KYDA

INTERVIEW RESPONSES,
NOTES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The KYDA Exploration process was designed to collect critical perspectives from key stakeholders in your organization or community. The key stakeholders should be selected to create the most diverse range of information. We asked ourselves. How can we earn the responsibility to rebrand an organization if we don't understand them? We set out to understand:

- Existing conditions
    - Perspectives
    - Audience
    - Divisions and differences
    - Inaccurate understandings
    - Graphic representations
    - Messages, Ideas, and Delivery
    - Written content
    - Online presence
    - SEO
    - Social
    - Brand processes
    - Brand communication strategies
    - Content development strategies and workflows
    - Goals
    - Vision

- Opportunities vs. Challenges
    - Does a change, update, or shift, help address any issues revealed?
    - What are the anticipated effects of different levels of change?
    - What opportunities can potentially be created by changes?
    - What challenges are created by making a change?
    - How do potential changes align with the vision?
    - Does the end outcome of change benefit those it should be directed towards?

- Right now, we are focused on
    - Earning buy-in and satisfying the Exploration needs of the project
    - Collecting and delivering the results of the full Exploration process
    - Reaching an approved vision for moving into the creative process
    - Understanding how to rebuild the branding and communication processes
    - Identifying the resources required to effectively implement a long-term strategy

The mission of the Exploration process is to continue to build data points that limit the potential outcomes. These data points or ideas will be filtered out by the decision-making group and the remaining guidelines will dictate the creative process. In the end, a written vision for the creative process will be delivered for approval. The approved vision will move forward into the creative process and set for concept delivery.

Based on the requested Exploration scope, the responses, interviewers' notes, and recommendations at this point in the process are below. Included are also any ideas, noticeable emotions, and details from the interviews. All interview responses are kept confidential, and no response is attached to any one interviewee. This allows for us to ask for the most honest response to the most sensitive and direct questions. Our summary at the end of the question responses is exactly that. A summation of the overall experience from the question and is not related to any one source.

Our interviews we designed with five sections:
- History and Background
- Personal Perspective
- Vision – looking forward
- Branding
- Online presence – website focused

History and Background

We believe we need to spend time investing in someone prior to engaging in an interview that asks what we are asking of someone. We never dive directly into the subject of the Exploration until we share some of ourselves and connect with our interviewee. How can we understand the responses if we don't understand where they come from?

For the Newport Strategic Action Committee, we wanted to understand what their geographic and school experience was like when they were in school and now that they are outside of it.

In the History and Background, we asked questions to learn the following:
- What is your current role in or connection with the Newport Independent Schools?
- Did you attend Newport Schools?
- Please share your school experience.
- What do you recall about your school or district branding?
    - Did it mean anything to you at the time?
    - Have you looked back now or at any time?

- In your time and experience with Newport Schools, what has changed?
- What seems different about schools today?
  - For the student.
  - For the parent.
- Do you have children, and did they go to Newport Schools?
- What do you recall about your district's communication strategies?
- What conversations or commentary are **popular** regarding Newport Schools?
- Do the population education statistics say anything about the district?
- Where does the majority of funding for the district come from and how do we compete with other districts?
  - Referenced housing, current developments, and median household income statistics.
- In your own words, what are the positives Newport Schools are **known** for?
- In your own words, what are the negatives Newport Schools are **known** for?
- What do the Newport Schools mean to the community?
- What does the community mean to Newport Schools?
- Is there a difference in the identities and branding of each individual school in the district? How are those identities tied to the district?
- What is the significance of the clock in the current logo/identity?
- What is a cornerstone of the current branding that must be maintained or valued in the future of the brand?
- Are there any aspects of the current or past branding that needs to be discarded?
- If the district continued to be viewed in the same way, and risked existence beyond the next five years, would you accept a change?

Personal Perspective

The responses to the questions above are critical to our process but we need to create a frame for how the response measures against their personal experiences. At this moment, we are narrowing down the previous responses through the next level of data filtering. During the Personal Perspective segment, we sought to understand:
- What does branding mean to you? Art, guidelines for communication, or anything that touches your audience?
- With a branding project like this, or when we complete this project, what do you think success looks like? (response telling of true project scope understanding).
- What should students gain from this change? (understanding of focus).
- Review of potential examples – results were positive but led to partial removal.

