

School and Subways in California

There are no subway tunnels that run under permanent school buildings in the state of California.

Summary:

After multiple discussions with representatives of the Department of State Architect (DSA), San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), and Muni Metro officials, it has been confirmed that there are currently no public school buildings located above subway tunnels. There are a few schools which have tunnels running under their *campuses*, but these are not comparable to Beverly Hills High School or the tunnel situation it faces with the Westside Subway Extension.

The first of these, *Rooftop Elementary School* in San Francisco, was built in 1953, and renovated in 1997. Alberto Vasquez, SFUSD Senior Construction Manager, confirmed that the school sits high on the top of a hill and that no easements were obtained for tunnels under the campus for any construction projects on the school. Vasquez also stated that if tunnels do go under the school, they would have to be very deep – so deep as to not require an easement and much deeper than the proposed tunnels under Beverly Hills. [Maps indicate](#) that, if tunnels do run under the campus, they would do so SW to NE under two basketball courts southeast of the main school building, not under the school building itself.

The second school is *West Portal School* in San Francisco, built in 1927. Vasquez confirmed that Muni tunnels do run underneath the school grounds, but once again there are no permanent structures over the easement. [Maps confirm](#) that the tunnels run SW to NE diagonally through the southeast corner of the campus, under tennis courts, a field, parking lots, and temporary buildings, but not under either of the two permanent school buildings.

In Los Angeles, the *Young Oak Kim Academy* was just recently completed in 2008 and was designed to be a “[model solution](#) for new school construction in high density urban areas,” sharing a lot with retail and residential buildings and the Metro Wilshire/Vermont Red Line Station. However, as [maps](#) and [design documents](#) indicate, the school is *next to the station*, not directly over it. The school lies in the [northeast corner](#) of a block through which the tunnels run SE to NW. Additionally, the school is a small and highly modern school building which was constructed after the Red Line was already in place, making it a poor comparison to the nearly century-old Beverly Hills High School.

In contrast to the above cases, Metro's proposed alignment would run directly under Beverly Hills High School [Building B](#), which is nearly a century old, at a depth of [less than 80 feet](#). This would be unprecedented in California. In addition to tunneling under existing buildings, Metro's proposed alignment would run directly below the only buildable land left on the aging campus, in precisely the same spot where the District plans to build a new classroom building with voter-approved bond money. Due to safety regulations, such construction over a subway tunnel would be prohibitively expensive, and may even be impossible. Public school buildings require the approval of the Department of State Architect and the agency has never approved a school atop a tunnel.

Compare this:



Beverly Hills High School existing buildings (green) and planned building area (yellow) with proposed tunnel location (red)

With These:

