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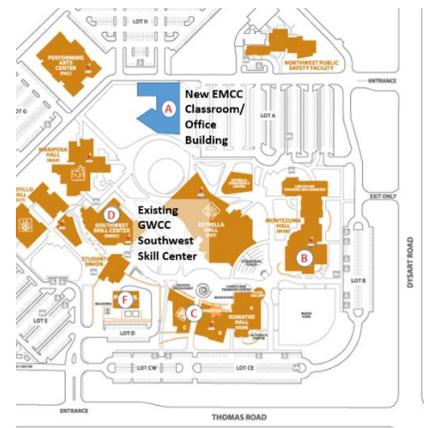
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**Estrella Mountain Community College Applauds Governing Board Approval of  
\$31,000,000 Campus Expansion Project**

**Estrella Mountain Community College issued the following statement in response to the approval by the Governing Board of the campus expansion project:**

This evening, the Maricopa Community College District Governing Board approved a proposal for a new Classroom/Office Building for Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC), and related remodeling projects to serve both EMCC and Gateway Community College (GWCC)-Southwest Skill Center (SWSC). The District will fund the combined project budget of 31 million dollars over multiple fiscal years. While this expansion will affect two colleges, all aspects of the project are located at Estrella Mountain Community College.

The District's Capital Development Advisory Council (CDAC) reviewed the initial proposal and recommended it for Governing Board action. The expansion will address critical needs for instructional and support service spaces at EMCC. The new construction and the remodeling of existing areas will address space deficits on the EMCC campus that are compounded by several years of consistent enrollment growth. During the 2017-2018 school year, annual enrollment of credit and non-credit students exceeded 15,000 students. Over the last decade (fall 2009 to fall 2018), EMCC credit enrollment has increased by 38%.



The impressive new centrally located 37,000 square foot building will contain ten academic multi-use classrooms, four flex-labs, faculty and administrative offices, and student support space. The new building will also include

6,000 square foot of vocational/occupational labs allocated in support of the on-going partnership with GWCC-SWSC.

Additionally, the expansion project includes much-needed renovation work in the GWCC Southwest Skills Center on the EMCC campus as well as a new Biology lab and support space in Montezuma Hall, and remodeling of the Komatke-A building for Enrollment Services. All of which will accommodate existing and future student population growth. Furthermore, EMCC will make the necessary improvements to the chilled water system at the central plant to support the new construction and build an additional parking lot to meet increasing student needs.

“At this point, our campus has depleted all available space for faculty and program offices, which has a huge impact on our enrollment growth,” states EMCC President Dr. Ernest Lara who has served in his current role since 2007. “We now have growing wait lists for classes due to a shortage of instructional space. The communities we serve have clearly demonstrated their desire to take advantage of opportunities to further their education on our campus,” Dr. Lara continues. “The leadership team at Estrella Mountain is ecstatic about the expansion project. By approving our request, the Governing Board recognizes that this campus is a springboard for occupational and entrepreneurial opportunities that will enhance economic growth in the West Valley.”

EMCC leadership will request funds, as needed, across multiple fiscal years. With a 7 million dollar budget and projected completion date in August 2021, remodeling of current buildings will likely begin next month. The budget for the new building along with related infrastructure improvements is \$24,000,000. EMCC anticipates construction will begin February 2020 and the expected occupancy date is January 2021. For more details about the approved expansion project visit <https://district.maricopa.edu/board-operations/current-agenda>

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[Estrella Mountain Community College](http://www.estrellamountain.edu) is one of the ten colleges in the Maricopa County Community College District, one of the largest community college districts in the nation. EMCC offers academic courses leading to associate degrees, university transfer, certificates, and short-term job training to more than 14,000 students annually. The flagship campus is located on Thomas and Dysart roads in Avondale. Classes are also offered online and at two Buckeye locations: EMCC’s Buckeye Educational Center, located in downtown Buckeye, Arizona, and at the EMCC @ West-MEC Southwest Campus at 500 N. Verrado Way.