Vision – looking forward

At this time, we felt comfortable exploring the individual's vision for the future of the Newport brand that was generated by the questions asked during their interview. We wanted to understand how they saw us, **"US"**, moving forward. Help us dream. Here are the questions we asked:

- What should Newport Schools be **known** for?
- Please provide me with **four terms**, adjectives, or singular words that always should represent Newport Schools.
- When you think about the brands you are most loyal to, why are you loyal to them?
- Do you believe the branding efforts need to work from the inside out or outside in?
- Understanding the difference in brand delivery, strategy, and resource allocation.
  - Outreach vs. Engagement
  - Outreach: Increasing audience connections via purposeful spending and campaigns to increase new connections.
  - Engagement: Focusing on creating the best experience, per audience target, looking internally, and all resources are allocated towards that effort.
- What should a new brand do for the students?
- How do you want to feel when you close your eyes and see what represents you?

Branding

You choose your brand. No amount of marketing or graphic design is going to set that table for you. Branding is the peace of mind. Know what you are saying, when you are saying it, how you are saying it, and your audience is being served well. Do you feel full control? A brand is built starting with the audience

- What are your top six User Personas (audience) that the branding and marketing should be focused on?
- What is your view of the way the District currently crafts and delivers to these personas?
- Is there anything unique about their needs?
- What is the current NIS mission or vision statement?
- The current two-line Google description for the district, when searched, is…what do you think it should say?
- Does the URL newportwildcats.org accurately represent all schools and clearly define what you should find at that URL?

- Your current tag line, "Preparing students for the future!", does that accurately represent what you want people to take away from your mission?

Website

Your website is the core of your online presence and serves a great need for your audience. The impact of a stunning and well-organized website tells a potential and current parent a lot about your organization. We did not expect for our interviewees to be savvy in all aspects of the website, so we asked just a few basic questions.
- What are the top five items that should be on the school district website home page?
- If a parent were to consider enrolling their student in one of your schools, if they click on enrollment, what should they find?
- How should the different schools be represented on the website? What should stand out?

Responses and Interview Notes

The questions included in our interviews were specifically asked to achieve our goal of finding the information that will lead to a great branding decision. We strive to maintain the interview flow but there are interviewees that lead us in a direction we choose to follow. We may have spent more time exploring one section more than another and due to the constraint of time, not all questions were asked to each person.

What is your current relationship with Newport Independent Schools?
- Advocate/Social Worker
- Art Teacher
- Business Association President
- Business owner
- Businessman
- CFO
- Code Enforcement Office
- Coordinator – Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Director of Curriculum
- Family Resource Coordinator
- High School Principal
- High School Teacher
- IT Director

- Police Chief
- Police Officer
- Primary Principal
- Primary Teacher
- Realtor
- Residents
- Retired
- Superintendent

Did you attend Newport Schools?   Y or N.   Even if not, tell me about your school experience.
17% Yes   83% No

What do you recall about the school or district branding? Did it mean anything to you at the time? Or have you looked back?
- Community values
- Didn't register
- Don't mess with tradition
- Don't step on the N
- History
- Letterman jackets
- More association with High School branding
- Newport reputation from history
- Not known as academic
- Nothing
- School was the center of the community, it empowered the branding
- They switched logos while I was in school
- Tradition
- Zero

What have you seen change in Newport schools over your years of experience with it?
- "I cannot handle this district; I cannot handle these kids" (they think they want it)
- Academic numbers
- Changes in Superintendents

- Combined schools
- Detachment of leadership
- Disconnection of relationships
- Early 2000's not seen as a partner
- Empathy not sympathy
- How we approach people
- How we approach problems
- Incorporated professional learning model
- More concentrated effort today
- More open to what kids have to say
- Need has changed. Kids need people that will stick with them
- Not much
- Nothing
- Philosophies
- Physical facilities (positive)
- Population
- Race strategy
- Reduced enrollment
- Segmentation of schools and students (reformation)
- Teachers working together (positive)
- There was more staff continuity
- Turnover
- Unfortunate reputation
- Very collaborative
- What it is now is what it has been

What seems different about schools today? For the student, for the parent?
- Available information to parents and their way to connect to it
- Communication from the school
- Devices
- Different systems
- Do the parents actually listen? Are they hearing us?
- Easier to get into trouble
- Focused on testing not learning and growth
- Frequencies and rhythms have changed
- Instant communication
- Less homework

