

Executive Summary: Selection of Strategic Planning Facilitator: Rg Consulting

Introduction

After a comprehensive review process involving interviews with four separate firms, I have selected Rg Consulting, led by Ralph Grimm, to facilitate the Meridian CUSD #223 strategic planning process. This decision was based on Mr. Grimm's specific experience with similar districts, his cost-effective proposal, and a methodology that prioritizes community engagement and streamlined goal setting.

Consultant Profile & Experience

Rg Consulting is led by Ralph Grimm, who brings extensive experience facilitating strategic planning for Illinois school districts.

- **Track Record:** He has recently successfully completed planning processes with Roanoke-Benson School District #60 and has worked with multiple other districts including Mt. Pulaski CUSD #23, Kewanee CUSD #229, and Taylorville CUSD #3. I conducted two reference calls, and superintendents spoke very highly of the experience of working with Mr. Grimm.
- **Approach:** Mr. Grimm utilizes a "strength-based approach" rather than a deficit-based model, focusing on what the district is doing well to drive future improvements.

Proposed Methodology & Logistics

The proposed process is designed to be efficient, avoiding "fancy forms" in favor of deep, facilitated conversations that align our District Goals with our Mission and Vision.

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** The process utilizes a Strategic Planning Team of approximately 25–50 participants. This will include a mix of internal stakeholders (boardmembers, administration, staff, students) and external stakeholders (parents/guardians, community leaders) to ensure broad ownership and buy-in.
- **Format:** The primary work is conducted during a concentrated timeframe, typically consisting of a Friday evening session (4:00 PM – 9:00 PM) and a Saturday session (8:30 AM – 2:30 PM).
- **Deliverables:** The outcome will include a refreshed Mission/Vision, identification of "North Stars" (non-negotiables), and strategic goals for the next 3–5 years derived via a SWOT analysis.

Financial Impact

Rg Consulting provides a highly competitive rate compared to the other firms interviewed.

- **Fee Structure:** The hourly rate is \$175 per hour plus standard travel expenses.
- **Total Estimated Cost:** The initial estimate for the total cost of facilitation is between \$3,000 and \$4,000.

- Efficiency: Mr. Grimm emphasizes that he does not extend time to earn more money and aims to keep project time to a minimum.

Next Steps

- Scheduling: We will look to schedule the Friday/Saturday retreat dates as soon as possible.
- Team Selection: Administration will begin compiling a list of potential invitees for the Strategic Planning Team for Board President to review.

I am confident that Rg Consulting will provide the honest process and efficient outcomes we require to move Meridian CUSD #223 forward.