

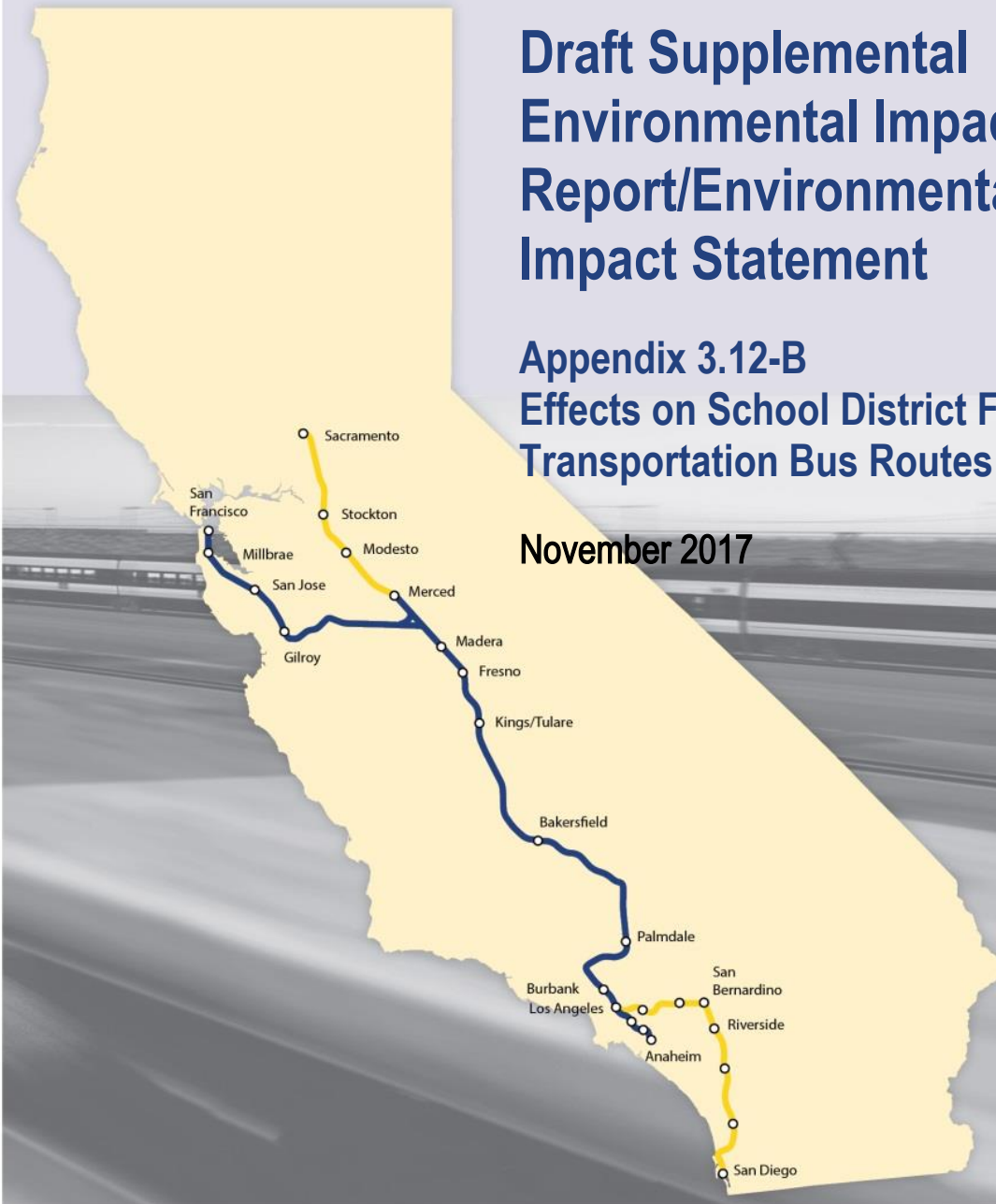
California High-Speed Rail Authority

# *Fresno to Bakersfield* *Section*

## Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement

### Appendix 3.12-B Effects on School District Funding and Transportation Bus Routes

November 2017



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDIX 3.12-B: EFFECTS ON SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDING AND		
	TRANSPORTATION BUS ROUTES .....	3.12-B-1
3.12-B.1	INTRODUCTION .....	3.12-B-1
3.12-B.2	EXISTING CONDITIONS.....	3.12-B-2
3.12-B.3	ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES .....	3.12-B-5
3.12-B.4	REFERENCES .....	3.12-B-11