- Less learning
- Less parenting
- Less structure and more relaxed for the students
- Meeting the needs of all students
- Modes of communication
- Parents are asking more of schools
- Parents are expected to be tech savvy
- Parents are not held accountable
- Parents aren't the only ones working
- Parents don't back teachers or school
- Parents require less buy-in
- Participation trophies vs. real expectations
- Pay requires additional jobs for the parents
- Resources; far more giving
- Social media
- Stigma, the parent didn't have a good school experience
- Students are asked to be older
- Students are engaged and entertained through technology. Instant entertainment.
- Students are expected to know more
- Students oversee more of their own learning
- Students are not being stimulated
- Technology
- Transition in traditional family structure
- Trouble at school meant more
- Virtual inclusion
- What schools can provide to students

Do you have children? Yes 95%   **No** 5%
Did they go to Newport Schools? Yes   5-10%   No 90-5% (some partial time/left at intermediate)

What do you recall about your district brand and communication/perception?
- Didn't register
- Don't mess with tradition
- Letterman jacket was only connection
- Mascot was a thing
- More people/more community

- Newport reputation – mob stories
- No
- Nothing
- Nothing of substantial value
- Partners with industry
- Pride
- Represented the community
- School was a community center/community social center
- Social media presence
- The personal touch has been lost

What conversations or commentary are *popular* regarding Newport Schools?
- Amazing resources
- An anvil sinking the overall success of the city
- Bad schools, bad kids, bad scores
- City development choices has eliminated the residents that sent their kids to Newport
- Drug infested
- Feel a disconnection between city and school
- Fighting
- Free & reduced (free services lead to increased students and families in need)
- Frustration
- Helps students and families
- Independent schools have a defensive culture
- Kids don't behave
- Lack of parent involvement
- Low socio-economic parents
- Not safe
- Out of control
- Parents appreciate our communication and involvement
- Parents appreciation how much we care
- Paying all this money, for what?
- Perceived poor facilities
- Poor results for high costs
- Poor test scores
- Questioning
- Schools may not be here in 5+ years
- Staff Turnover
- Taxes

- They are a joke
- Transient
- Troubled kids
- What is the tax money doing?

With a median household income of $37,435, and many school needs covered by taxes, how does Newport compete with other school districts?

- Dollars don't always equal success
- Facilities
- Grants
- I don't know
- McKinney Vento program
- More complex challenges between school, students, and family in Newport
- One to one Apply products
- Resources (lunches, clothing, Advisors)
- Scholarships
- Strong FRC
- That's a good question
- We have plenty of resources, as many as those districts around us
- We might not be able to
- You cannot compete, you must be better in other ways

In your own words, what are the positives Newport Schools are _known_ for? The Negatives?

- Accepting of any student
- Anyone can go there
- Career and technical paths
- Close knit community
- Diverse student base
- Ecosystem around the children**
- Experience driven activities (special field trips)
- FRC
- Great facilities
- Great intentions
- Grit and persistence
- History
- Kindergarten readiness
- Not afraid to try new things

- Notable alumni
- One-to-one technology
- Opportunities are available if you want them
- Resources and programs, more than other districts
- STEAM
- Support to families
- Taking care of their own
- Teachers are not just teachers
- Teachers go the extra mile
- The teachers truly care
- Usage of technology

Negative
- Lack of/Inconsistent communication control
- Limited community business involvement
- Low socio-economic families
- Many parents in survival mode
- Nothing good
- Poor test scores
- Poorly behaved students
- Sports aren't what they used to be. Lacks programs.
- Teachers experience and deal with challenging situations
- That is a good question
- Turnover
- Very little school spirit

What do Newport Schools mean to the community? What does the community mean to Newport Schools?
- A history and tradition that residents are proud of
- A lot
- Community pride for long-term residents
- Depends on where you live in Newport
- Educating and supporting the whole family
- Education is the key
- Families are accepted and supported in Newport
- It feels like there is an us against them between the city and schools
- Opportunity and a future

- Opportunity for the kids
- Some would rather the schools were not here
- The doors are open to anyone that is a part of the community
- The school feels disconnected from the community and city
- The school lacks the support of many residents that have voices with reach
- The schools are a beacon to the community
- The schools are an opportunity for people to say negative things about Newport
- The schools mean a lot to the community
- There are divides between interests. Because of taxes, test score, and where people live
- There is a lot of hometown pride
- They are unhappy with the schools but know they are necessary

Is there a difference in the identities and branding of each individual school in the district? How are they tied to the district?

