



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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New Signs Guide Visitors, Boost School Spirit at Samohi

Previously, the first thought of Santa Monica High School visitors — after eyeing the flat expanse of ground where the Discovery building will be built — was “where AM I?” Now a new project aims to address that.

The “wayfinding and signage” project, paid for by voter-approved Measure ES bond funds, has these goals:

- Make guests and new students feel welcome
- Guide people around campus to make for efficient class and event start times
- Build school spirit and a sense that Samohi is a vital part of the surrounding community



Samohi Principal Dr. Antonio Shelton said the traditional methods of getting people around just weren’t connecting. “We’d send out maps for events, but it’s a lot easier if things are right in front of you.”

The installation includes wayfinding stations, such as those in malls or amusement parks, eye-level signs telling people what lies in the area or lies ahead, and banners hanging from poles and structures .

As much as Dr. Shelton appreciates the directional and building signage that will be particularly helpful during open house events, he is more enthusiastic about the banners, some of which can be seen hanging from the fencing around the athletic fields along Pico and 4th streets. The full color two by six foot banners have “Samohi” on one side and a photo of a student in action on the other, or alumni. The banners represent athletics from basketball to golf and arts from jazz band to theater. Successful alumni are also featured. All the photos were taken by students or faculty.

“For students, staff, guests and the entire Santa Monica community to see this portrayal of Samohi is an awesome thing,” Dr. Shelton said.

Students are excited about the banners. One student not represented on a banner told Dean of Students Catherine Baxter that it evoked more pride in her school. Another gleefully exclaimed “DID YOU SEE MY BANNER?”

And students are getting directly involved: A contest is being held to select student-produced

photos representing wrestling, dance, art, and student life for use on banners along the under-construction Olympic Boulevard side of campus.

The project, paid for by voter-approved Measure ES bond funds, was planned and designed by Los Angeles-based design firm Sussman Prejza.

Miles Mazzie, an environmental graphic designer with the firm, said it was slightly unusual in that he's often reimagining and replacing signage, not really starting from scratch.

As the project continues, Mazzie said people will see that the project employs Samohi iconography, like the ubiquitous Viking mascot, the slightly lesser-known nautilus (the name of the school yearbook) and the school crest.



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Written by: Chris Clonts, communications specialist

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