### Tables

Table 3.12-B-1 School Districts Traversed by the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA	
Alignments .....	3.12-B-2
Figure 3.12-B-1 Elementary and Secondary School Districts along the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA.....	3.12-B-3
Table 3.12-B-2 Road Closures by School District for the F-B LGA .....	3.12-B-5
Table 3.12-B-3 Estimated Numbers of Students Affected in School Districts by the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA .....	3.12-B-6
Table 3.12-B-4 Comparison of Students Affected in School Districts under the F-B LGA, relative to the May 2014 Project.....	3.12-B-8

### Figures

Figure 3.12-B-1 Elementary and Secondary School Districts along the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA.....	3.12-B-3
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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EIR	environmental impact report
EIS	environmental impact statement
Fresno to Bakersfield Supplemental CIA	Draft Fresno to Bakersfield Supplemental Community Impact Assessment Technical Report
Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS	Final Fresno to Bakersfield Section Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement
F-B LGA	Fresno to Bakersfield Locally Generated Alternative
HSR	high-speed rail
May 2014 Project	Comparable portion of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS Preferred Alternative

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## APPENDIX 3.12-B: EFFECTS ON SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDING AND TRANSPORTATION BUS ROUTES

### 3.12-B.1 Introduction

This appendix summarizes potential impacts related to school district funding and transportation bus routes as a result of the high-speed rail (HSR) project. Specifically, the analysis considers the proposed Fresno to Bakersfield Locally Generated Alternative (F-B LGA) and the comparable portion of the Preferred Alternative identified in the *Fresno to Bakersfield Section California High-Speed Train Final Project Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement* (Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS) (Authority and FRA 2014), herein referred to as the May 2014 Project. The appendix includes a summary of the potential effects on public school district funding from a reduction in the number of students as a result of residential relocations and the loss of property tax revenue to school districts due to property acquisitions for the HSR project. The appendix also addresses the potential effects of the construction and operation of the HSR project on school district bus transportation. Information on effects to school district funding is provided in the *Fresno to Bakersfield Draft Supplemental Community Impact Assessment Technical Report* (Fresno to Bakersfield Supplemental CIA) (Authority and FRA 2017). Information on road closures in school districts that may affect bus transportation is provided in Section 3.2, Transportation, of this Supplemental Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS).

#### **Methodology and Definitions**

The analysis presented in this appendix consists of two parts: an examination of the potential effects of the HSR project on school district funding, and an examination of the potential effects of the HSR project on school district bus transportation. The potential effects on school district funding could occur as a result of (1) the potential relocation of students out of current school districts and (2) reductions in property tax revenues that are collected as land acquired by the HSR project is removed from tax rolls.

This analysis uses the same methodology as was used for the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (2014), which consisted of reviewing the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA in relation to school district boundaries and quantitatively assessing the potential impacts to public school districts. School district funding in California is based on student attendance; therefore, the relocation of large populations of students outside of their current school districts would reduce school district funding. To determine the potential likelihood of any such adverse project effects, residential displacements from the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA were examined in relation to school district boundaries and the potential number of school-age children that would be affected in each district. These potential relocations were then evaluated, along with current residential vacancy counts, within the affected school districts to determine whether these relocated students would have the opportunity to remain in their current districts. Reductions in school district funding could occur in an area where a large number of displaced residents would need to relocate to homes in a new school district.

The potential loss of property tax revenue as a result of HSR project property acquisition is calculated based on the assessed values of the properties to be acquired for the project and the corresponding revenues collected from these properties.

To determine the effects of the project on school district transportation, the analysis included a review of the potential roadway closures and the construction of new roadway crossings in conjunction with the project. In some cases, these roadway changes may require bus routes to be altered.