- All the same
- Blurred together
- Everything changed when they reduced schools, and everyone became a cat
- Facility graphics, information, and communication are different
- Hard to say
- I guess I never noticed
- I notice a difference in Middle School and High School
- I think they may need unified
- It all seems one
- Not sure
- Primary and Intermediate, not as much High School
- The cats are different
- The N is a part of Newport tradition for all age levels
- There are a lot of different cats over a long period of time and change
- Turnover creates inconsistency in teams of teachers, some identity is lost
- We are all Wildcats, but we use different images in communication based on age

What is the significance of the clock in the current logo?

- A clock
- Historical aspect
- I don't know
- I have no idea

- I mean, it's old
- Is there a clock in the current logo?
- It is a visual reference
- It's terrible. Original High School building.
- Just a part of the oldest building
- No one knows the history
- No significance
- Oldest part of the district
- Original building rooted in history
- Student won design process, didn't know it had been chosen, alterations made
- Tradition
- What is that?

What is a cornerstone of the current branding that must be maintained or valued in the future brand?

- Don't know
- Everything is on the table
- Go to Amazon, buy something with Nebraska "N", same thing
- I love change, new things
- No
- No attachments
- Not sure what connects today
- Nothing, revamp
- Red and Black
- The "N"
- Varsity font
- Whatever is best for the future of the district

History and Background Interview Summary (personal and Newport specific)

- The current role or relationship framed the responses for the interviewee. Here are impactful ideas that we identified in this section:
    - Each person was passionate about finding a positive future for Newport schools.
    - Most interviewees did not attend or send their children to Newport Schools.
    - Several interviewees chose to send their Newport eligible children to schools outside of the district.
    - Interviewees that worked directly with the kids in the schools truly felt that the perceptions from the outside, of the schools and kids, are not accurate.
    - The community does not completely understand the resources and support required to deliver on the need of the kids/families at the schools.
    - Test scores are not the true measure of the work being done within the schools.
    - Test scores are the focus of most that are not working directly with the kids in the schools.
    - Test scores are an important aspect of the future success of the schools.
    - Most interviewees had a positive school experience and discussed the importance of their family and the community that school was.
    - More than the schools, changes in city development and housing, has and is impacting the future attendance of Newport Schools.
    - Redevelopment and rising rental rates are pushing student enrollment lower and housing is limiting the options for families.
    - There is a "feel", of division, between the City of Newport and Newport Schools. This was based on multiple factors.
        - City development and redevelopment decisions.
        - Outside perceptions.
        - Internal discussions.
        - "We are approaching change is if we are two different entities. We need to approach this as one".
        - Publicly promoted city/community/school connections are minimal.
    - There are divisions in perception and interaction with the schools based on personal geography or role within the city/schools.
    - Most were not impacted as a student or parent by the district branding. Communication strategies, events, teachers, and community were the most impactful elements to their school experiences.
    - The overall identity and the perceptions of Newport Schools are negative.
    - There is a protective nature to the way people stand for Newport.

- There have been rumors for years and the reality of the school district no longer being here in the way it is now, is real.
- Newport schools are viewed as poor, underachieving, and a reason why some people choose not to move here.
- Newport schools is open and more than willing to take any student and family that may not be accepted by another district.
- Most interviewees had no idea what the current branding, mission statement, or structure of district communication was (who is responsible for what).
- If the possibility was real of the district no longer existing in the form it does currently, most responses including alumni, supported change.
- Most responses encouraged change.
- Responses were divided when asked about changing core colors or representations.
- Change could provide opportunity for shifting the perceptions of what Newport Schools truly are.
- Those with direct experience in the schools highlighted the "N", the wildcat, and red/black as cornerstones of the brand. They did not directly attach them to the district, but more the schools.
- Those with years of teaching experience spoke of the stability of teachers that remained in the district for long periods of time.
- The three most impactful elements in the district history:
  - Housing removal for development
  - District/school reorganization
  - Leadership turnover/philosophies
- When asked what conversations were **popular** regarding Newport Schools, respondents could quickly identify negatives. The wording was critical to understand popular vs. true vs. known for.
- There was a recognizable pause for all responses when asked what positives Newport Schools are known for, there was a struggle for most to easily gravitate towards a response. Responses were quicker from those working directly in the schools versus someone that did not.
- The theme of a strong Ecosystem for the kids was a brilliant idea.
- The level of scrutiny and real challenges seem to require a level of ownership in order to strive to the level of change to defy it. Admit and own any deficiencies to earn the ear of those with significant doubt.

