



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Samohi's Topping Out Ceremony Marks Progress on New Exploration Building and Gold Gymnasium

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) would like to invite Santa Monica High School (Samohi) students, staff and parents to be a part of a major milestone in the evolution of phase three of the Samohi Campus Plan. A steel topping out ceremony is scheduled to take place at Samohi on Monday, May 8, 2023, at 3:30 p.m.

Be a part of the tradition! It has been more than five months since construction crews at Samohi broke ground for its Exploration building and Gold gymnasium, and since then significant progress has been made.



*Rendering of Exploration building and
Gold Gymnasium.*

The topping out ceremony is a construction tradition that has been occurring for centuries. This custom celebrates the construction process and honors the accomplishments of the construction crew. Traditionally, this ceremony occurs when the final structural beam is raised into place, completing the building's frame. The topping out ceremony is a builders' rite, an ancient tradition thought to have originated in Scandinavia by 700 AD.

Prior to placement, construction crews, guests and elected officials will be given the opportunity to sign the steel beam before it is hoisted up to the highest point of the building.

This phase follows the completion of the Discovery building that opened in 2021 and the Innovation building, which opened in 2015. SMMUSD is transforming Samohi into a progressive, cutting-edge campus for 21st-century learning. The Exploration building and Gold gymnasium are the next leaps to engage the whole student through specialized academies, arts, physical education, and athletics.

The Exploration building will initially house four academies that develop creative and critical thinking and support career pathways. This facility incorporates new technologies within flexible learning spaces. The academies are integrated project-based learning capstone programs focused on engineering; health, wellness; law and public policy and media. The other side of the Exploration building will contain the visual and media arts studios. The building is designed on an open building plan that can adapt and evolve as learning changes.

The Gold gymnasium will expand the physical education and athletic opportunities for students. The two-court practice gymnasium will have pull-out bleachers with seating for 800. A third auxiliary court will provide an additional facility for basketball and volleyball. The first floor will

feature a yoga room and fitness room, both with outdoor workout areas. On the upper floor will include a new dance studio that will support cheer and dance teams in an environment specifically designed for these programs.

This project is funded by Measure SMS, overwhelmingly approved by Santa Monica voters in 2018. Construction for phase three is estimated to cost \$120 million. Moore Ruble Yudell Architects and Planners are the design architects, HED are the executive architects and McCarthy Building Companies, Inc. is the builder on this project.

A community groundbreaking ceremony took place on Aug. 29, 2022. The buildings are planned to open in fall 2024.

Please RSVP: <https://bit.ly/SamohiExplore050823Invite>.

Watch the groundbreaking ceremony here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yD-DazoJB4Y>.

For more information on upcoming Facility Improvement Projects visit: <https://www.smmusd.org/fip>.

Learn more about Samohi projects here:
<https://www.smmusd.org/Page/5603>.

Read more about Samohi's Campus Plan here:
<https://bit.ly/SamohiCampusPlan>.

Written by Esmi Careaga, Communications Specialist



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