



Mira Loma High Measure N Signature Project Forum Report

Summary

San Juan Unified held a Measure N Signature Project Forum at Mira Loma High on Tuesday, Sept. 30 in the school cafeteria.

The Mira Loma forum drew a crowd of 73. Staff delivered a short presentation seeking input and feedback regarding three previously proposed Signature Project ideas: A stadium, new or modernized science classrooms, and renovations to the school's black box theater.

The audience was then asked to move into small groups to discuss their No. 1 preferences. They were asked why their preferred project is needed at Mira Loma and what features would be needed for those projects to meet program and academic needs at the high school. A second small group setting was also made available to those that wanted to weigh in on their No. 2 preferred option. The majority of participants chose not to attend a second small group.

Small group results

An informal poll was taken to get a clear idea of which project forum attendees preferred. At Mira Loma, 55 audience members said they prefer a stadium, 13 preferred science classrooms, and one gentleman said the school's top priority should be a black box theater upgrade.

Key points (listed in no particular order):

Why a stadium is needed at Mira Loma:

- Improved physical education opportunities
- A true home field for football, soccer, track and others sports

- Community pride and spirit. Increase of morale for students/staff/community
- Safety. The current condition of Mira Loma athletic facilities is poor and not accessible to all
- Community events and Friday night football
- Brings equality to Mira Loma
- Potential revenue generator for school through tickets and rentals

Needed features of a stadium:

- Equitable facilities to other San Juan schools
- Synthetic turf
- All-weather track with 9 lanes, jump pits, discus and all other amenities that allow for a CIF-sanctioned meet to be held at Mira Loma
- Stadium lighting
- Electronic scoreboard
- Snack bar
- Press box
- Ticket booth
- Bleachers to accommodate large crowds
- Bathrooms/lockers
- Fieldhouse with weight room and coach offices
- Storage
- Sound system
- Parking/fencing

Why Science classrooms are needed at Mira Loma

- Mira Loma identifies itself as a “science school”
- Science is a “showcase” program at Mira Loma
- Mira Loma has received national recognition for science programs
- New facilities will continue Mira Loma’s science legacy and help the program grow
- Current labs small, cramped, unsafe
- Transfer students come to Mira Loma for academics, not athletics

Needed features of science classrooms:

- First goal is brand new science wing
- Second goal is to expand and modernize current rooms
- Larger classrooms
- Computer labs/stations
- Safety upgrades
- Labs for chemistry, biology, physics and environmental
- Defined areas for each student to work
- Storage for equipment/chemicals

- Modern cabinetry and tables

Why a renovated black box theater is needed at Mira Loma:

- Only concerts now in multi-purpose room
- Acoustics in current facilities are bad
- Black box theater is too small
- Meeting space
- Large group meetings
- Used by wide variety of campus groups
- Current storage is inadequate

Needed features of a black box theater renovation:

- Ceiling of black box theater needs to be raised
- Proper acoustics
- Add seating
- Storage
- Aesthetic improvements

Questions & Answers

Comments from the Mira Loma community expressed disappointment that their school has not received many upgrades over the years compared to other schools. Proponents of a stadium were vocal regarding the fact that Mira Loma plays its home games at El Camino High and they felt a new synthetic turf field and all-weather track would create a real sense of community pride for the Matadors.

Questions were:

Q: We already had a forum where we identified a stadium as our Signature Project. Why do we have to have another forum?

A: A forum was held last year. At that forum, school and parent group leaders were asked to help identify the top project ideas at each high school. Tonight's forum is being held so that a broader cross-section of the community can provide input and feedback. Staff will then take that information and then dig deeper to come up with preliminary budgets that will incorporate as many of the desired features as possible.

Q: Why don't we just take a vote for the project we prefer and go home?

A: We're here to gather information so that staff can better shape and mold the top Signature Project ideas. A vote would tell us what folks here tonight prefer, but it won't help us identify what the community believes are the most important features of each project idea.

Q: Are you trying to convince us that we should support science classrooms and not a stadium?

A: No. Staff is not trying to sway opinion. We are only gathering information at this forum. We are noting what the consensus opinions are, and will present that information in future meetings with principals, the Superintendent's cabinet, and the Board of Trustees.

Q: El Camino and Del Campo recently received renovations to their stadiums, funded by more than \$6 million from Measure N. Why?

A: The Board of Trustees voted to upgrade to synthetic turf fields and all-weather tracks at El Camino and Del Campo. Those facilities are considered to be shared facilities and are used by multiple schools for a variety of athletic activities.

Q: Are the El Camino and Del Campo fields the Signature Projects at those schools?

A: No. Those field and tracks are not considered Signature Projects for those schools. Staff continues to plan Signature Projects at all nine high schools.

Q: I'm a student at Mira Loma. I think we need new science classrooms and black box theater upgrades for safety reasons. We have unsafe conditions in our science labs. It's cramped for space and we're using open flames. We have performers in drama that have to work under an 8-foot high ceiling. It's not safe. Isn't that more important than a football field?

A: Thank you for your comments. All of the projects identified for Mira Loma have their merits. We appreciate and respect all thoughts and opinions as we move toward a recommendation.