During this section of the interview, we collected personal experiences and insights into their current perspective of the district, schools, and overall perceptions. Quite simply, give us some

background on yourself, help us understand where we are, and what challenges need addressed by the brand.

As expected, each interview was powerful in its own unique way. It became clear that each person was passionate about their perspective and experience with the schools. We could put people into buckets based on their relationship with the schools. If you didn't work for the schools you talked about the poor academic performance, tax rates, impact on city image, and the need to send their kids to schools outside of the district for them to have the best opportunity. If you worked in the schools, the responses focused on the kids, the needs of the families in the community, and the outside perceptions that weigh on the kids. They have a great point, the concerns of the student in Newport today, can go beyond books. They have life concerns that are more critical to performance needs of the schools. Schools can become a second or third priority. If life challenges and potential survival mode are affecting families and kids in the community, how can we expect test scores become the number one priority? If students come into the district from all levels of education, a district willing to accept any and all students, how can we expect consistent results that don't consider these variables?

When this conversation is compared against ideas of taxes and test scores, are the responses about test scores and taxes wrong? No, no one is wrong, they are just coming from a different perspective. They all are necessary at the same time. What was most important were the stories of support and what it means to the Newport community. There was more to be proud of than there was negative. The myths and outside perceptions that didn't match the reality were merely stories untold.

We admit, some of the questions may seem unrelated to a branding process. But looking months forward, a branding project will require the support of a brand implementation and communication strategy. We are not expecting a basic logo change to bring true opportunity for change. Every aspect of what a brand is, must cohesively work in the same direction, and towards the same goals. What content is created, what mediums and channels are used, how is it delivered, and how do we own our narratives?

We are aware of the expected ties to the traditional representations of the Newport Independent School District and School branding. We are respectfully inquiring, how changing the branding would impact those that are most invested in the traditions and history? Any changes must strongly consider history, tradition, and alumni. It is a difficult decision weighing how much tradition you need to detach from in order for a branding change that can help you reach your goals.

There were many responses that felt there is a division between the schools, the city, and the community. This felt real to us as they shared their stories and experiences. This became a potential opportunity when we considered possible changes to the brand and the ability to address those divisions in the design/behavior of the brand.

Personal Perspective Interview Summary

- We wanted to understand their view of branding and the current perceptions of the District and schools. Here are impactful ideas that we identified in this section:
    o Branding meant more than a logo. It encompassed all communication and anything that touched the District audience.
    o Branding meant improving the communication standards of the District.
    o More effort needs to be put into getting closer to the stories in the schools and delivering the content in a modern way.
    o The look and feel of the Newport brand fits the perceptions people have of the District today.
    o When asked about "what success looks like for this rebranding project", was the most impactful response. Success meant change, and beyond change, an opportunity to shift the perception of the district and kids. If the answer was to do nothing and we are good where we are, the responses would have been different. Even alumni wanted something out of this project.
    o Multiple responses wanted a change that would bring a new perception of the schools for the kids, not as much the District, but more for a chance for a new identity for the kids.
    o A few interviewees doubted that a change in the branding wouldn't matter to the future of the District.
    o Pride was a central theme and something everyone wanted for the District.
    o The voice and tone of the District branding needs to change, beyond art, and with a proactive communication plan.
    o Why did we attach the School of Innovation to our sparkling Newport image? This was an interesting observation.

During this section of the interview, we focused on understanding their perception of branding in general and using that to frame their thoughts on change. It was important to value what their idea of what success would look like in this project. They were a measure of the community as a whole.

By understanding their view of branding, it helped identify the structure of communication they saw for the District, and how they expected the District brand to engage the community. It also outlined what the group viewed as actual change in the branding and how far the changes need to go. It was obvious a content development strategy was a positive aspect of the vision for improving the brand. Their view of what success looks like in this project is one of the most informative responses that supports a direction for change.

