



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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NEWS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Project-Based Learning Topic of SMMUSD Special Meeting
Public is welcome to attend: Jan. 24, 2019

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education will continue discussing plans for the expansion of a project-based learning program at a special school board meeting on Jan. 24, 2019 at 4 p.m. in the district office board room, 1651 16th St. Santa Monica. The public is invited to attend.

Project-based learning (PBL) is an authentic learning experience achieved through deep engagement with high interest, relevant, real-world, curriculum-related projects over an extended period of time. Students then demonstrate their knowledge and skills through a public product or presentation. It is often interdisciplinary and / or interest-based with differentiation existing in instruction, demonstration and content.

This discussion follows a December presentation that included key components, and seeks board direction to move forward:

1. Expand PK-12 PBL professional development opportunities for teachers;
2. Strengthen high school college and career learning pathways, including extending opportunities for internships, externships and apprenticeships, and expand community partnerships;
3. Develop Capstone learning experiences; and
4. Launch ninth grade PBL student cohort in fall 2019.

“Our superintendent’s working committee has engaged stakeholders, attended conferences, visited schools with successful PBL models, received professional development and poured through literature to develop a successful program at SMMUSD,” said Dr. Jacqueline Mora, assistant superintendent, educational services. “We have met with secondary teachers and have held focus groups for more than 300 secondary students as part of our process. We are very excited about this program that meets our district goals.”

The district’s objective is for all students to graduate ready for college and careers from schools that are safe, socially responsible and academically rigorous. This is accomplished through a self-reflective, shared system of accountability that consistently uses culturally relevant best practices to maximize equitable student outcomes.

As part of the PBL plan development, staff will boost parent engagement and address equity and achievement gaps.

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