FAQ

09.10.19

Funding

Question 1: How is the proposed STEM High School being funded?
Answer 1: The proposed STEM High School is part of the District's STEM Initiative Plan and has a projected cost of $64 million. Roughly half of the project budget will be from Measure O funds, a ballot measure that was approved by voters in 2016 and has an Oversight Committee that was established in March 2017. The remainder of the STEM HS funding will be through Career and Technical Education (CTE) grants and state funding. UCR is providing the land through a long-term, no cost lease.

Question 2: Where exactly does the STEM HS fit with the Measure O funding?
Answer 2: Measure O allows school site acquisition and construction, and this is where the STEM High School, as well as three new elementary schools – Casa Blanca, Eastside and Spring Mountain Ranch – fit within the bond measure's funding. The three new elementary schools are in the planning and site acquisition phase. The Board has approved Measure O Project Groups A – H. Currently, 16 schools are under design for modernization, renovation, and classroom replacement in Groups A-C; five projects in Group A have begun construction.

Question 3: Why is RUSD spending $64 million on one school?
Answer 3: A new comprehensive high school can cost approximately $160 million. The proposed STEM High School includes a design that is tailored around specific program requirements for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). As the school is focused toward STEM, it eliminates several costly components of a standard high school, such as recreational fields, aquatic centers, multi-purpose rooms, theaters, gymnasiums, and a stadium.

Question 4: Why is the money not being spent to upgrade the existing high schools?
Answer 4: Money is being spent to upgrade existing high schools. As the District moves forward steadily with modernization projects with initial Measure O funding, Arlington, King and Poly high schools will be experiencing improvements and upgrades. Guided by Board of Trustees' vision, it is also the District's goal to incorporate STEM into all RUSD school education. The proposed interdisciplinary STEM High School at UCR will support areas of study at other comprehensive high schools within the District through a variety of collaborations and partnerships that are being developed. Some initial concepts:

- Future STEM High School students serve as STEM ambassadors to mentor students from other elementary and middle schools during Saturday STEM Camp and Summer STEM Camp.

- RUSD high school students visit the STEM High School at UCR to participate in STEM activities, e.g. half-day field trips.
- Professional development opportunities occur at the STEM High School for RUSD teachers.