The other impactful revelation was the identification of what students should gain from the change. No matter the priorities that can dominate the conversations. The project needs to focus on what the students and families gain from this change, or it becomes limited to an update in artwork.

The energy of change is not to be underestimated. You could sense that many of the interviewees were searching for a spark. A shift in the energy around the schools and an understanding for how other districts or schools have managed to achieve it through refreshing their identity.

Vision and looking forward interview summary

- In this segment, want to begin narrowing our focus by collecting their personal vision for the future of the brand by adding in some specifics. Here are impactful ideas that we identified in this section:
  o The list of responses for "what Newport Schools should be known for" is manageable and these items can be measured against all branding and marketing/pr decisions.
  o In order to change the narrative, when these things happen, it must be known.
  o Realistic perception changes in the schools and academics is going to take more than branding.
  o The most challenging question for the interviewee was providing only four terms that would represent the district and school branding. These set the tone for how we measure the delivery of the brand.
  o The goal of the attributes list is to have the decision-making group select only four terms out of the entire list. These terms would tie into the branding

development, communication strategies, content development strategies, and content writing.

o Interviewees were mostly loyal to brands that delivered on the brand promise and lived up to the expectations over a long period of time.

o Many responses referred to consistency, dependability, and reliability. This is where the branding and Strategic Action Committee meet.

o Logo examples were shown to 40% of the audience but the examples were substituted for two new questions and the visual preferences were less important to the end outcome of the Exploration. The examples were used to get a sense for their artwork preferences and to gauge a level of desired change.

o When the branding examples were shown, here is what we learned:
- A more modern look and feel was desired.
- Images that told a story about the community were preferred.
- Simplicity was more attractive than busy.
- A simple letter as the representation was less preferred for the District.
- The preferred images in order of preference were as follows: (images on following page)
  - Akron
  - Monroe
  - Moreno
  - Waukee
  - Desert Sands
  - Downey
  - Coppell
  - Saint Louis

o The Newport District branding was purposefully placed on the same page to allow for a comparison and to build on their understand of what the current branding is.

o You can go to Amazon and buy anything with the Nebraska "N", and you've got Newport gear. It isn't special image.

LET'S GET A FEEL FOR DIRECTION

Branding interview summary.

- In this segment, we want to reinforce the idea that the brand strategies begin with the people that the brand serves. This is the reason we don't discuss artwork in this area of questioning. Here are impactful ideas that we identified in this section:
  - Based on the responses given, here are the top 10 audience profiles the responses stated the branding and marketing should focus on. These are ranked in order:
    - Current parents
    - Future parents
    - Alumni
    - Residents and taxpayers
    - Potential parents
    - Current students
    - Potential students

- Staff and Administration
- Regional/local government
- Local businesses

o If these are the most important targets of the branding and marketing, what is being done now to prove our understanding of that?

o We had to offer potential responses to encourage the audience segmentation needed to define an accurate communication strategy.

o Current representations and branding elements for the district exist. We wanted to know how accurate specific elements were based on our review of them.

o Out of the four examples of current Newport branding provided, all four returned negative for an accurate representation for the brand and district. (see full responses). The examples provided were:
- The strength of the "wildcat" in the tradition and history.
- The current Google description when Newport Schools are searched.
- The current District website URL.
- The current District tag line.

o Even those that identified with limiting change, disagreed with the examples given of the current Newport branding.

o All responses believed the District could update and improve communication strategies.

o Inconsistencies in brand images, delivery, use of art, and freedom to choose the branding that represents the District diluted the identity.

o It was mentioned, the lack of consistent standards in emailing communication and writing, not only to staff internally, but also parents. It isn't the mention of the issue, it was more the lack of mention of guidelines, processes, or oversight. Specific issues with emails were mentioned.

Website interview summary.

