Raymore-Peculiar

School District

Show Me Challenge

Feedback Report-Final

June, 2011

Key Themes

Opportunities for Improvement

Leadership/Communication-There was limited evidence of Cabinet leadership consensus regarding the vision, direction, policies and procedures, and systematic approaches in the organization. Leadership should establish the direction for the organization cohesively, considering all organizational components, and then communicate the direction clearly. Ensuring consistency across the leadership team, followed with an effective communication and deployment system from the Cabinet to lower leadership levels in a two-way feedback loop could ensure an effective flow of information conducive to optimum performance.

Strategic Planning-While some planning does occur at the department and financial levels; there is not an approach in place to develop an organizational strategic plan that considers the necessary elements of workforce, technologies, market, customers, and the regulatory environment. In addition, there is limited accountability in place regarding the fulfillment of the organization's strategic direction. The development of a strategic plan for the organization could ensure a cohesive direction for the organization that could drive better alignment between the departments. In addition, the development of a systematic data collection and analysis process in support of the strategic plan would provide the key information needed to develop a successful strategic plan.

Organizational Communication-While there are some approaches to delivering information to the organization, there are gaps in the approaches. For example, the identification of organizational priorities, long term direction, goal linkages, and changes in direction are not always communicated to non-leaders within the organization. Development of a systematic approach to organizational communication could provide for alignment of the direction of the school district, resulting in the organization moving in a consistent direction.

Organizational Performance Measurement-The organization does not utilize a systematic approach to a performance measurement system that identifies the measures needed to capture performance across the organization. While measures have been identified and are tracked to ensure budget performance and key financial results, a systematic approach to an organizational level identification and tracking of measures for areas such as leadership, workforce management and capabilities, organizational knowledge, and process effectiveness and performance do not exist.

Workforce Focus: There is limited evidence of a systematic, organizational level approach to ensure all employees are engaged and trained to meet current and future job requirements, as well as the transfer of organizational knowledge. The organization also lacks a systematic process to identify and assess staffing needs, skills identification, knowledge, experience, succession planning and leadership development at an organizational level to meet current and future workforce performance needs.

Customer Focus- It should be noted that an improvement opportunity in the area of customer focus does not mean the organization isn't focused on their customers. In this case, it does mean the organization can benefit from the development and implementation of systematic approaches deployed throughout the organization. The organization uses a limited number of methods for receiving feedback from their customers. There is an opportunity for the development of approaches that include a systematic mix of a proactive and reactive feedback approach to ensure actionable feedback is received. There is also an opportunity to effectively utilize the information gathered by analyzing the data collection results to make positive changes. Finally, opportunities were identified to ensure customer requirements are identified, building and managing relationships are the result of systematic approaches, and complaints or concerns are collected and aggregated for action at the organizational level in addition to resolution at the individual level. The development of systematic approaches to serving customers and stakeholders could provide the opportunity for customer needs to be effectively and efficiently addressed, potentially improving customer satisfaction.

Category 1 – Leadership

Strengths

- Many of the Cabinet leaders personally promote an environment that fosters, requires, and results in legal and ethical behavior through regular discussion in cabinet meetings, working with staff to ensure ethical decisions, personal modeling of ethical behavior by the leadership team, and through following protocols established to ensure ethical and legal behavior. Ethics and legal behavior are a key part of the culture as established by the Cabinet leadership team.
- Many of the Cabinet leaders and the organization create long-term viability and success for the organization through the strategic planning process (CSIP), monitoring, measuring and sharing the performance of the CSIP, ensuring a budget consistent with the direction set by the administration, and working with stakeholders to develop strategic plans for student achievement; financial stability; and promoting stakeholder buy-in. The focus is created by the cabinet leader and effectively deployed through the organizations as shown by the results of the walk arounds.
- Many Cabinet leaders encourage and support organizational and employee learning through a variety of approaches. Professional development is a significant focus for the organization and occurs through book studies, cabinet discussions, providing time and money for personal development, and a focus on learning driven by many leaders of the organization. The culture of the organization encourages learning and development.
- Many Cabinet leaders actively communicate with and engage the workforce through formal and informal approaches. The formal approaches include the web site, newsletter, Team Ray-Pec, emails, Ray-Pec Update and the Communique. Informal approaches include face to face interactions, an open door policy and personal interaction.
- Cabinet leaders use a variety of methods to ensure fiscal accountability actions are accomplished to protect stakeholders' interest. These methods include management of the budget, regular financial audits, adherence to state and federal regulations, and tight budgetary policies. Procedures and systems are in place for budgetary review by the Board