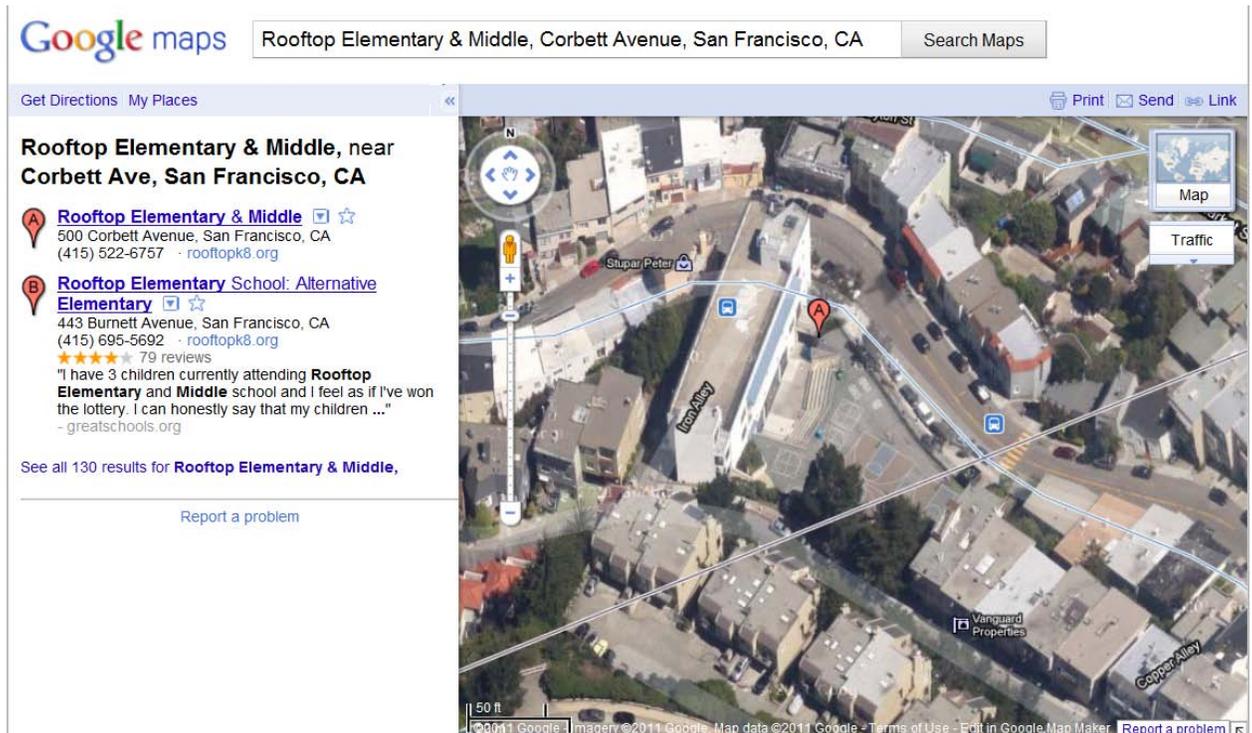


Rooftop Elementary School

West Portal School

Young Oak Kim Academy

1. Rooftop Elementary School



[http://maps.google.com/maps?q=Rooftop+Elementary+%26+Middle,+Corbett+Avenue,+San+Francisco,+CA&hl=en&ll=37.757519,-](http://maps.google.com/maps?q=Rooftop+Elementary+%26+Middle,+Corbett+Avenue,+San+Francisco,+CA&hl=en&ll=37.757519,-122.444708&spn=0.003173,0.003589&sll=37.0625,-95.677068&sspn=36.778911,58.798828&t=h&z=18&lci=transit_comp)

[122.444708&spn=0.003173,0.003589&sll=37.0625,-](http://maps.google.com/maps?q=Rooftop+Elementary+%26+Middle,+Corbett+Avenue,+San+Francisco,+CA&hl=en&ll=37.757519,-122.444708&spn=0.003173,0.003589&sll=37.0625,-95.677068&sspn=36.778911,58.798828&t=h&z=18&lci=transit_comp)

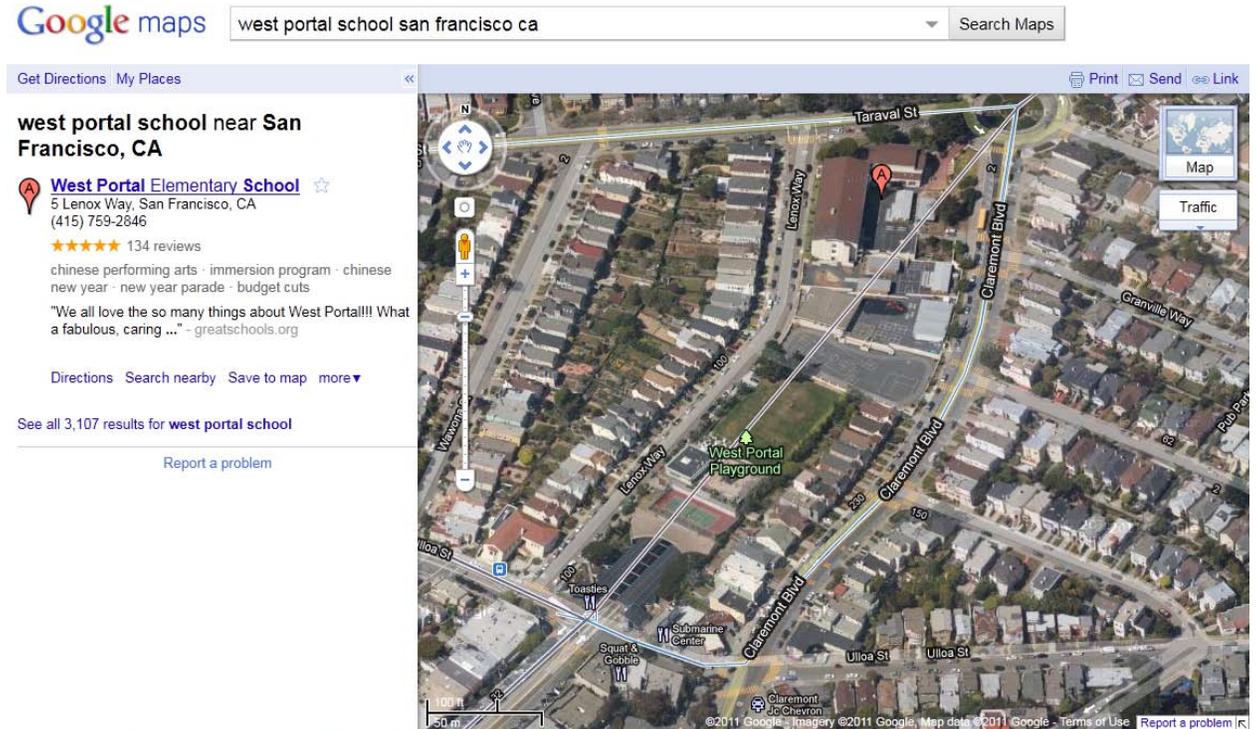
[95.677068&sspn=36.778911,58.798828&t=h&z=18&lci=transit_comp](http://maps.google.com/maps?q=Rooftop+Elementary+%26+Middle,+Corbett+Avenue,+San+Francisco,+CA&hl=en&ll=37.757519,-122.444708&spn=0.003173,0.003589&sll=37.0625,-95.677068&sspn=36.778911,58.798828&t=h&z=18&lci=transit_comp)
500 Corbett Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94114-2220
(415) 522-6757

