



Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District
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Summer 2021 Report



School Starts August 19th!

For back-to-school details, visit www.smmusd.org/school21-22

“The District listened to parent thoughts on re-opening plans. Our input was sought and taken into account. We are happy that our schools were able to reopen safely this spring and that SMMUSD students can look forward to safe, in-person learning in the fall.”

— Gabrielle Cohen, President
 Santa Monica-Malibu Council of PTA's

Let's Continue to Stay Safe

COVID-19 vaccines are now available for everyone age 12 or older. Vaccines are free. Check LA County Dept. of Public Health website for locations and additional information: <https://tinyurl.com/4svbwpa4>



Update on School Re-Opening, Student Achievements and School Improvement Projects in Santa Monica

Letter from Superintendent

Dear Parents and Neighbors,



In this unprecedented year, we hope this update finds you well. Of course, our top concern throughout the pandemic has been keeping students and staff healthy and supporting them through online instruction as we worked to get schools open safely. Our teachers and students responded to the shutdown by becoming distance-learning experts. We're grateful for the resiliency and patience shown by students, parents, families, and staff members. It was an incredibly challenging journey, and I'm happy to report that in April of this year, SMMUSD became one of the first Districts in Los Angeles to open for in-person instruction once again.

While our school facilities were closed, we took advantage of the opportunity to make important upgrades, repairs, and improvements to support high-quality instruction and safe, healthy learning environments. As we look to the new school year, we want to report back to the community to show how these improvements will benefit students when they return in the fall as well as Santa Monica students for generations to come.

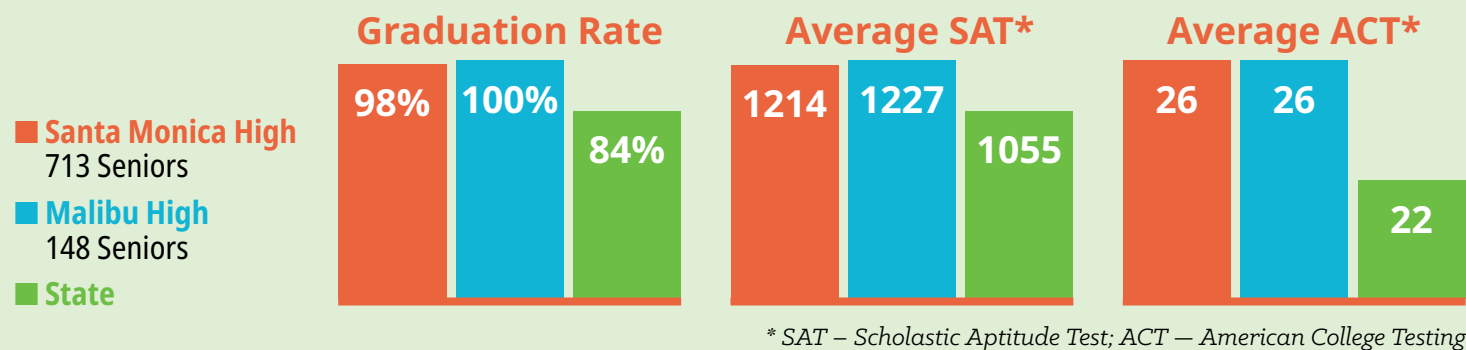
Thank you to all for your ongoing trust and I hope everyone is enjoying a safe and relaxing summer.

Sincerely,



Dr. Ben Drati, Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Superintendent

Santa Monica and Malibu high schools rank in the top 5% of schools in the state and nation, according to U.S. News & World Report 2019 Best High Schools. Our graduation rates and test scores continue to outperform averages in the county, state and nation.



SMMUSD has been recognized with a “Best Communities for Music Education” designation for the 19th consecutive year, setting a new state record. This award recognizes districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students.

New School Facilities and Improvements Support 21st-Century Learning and Healthy Learning Environments

Voter-approved school bond measures have been instrumental in supporting the high-quality education SMMUSD provides. In fact, the improvements made to our school facilities — most of which were built more than 60 years ago — are made possible almost exclusively by the funds generated by school bonds.

Highlights of Recent School Improvements:

Samohi Discovery Building Opens for Classes in August:

This new building replaces aging high school facilities with 35 new classrooms and science labs, outdoor learning spaces, and open areas for common use, and flexible instruction to support 21st-century learning. This building is built to be resilient and adapt to changes in teaching practices over its lifespan.

To see the full Campus Plan for Samohi, visit <https://www.smmusd.org/Page/5603>.



Health, Safety and Indoor Air Quality Improvements:

Projects to upgrade much-needed filtration, ventilation, and air conditioning systems are nearly complete in all Santa Monica schools, filtering toxins like wildfire smoke and improving indoor air quality for students and staff. This work included enhanced ventilation during the pandemic and to address future challenges.

Repairs to Older Schools: Modernization projects throughout Santa Monica elementary and middle schools to improve the use of classrooms, replace worn-out windows, doors, flooring, and paint are nearing completion. Facility assessments of outstanding needs in aging elementary and middle schools have been completed, allowing for much-needed work to begin. Campus planning is underway, and the first round of projects are under design.

Student Safety & Security: Alarm and security systems with new visitor check-in are complete at all SMMUSD schools.

John Adams Middle School Performing Arts Center:

This joint project with Santa Monica College was made necessary due to earthquake damage of the original school auditorium. The new facility includes classrooms for music instruction and other arts programs, in addition to the beautiful performance space to be enjoyed by the entire community.