#### **Study Area**

The study area for this analysis is all of the public school districts through which the HSR project would pass. The following discussion provides a list of all public school districts in the study areas

for the May 2014 Project and for the F-B LGA. It includes figures that delineate school district boundaries.

### 3.12-B.2 Existing Conditions

This section identifies the public school districts in the study areas for the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA, the current funding mechanisms for these school districts, and the expected road closures in each district.

#### ***School Districts***

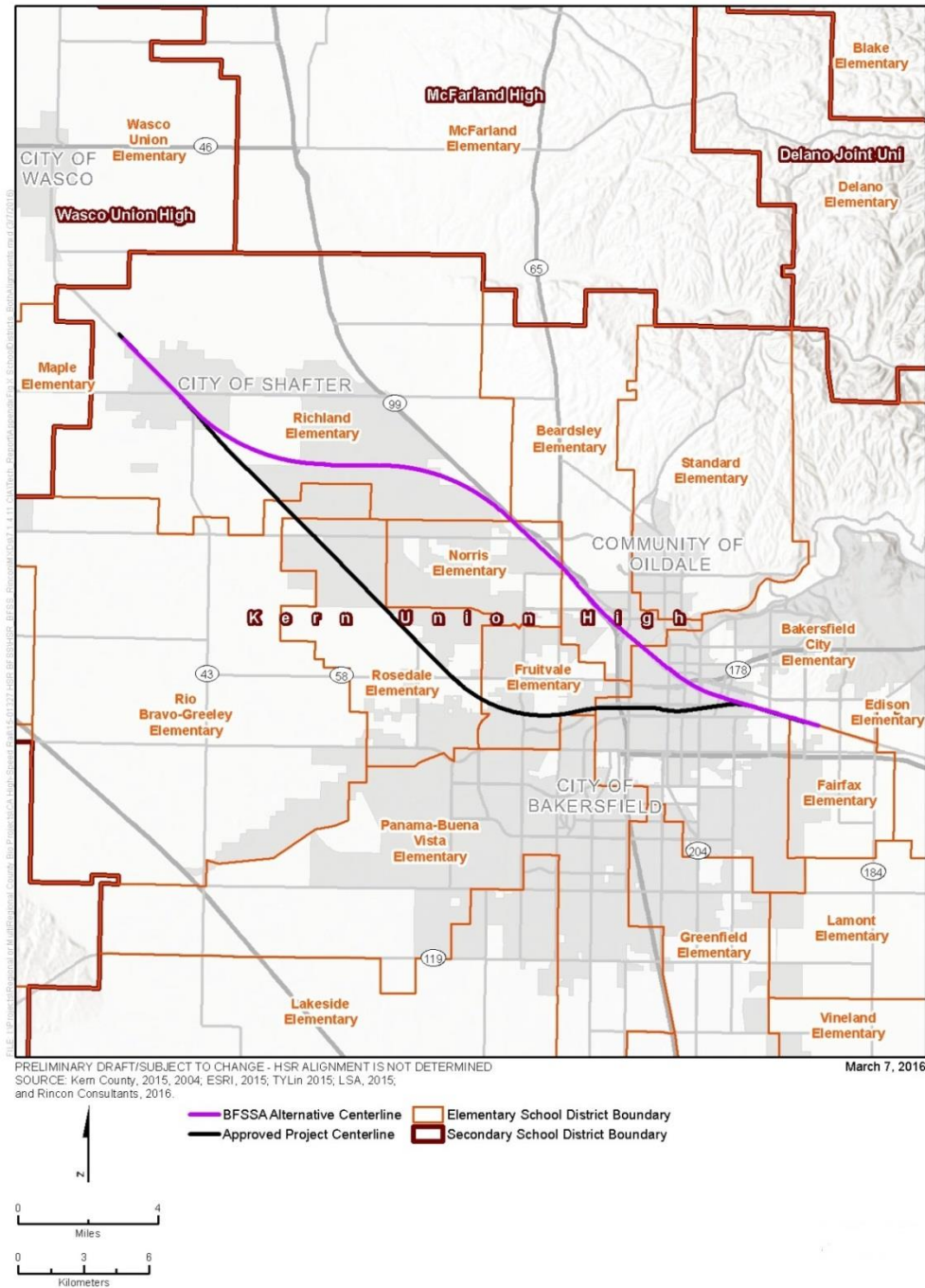
The study areas for the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA contain a total of eight public school districts. Seven districts would be affected by the May 2014 Project and five would be affected by the F-B LGA. Table 3.12-B-1 provides a list of the school districts, their current enrollment, and the alignments that affect each of them. The public school districts in the study area are elementary and secondary districts. Because the study areas considered for each of the alignments are in Kern County, all eight school districts are in the county. School district boundaries for each of the potentially affected districts are shown in Figure 3.12-B-1.

