



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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The Franklin Elementary Campus Plan Calls for Eight Percent Increase in Green Space

The Franklin Campus Plan has been developed with parents, staff and community input over the past several years. Construction is set to start in summer 2026 and includes an eight percent increase in green space campus wide over the multi-phase plan. A new classroom building will be built with the need for additional classrooms to facilitate the transitional kindergarten expansion.

As part of the plan the athletic field will be moved, reducing the size and changing the material. Last week's memo, [Turf Facts](#), addressed the change in field material from grass to synthetic turf. We have received questions about the size change of the field. This memo outlines the proposed change and the reasoning behind the recommendation.

The Campus Plan balances many priorities, including educational, community, recreational, historical, environmental, safety and other priorities. The primary challenge is the size of the Franklin campus. The California Department of Education recommends an elementary school campus be approximately 11.7 acres for a school of 600 students. Franklin is 5.6 acres which is less than half the recommended size.

There are competing priorities for space to be used for many purposes. The guide to balance these needs is the [SMMUSD Education Specifications](#). They were developed with our educators to determine the facilities needed to teach today's and tomorrow's students. The education specifications recommend changes to the campus to support how learning has changed. Major changes are larger classrooms, more alternative learning spaces, and improved outdoor learning facilities.

Another major change driving the Franklin campus plan is universal transitional kindergarten (TK), which expands the number of needed classrooms on the Franklin campus to facilitate all four-year-olds attending school beginning fall 2025. These TK classrooms, like kindergarten, are larger than standard classrooms, contain restrooms, and have specific outdoor play requirements (75 sf per student).

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Green space increasing by eight percent

The outdoor learning green space will be increased by eight percent within the campus plan. This includes the addition of indoor-outdoor learning spaces. The recreational green surface will remain the same size though some square footage will be shifted from the athletic field to other play space.

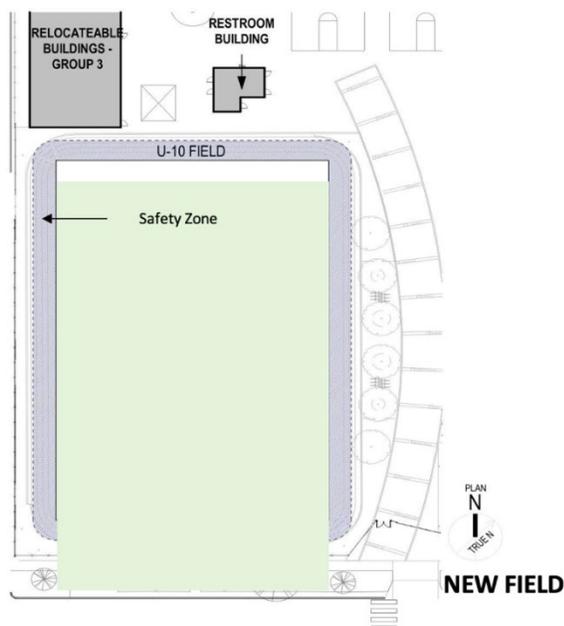
The plan proposes a 5.3 percent increase in the building footprint, including a new two-story classroom building. The recreational and outdoor learning hard surface will be reduced by more than 11 percent.

Site	Building Footprint	Recreational Space		Outdoor Learning		Exterior Pedestrian Circulation	Parking / Vehicle Circulation	Service / Utility Yard	Total
		Hard Surface	Green Surface	Hard Surface	Green Surface				
Franklin ES - Existing	22.17%	20.55%	25.15%	13.89%	2.49%	8.54%	4.97%	2.24%	100.00%
Franklin ES - Proposed Phase 1	25.18%	20.08%	22.64%	13.22%	2.12%	8.15%	6.60%	2.01%	100.00%
Franklin ES - Proposed Campus Plan	27.47%	16.35%	25.20%	6.30%	10.50%	4.36%	6.60%	3.22%	100.00%
Change from Existing to Campus Plan	5.30%	-4.20%	0.05%	-7.59%	8.01%	-4.18%	1.63%	0.98%	0.00%

The current athletic field is smaller than a U-12 soccer field. It has a few-lane dirt track surrounding it. It is 42,356 square feet (sf). The new athletic field reduces the area by 29 percent. (Not more than 50 percent as some claim). It has 30,001 sf of playing area, including the synthetic turf track. It will be a U-10 soccer field with 24,531 sf.

The U-10 field matches the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) field and other elementary school aged students' sports. It aligns with the permitting and use allowed by the Master Facilities Use Playground Partnership Agreement with the City of Santa Monica.

While the plan is for the playfield to be synthetic turf, the campus plan anticipates an increase in grass and natural areas for play, reflection and learning. The front lawn will remain grass. There are three areas of outdoor learning and softer play areas that are planned to be grass. The TK and kindergarten yard includes sections that are grass.



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School outdoor traditions will continue

The turf field and track will allow for all traditional school events and for other uses:

- Move-a-thon
- Movie Night
- Carnival
- AYSO and other elementary age field permits
- Playground Partnership free play on weekends and breaks

The proposed enhancements to the campus plan will improve learning and play opportunities for Franklin Elementary students while continuing to serve community needs.

We look forward to moving forward on this campus plan with groundbreaking starting this summer.

Warmly,

Carey Upton
Chief Operations Officer, SMMUSD