

RFP 4133 – Consulting Services for a Visual Rebrand

Vendor Questions/Inquiries and Responses

- 1: How does MMSD define success for this branding initiative, beyond the deliverables listed?**

RESPONSE: See objective 1.2.2 under Scope.

- 2: Is there a preference to retain elements of the current brand (e.g., logos, colors, messaging), or is a complete overhaul anticipated?**

RESPONSE: This will be based on vendor's research and recommendations.

- 3: What is MMSD's anticipated timeline for launching the new brand?**

RESPONSE: June 2025

- 4: Are there specific channels (e.g., social media, events, physical signage) where the rollout should be prioritized?**

RESPONSE: Website, newsletters

- 5: Are there specific school districts or organizations MMSD considers competitors in the region that we should benchmark against?**

RESPONSE: This is not an apples to apples answer. Districts to consider as part of the process, but not necessarily benchmark against, are Verona, Waunakee, Sun Prairie and Middleton.

- 6: Is there an allocated amount for the budget of this project?**

RESPONSE: Vendors are encouraged to be competitive.

- 7: Is your list of group/individuals for the research prioritized?**

RESPONSE: No

- 8: Who are your competitors?**

RESPONSE: Verona, Waunakee, Sun Prairie, Middleton and other private/charters

- 9: Why is "now" the right time for an MMSD rebrand?**

RESPONSE: We are a district in transformation. We have a new superintendent, a new strategic framework and work regarding the passage of the 2024 referendum.

- 10: What are your biggest concerns with the current brand?**

RESPONSE: It is outdated and doesn't embody the district's vision.

11: Will priority be given to Madison-based respondents?

RESPONSE: Reference 3.4 of the Evaluation Criteria.

12: There are many mentions in the RFP of multiple parties being involved in the visual brand creation. Ultimately who is the final decision maker? Is it one person or how big is the group of people?

RESPONSE: Senior Executive Director of Communications in conjunction with the Superintendent and the Board of Education.

13: 1.2.3 - "the development of a strong brand concept, creative elements, messaging / positioning and the overall brand initiative." ○ Is this a strictly a visual rebrand project—a project strictly concerned with the visual/aesthetic branding components—or is messaging, mission/vision statements, taglines, etc. work expected?

RESPONSE: Visual brand

14: 1.2.2 - "Flexibility – The brand must be flexible to meet the needs of a variety of departments within MMSD while maintaining consistency with and integrity of the overall brand. District logo and individual school logos must work together and use logo lockups to show a cohesive brand." ○ Considering "this is a district-wide branding initiative," can you confirm that there are no changes happening to any of the distinct, individual schools' visual brands? We understand that there will need to be a system developed to allow for individual school logos to coexist with the new district branding, but we want to ensure that there is nothing changing with those schools' logos or brands, themselves.

RESPONSE: Hierarchy logo lock-ups are needed.

15: 1.2.3 - "Recommendation of ways to articulate the brand; define markets and promotional avenues; and advise on strategies to better promote and create brand awareness." ○ Can we have more context here? This sounds like the development of a marketing plan following the rollout of the visual brand.

RESPONSE: Provide a recommendation of how to represent a cohesive brand through various channels and to various audiences.

16: 1.2.3 - "Maintenance and consistency of brand image and messaging while providing suitable flexibility for the target audiences of the participating agencies." ○ What ongoing maintenance work are you envisioning?.

RESPONSE: Deliverable is to ensure a brand book is provided as a guidance document for brand use.

17: 1.2.3 - "A minimum of three distinct creative options must be presented, based on the results of the research. The selected logo design (including the possibility of current logo) will be delivered..." ○ Considering "the possibility of current logo," does this

mean we need to present two options (for a total of three) or are we presenting three options above/beyond the current logo?

RESPONSE: This will be based on the vendor's research.

- 18: 1.2.3 - "a style manual and guidelines for use and the capability of use in the following, but not limited to: Print and electronic advertising, Website design, Media placement, Public Relations, Events, Templates, Vehicle branding, Textiles" ○ Are consultants designing each of these items, or simply providing a guide on how to apply the logo and custom brand elements to these items, but not providing specific-to-each-item design work?

RESPONSE: These items would be designed as examples and included in the comprehensive brand book.

- 19: There is a variety of mentions of "focus groups" and "listening sessions", "creative means of public involvement/community engagement" throughout the RFP. ○ Are these intended to be in-person or can they be virtual? ○ How many sessions are you looking to hold?

RESPONSE: A combination approach should be considered.

