

EXHIBIT A
TUSD ELECTORATE SURVEY FOR A POTENTIAL
NOVEMBER 2017 BOND

Preliminary Executive Summary

The public attitude and opinion survey for the Tucson Unified School District was a 46-question, phone survey undertaken from April 24th 2017 to April 29th, 2017 from a stratified sample of residents of the Tucson Unified School District who voted in the 2013 or 2015 General elections or the May 2016 special election. There were 479 fully completed surveys, which provide a 95% confidence interval of $\pm 5\%$.

The survey focused on four areas: 1) general attitudes and opinions about the school district and its policies, 2) community opinions towards several bond thresholds (\$300 million, \$240 million and \$180 million), 3) community opinions towards specific uses for bond funds and 4) impacts of pro and con arguments on the vote.

Given recent negative publicity about the resignation of the superintendent and years of contentious debate at all levels of the school district, it is not surprising that just 30.0% of the respondents with an opinion (20.9% of all surveyed) believe the Tucson Unified School District is headed in the right direction. (Verbatim comments about why the district is off on the wrong track will be included in the final report.) Coupled with this, only 32.8% believe TUSD is meeting the needs of its students and only 31.1% agree TUSD is using its money in a responsible manner. Despite these concerns about the direction of the district and the degree of mistrust for the district, 69.5% of all respondents are willing to support a bond package of \$180 million 61.0% would support a \$240 million bond and 54.3% of all respondents would support a \$300 million bond (assuming respondents who would support the higher bond amounts would also support the lower amounts).

Also, in spite of concerns about TUSD, respondents recognize the need and importance of improving schools. Almost 75% of all respondents (74.5%) are more likely to support a bond if bond funds would be used to help the district save operating money allowing for more dollars to be spent in the classroom. Almost as many respondents (72.7%) would be more likely to support a bond if there is a citizen oversight committee in place to ensure funds are spent as promised and on budget. And more than 60% (62.6%) of respondents would likely support a bond knowing the school district is an economic engine for the region and will help attract businesses, jobs and other economic opportunities.

In conclusion, the survey results indicate the Tucson Unified School District has a base of support for some level of bonding. It appears both proposals of \$300 million and \$240 million do not have strong enough support from the community to be successful. However, there is a stronger level of support for the smaller package of \$180 million.

Without question, Tucson Unified School District must increase its efforts to communicate and educate the direct benefits of the bond to parents, staff and community members. These same groups must be informed about the consequences of not passing the bond and how the district's capital needs both short-term and long-term will not be addressed without local dollars.

Community members as well as parents and staff need to know about the quality of the education provided to Tucson Unified School District students and the exceptional programs being offered. Bond projects need to be as specific as possible to ensure the community understands how and why the funds will be spent with a strong and active oversight committee in place. It is equally important for the district to have a strong and united front to support the bond – from the top of the administration to the teacher in the classroom and custodians cleaning a school. Through existing communication channels the district needs to present how the bond funds will be used to improve educational and community opportunities, save tax payers' dollars and put more money into the classroom. Doing these activities, and with a strong and active advocacy effort, the district should be able to gather sufficient voter support to pass a bond in November 2017.

Summary of Specific Questions

The first set of survey results focuses on the overall attitude and opinion questions asked in the survey.

- 448 (93.5%) believe it is important to maintain all Tucson Unified School District schools to ensure students are safe, in facilities that comply with building requirements and provide a positive educational environment
- 403 (84.1%) feel as homeowners quality schools will enhance their property values
- 403 (84.1%) don't mind paying a few dollars more a month in school taxes as long as the money is used to make education better for kids
- 235 (49.1%) agree property taxes in their community are just about right while 118 (24.6%) think their property taxes are too high, just 62 (12.9%) felt property taxes in their community were too low

- 157 (32.8%) believe the Tucson Unified School District is meeting the needs of its students
- 149 (31.1%) agree the Tucson Unified School District is using its money in a responsible manner

The next set of findings highlight the results related to a \$300 million bond proposal. 260 (54.3%) of all respondents are willing to support the bond proposal, 145 (30.3%) are opposed to the bond proposal and 74 (15.4%) are unsure about the bond or refused to answer the question. Respondents opposed to or unsure about the \$300 million bond proposal were asked if they could support a \$240 million bond. 78.7% of respondents opposed to the \$300 million remained opposed to the \$240 million bond. Of the respondents that were asked about the smaller bond, support increased by 14.5% (6.7% of all respondents).

Finally, respondents opposed to or unsure about the \$240 million bond were asked if they could support a \$180 million bond. More than half (55.9%) of the respondents opposed to the \$240 million bond remained opposed, but an additional 21.8% of these respondents would support the \$180 bond—overall, a gain of 8.6% support over the \$240 million bond and 15.3% over the \$300 million bond.

All respondents were asked about the importance of various bond projects. Their opinions are as follows:

- 425 (88.7%) believe purchasing technology to increase student access is an important use of bond funds
- 423 (88.3%) agree replacing heating and cooling units are an important use of bond funds
- 422 (88.1%) feel increasing student achievement is an important use of bond funds
- 401 (83.7%) believe installing new roofs are an important use of bond funds
- 412 (86.0%) agree security and safety improvements are an important use of bond funds
- 398 (83.1%) feel general deferred maintenance is an important use of bond funds

- 372 (77.2%) believe renovating and remodeling schools are an important use of bond funds
- 355 (74.1%) agree improving playgrounds and fields are an important use of bond funds
- 337 (70.4%) feel installing new carpeting, flooring, plumbing and painting are important uses for bond funds
- 312 (65.1%) believe purchasing new buses is an important use of bond funds
- 262 (54.7%) agree upgrading athletic fields is an important use of bond funds

Then respondents were asked about arguments in favor of or against the bond to determine the impact of those arguments. These need to be further analyzed against the bond votes to determine impact on decided and undecided voters, but preliminarily, their opinions are as follows:

- 357 (74.5%) are more likely to vote for a bond if they knew the bond would help the district spend more money in classrooms
- 346 (72.2%) are more likely to vote for a bond if they knew there would be a citizen bond oversight committee in place to ensure the funds are spent as promised
- 215 (44.9%) are more likely to vote for a bond if they knew the legislature had failed to fund capital needs

Arguments related to the increasing costs of delayed repairs and the time since the last bond had less of an impact than those above. Overall, arguments against the bond had less of an impact than arguments for. The strongest argument against the bond is the “blank check” argument. This resulted in 174 (36.3%) saying they would be less likely to support the bond. On the same question 25.1% were more likely and 27.6% said it would have no impact.

After providing the additional information about the need for the bond, potential uses of the bond and statements in support of and opposition to bonding, all respondents were asked again if they would support or oppose the bond proposals. The results are essentially the same as in the earlier questions.