<http://rooftopk8.org/>

- # Buildings: 1
- When Built: 1953, 1997¹
- Does tunnel alignment run under school buildings, or just campus?
 - If it does run under any buildings, SFUSD rep says tunnels would have to be very deep, he does not recall an easement.

¹ According to the SFUSD School Profile <http://orb.sfusd.edu/profile/prfl-796.htm>

2. West Portal Elementary School



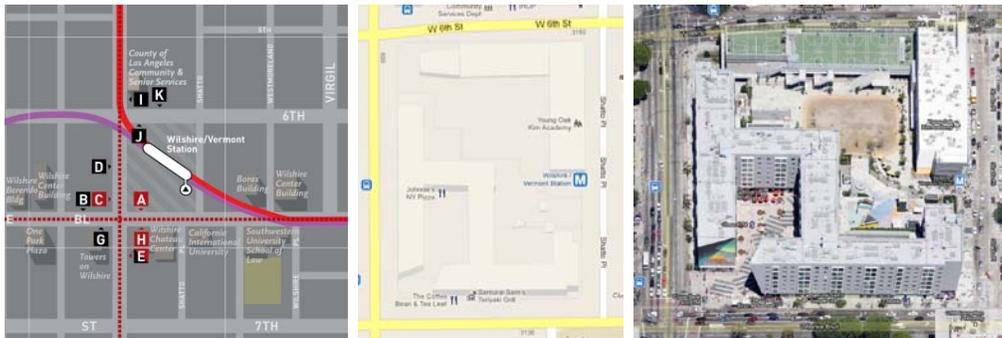
http://maps.google.com/maps?q=west+portal+elementary+school&hl=en&ll=37.742672,-122.46424&spn=0.003371,0.004136&oe=utf-8&client=firefox-a&radius=15000&t=h&z=18&lci=transit_comp

5 Lenox Way, San Francisco, CA
(415) 759-2846

- # Buildings: 2, plus portables
- When Built: 1927²
- Does tunnel alignment run under school buildings, or just campus?
 - Under campus, but not under any permanent structures.

²According to the SFUSD School Profile <http://orb.sfusd.edu/profile/prfl-876.htm>

3. Young Oak Kim Academy



<http://maps.google.com/?ll=34.062935,-118.290723&spn=0.004204,0.006909&t=m&z=18>

615 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, CA 90005

(213) 739-6500

- # Buildings: 1
- When Built: 2008
- Does tunnel alignment run under school buildings, or just campus?
 - Tunnel runs diagonally through an open area directly to the southwest of the building.