

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR



BAKERSFIELD

August 19, 2022

CHANNEL ISLANDS

MEMORANDUM

CHICO

DOMINGUEZ HILLS

TO: Faculty, Staff, Students and Community
California State University San Marcos

EAST BAY

FRESNO

FROM: Jolene Koester *Jolene Koester*
Interim Chancellor

FULLERTON

SUBJECT: President Ellen J. Neufeldt – Completion of Triennial Performance Review

HUMBOLDT

LONG BEACH

The California State University Board of Trustees evaluates the performance of CSU presidents and the state of campus affairs on a three-year cycle, in addition to less formal annual reviews the chancellor conducts with each president every summer.

LOS ANGELES

MARITIME ACADEMY

I write today to inform you that the regularly scheduled three-year performance evaluation for President Ellen Neufeldt has been completed. As evidenced by positive progress on Graduation Initiative 2025 goals – including graduation rates that are among the highest in CSUSM's history – the board and I are confident in the future that awaits California State University San Marcos under President Neufeldt's leadership. Together with the campus and broader communities, the president will continue to chart an even more vital path forward to support equitable and lasting change that benefits students from all backgrounds.

MONTEREY BAY

NORTHRIDGE

POMONA

SACRAMENTO

The horizon for public higher education is comprised of opportunities and challenges, and we believe that with the extended CSUSM community working together, the campus will continue as a beacon of opportunity as it advances its unique, necessary and consequential educational mission.

SAN BERNARDINO

SAN DIEGO

SAN FRANCISCO

The litany of tasks and responsibilities expected by the board of President Neufeldt is extensive. In addition to providing leadership and management for academic, student support and administrative matters in a collaborative environment that honors principles of shared governance, the president also has responsibility for engaging with the broader community, performing systemwide duties, contributing to state and national higher education policy, and cultivating philanthropic support and stewardship – all of which advance and benefit CSUSM and its students. And, of course, the COVID-19 pandemic has required nimble and thoughtful decision-making and fast action to maintain students' progress to degree while protecting their health, safety and well-being, as well as that of faculty and staff.

SAN JOSÉ

SAN LUIS OBISPO

SAN MARCOS

SONOMA

STANISLAUS

The purpose of presidential evaluations and summer conferences is to keep the CSU Board of Trustees properly informed of campus successes and challenges, to develop and maintain alignment regarding strategic goals, and for the board and chancellor to demonstrate our commitment to and support of the campus and its students, faculty, staff and leadership.

As you may know, during spring term 2022 we initiated the regular three-year review process for President Neufeldt – her first comprehensive evaluation since her appointment as president in 2019. All campus constituents and stakeholders were invited and encouraged to participate.

We received letters regarding all aspects of the president's performance from faculty, staff, students and community members. The board and I appreciate the candid, insightful and confidential feedback from the extended campus community, and offer our heartfelt thanks to those who took the time to provide such thoughtful input for this review.

The points of view expressed in each letter were read and carefully considered, and a comprehensive summary of the input was prepared for the board's review, maintaining the confidence and anonymity of every participant. In addition, the CSU Office of the Chancellor prepared its own evaluation of the president, informed by campus and community input, visits to the campus and interactions in the normal course of business with leadership, faculty, students, alumni and staff at CSUSM.

These documents, plus comprehensive operational, fiscal and student success data were reviewed, discussed and deliberated in closed session with the board and President Neufeldt on May 25, 2022. That meeting led to a deeper understanding of the campus, the relationship of CSUSM to the larger community, and of the campus's opportunities and challenges moving forward. (While it is understandable that there is public interest in the details of this discussion, performance evaluations for any faculty or staff member within the CSU, including our presidents, are confidential [Government Code Sec. 6254(c) and 6255].)

As a result of this process, certain goals were agreed upon by President Neufeldt and the board. They are, in no rank order:

1. Establish CSUSM's reputation as a national social mobility leader by 2024-25 through:
 - a. Managing student fees and targeting outreach and recruitment of historically underserved students in the region, as measured by improvements in CSUSM's ranking on the Social Mobility Index;
 - b. Establishing a \$3-million social mobility fund for initiatives and programs that support students equitably through a seamless life-cycle experience and remove barriers to their success; and
 - c. Forming a national social mobility center that serves the campus and beyond through research and dissemination of evidence-based practices that promote social mobility.

2. Accelerate innovation at CSUSM by 2023-24 through:
 - a. Growing industry partnerships as measured by the number of active agreements and engagements through the newly opened Innovation Hub, Innovation Lab and other community-engaged learning initiatives;
 - b. Cultivating a campuswide innovation ecosystem that supports intellectual property creation as measured by increases in start-ups launched, research grant dollars awarded, and patents and license agreements granted;
 - c. Exploring partnerships with the City of San Marcos and North County developers to attract biotech and engineering firms to the inland North County region; and
 - d. Launching new campus and community programs including an innovation faculty fellows program, “quick pitch” competitions and educational series programming.
3. Develop an academic master plan by 2023 that aligns with CSUSM’s new strategic plan, featuring programs that meet the region’s priority workforce needs (e.g., engineering, blue tech, hospitality, social work, early childhood education and health sciences) in a variety of formats and modalities, with an emphasis on underserved and nontraditional student populations, such as veterans and adult learners.
4. Launch the largest comprehensive philanthropic campaign in CSUSM history – more than \$60 million – by 2024-25 to support campus priorities including the new Integrated Sciences & Engineering Building.
5. Build a more robust on-campus residential experience with a new housing affiliation agreement launched in 2022, the opening of the first on-campus dining hall in 2023 and construction of new affordable housing – via public and private funds and/or establishment of public-private partnerships – by 2023-24.

In order to remain attentive to the current and future state of affairs at CSUSM and as noted above, the chancellor will continue to hold annual summer conferences with the president. President Neufeldt’s next formal three-year review with the Board of Trustees and the chancellor will be initiated under current policy in 2025.

Again, thank you for your participation in this important process. The feedback received made clear that there is a strong community-wide commitment to the success of California State University San Marcos. Please know that the CSU Board of Trustees and I share in that commitment, as does President Neufeldt.

