



Casa Roble High Measure N Signature Project Forum Report

Summary

San Juan Unified held a Measure N Signature Project Forum at Casa Roble High on Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2014 in the E-F Cafeteria.

The Casa Roble Forum drew a crowd of 23. Staff delivered a short presentation seeking input and feedback regarding three previously proposed Signature Project ideas: A library/student union, a new restroom/concession building/fieldhouse at the stadium, and a fine arts center.

Because the crowd at Casa Roble was relatively small, the audience was not asked to move into small groups. Instead, staff asked the full audience to gather together to identify what program and academic needs each Signature Project idea would meet at the high school, and what features would be necessary to accommodate those needs. Then, staff took questions and comments.

Small Group results

An informal poll (show of hands) resulted in 13 people that preferred a student union. Three people indicated they would prefer a restroom/concession facility at the stadium, and one supported a fine arts center. There were six people that either left the meeting before the poll was taken or did not have a preference. There was a request for the district to research the possibility of incorporating fine arts features into a student union building.

Key points (listed in no particular order):

Why a fine arts center is needed at Casa:

- Space for band, choir and drama programs
- It would help Casa compete with other schools for enrollment
- It could serve as a link to current programs at Casa's feeder schools
- A new center could spur bigger investment into arts programs. Not enough current funding for arts at Casa

Needed features of a fine arts center

- Stage and curtain
- Lighting/sound
- Seating
- All the elements of a Performing Arts Center
- New teachers and revamped arts program

Why a restroom/concession stand is needed at Casa:

- Currently no restrooms
- Athletics and P.E. classes need restroom access
- For public use at graduation ceremonies
- For public use at ROTC events
- Community events
- Weekend events
- Sanitation/safety of portable restroom situation is poor
- Need to meet ADA requirements

Needed features of a restroom concession stand:

- High capacity
- Concession area with electrical outlets
- Locker rooms/team rooms
- Field house
- Recreation center
- Film room for teams/coaches

Why a library/student union is needed at Casa:

- Expand/modernize library
- Collaboration space for students
- Homework/hangout space
- Tutoring center
- Counseling offices

- Career and college counseling
- Financial aid office
- Access to technology
- Media center
- Possible business course expansion if student-run food service is involved
- Some administrative offices
- Community meeting space

Needed features of a library/student union:

- Internet café
- Vending machines/pretzels
- Open concept
- Café stand/coffee shop – possibly student-run
- Broadcast studio/live broadcast space
- Newsroom for student broadcast/newspaper courses
- Restrooms for student use
- Potential to combine union with performing arts space

Questions and Answers

Audience members spoke on a variety of topics. Some questioned whether or not a restroom/concession stand meets the spirit of what a Measure N High School Signature Project should be. There was a lot of interest in finding ways to combine the fine arts center idea into the student union concept. One person said a student union and arts building sounds like a “cool” idea but is not a need for the school the same way a restroom facility is.

Q: Have we had a band program at Casa before?

A: (Principal Michele Lorenzo) Yes. They’ve worked out of the theater in the past.

Q: Would the current library be expanded to be a new student union, or would it be completely new construction?

A: (Principal Michele Lorenzo) Our current library building would have a full upgrade. They’d gut the building, take out walls, and allow for windows and shade structures. It could possibly be a two-story building or we do have space to expand at the first floor level.

Q: We know El Camino and Del Campo High received new synthetic turf and all-weather tracks at their stadiums. Are those stadium upgrades the Signature Projects for those schools?

A: No, those projects are not included in the Signature Project program. The Board authorized spending Measure N money on stadium upgrades at Del Campo and El Camino because those facilities are used as home fields for multiple San Juan Unified schools. Because the projects met an established need, were designed and ready to be started, and because they impact multiple schools and thousands of students throughout the District, they were the first projects

Q: Doesn't that bring up some questions of parity because those schools get the synthetic turf and all-weather tracks and also a Signature Project?

A: Each high school receives one signature project to meet their school's unique needs. The Board has established a budget for all projects which allows an average of \$10 million per school for a signature project. The tracks and fields at the schools referenced are not their signature projects. Each school may receive additional funding for needs beyond their signature project as resources allow.

Q: Ok. But, it's not just dollars spent. It's also the number of projects that each school will get. When you look at (El Camino and Del Campo) they get a stadium and another Signature Project. So, that looks like two projects.

A: We understand that perspective. Schools may receive funding for projects beyond their signature project depending on the immediacy of the need and the impact it will have. San Juan Unified has \$2.4 billion in identified facilities needs among 65 schools. A decision was made to upgrade the Del Campo and El Camino stadiums to meet athletic needs for multiple schools. A second decision was made to dedicate \$117 million to Signature Projects at all nine high schools. Signature Projects will help us meet needs for specific programs/services at each high school and its respective community.

Q: Can we combine the student union and fine arts facility into one large expansion?

A: That is something we will fully research and determine if it's feasible.

Q: If we choose a project, and it's built with money to spare, could we build a second project?

A: When Signature Projects come in under budget, that remainder will go back into Measure N where it will be designated to meet the district's most pressing needs. Casa does have many needs identified in the Facilities Master Plan. It's possible that some of those needs will be met with Measure N funding. You can view the full Facilities Master Plan at www.sanjuan.edu/fmp.