



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **SMMUSD Requests Community Input as Campus Assessments Begin Next Round of School Construction**

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District will hold a series of online community meetings in May and June to gather feedback on nine campuses from parents, school neighbors and community members.

The meetings are part of the district's campus assessment process as it continues to align its instructional programs and environments to the way students learn and the jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to make those environments adaptable for future changes in coming decades.

The online presentations will take place as follows:

- Grant Elementary School: May 14, 6-8 p.m.
- Lincoln Middle School: May 19, 6-8 p.m.
- John Adams Middle School: May 26, 4-6 p.m.
- Will Rogers Learning Community: May 27, 4:30-6 p.m.
- McKinley Elementary School: June 2, 6-8 p.m.
- John Muir Elementary School/SMASH: June 3, 1:30-3:30 p.m.
- Edison Language Academy: June 11, 3-5:30 p.m.
- Franklin Elementary School: June 16, 5-6:30 p.m.
- Roosevelt Elementary School: June 17, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Those interested in attending can find meeting login information prior to each meeting at <https://www.smmusd.org/campusassessments>.

A campus assessment is the first step in planning changes to campuses and classrooms to align with the district's [educational specifications](#), which were finalized in 2019. The district has hired architects to assess nine campuses. The final assessments will recommend a series of changes and improvements to address where the current campus environment needs alignment with the goals of using 21<sup>st</sup>-century teaching and learning methods.

District Chief Operations Officer Carey Upton stressed the importance of this early opportunity for community input. "These meetings are an opportunity to influence how school facilities will serve the students and the surrounding community in the future. We need people's diverse experience and input on how to shape schools to support education and reflect the community," Upton said.

While there will be another round of meetings in the fall, this is the best time to provide input. “As we advance in the process, we narrow down the number of choices we are considering. So earlier participation has a chance for greater influence,” Upton said.

During the assessment process, architects visit the schools and meet with administrators, teachers and staff, as well as hold meetings for the wider community. Architects consider enrollment projections and other factors to evaluate each campus for square footage needs for classrooms and school support spaces such as administrative offices, kitchens and eating areas. They also consider on-campus traffic patterns, access and security needs. Recommendations can range from different kinds of learning spaces to entirely new buildings.

Originally, meetings were planned for in person on each school site. With the current safer at home orders during the coronavirus pandemic, the process continues, with meetings moving to an online format. During the online meetings, issues identified in previous online meetings with educators and staff will be shared. Overall, the goal is to get feedback from participants about what works on campuses and what can be improved. Depending on the architecture firm leading the discussion, attendees may be led through some exercises to help clarify issues.

Projects that result from these assessments will be paid for with approximately \$100 million in unassigned funds from the voter-approved Measure SMS, which raised \$485 million in school construction bonds for Santa Monica schools in 2018.

Upton stressed that while these assessments will create projects to occur in the near future, the district will need to be judicious. “There will real, tangible projects that come out of this process, but this process will not address all needs of all campuses,” he said.

After the assessments are complete, the recommendations and possible action steps will be shared in the fall, again with the wider community.

The SMMUSD Board of Education will discuss the assessment outcomes and ultimately decide which projects move forward to design and construction. The facility improvements projects team will work with the architects and site administration to schedule the projects.

Questions can be directed to Carey Upton at [cupton@smmusd.org](mailto:cupton@smmusd.org).

Schools in Malibu are making progress as part of the Malibu Campus Plan, funded by bond measures.

*Written by Chris Clonts, communications specialist*

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