardous materials and waste, easements, and setbacks.

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- A site outside the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Eligible Historic Districts is strongly preferred.
- Given that family housing land is leased to private entities through a Public Private Venture, this property is not available for development.

The Navy considered a No Action Alternative and two action alternatives that meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action.

**No Action Alternative:** No charter school would be constructed on JBAB property. JBAB students would continue to be either homeschooled or bused to 33 public and charter schools in DC with commutes of up to 60 minutes each way.

**Alternative 1:** The charter school would be constructed on a 7.4-acre site at the northern portion of the installation on Mitscher Road, on an open field adjacent to Building 414. Portions of the proposed building would consist of two stories, and there would be several outdoor play areas. Perimeter fencing would be installed between JBAB and the proposed school to separate the land uses. The public would access the school from South Capitol Street SW without going through military security. Curbside drop off for military families would be available along Mitscher Road on JBAB. Turnstiles with Common Access Card readers would be installed to allow military children to re-enter JBAB at the end of the day.

During Phase I of construction, military personnel using office space in Building 414 would be relocated to office space in Building 72, which is adjacent to the Anacostia River on Robbins Road. Building 414 would be renovated to serve pre-kindergarten 3 and 4, kindergarten, and first grade during Phase I as the lot is prepared for construction. During Phase II, students would move into the new school building, and Building 414 would be demolished. The school would continue to add one grade each year for second through eighth grades. Alternative 1 would include 21 parking spaces at the charter school. Measures to ensure transportation systems continue to operate effectively are being considered under Alternative 1, including signalization of the South Capitol Street/Alternative 1 Drive intersection and adding a 125-foot northbound left turn lane to accommodate future queues.

The Alternative 1 site is within the 100-year floodplain. Design measures would be incorporated at this site to address hazards for high-risk structures in flood hazard areas. At a minimum, the first-floor elevation would be raised using fill to at least the height of the 500-year flood, which is 11 feet above mean sea level, plus an additional foot for a total of 12 feet. Building 414 would also be upgraded to meet floodplain requirements.

**Alternative 2:** The charter school would be constructed on a 5.9-acre site at the southern portion of the installation on Boyer Road, at the location of Building 4412, the Navy Lodge. Similar to Alternative 1, this alternative would be constructed in two phases. The Navy Lodge may be used temporarily with renovations and would then be demolished to accommodate the proposed school. If the Navy Lodge is not used, trailers would be brought in temporarily. Perimeter fencing would be installed prior to construction between JBAB, the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL; immediately south of JBAB), and the proposed school to separate the school from the installations. Curbside drop off for military families would be available along Beyer Road on JBAB. Given that military family housing is adjacent to this site, more children would be able to walk to school from JBAB as compared to the northern location.

A new access drive to the charter school would be constructed separate from the installation access road. The new entrance would be constructed from the old military gate that is currently closed, off Overlook Avenue. The entranceway would be approximately 600 feet north of the NRL Driveway and

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I-295 ramp intersection. Alternative 2 would include 26 parking spaces. Measures to ensure transportation systems continue to operate effectively are being considered under Alternative 2, including signalization of Overlook Avenue SW/Beyer Road SW/Alternative 2 Drive and extending the southbound right turn lane storage length to 200 feet. In addition, Chesapeake Street SW between Overlook Avenue SW and 2nd Street SW would include improvements such as widening of the sidewalk, restriping Chesapeake Street SW to include a sharrow, narrowing the apron of the I-295 on-ramp to Chesapeake Street SW, and adding a crosswalk at 2nd and Chesapeake Streets SW from the northeast corner to southside.

Alternative 2 is the Navy's Preferred Alternative.

**Environmental Effects of the Preferred Alternative**

The EA examined the potential effects of the No Action Alternative, Alternative 1, and Alternative 2, on the following resource categories: air quality, water resources, cultural resources, noise, infrastructure, transportation, socioeconomics, and environmental justice. The following is a summary of the environmental consequences of Alternative 2, as it is the Navy's Preferred Alternative; differences among alternatives are also noted for specific resources.

**Air Quality:** There would be no significant impacts on air quality. Short-term, minor air emissions would occur during construction from construction equipment, waste removal, and material delivery. Long-term, minor air emissions would be expected from facility operations and increased commuters. Estimated construction and operational emissions would be well below *de minimis* and major source thresholds.

**Water Resources:** There would be no significant impacts on water resources. In the short term, construction would likely require dewatering for any below-grade construction, requiring a Temporary Discharge Authorization Permit for discharge of uncontaminated groundwater, after passing through a sediment trap, into the Anacostia River, but groundwater would resume normal levels once dewatering ceases with no long-term impacts. Alternative 2 would have slightly more impervious surfaces from a larger parking area than Alternative 1. Erosion- and sediment-control plan and stormwater management plans would be required as part of permit processes for the proposed school and would minimize short-term impacts on surface water from runoff. Alternative 2 is outside of the 100- and 500-year floodplains, and no impacts on floodplains would occur.

