

Groton Public Schools Public Opinion Survey

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY – SURVEYS

CRPP, with the active input of SFITF and Milone & MacBroom project personnel, proposes to design and implement custom questionnaires which meet project goals and objectives.

Because of the anticipated utilization of study results and size of the target market, it is important that the study's sample size is large enough to provide representative and credible data on the subgroup and/or geographic level. CRPP proposes to provide a highly credible and statistically reliable sample of **300 to 400** completed telephone surveys. The overall statistical margin of error for a **300 to 400** sample is **+/- 5.5 – 5.0** percent respectively. Equally important, a sample of this size will provide sound data on the subgroup and/or geographic levels. CRPP is prepared to begin this project immediately and meet any timeline the GPS requests.

The following is CRPP's proposed methodology for the telephone (landline and cell) surveys:

- 1. Project Initiation Meeting/Teleconference** - Communication is a critical component of any successful study. CRPP recommends an initial kick-off meeting / teleconference with GPS project personnel to discuss overall approach, review comments on the methodologies outlined in the proposal, formalize a project timetable, and establish a project reporting system.
- 2. Maintaining Communication** - CRPP will provide GPS with regular progress reports which summarize activities, including progress around the work plan, tasks completed, and milestones achieved in accordance with established timetables. In addition, project directors are available to answer questions 24 hours a day.
- 3. Survey Design** - Using the information from our Project Initiation Meeting and subsequent meetings/conversations, CRPP project staff will design a questionnaire to meet the expressed goals of this project. CRPP has helped design survey instruments on behalf of clients for over 33 years and has developed hands-on expertise in developing instruments that elicit meaningful, concise, and comparable information. CRPP will submit the questionnaire for final approval by the designated individual(s).
- 4. Sample Design** - The determination of sample size is a function of budgeting constraints and expected statistical reliability (or margins for error). CRPP recommends a sample of 300-400 completed telephone interviews. A sample of 300-400 has an associated overall margin of error of +/- 5.5 to 5.0 percent, which is highly reliable and credible. Equally important, a sample of this size will provide statistically reliable data on major subgroup levels and sound data on other subgroup levels.

CRPP will design and implement a sample which is proportional to the target community's population distribution – perhaps by registered voters. CRPP utilizes a super random digit sample in most studies and proposes this method for the GPS's telephone survey rather than listed (phone book) sampling. Survey Sampling Inc., a nationally recognized survey sample development firm, estimates that 29.6 percent of American households are unlisted. The use of a super random digit sample ensures that all potential households are included thereby increasing representation and reliability. **Importantly, CRPP purchases “mixed access” phone samples that include cell phone numbers – critically important as the number of residents in homes without landlines or use cell phones as their “primary” increases.**

5. **Staff Training** - In addition to general researcher training, CRPP's Project Director and Research Supervisors will conduct a training session regarding the GPS's project. Training will consist of a question-by-question review of the survey instrument, including any specifications associated with each question; whether the question should be probed or not and, if so, what probe to use; and whether any clarifications or definitions can be provided to the respondent. Procedures for dealing with problems, questions, or situations will be provided so that interviewer-to-interviewer variation in administration is minimized.
6. **Pre-Test** - CRPP always includes a pre-test of 5 percent of the total sample with the final questionnaire. Following the pre-test, a briefing is held with the researcher team to determine any problems, ambiguous areas, or incorrect skip patterns. Pre-test surveys are excluded from the final results if any changes result.
7. **Full-Scale Fielding** - Given the high caliber of our field research staff, strict sampling and internal data control procedures, we achieve high response rates -- bolstering our confidence in survey results because non-response bias is minimized. CRPP will conduct all interviews (except for scheduled call-backs) between 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. weekdays and 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekends, ensuring proper demographic distribution. Using this system, approximately 25 percent of all interviews are monitored on any given day.
8. **Quality Control** - CRPP Supervisors monitor approximately 25 percent of all calls through random phone bank checks. In addition, CRPP's Supervisors ensure survey quality by verifying 15 percent of all completed interviews. The Supervisor re-calls selected respondents and confirm the survey was properly completed by randomly re-asking 2 to 3 survey questions. In addition, supervisors check all completed interviews for correct skip-pattern procedures, correct rotation, and completeness of open-ended responses.
9. **Computer Programming** - A customized program, in SPSS -- a comprehensive and flexible statistical analysis and data management system, is written to accommodate the final survey instrument.
10. **Data Analysis & Quality Control** - Coding of open-end questions proceeds as surveys are completed. Data is converted to SPSS/ASCII format after each survey has been carefully reviewed. After data analysis is performed, logic validation checks are performed to ensure consistent relationships between question responses. Computer-processed data is reviewed on a scheduled periodic basis by CRPP's Project Directors
11. **Analysis & Written Report** – CRPP provides objective, reliable information with actionable recommendations. We insist on clear and meaningful narrative analysis of the data compiled for our clients. We have prepared many related reports that succinctly present and analyze statistical information. The final written report will include, but not be limited to:
 - ◆ Statement of Confidentiality
 - ◆ Introduction
 - ◆ Methodology;
 - ◆ Highlights;
 - ◆ Summary of Findings;
 - ◆ Composite Aggregate Data;
 - ◆ Survey Instrument(s);
 - ◆ Cross tabulation Tables.