**Table 3.12-B-1 School Districts Traversed by the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA Alignments**

School District	Enrollment	Alternative
Richland Elementary	3,530	May 2014 Project and F-B LGA
Beardsley Elementary	1,753	F-B LGA
Norris Elementary	4,073	May 2014 Project
Rosedale Elementary	5,397	May 2014 Project
Fruitvale Elementary	3,259	May 2014 Project
Bakersfield City Elementary	30,076	May 2014 Project and F-B LGA
Fairfax Elementary	2,412	May 2014 Project and F-B LGA
Kern Union High	37,318	May 2014 Project and F-B LGA

Source: California Department of Education 2015





**Figure 3.12-B-1 Elementary and Secondary School Districts along the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA**

### ***School District Funding***

For a discussion of funding for California public schools and how school enrollment and property taxes affect funding, please refer to Section 2.2, School District Funding, of Appendix 3.12-B of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2014: 3.12-B-2-3 to 3.12-B-2-4).

### ***Project Road Closures and School Districts***

Public school districts provide students with transportation to and from school if they meet general requirements, which are outlined in Section 2.3, Project Road Closures and School Districts, of Appendix 3.12-B of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS. In some areas, safety concerns exist with bus passage across the current at-grade crossings of existing railroad corridors. The HSR project will be designed to prevent conflicts with other vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists in the study area. Project design includes construction of vehicle overpasses that allow for bus access over the project and over the current existing railway corridors and viaducts that pass over roadways in urban areas.

The HSR project would result in permanent road closures in the study areas for the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA. For a list of road closures by school district under the May 2014 Project and the out-of-direction travel that would be required as a result of the road closures, please refer to Table 3.12-B-2 in Section 2.3, Project Road Closures and School Districts, of Appendix 3.12-B of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA: 3.12-B-2-5 to 3.12-B-2-10). Road closures in school districts affected by the F-B LGA and resulting out-of-direction travel are listed in Table 3.12-B-2. A road closure with no out-of-direction travel is defined as:

- A roadway that does not serve as a regional connection and is in close proximity to an HSR project road crossing that would exist during project operation
- A roadway with reduced access, such as turn restrictions or reduced lanes, that would still be in place during project operation

**Table 3.12-B-2 Road Closures by School District for the F-B LGA**

School District	Road Closure	Out-of-Direction Travel (miles)
Richland Elementary	Madera Avenue	0.5
	Mettler Avenue	0.25
	Golds Avenue	0.5
	Driver Road	1.1
Bakersfield City Elementary	Golden State Avenue South Frontage Road (at F Street)	0
	Sumner Street (restricted access - no westbound or northbound left turns allowed between Truxtun Avenue and Baker Street)	0
	Miller Street	0.4
	Haley Street	0.2
	Exchange Street (right-in/right-out access only)	0
	Webster Street (right-in/right-out access only)	0
	Edison Highway (between Oswell Street and Mount Vernon Avenue - one lane in each direction)	0
Fairfax Elementary	Edison Highway (between Oswell Street and Mount Vernon Avenue - one lane in each direction)	0
Kern Union High	Madera Avenue	0.5
	Mettler Avenue	0.25
	Golds Avenue	0.5
	Driver Road	1.1
	Golden State Avenue South Frontage Road (at F Street)	0
	Sumner Street (restricted access - no westbound or northbound left turns allowed between Truxtun Avenue and Baker Street)	0
	Miller Street	0.2
	Haley Street	0.1
	Exchange Street (right-in/right-out access only)	0
	Webster Street (right-in/right-out access only)	0
	Edison Highway (between Oswell Street and Mount Vernon Avenue - one lane in each direction)	0

Source: Kern County Superintendent of Schools 2016

### 3.12-B.3 Environmental Consequences

This section describes the potential effects of the May 2014 Project and the F-B LGA, and determines whether these effects would result in substantial effects on school district funding and bus transportation.