~~Alternative 1 is located in the 100-year floodplain. Further site design and mitigations, specific flood protection measures, and preparedness planning would be required under this alternative, in order to account for the occupancy of Building 414 during Phase I and the new building under Phase II, given that the proposed use as a school would be considered a critical facility.~~

**Cultural Resources:** There would be no significant impacts on cultural resources. The Alternative 2 site has been heavily disturbed from previous construction. Archaeological investigations at the site in June and July 2020 identified one new archaeological site, 51SW030, below the areas disturbed by past filling and grading; Site 51SW030 was determined not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Although the project is in close proximity to NRHP-eligible prehistoric sites, the archaeological investigations did not identify any NRHP-eligible sites within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Therefore, Alternative 2 would not have any direct effects on belowground cultural resources. The NRHP-eligible NRL Historic District is south and west of the Alternative 2 site, and a portion of the NRL Historic District falls within the visual APE for Alternative 2. This viewshed is not significant; therefore, no adverse effects on aboveground resources would occur.

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The Alternative 1 site largely consists of fill, and there would be no potential for prehistoric or archaeological sites. Alternative 1 would have no direct or indirect adverse effects on any NRHP-eligible resources, including viewsheds.

**Noise:** There would be no significant impacts on the noise environment. Short-term, minor, adverse impacts from construction noise would occur. Long-term, negligible-to-minor impacts from traffic noise would occur.

**Infrastructure:** There would be no significant impacts on infrastructure. Minor utility relocations and interconnections would be needed during construction of the charter school, which could result in intermittent and temporary minor service interruptions on existing utilities while construction is occurring. Long-term, minor increases in utility consumption would occur.

**Transportation:** There would be no significant impacts on transportation systems, with implementation of mitigation measures. Short-term, minor, adverse impacts on pedestrians, bicyclists, and traffic during construction would occur. Long-term, adverse impacts on pedestrians, bicyclists, traffic, and transit would occur. Minimal long-term impacts on truck-traffic access would be expected, and no long-term impacts on parking. Recommended mitigation measures for the pedestrian and bicycle network under Alternative 2 include widening the sidewalk on the southern side of Chesapeake Street SW, restriping Chesapeake Street SW to include a sharrow, and narrowing the apron of the I-295 on-ramp on Chesapeake Street SW to reduce high-speed turns. No mitigation measures are recommended for the transit network. Measures to minimize long-term, adverse impacts on traffic under Alternative 2 include traffic signal timing adjustments, modifications to intersection lane geometry, and the potential for signalization of the site driveway intersection. Short-term, adverse impacts on traffic from construction trucks may be prevented by contractually requiring designated parking areas and staggering truck arrival times. Pedestrians would be alerted of sidewalk closures and alternative sidewalks during construction. LEARN would be required to prepare and update a transportation demand management plan, in coordination with the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), to ensure recommended mitigations are effective.

Impacts from Alternative 1 would be similar to Alternative 2, but impacts on pedestrians and bicyclists would be negligible. No mitigation measures are recommended for the bicycle, pedestrian, or transit networks. Mitigations to minimize long-term, adverse impacts on traffic would include traffic signal timing adjustments, modifications to intersection lane geometry, and the potential for signalization of the site driveway intersection. Short-term, adverse impacts on traffic from construction trucks may be prevented by contractually requiring designated parking areas and staggering truck arrival times. Pedestrians would be alerted of sidewalk closures and alternative sidewalks during construction. Selection of Alternative 1 would also require that LEARN prepare and update a transportation demand management plan, in coordination with the DDOT, to ensure recommended mitigations are effective.

**Socioeconomics:** There would be no significant impacts on socioeconomics. Short- and long-term, minor, beneficial effects would occur from job creation and an additional local school choice. Short-term, minor, adverse effects would occur from reallocation of per-pupil funding in DC public schools. Under Alternative 2, quality of life benefits would be increased for JBAB families related to the proximity of the school to the JBAB residential area.

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**Environmental Justice:** There would be no significant impacts on minority and low-income populations. There are notably larger minority and low-income populations within the study area that would experience noise, air quality, and transportation impacts, but impacts would not be significant. Short- and long-term, minor, beneficial impacts from local job creation and new school choice for residents would occur.

**Cumulative Impacts**

Potential cumulative impacts of any of the alternatives in combination with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions were analyzed and found to be not significant.

**Public and Agency Involvement**

The Navy held a public scoping meeting on November 12, 2019, to solicit input on the Proposed Action, which was announced in the *Prince George's Sentinel* and *The Washington Times*, as well as the JBAB Facebook page. The Navy prepared and circulated a Draft EA to inform the public of the Proposed Action and to allow the opportunity for public review and comment. The review period began with a Notice of Availability published in *The Washington Times* on April 24, 27, and 28, 2020. The Draft EA was accessible on a Navy website.

The Navy coordinated or consulted with agencies including the District Department of Energy and Environment, National Capital Planning Commission, District Department of Transportation, and the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office regarding the Proposed Action.

**Finding**


Based on the analysis presented in the EA, which is herewith incorporated by reference into this Finding of No Significant Impact, the Navy finds that implementation of Alternative 2 (as the Navy's Preferred Alternative), would not significantly affect the quality of the human or natural environment or generate significant controversy, with the traffic mitigations measures that are incorporated into the proposal. Therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

The EA prepared by the Navy addressing this action is on file. Interested parties may obtain a copy from:

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30 Sep 2020  
Date

  
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