

Glossary

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

(Modified from the 2003 Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence)

Action Plans

Specific actions that respond to short and longer term objectives. Action plans include details of resource commitments and timelines for accomplishment. Action plan development represents the critical stage in planning when strategic objectives and goals are made specific so that effective, organization-wide understanding and deployment are possible.

Active Learning

Interactive instructional techniques that engage students in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Students may demonstrate their abilities to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate through projects, presentations, experiments, simulations, internships, practicums, independent study projects, peer teaching, role playing, or written documents. In addition, active learning may address multiple intelligences and incorporates differentiated instruction to better meet the needs of all students.

Alignment

Consistency of plans, processes, information, resource decisions, actions, results, analysis and learning to support key organization-wide goals. Ideally, consistency occurs across all levels of a system. In education this would include: State, local Board of Education, Superintendent, administrative staff, school site, classroom, and individual.

Analysis

Examination of facts and data to provide a basis for effective decisions. Overall organizational analysis guides process management toward achieving key organizational results and toward attaining strategic objectives. Actions depend on an understanding of relationships, derived from analysis of facts and data.

Approach

The methods and processes used by an organization which should be repeatable, integrated, consistently applied, reliable, clearly articulated, data driven and embodies evaluation, improvement, and continuous improvement cycles. It also must be in alignment with the organizations needs and evidence of beneficial innovation and change should be apparent.

Benchmarks

Processes and results that represent best practices and performance for similar activities inside or outside the education community. Organizations engage in benchmarking as an approach to understand current dimensions of world-class performance and to achieve breakthrough improvement. Benchmarks are one form of comparative data.

Comparative Data

Data used to compare an organization against other competitors used to challenge an organization to reach higher levels of performance. This might include data on performance of comparable education organizations and competitors, and comparisons with similar organizations in the same geographic area.

Systematic

Approaches that are repeatable and use data and information so learning is possible. In other words, approaches are systematic if they build in the opportunity for evaluation, improvement, and sharing, thereby permitting a gain in maturity.

Values

The guiding principles and behaviors that embody how an organization and its people are expected to operate. They reflect and reinforce the desired culture of an organization. They support and guide the decision making of all faculty and staff, helping an organization to accomplish its mission and attain its vision in an appropriate manner.

Vision

The desired future state of an organization. The vision describes where the organization is headed, what it intends to be or how it wishes to be perceived in the future.

Work Systems

How faculty and staff are organized into formal and informal units to accomplish your mission and strategic objectives; how job responsibilities are managed; and how processes for compensation, faculty and staff performance, recognition, communication, hiring, and succession planning are organized. Organizations design work systems to align their components to enable and encourage all faculty and staff to contribute effectively and to the best of their ability.