#### ***Effects on School District Funding from Student Relocations***

The HSR project would relocate residential properties and could create the need for students to leave their current school districts. These effects could reduce funding for the school districts where students leave. For an overview of potential effects related to all HSR alternatives, including the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA, please see Section 3.2.1, Overview, of Appendix 3.12-B of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2014: 3.12-B-3-1 to 3.12-B-3-2).

Table 3.12-B-3 provides information on the number of students potentially displaced in each school district by the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA. The methodology used to determine the number of displaced students is the same as that used in the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (2014). For this analysis, elementary and secondary school district boundaries in Kern County were examined to determine the number of residential relocations in each school district. Because secondary school districts are often an aggregation of many elementary school districts, these boundaries overlap. The number of affected students in each school district was estimated by first multiplying the percentage of school-age children (5 to 19 years old) in each city or county population by the average household size in the corresponding location (U.S. Census Bureau 2010) to obtain the average number of school-age children per household. This average number of school age children per household was then multiplied by the number of residential relocations in each area. Ages 5 to 14 were used to approximate elementary-school-district-aged children, and ages 15 to 19 were used to approximate secondary-school-district-aged children. The number of enrolled students in each school district was then obtained from the California Department of Education for the 2014–2015 school year (California Department of Education 2015). The number of residential vacancies within each school district was determined from housing data, based on the zip code or codes that most accurately captured the school district boundaries (Zillow 2016).

**Table 3.12-B-3 Estimated Numbers of Students Affected in School Districts by the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA**

School District	Estimated Number of Students Affected	School District Enrolment (2014-15)	Percent of School District Affected
<b>May 2014 Project</b>			
Richland Elementary	6	3,530	0.17%
Norris Elementary	1	4,073	0.02%
Rosedale Elementary	82	5,397	1.52%
Fruitvale Elementary	22	3,259	0.68%
Bakersfield City Elementary	70	30,076	0.23%
Fairfax Elementary	8	2,412	0.33%
Kern Union High	101	37,318	0.27%
Total	289	86,065	0.34%
<b>F-B LGA</b>			
Richland Elementary	2	3,530	0.06%
Beardsley Elementary	11	1,753	0.63%
Bakersfield City Elementary	21	30,076	0.07%
Fairfax Elementary	7	2,412	0.29%
Kern Union High	22	37,318	0.06%
Total	63	75,089	0.08%

Sources: County of Kern 2016; U.S. Census Bureau 2010; California Department of Education 2015

In order to perform a direct comparison between the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA, residential relocations for the segment of the May 2014 Project that spans the area from Shafter to Bakersfield (i.e., the segment between the northern and southern termini of the F-B LGA) was updated to account for any changes that have occurred since the analysis performed for the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS. These figures, therefore, differ slightly from those in the Appendix 3.12-B of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA: pages 3.12-B-3-3 through 3.12-B-3-6).

### May 2014 Project

The May 2014 Project would result in residential displacements in the city of Bakersfield and the surrounding areas. The elementary school district with the largest number of displacements would be the Rosedale Elementary School District, with 177 residential relocations. This district would have 82 potentially affected students out of a total 5,397 students enrolled (Table 3.12-B-3). In the Kern Union High School District, which encompasses the entire study area, the alternative would result in 384 residential relocations, with 101 potentially affected students in a school district with 37,318 students enrolled. Table 3.12-B-3 provides a list of the remaining districts and associated relocations that would occur under the May 2014 Project.

Although a total of approximately 289 students would be displaced as a result of the May 2014 Project, this represents a small percentage (about 0.34 percent) of the total number of students enrolled in the affected school systems. The percentage of students that would be affected in each individual school district is also low, with 1.52 percent of students attending schools in the Rosedale Elementary School District and less than one percent of students in all other school districts being affected (Table 3.12-B-3).

