

# Summer Report 2020



## Update on Voter-Approved Local Funding for Santa Monica Schools



SMMUSD is putting voter-approved school bond funds to work to improve Santa Monica schools, most of which were built more than 60 years ago.



### Santa Monica High School Discovery Building on Schedule for 2021-22 School Year

Santa Monica High School's Discovery building is on schedule to be open in fall of 2021, bringing 38 new classrooms, common areas, seminar rooms, multi-purpose spaces and an outdoor classroom for science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) classes to the campus to support 21st-century instruction. The building will also include an upgraded pool to meet today's health and safety standards, replacing the 50-year-old original pool. Due to the school shutdown, we were able to accelerate the work in the science quad and peace and justice circle and make accessibility improvements to the campus, completing as much work as possible before students return.

### John Adams Middle School Performing Arts Center

The John Adams Middle School (JAMS) Performing Arts Center is scheduled for completion in the spring of 2021, housing a 750-seat theater and rehearsal spaces for music classes. The original JAMS auditorium, built in 1934, suffered earthquake damage and has been closed since 2014, leaving one of the district's two Santa Monica middle schools with no indoor space for schoolwide assemblies. That will change soon thanks to voter support for local school bonds and a strong partnership between the district and Santa Monica College, whose main campus is just across the street.

### Improved School Security System in Place

The visitor management system is now installed at all campuses, verifying identification of all visitors to campus. This completes a priority security improvement project for our schools.

### Repairs and Upgrades to all Santa Monica Schools

The final phase of work to upgrade the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems at Santa Monica schools is finishing up at JAMS and planned for Will Rogers and Roosevelt elementary schools in summer 2021. Additional modernization work is also wrapping up at Franklin and McKinley elementary schools. Modernization includes replacing windows, paint, floors and doors, the addition of air conditioning, a new fire alarm system and accessibility improvements. This work is also planned for Lincoln Middle School, Grant Elementary and Muir Elementary/SM Alternative School House (SMASH), completing modernization of all Santa Monica campuses over the next two years and ensuring a clean, safe, learning environment for all students.



Artist rendering of new Santa Monica High School Discovery Building

### Plans Reflect Community Priorities

School campus plans are developed with extensive parent, student and staff involvement, including community meetings for every elementary and middle school in Santa Monica. The entire community can be proud of the work that has been accomplished. [Click here](#) for a detailed progress report on current and planned Santa Monica school facility improvements. Watch for future community meetings to discuss campus projects.

### Addressing Fiscal Challenges

The construction funding available to SMMUSD is the result of voter-approved bonds for school facility improvements, and unfortunately it cannot resolve the general fund challenges our schools are facing when it comes to programs, teachers, counselors, librarians and other essential school staff who support our students. By law, bond funds may only be used for school construction, modernization and technology. Before COVID-19, SMMUSD was already in the process of realigning its budget to address the gap between ongoing costs and existing revenues. The economic impact of a worldwide pandemic has significantly compounded the severity of the problem as all schools reduced state and local funding. The 2020-21 budget is finalized and has been approved by the school board. Detailed budget information and reports are available [online](#).

### Fall 2020 School Re-Open Planning

In close coordination with public health officials and the Los Angeles County Office of Education, the planning process to re-open our schools this fall is underway. The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District hosted virtual town hall-style meetings, for Santa Monica elementary school community members on June 30 and for Santa Monica secondary school community members on July 1, to discuss potential models for reopening schools based on parent and staff survey responses and State and County public health guidelines. The plan is expected to be finalized mid-July. Recordings of the meetings and the presentation can be found [here](#).

For more information or any questions, please visit [www.smmusd.org/superintendent](http://www.smmusd.org/superintendent)