- In this segment, your website is the core of your online presence and the source for information critical to your audience. We wanted to ask specific questions about the audience needs of your website user experience. Here are impactful ideas that we identified in this section:
  o The top ten items' interviewees believed needed to be on the home page are as follows, ranked in order:
  - Contact information
  - Academic calendar
  - COVID Information

- Enrollment information
- Current events
- Detailed district data
- Parent portal and resources
- Mission/vision statement
- Student photos
- Positive PR

- If a parent wanted to enroll their student, what should they find?
  - Criteria for applying
  - Chat feature
  - Entry of their information for admission
  - Easy to find contact information
  - Teacher/student matching mentorship
  - Something to share with their children
- Most responses about the website focused on delivering critical parent information.
- Most felt data and statistics were critical features.
- The interviewees questioned how much students actually used the website and felt it should either be parents focused or truly provide a reason for students to use it.
- Most found the current online presence outdated and offering little in the way of user experience.
- We asked, "why does a school website have to feel like a school website". Examples exist of uniquely designed school website experiences.

Recommendations

After spending more than sixty hours, in more than thirty interviews and meetings, we find the potential outcomes of change for the District branding proves more positive than negative. We do not recommend addressing any of the school branding until any District change takes place and has time to be evaluated. Our instinct leads us to believe refreshing and unifying school branding could be recommended, but at a later time.

The areas of opportunity that we would like to help you address through our rebranding process are:

- The existing perceptions combined with history, matched by statistics and stories, will always stay with the current image of the schools until data proves otherwise. We cannot promise a change will absolutely eliminate that. But the current branding cannot refute it. For that reason, we lean towards refreshing the identity for the opportunity of successfully denying the false perceptions and truths about the district.
- Potentially adding exploration or community meetings (may require scope change).
- Take a look at an approved direction for change and be open minded about what the results are. Not definitive but exploratory.
- Refresh the visual representations of the District and match the efforts of change from that of the Strategic Action Committee.
- Strongly **consider** matching the Newport Independent School District colors with those used within the City of Newport branding to build on the appearance of working together as one. The schools are the city, and the city is the schools. This doesn't have to change the school colors or branding.
  - When asked this question during the interview, the responses were very positive, and this idea became evident early in the process.
- There are four key colors in the city branding, the district can have four categories that are represented by each color:
  - Primary
  - Intermediate
  - High School
  - Innovation
- The development of the Newport Independent Schools Brand Strategy Guide.
  - Controls fonts, colors, usage and dictates all representations of the brand.
  - Outlines audience personas, unified tag line usage, content positioning, and dictates the voice and tone of the brand.
  - Establishes guidelines for marketing resource development and can help maintain cohesion across platforms.

- Unify the district and school messaging. Eliminate multi-tag line usage to simplify the message. Currently "Preparing students for the future", and "we're about kids" are being used together. Different schools, different locations of information, and different ago publications may show different messaging.
- The website needs to review the audience expectations and plan for a positive user experience custom to their needs and not a template, or an out-of-the-box product being resold to other schools.
- You cannot deliver the unique stories and content for a well-rounded marketing/branding strategy without a process for collecting and processing it.
- The channels and media people are consuming are now found on mobile apps, video, and social media. Website use rates are dropping each year as these categories rise. Collecting content and streamlining your process for each select channel is critical to developing a positive brand experience.
- There are positive stories to be told from each of the schools and the work the District is doing. Capturing that content is the easiest task to accomplish and developing a simplified strategy to deliver may be easier.
- Tie the Strategic Action Committee deliverables that go out to the school and community to feature any refresh on the branding and capitalize on the opportunity to show unified change. The impact would be powerful.
- Be mindful of the cost of any brand implementation. Rebranding the District and all schools would be too costly to take on at once. If you don't change the brand everywhere, do you actually rebrand?
- Complete the KYDA Workshop to define the four attributes, select the artwork direction, and define the creative processes guidelines that lead to concept development. The activities included in completing the workshop are the board review of the following:
  - Comparable organization brands and online presence.
  - Defining the key four attributes of the brand.
  - What do we like about the comparable logos and brand examples presented?
    - Why do we like it?
    - Do we want the same design or story?
    - How could it tell the Newport District story better?
  - Review specific content writing and brand positioning examples from the current District strategies.
  - Refine the responses down to actionable, task-oriented, conceptual design production.
- Review a strategic implementation and communication calendar concept to deliver any changes in the branding.

We've designed our process to learn from our clients and to lead by example. We have to earn the right to have the responsibility to advise you on the future of your brand. Your district, schools, and community are filled with positive stories. We believe this project can help you tell those stories and set the record straight.

We are merely collectors of information that share stories in a way it can influence businesses and organizations. Our team greatly appreciates the opportunity to understand your community and we are ready to help your community in any way we can.

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