Many of the affected students would have the opportunity to relocate within the same school districts. According to January 2016 real estate listings, there are 235 single-family homes for sale and 345 residential units available for rent in areas that would be affected by relocations under the May 2014 Project, where a total of 384 residential units would be displaced (Zillow 2016). A suitable amount of vacant replacement housing is, therefore, available in the vicinity of all anticipated displacements that would occur under the May 2014 Project.

Given that, a small percentage of students in each district would be affected and that most residents would have the opportunity to relocate within the same school districts, the May 2014 Project would not have a substantial effect on school district funding as a result of student relocations.

### F-B LGA

The F-B LGA would also result in residential displacements in the city of Bakersfield and the surrounding areas, but these displacements would be distributed differently and some would occur in different districts. In terms of elementary school districts, the majority of residential displacements under the F-B LGA would occur in the Bakersfield City Elementary School District, with 46 residential relocations and 21 potentially affected students in a school district with 30,076 students enrolled (Table 3.12-B-3). There would also be 86 residential displacements in the Kern Union High School District, resulting in the displacement of 22 students in a school district with 37,318 students enrolled. Table 3.12-B-3 provides a list of the remaining districts and associated relocations that would occur under this alternative.

Approximately 63 students would be displaced under the F-B LGA, representing a small percentage (about 0.08 percent) of the total number of students enrolled in the affected school districts. For each school district affected by the F-B LGA, the percentage of students affected would be below one percent of the district's total enrolment (Table 3.12-B-3).

As under the May 2014 Project, affected students under the F-B LGA would generally have the opportunity to relocate within the same school districts. In the areas that would be affected by relocations under the F-B LGA, based on January 2016 real estate listings, there are 255 single-family homes for sale and 444 residential units available for rent, to replace 86 residential units that would be displaced (Zillow 2016) by the alternative. As suitable replacement housing exists in the vicinity of anticipated displacements, students would likely have the opportunity to remain in their current school districts.

Given the small percentage of students affected and the opportunity for most students to relocate within the same school districts, the F-B LGA would not have a substantial effect on school district funding because of student relocations.

### Comparison of the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA

In addition to estimating the number of students that would be displaced and the associated affects to school districts under both the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA, this analysis provides a summary of the difference in impacts between the two alignments. Table 3.12-B-4 shows the relative differences in the estimated number of students displaced in each school district under either alignment and the percentage of the enrollment this number of students represents. Negative values indicate that the F-B LGA has less of an impact than the May 2014 Project.

The F-B LGA would result in fewer residential unit displacements than the May 2014 Project and associated affected students in six elementary school districts and in the Kern Union High School District. One district, the Beardsley Elementary School District, would experience more displacements under the F-B LGA. The total effect of the F-B LGA relative to the May 2014 Project would be a reduction in the number of residential displacements, amounting to 298 units and an associated 147 elementary school students and 79 high school students. Although the F-B LGA would result in fewer displacements and associated affected students, sufficient relocation properties are available under either the May 2014 Project or F-B LGA, and the effect on school district funding would be minimal in either case.

**Table 3.12-B-4 Comparison of Students Affected in School Districts under the F-B LGA, relative to the May 2014 Project**

School District	Estimated Number of Students Affected	School District Enrolment (2014-15)	Percent of School District Affected
Richland Elementary	-4	3,530	-0.11%
Beardsley Elementary	11	1,753	0.63%
Norris Elementary	-1	4,073	-0.02%
Rosedale Elementary	-82	5,397	-1.52%
Fruitvale Elementary	-22	3,259	-0.68%
Bakersfield City Elementary	-48	30,076	-0.16%
Fairfax Elementary	-1	2,412	-0.04%
Kern Union High	-79	37,318	-0.21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>-226</b>	<b>87,818</b>	<b>-0.26%</b>

Sources: County of Kern 2015; U.S. Census Bureau 2010; California Department of Education 2015

### Effects on School District Funding related to Property Tax Revenues

The effects of the HSR project with regard to property tax revenues are similar for the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA because property that would be acquired for the HSR project would be removed from the local property tax rolls. The exact value of short-term property tax revenue reductions, however, would vary slightly between the two since they would require the acquisition of different parcels. Anticipated long-term effects, on the other hand, are the same for both, and relate to long-term property values along the alignment and in the station area as well as potential job growth related to the HSR project.

