

To: Dunklin R-5 Community
From: Stan Stratton
Date: April 18, 2016
Re: Journey to Excellence Update

In October 2013, the Board of Education approved the usage of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence to guide the district on a journey to excellence. The criteria are not a minimum set of standards such as MSIP 5 but a series of 340 questions that are used to evaluate the district compared to world class organizations including other school districts.

In the spring of 2014 twelve Dunklin R-5 employees conducted a self-study with the assistance of personnel from the Excellence in Missouri Foundation. The self-study identified one strength of the district-a student-centered environment. The study also identified several opportunities for improvement (OFI's) including a lack of a comprehensive strategic plan.

In the summer of 2014 the Board of Education selected Excellence in Missouri Foundation to provide consulting services in the development of a new strategic plan. That fall surveys were administered and focus groups were held with staff, parents, and students. The results along with other data were used for a two-day retreat to begin the development of the new strategic plan. The committee for the two-day retreat included certified staff, classified staff, administrators and school board members. The committee identified five goal areas: Student Achievement, Stakeholder Engagement, Workforce Focus, Organizational Sustainability and Fiscal Sustainability.

Teams comprised of staff members were organized for the first four areas to develop objectives and strategies to improve the district. Fiscal sustainability was identified as a strength and therefore no objectives and strategies were developed. The board approved the new five-year strategic plan in June 2014 setting the priorities for the next year.

Since last year the goal teams have been working to implement the priorities identified in the strategic plan. Some of the priorities have been accomplished while others are still in progress. A committee of certified staff, classified staff and administrators met April 11 to review progress and identified priorities for the next year.

As the district has worked on continuous improvement positive results are starting to be identified. On a department level, the transportation department has had significant improvements. Sue Sharp, the transportation director has worked hard to implement processes within her department. Some of those processes are to help with preparation for the Missouri State Highway Patrol inspection. In the spring of 2014, before processes were put in place, the district scored an 86% pass rate on this inspection. In the spring of 2015 after the department had implemented some processes, the score improved to 92%. The department reviewed the processes and went through a cycle of learning and this spring the score improved again to 100%. The department has also cut costs this year. In the past one supplier was used for fuel. This year fuel has been bid out weekly. There

have been three suppliers bidding on the fuel. The bid process in conjunction to lower fuel prices has lead to thousands of dollars being eliminated from the budget.

Positive results are also starting to become visible on the district level. Last year staff members were asked to complete the National Center for School Leadership School Climate and Culture Survey. The survey is divided into ten dimensions. The survey uses a 5-point scale and determines an average score for each dimension. Last year the district scored below the national average in all ten areas. This year nine out of the ten dimensions showed improvement and the tenth was the same as last year. This year four out of the ten were above the national average and a fifth was at the national average. A table with the data is also attached to this email.

Thank you for all the hard work that each and every one of you have done to achieve these improvements. Progress is being made on our journey to excellence. As we implement the strategic plan in year two, develop and implement more processes and continue the implementation of Baldrige in the Classroom, I look forward to the additional improvement we will see as a district working toward our vision “to be a nationally recognized school district that is highly regarded for the achievement and character of our students and the excellence of our people, programs and learning environment.”