

San Marcos Unified School District
MFA Secures the Future of Education



SAN MARCOS
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
ENGAGING STUDENTS... INSPIRING FUTURES

“At San Marcos Unified, we’re committed to providing a secure and safe learning environment for all our students and staff. Implementing Identiv’s uTrust FIDO2 Security Keys has been a pivotal step in our journey to enhance our district’s cybersecurity infrastructure. This solution not only meets our enhanced security requirements but also supports our mission to use technology effectively and responsibly in our schools. We are proud to lead the way in adopting advanced security measures that protect our community while ensuring ease of use and minimizing impact on our budget.”

Tony Cabral,
Coordinator of Technology Operations, SMUSD

INDUSTRY
Education

END USER
San Marcos Unified School District (SMUSD)

PARTNER
Identify Systems

PROJECT TYPE
Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) Implementation

SCOPE
Deployment of Identiv’s uTrust FIDO2 Security Keys for 2,500 employees across multiple school sites

IDENTIV SOLUTION
uTrust FIDO2 Security Key

- BENEFITS**
- Enhanced security
 - Compliance with insurance requirements
 - User-friendly authentication
 - Cost-effective solution



THE CHALLENGE

SMUSD needed to enhance its security measures to protect against escalating cyber threats and comply with updated insurance requirements.

THE SOLUTION

The school district deployed Identiv's uTrust FIDO2 Security Keys for secure and user-friendly multi-factor authentication.

THE NEXT STEPS

SMUSD will continue to evaluate the performance of the keys and seek opportunities to further enhance its cybersecurity framework.



Business Situation

San Marcos Unified School District (SMUSD), with its origins dating back to 1882 and its current configuration since 1976, serves a diverse community within San Diego County, California. The district oversees an extensive network of educational facilities, including ten elementary schools, two K-8 schools, three middle schools, two high schools, a continuation high school, an independent study high school, and an adult education school. SMUSD recognized the growing threats targeting educational institutions, including ransomware and direct attacks. The district's insurance requirements were enhanced to reflect the heightened risk environment, necessitating a balance between improving security and managing insurance costs.

Technical Situation

The urgent need for enhanced security led SMUSD to consider multi-factor authentication (MFA) for its 2,500 employees. However, the initial consideration of mobile-based solutions faced reluctance from staff to use personal devices for authentication. This challenge prompted the search for an alternative solution that was both secure and user-friendly.

Solution

Considering both cost-effectiveness and Identiv's long-standing history of exceptional service, SMUSD chose Identiv's uTrust FIDO2 Security Key as its solution. This hardware-based MFA tool provides the necessary security without relying on personal mobile devices. The keys were distributed to each school site, with clear testing and enrollment instructions. To accommodate different user preferences, SMUSD offered three enrollment options through its single sign-on product, ClassLink, SMS messaging, and uTrust FIDO2 Security Keys. A mandatory enrollment deadline ensured widespread adoption, and a dedicated help desk call center was established to assist users with any login issues.

Conclusion

The implementation of Identiv's uTrust FIDO2 Security Keys has significantly enhanced the cybersecurity posture of San Marcos Unified School District. By providing a secure, user-friendly, and cost-effective authentication solution, SMUSD has successfully navigated the challenges of modern security threats while meeting its insurance requirements. The district's proactive approach serves as a valuable example for other educational institutions facing similar challenges.