#### Short-Term Effects

Property tax revenues are likely to decrease over the short-term regardless of whether residential property owners or business owners relocate within the same jurisdictions because the HSR project would result in a net decrease in the number of properties on the tax rolls for Kern County and the affected cities. Because school districts are funded, in part, by property taxes, it is likely that the removal of some private properties would result in a net reduction in the local property tax revenues available to school districts.

The potential reductions in annual property tax revenues to county and city budgets are estimated to be approximately \$4.2 million under the May 2014 Project and \$3.6 million under the F-B LGA. These estimated amounts represent about 1.23 percent of the total 2013/14 fiscal year property tax revenues of the county and cities in the study area under the May 2014 Project, and 1.06 percent under the F-B LGA. The estimates indicate that property tax revenues to local jurisdictions would be more heavily impacted by the May 2014 Project than the F-B LGA, with additional losses of approximately \$573,000 per year, or 0.17 percent of total property tax receipts by these jurisdictions. See Section 5.1.6, County and City Property Tax Effects, of the Fresno to Bakersfield Supplemental CIA (Authority and FRA 2017) for more details on the methodology used to generate these estimates and for specific estimated losses to cities in the study area.

Because of the way funding is determined for California public schools, school district funding would likely constitute a portion of the loss described above. As discussed in Appendix 3.12-B of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (2014), for NEPA, a potential effect is examined from the standpoint of both its intensity and the context of the effect. For both the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA, the intensity of the effect would be slight given the small percentage of total regional property tax lost, but the context of the effect is one of potential local budget deficits and uncertainty surrounding the region's transition from an agricultural-based economy to one in which other sectors contribute a larger share than they do today. As a result of this context, any additional fiscal burden in the short term, however small, could be of consequence. It follows that the potential effects of these reductions on school district funding are moderate.

### **Long-term Effects**

Over the long term, the per-pupil revenue of the affected school districts is not expected to decrease under either the May 2014 Project or F-B LGA due to potential job growth and long-term increases in property values related to the HSR project. For a description of these effects and how they relate to property tax revenues, as well as how school district funding is determined and how it relates to property tax revenues, see Section 3.2.3, Effects on School District Funding from Reduced Property Tax Revenues, in Appendix 3.12-B of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2014: 3.12-B-3-11 to 3.12-B-3-13). This section also explains anticipated long-term effects that relate to all HSR alternatives, including the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA, and does not identify any significant long-term effects on school district funding.

### ***Effects on School District Bus Transportation***

#### **Construction Effects**

During construction, temporary impacts may result from school bus detours due to road closures. These impacts would be similar for all HSR alternatives, including the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA. Please see Section 3.2.4.1, Construction, of Section 3.2.4, Effects on School District Bus Transportation, in Appendix 3.12-B of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2014: 3.12-B-3-13) for a description of these effects. As discussed, with implementation of a Construction Management Plan and Construction Transportation Plan, as required by the mitigation measures proposed in Sections 3.11, Safety and Security, and 3.2, Transportation, of this Supplemental EIR/EIS, no significant impacts on school transportation are expected during construction.

#### **Operation Effects**

Project-related roadway modifications may change some access and routing of school buses due to road closures associated with the HSR project, but alternative routes would be provided to minimize any impacts. These impacts would be similar for the May 2014 Project and F-B LGA. Please see Section 3.2.4.2, Operation, of Section 3.2.4, Effects on School District Bus Transportation, in Appendix 3.12-B of the Fresno to Bakersfield Section Final EIR/EIS (Authority and FRA 2014: 3.12-B-3-13) for a description of these effects. This analysis found that no significant impacts are expected on school district bus transportation during construction and operation because the out-of-direction travel distances required due to road closures would not result in long detours, and the Authority will work with local jurisdictions to provide additional

access, as needed. During operation, beneficial effects may result because the roadway crossings associated with the project would improve safety and access.



### 3.12-B.4 References

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