

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Riverside Unified School District and UC Riverside Collaborate on New Proposed STEM High School

School district and university partnering to create an educational community focal point

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA – The Riverside Unified School District (RUSD) Board confirmed their commitment to offer its students the opportunity to have a focused setting for studying science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). As a crucial part of the Board’s vision, another step forward was taken yesterday with the decision to conduct a preliminary exploration of a new potential six-acre site on the UC Riverside (UCR) campus at the southwest corner of Blaine Street and Canyon Crest Drive.

RUSD staff will now work with UCR and the City of Riverside on conducting all the necessary site due diligence, such as evaluating Gage Canal constraints, cell tower relocation, preliminary site design, ingress/egress, and other factors. During this evaluation, the partners will re-activate their community outreach and information program during the late summer and into the fall and winter months to gain insights from community stakeholders.

“Being a partner with UCR to establish such an important resource for students and prepare next generations for careers in science, technology, engineering, and math demonstrates the District’s commitment to innovation,” explained RUSD Board President Dr. Angelov Farooq.

Echoing that sentiment, UCR Chancellor Wilcox added, “We embrace this partnership with RUSD. UCR is a research institution committed to science, as well as contributing to the well-being of this community.”

The proposed STEM High School is envisioned to be a three-story, state-of-the-art facility with approximately 30 classrooms, commons, labs, parking, a kitchen, and outdoor learning spaces. It is proposed to accommodate approximately 800 students. The enrollment process will tentatively follow the same equitable selection process that the Riverside STEM Academy has established, which is designed to achieve diversity using census block information based on language, educational attainment, and income to better reflect RUSD’s demographics.

Steps required prior to the school’s opening include: initial evaluation and due diligence now starting on the proposed site, formal environmental review, local and state agency approvals, Board of Regents approval, Board of Education approval, bidding and construction, then enrollment.

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The Board credits listening carefully to community input for their recent action. “Listening has been, and will continue to be, vital to the proposed high school’s success. We look forward to further engaging stakeholders, community groups, parents, and equally importantly, their students,” finished Dr. Farooq. Beginning this month, both in-person engagement and new information resources will be made available, including a new project website page at www.riversideunified.org.

RUSD and UCR are building on the community’s strong history of participation and continued commitment to providing a livable, vibrant, and innovative place for its community. The proposed STEM High School will be the first public high school on a university campus in Riverside County. It follows other successful examples of school district/university partnerships nationwide, including the Preuss School at UC San Diego and the California Academy of Mathematics and Science at Cal State Dominguez Hills, among others.

The proposed school has a projected cost of \$64 million and is part of the RUSD STEM Initiative Plan. UCR is providing the land through a long-term lease to RUSD, saving the District significant site land acquisition costs. Roughly half of the project budget will be from Measure O funds, a ballot measure approved by voters in 2016 and overseen by a public committee established in March 2017. The remainder of the STEM High School funding will be through CTE grants and state funding. The Board has approved Measure O Project Groups A – H. The first phase of improvements for Groups A – C includes 16 existing schools, which are under design for modernization, renovation, and classroom replacement; three new elementary schools are in the planning and site acquisition phase.

For more information, please visit the website at www.riversideunified.org and click on the STEM High School icon where you can then explore and sign up for project updates.

About Riverside Unified School District:

[Riverside Unified School District](http://www.riversideunified.org) is the 16th largest school district in California, serving over 42,000 students in 50 schools in Riverside, California. The district serves a large portion of the City of Riverside as well as unincorporated areas of Highgrove and Woodcrest in Riverside County. The District is governed by a publicly elected Board of Education consisting of five members who serve five different trustee areas. The District is led by Superintendent Dr. David Hansen.

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