- 20: 5.2.1 states "Ability to organize and facilitate community sessions." but 5.1.4 says "Design a listening session format (digital and in-person) and facilitation protocol - to be executed by MMSD staff - to maximize a diverse group of stakeholders that would lead to at least 10 listening sessions with 3 being identified for students." ○ Are these two points referring to two different things? If so, please provide more detail on each. If not, please explain if we would be facilitating these sessions or simply creating a guide for them.

RESPONSE: 5.2.1 shows the technical acumen and skills a vendor must have in regards to the stated ability in 5.2.1. 5.1.4 is the deliverable.

- 21: Brand rollout, promotion plans, etc. ○ Are consultants simply doing the planning, or is the expectation to execute the plan as well? If the expectation is to execute the brand rollout what are the specific expectations?

RESPONSE: The vendor is expected to provide a rollout plan, the district will execute.

- 22: Is there existing (benchmark) market research on MMSD available regarding awareness, attitudes and/or perceptions?

RESPONSE: No

- 23: We didn't find any references to enrollment goals in your strategic framework. Are there specific short- or long-term goals for enrollment to be considered in project success metrics?

RESPONSE: No

- 24: Is there a time during the school year (or summer term) you plan to launch a rebrand or will you base that on our recommendation?**

RESPONSE: summer 2025

- 25: Would you provide a working URL to the strategic plan - this link is not correct:**

RESPONSE: <https://www.madison.k12.wi.us/about/strategic-framework>

- 26: As part of marketing research efforts can you recommend a minimum number of focus groups and minimum number of people reached as part of market reach? The answer to this question will be the biggest variable related to cost from our perspective.**

RESPONSE: Madison is a city of 280,000 people, MMSD has approx. 25,000 students, 52 schools, 6 high schools. Based on this size market the vendor would recommend the appropriate sample.

- 27: In section 1.2.3, the RFP states that the consultant conduct market research. In the first sub-bullet, the RFP states “List of key stakeholders, groups, or influential individuals, as well as a cross section of community members and business owners...” – do you want your selected partner to identify the list of key stakeholders or is this something MMSD can provide? From the way the RFP is worded, it’s unclear to us if the research extends to actually identifying who the key stakeholders are or if this is something MMSD already knows.**

RESPONSE: The selected partner should offer ideas in addition to what MMSD can provide.

- 28: If possible, can MMSD provide a starting list of key stakeholder groups that you expect will need to be included in our research?**

RESPONSE: The selected partner would help to determine along with MMSD, the key stakeholders to engage.

- 29: Does MMSD have any existing brand perception research that we can use for a baseline here? If so, when was the last time this research was conducted?**

RESPONSE: No

30: What is prompting MMSD to pursue a visual rebrand now?

RESPONSE: We are a district in transformation. We have a new superintendent, a new strategic framework and work regarding the passage of the 2024 referendum.

31: The RFP notes a desire to analyze competitor marketing strategies – who do you see as MMSD’s primary competitors? And, should this analysis extend beyond brand identity?

RESPONSE: Verona, Waunakee, Sun Prairie, Middleton and other private/charters

32: The RFP notes that continuing to use MSD’s existing logo is a possibility – our assumption is that research would be integral in understanding our goals for logo and potential for the existing brand identity to ‘best fit’ our goals. Can you provide any additional context around the consideration of keeping the existing brand identity?

RESPONSE: This will be based on the vendor’s research.

33: When was the last time that MMSD executed a visual rebrand?

RESPONSE: Several decades ago with an update in 2020.

34: Section 5.1.7 reads as “provide quarterly presentations to Senior Leaders with progress updates” – do you envision these being written updates, or presented updates (and digitally or in-person)?

RESPONSE: In-person

35: Section 5.2.1 states “ability to organize and facilitate community sessions” but in 5.1.4, the RFP reads that the consultant will “design a listening session format (digital and in-person) and facilitation protocol – to be executed by MMSD staff” – just seeking to confirm that the consultant will not actually be facilitating community sessions?

RESPONSE: Correct

36: Can you share examples of school districts that you feel have successful visual brand identities?

RESPONSE: No

37: Who do you perceive to be your main competitors and how will this visual rebrand influence your standing amongst them if done well?

RESPONSE: See objective 1.2.2 under Scope.

38: While we can recommend and design an initial path forward for research, it seems highly likely that we'll need to collaborate with the MMSD staff directly in order to finalize a research approach that is sure to include all of the necessary audiences and stakeholders; with that in mind, how do you propose we come to a finalized price estimate for this submission?

