

UHS Vision Statement Proposal: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
FEASIBILITY REPORT FOR UHS AND HIGH PERFORMING MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS

On May 23rd, 2017 the TUSD Governing Board directed University High School (UHS) and its Site Council to report back on the feasibility of implementing the Board's 2012 direction to provide UHS with a dedicated site. The dedicated site could also include consideration of a co-located or nearby high standards middle school that has no admissions test. The Board directed that the report address an array of issues: Desegregation Goals and Integration, Capacity and Physical Limitations of Rincon/UHS, Current and Prospective UHS and Rincon Students, Co-location of UHS and a High Standards Middle School, and Financial Considerations and Policy Options.

What began as the Special Projects at Tucson High, which was established by the Board in 1976, has dramatically changed to become what is now known at UHS. The total enrollment has increased, as well as the diversity of the student population, reflecting the cultural and ethnic make-up of the community. UHS is the most diverse public exam high school in the United States, and has produced more national Hispanic Scholars than any other high school in the nation. In addition, UHS continues to produce high levels of National Merit Scholars on an annual basis and maintains national rankings, thereby serving the school's commitment to provide a successful academic enrichment environment.

UHS has been co-located on the campus of Rincon High School since 1985, and is recognized by TUSD and the federal court as a separate school with no defined attendance zone. UHS and Rincon High Schools are currently the 5th and 6th largest high schools in TUSD. They are unable to grow larger because the combined enrollment exceeds 2,200 students: 113% of the site's capacity. A high school that is under-enrolled can be repurposed to accommodate and expanded UHS along with a co-located high standards middle school. Former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, a 1988 UHS graduate, has graciously allowed the proposed middle school to be named after her.

In response to the TUSD Board directive, nine options were evaluated based on five criteria: 1) Create increased academic enrichment for TUSD students, 2) Space and autonomy for UHS and possible affiliated middle school, 3) Central location, 4) Efficient allocations of resources, and 5) Continued successful integration of TUSD high schools. The process yielded three options for the Board's consideration that successfully met the established criteria. While the various options each have their own set of strengths, relocating UHS to a separate campus with improved facilities and increased enrollment capacity with an accompanying high performing middle school will assure equity for all student, afford opportunity for growth and achievement, boost retention and enrollment, increase extracurricular opportunities, and provide greater efficiency in allocation of district resources. Additionally, combining an underutilized school with Rincon would provide a richer array of electives and consolidate specialized services that would benefit an expanded Rincon campus, potentially becoming a more attractive school choice for parents. Based on the information and data available, the following recommendations are being submitted to the Governing Board:

1. Pursue Option A: Move UHS to Catalina and expand Rincon to include students from Catalina.
2. Initiate a boundary change process to govern the relocation of students from Catalina to an expanded Rincon in order to accommodate UHS on the Catalina campus.
3. Direction from the Governing Board to TUSD administration and Legal Counsel to submit all necessary and relevant data to the District Court, Special Master and Plaintiffs in as expeditious a manner as reasonably possible related to the UHS relocation.
4. Designate an Ombudsman to coordinate with UHS and develop the execution plan.
5. Relocation of UHS and Catalina would be in place for the start of the 2018-2019 school year
6. Initiate further study of a possible co-located or nearby high standards middle school.