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FM3

*Public Opinion Research
& Strategy*

TO: Kelly Porterfield, Assistant Superintendent Executive Services, CBO
Central Unified School District

FROM: John Fairbank & Rick Sklarz
Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates

RE: Central Unified School District High School Boundary Community Survey Proposal

DATE: November 9, 2017

Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) is pleased to submit this proposal to conduct a community survey of Central Unified School District (CUSD) residents to inform the district's public engagement program to determine a process for building a high school. FM3 has extensive experience conducting research for California's K-12 school districts, which includes helping to secure billions of dollars in voter approved state and local school bond measures over the firm's 36-year history. Furthermore, FM3 regularly conducts research for local government agencies to examine satisfaction with services, assist in the development of strategic planning, and inform public communications to educate and inform residents.

For this project, FM3 recommends conducting a multimodal survey among an address-based sample of 400 or 500 adult residents within CUSD. To ensure maximum participation and accurate representation of the district's entire population, the research would be conducted in English, Spanish and Punjabi, and the interviewing process would have three distinct phases beginning with online interviews, then moving to telephone (landline and cell phone) interviews, and mailing an invitation to households to take the survey online. All three of these phases are described in greater detail below on the following pages.

We believe that this research methodology will result in greater participation and fully represent the population of district residents. In comparison, mailing a survey to all households relies upon residents to fill out and return the survey, which reduces the likelihood that the sample of respondents who fill out and return the survey is representative of the district

The survey would feature an average interview length of roughly 10 minutes. A survey of 500 residents would produce a margin of sampling error for the full sample of +/-4.4 percent, and allow for the analysis of results by major demographic groups, such as gender, age, ethnicity, and residents with and without school-age children.

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FM3 believes in a collaborative research process, and we welcome the input and feedback of district staff in the development of a survey instrument. We foresee proceeding through several drafts, incorporating feedback from district staff before each revision, to develop a research instrument that will obtain all the information desired. Before interviewing commences, FM3 will secure approval from the appropriate CUSD representative on the final version of the questionnaire.

Phase I: Online Interviews

During this phase, FM3 will pull a stratified random sample of residential households in CUSD (sourced from comprehensive lists of all residential addresses in the district provided by the U.S. Postal Service) and identify the names, phone numbers, and email addresses for their adult residents. We will acquire this name and contact information data from two major sources:

- (1) The voter file maintained by the Fresno County Clerk/Registrar of Voters; and
- (2) Commercially available consumer records

Once FM3 has identified email addresses for the desired number of respondents, an invitation will be sent to the individuals for whom an email address is available. To encourage the greatest level of participation in the survey, we would recommend the email invitation include the district’s actual electronic seal or logo, with a note explaining that the district has hired an independent public opinion research firm to conduct a survey about local issues that are relevant to its residents, electronically “signed” by the Superintendent and/or Board President. The email invitation will provide a unique link for the voter to take the survey online (which can only be used to take the survey once). Three to four days after this initial email invitation is sent, a second reminder email will be directed to recipients who have not yet taken the survey, requesting that they do so.

Phase II: Telephone Interviews

Within a week of the initial email’s distribution, FM3 will conduct a thorough examination of the demographic characteristics of those who have taken the survey online. By comparing the demographic characteristics of those who have completed the survey online with the attributes of the district’s adult resident population as a whole, FM3 will note specific subsets that are either overrepresented or underrepresented in the online sample. In many communities, those who opt to take a survey online tend to be younger and/or more affluent than the broader population.

FM3 will then conduct further interviews with additional respondents by telephone. The telephone interviews will be conducted primarily among respondents who were underrepresented in the online sample, thereby producing an overall survey sample using both methodologies (online and telephone) that mirrors the district’s adult resident population.

Phase III: Postcard-Prompted Online Interviews

Should the telephone interviewing not provide a sufficient number of interviews to ensure a fully representative sample, FM3 will mail a postcard to the remaining residents within the sample who have not yet taken the survey – including those who have not yet been contacted because they do not have a publicly available telephone number or email address. The postcard, like the email invitation, would

be framed as a request from CUSD to participate (and be bilingual), and include a written invitation to take the survey online with a unique URL provided at which to do so.

If additional interviews are deemed necessary once the burst of online interviewing among recipients of the postcard invitation tapers off, a second, final postcard will be mailed to the remaining residents within the sample who have not yet taken the survey. This postcard, also branded as coming from the district, would include not just an invitation to take the survey online and a unique URL at which to do so, but also a modest incentive (such as a \$5 gift card for Starbucks, redeemable only after completing the survey) to thank residents for sharing their opinions with CUSD.

FM3 is ready to begin this research project immediately, and one of our firm's strengths is the ability to complete a course of research quickly and efficiently. We are confident that we could develop the survey, conduct the interviewing and report the results within four to six weeks.

The total cost to conduct the research as presented in the proposal would be \$41,500 for 400 respondents and \$44,250 for 500 respondents. This price is all-inclusive, and reflects all costs for questionnaire development, survey hosting and emailing, English, Spanish and Punjabi translation, telephone interviewing, bulk mailing, data entry, cross-tabulation, data analysis, and preparation and presentation of survey results. Direct incidental expenses, such as extra reproduction of reports and travel, are not included but would be billed at-cost if incurred.

Of course, any number of alternative survey structures are possible, which may result in higher or lower costs. FM3 is committed to working with the CUSD staff to tailor the research plan to fit your budget and meet your research needs.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact us. You may reach us in our Los Angeles office as follows:

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We would welcome the opportunity to work with you on this research. Thank you for your consideration, and please let us know if there is any further information we can provide.