RESPONSE: Vendors are encouraged to be competitive

39: Does the school district have a budget for this proposed scope that you can share?

RESPONSE: Vendors are encouraged to be competitive

40: In section 1.2.3, it seems like the bulleted item that starts with "facilitate during the research" is possibly cut off – can you let us know if there is any additional text here? It seems to end as follows – "Provide the process for arriving at an agreed-upon visual brand that will include MMSD leadership, the MMSD board,".

RESPONSE: nothing missing

41: Can you describe the approval process for the final visual brand?

RESPONSE: This will be a process determined with the district creative team.

42: Are there any particular timing milestones we should be aware of for the rebrand initiative?

RESPONSE: Completion of brand 5/25 launch in June 2025

43: Why are you considering specifically a visual rebrand? How do you expect the visual component of your brand to impact your overall success?

RESPONSE: See objective 1.2.2 under Scope.

44: What does success look like for this project? We understand that you want help defining KPIs but more broadly, if this goes well, what sort of impact do you want it to have on MMSD? Examples could include things like enrollment, retention, ability to attract employees, funding, something else, – etc.

RESPONSE: See objective 1.2.2 under Scope.

45: Has a budget been established for this procurement? Even a ballpark estimate would be helpful in our planning phase.

RESPONSE: Vendors are encouraged to be competitive.

46: Does this form (Appendix D) need to be returned with our final submission or can we exclude it from the final forms at time of submission?

RESPONSE: See required forms in the RFP.

47: On a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 is a perfect score, how satisfied are you with the current agency? What is the reason for that score?

RESPONSE: 10, this is managed internally currently.

48: Describe the pain point or needs that led to this RFP.

RESPONSE: Capacity. We only have one person.

49: What is the project's estimated timeline from agency selections to the deployment of the approved assets? What is the ideal launch date?

RESPONSE: Completion of brand 5/25 launch in June 2025

50: We often see that large public school districts suffer from an inaccurate and negative public perception. Describe the current public and political perceptions of MMSD.

RESPONSE: The vendor is encouraged to research and collect this information when engaging with the focus groups.

51: Describe the approval process (with the selected firm) and who is involved in approving advertising plans and creative concepts. What creative mandates are required? Is a legal or board approval needed?

RESPONSE: This will be a process determined with the district creative team.

52: Describe the market, district, and/or category research that will be available to the selected agency.

RESPONSE: Please describe specifically what you are looking for.

53: What key performance indicators (KPIs) will be measured to determine the success of new brand? What tools are used to track employee and family satisfaction, web traffic, enrollment, program participation, etc.

RESPONSE: Vendor is encouraged to provide recommended KPIs

54: Will Finalsight continue as the preferred website platform? What support will MMSD's need from the selected agency to apply the new brand to the site?

RESPONSE: To be determined

55: If you were forced to pick only one type of relationship with a marketing firm for this project, which would you select?

- 1. Follow Orders - An agency that executes your ideas and acts as a helping hand to get things done.**
- 2. Team Player - A collaborator that thinks and works with you to create assets.**
- 3. Thought Leader - A thought leader and subject matter expert who leads you, constructively challenges assumptions, and offers fresh perspectives.**

RESPONSE: The ideal vendor is all three.

56: What would you consider an ideal news story about MMSD that supports the goal of reaching target audiences?

RESPONSE: We would encourage vendors to provide their insights on this topic.

57: To what extent is a local or Wisconsin based agency preferred? Is MMSD open to working with agencies outside of Wisconsin?

RESPONSE: Reference 3.4 of the Evaluation Criteria.

58: What would you consider an ideal news story about MMSD that supports the goal of reaching target audiences?

RESPONSE: We would encourage vendors to provide their insights on this topic.

59: Under deliverables, you mention website design, does this mean just revising a current website to match the new branding, or will there be a need for web development for a new site?

RESPONSE: As part of the brand guidelines we anticipate these recommendations will be identified.

60: Are you looking for media recommendations with recommended spend in this proposal as well?

RESPONSE: No

61: Is there a starting budget or range that we should be considering as we approach this project?

RESPONSE: Vendors are encouraged to be competitive.

62: In an ideal world, when would you like all this work outlined in this RFP to be completed?

RESPONSE: Completion of brand 5/25 launch in June 2025

63: How do you intend to measure brand performance? Community surveys, enrollment rates, academic performance, community involvement in MMSD related events, etc?

RESPONSE: See objective 1.2.2 under Scope.