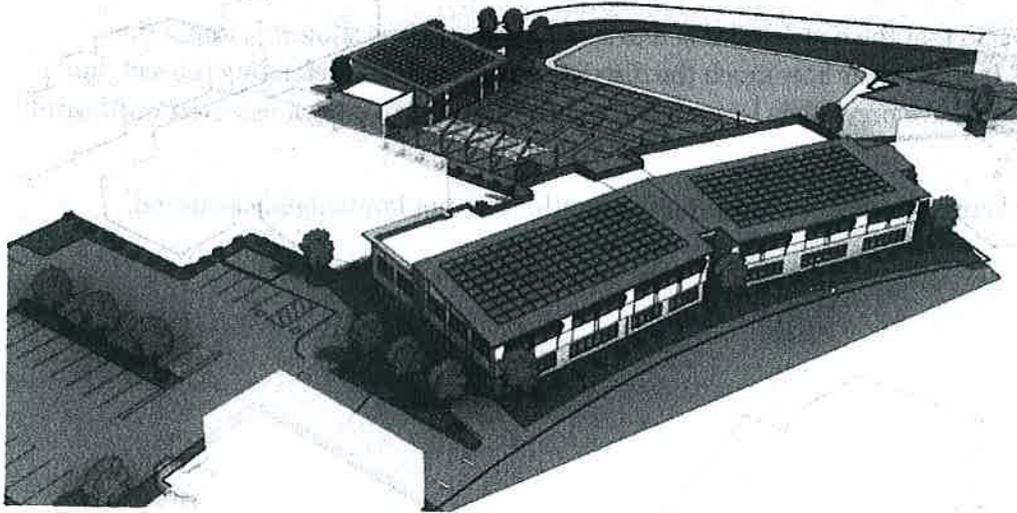


Suit over North School dismissed; district may seek attorney's fees

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A rendering of the proposed new North School campus. A lawsuit dismissed this week brings construction closer to reality.
Rendering by SVA Architects

BY RYAN MCDONALD

A Los Angeles County Superior Court judge has dismissed a lawsuit against the Hermosa Beach City School District that sought to prevent the district from beginning construction on the North School campus.

In a decision released Monday, Judge Holly Kendig ruled that both of the claims filed by resident Blair Smith against the district were submitted too late. Although the two code sections under which the suit was filed do not contain statutes of limitations, the district successfully argued that Smith's suit was a "validation action" and therefore subject to a 60-day statute of limitations. The suit, filed against the district in late August 2017, should have been submitted at the latest within two months of the February announcement of the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for North, Kendig wrote.

Because she based her ruling on the statute of limitations issue, Kendig's opinion does not address the lengthy list of deceptions and ethical violations the suit alleged HBCSD committed in association with Measure S, a school facilities bond passed by voters in June of 2016 to fund the reconstruction North School and improvements at other district facilities. Among the complaint's allegations: that North School was deserving of consideration as a historic resource, that more economical alternatives existed to address current overcrowding, and that the school board illegally used district funds to aid the measure's chances of passing.