



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Paramount Unified to Open New STEM High School in 2018-19

Paramount, CA – Paramount Unified School District will open a new high school for the 2018-19 school year that focuses on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) curriculum to prepare students for college and technology industry jobs.

The unnamed school plans to offer either an engineering pathway or a biomedical pathway through Project Lead The Way (PLTW), the nation's leading provider of STEM curriculum, and use project-based learning to teach students to identify and solve real-world problems. Either pathway will include elements of computer science in their curriculum.

The new high school will blend PLTW and its pathway program with traditional academic subjects to immerse its students in STEM learning in all of their courses.

The District plans to create a bridge from its middle school's general PLTW curriculum, which offers a broad scope of STEM learning, to its focused pathway offerings at Paramount High School and the new unnamed high school. Paramount High School currently offers computer-integrated manufacturing as an engineering pathway.

The new school will be led by Keith Nuthall, who supervised the creation of an applied science program at Escondido Union High School District's Del Lago Academy. Nuthall said his experience taught him the importance of instilling strong critical-thinking skills, a foundation of math and literacy, and offering social emotional support through internships and teacher mentorships.

"We want to make sure that our students have the opportunity to read, write, think and behave like scientists, mathematicians, historians and writers," Nuthall said. "Solving society's problems takes multiple perspectives, disciplines and attitudes and our goal is to provide those opportunities to our students."

Assistant Superintendent Ryan D. Smith praised Nuthall's depth of knowledge of STEM programs.

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“He has a tremendous amount of experience in opening a STEM school,” Smith said. “With an experienced principal and STEM focus in place, we believe this new school will nurture major academic excellence in our students for years to come.”

The school will enroll 150 freshmen in its inaugural school year, and add a grade level each year until achieving full enrollment at 600 students. At that size, the school will be substantially smaller than Paramount High School’s West Campus, which serves freshmen, and about a fifth the size of its Senior Campus, which serves sophomores, juniors and seniors.

Smith said that while the new school’s enrollment process is not yet determined, the District plans to first and foremost serve residents in the Paramount area.

The former Lakewood Elementary school campus has been secured for the new high school. District officials plan to renovate the more than 20 buildings on the campus, replacing floors, ceilings, lighting and desks. New computers and high-speed internet will be added.

The District is also amid efforts to select a name for the school. More than 100 suggestions have been submitted by students. District officials will narrow the list to six choices before a final vote by the Board of Education in September.

“This new school will be a shining example of our District’s goal to provide our students with a strong pathway to success,” Superintendent Dr. Ruth Pérez said.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

072517_PARAMOUNT_NEWHIGHSCHOOL1: Paramount Unified’s new high school is planning to open in 2018-19 and will focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) curriculum.

072517_PARAMOUNT_NEWHIGHSCHOOL2: The former Lakewood Elementary school campus has been secured for Paramount Unified’s new high school while the school’s name will be voted on by the Board of Education in September.

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