Opportunities for Improvement

- The Raymore-Peculiar School district does not currently have a vision statement officially established. While the development of a vision statement is under discussion, it is not currently in place. While the objectives are established through the CSIP revision process and the Long Range Planning Committee focuses on the long term use of facilities, there is limited evidence of a systematic approach to the establishment and evolution of the vision, values, performance expectations and long-term objectives for the organization. The development of a systematic approach could provide for a process aligned with the needs of the organization and a more effective use of resources responsible for developing the direction for the district.
- While a variety of means were identified as methods for deploying the organization's mission, values and objectives, there is limited evidence of a systematic approach to deploy the direction set by the leadership team. Development of a systematic process could ensure deployment of organizational direction to the entire workforce, which is important for the employees to understand and embrace.
- While a variety of methods were described for how cabinet leaders determine the effectiveness of their communications, decision-making, priority setting, knowledge sharing, and interactions with customers, partners, suppliers and the workforce, there was limited evidence of a systematic approach

for addressing these items. Development of a systematic approach could provide the opportunity for ensuring the most effective evaluation system possible, thereby allowing cabinet leaders to perform at a level consistent with the needs of the organization.

- While some of the cabinet leadership interviews revealed a variety of measures to address ethics, fiscal accountability and legal and regulatory compliance, there was mixed understanding of the measures in place and measurements were not apparent for the organization's impacts on society.
- Results were not presented for this category. For this criteria item, trends would be reported for evaluation of positive, negative or mixed trends.

Category 2 – Strategic Planning

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

- While there appears to be clear understanding of the information gathered and used to develop the strategic plan, including gathering information from key stakeholders, there is limited evidence of a systematic approach used to complete and update the strategic plan on an ongoing basis. There is limited evidence of the "one" process that all leaders understand and use. In addition, there is an opportunity to improve the information used as the basis of the strategic plan to ensure all Baldrige elements are addressed. While there have been efforts to improve the process over the last couple of years, the process does not yet meet the criteria requirements. The development of an accepted approach that is understood by all would allow for a system based approach to strategic planning.
- The Cabinet leadership interviews revealed mixed understanding of the approach for determining the appropriate time window to be addressed in Strategic Planning. Some indicated that the state mandate of five years was followed; some indicated a lack of a systematic approach for determining the appropriate time window based on the longest time-line of the strategic objectives identified. Development of a time window based on the longest time-line of the strategic objectives identified could help the organization ensure successful completion of the most significant projects by including the entire time horizon within the strategic planning period.
- While there is evidence of multiple approaches for the collection, analysis and use of relevant data and information on organizational capabilities, technology, markets, competition, and regulatory environment, they seem to vary by cabinet leader. Some approaches are reactive, which could lead to overlooking important information. The development of a systematic approach for the collection, analysis and use of relevant data could lead to more complete information available for use in the strategic planning process.
- While some members of the Cabinet leadership team could completely and cohesively articulate the strategic objectives for the organization, not all articulated the same objectives. In addition, the staff was not able to articulate the most important objectives for the organization. This would indicate that there is an opportunity for the leadership team to work together collaboratively to reach a consensus on the strategic objectives and for communication and deployment of the organization's key objectives to staff to drive cohesiveness in working toward common goals. In addition, there did not appear to be a systematic approach to identifying the timetables associated with each strategic objective. The development of a timetable would assist with prioritization of the work and with the development of the workforce plans needed to support action plans.
- The organization does not currently have a process for the development of core competencies. These were developed by the leadership team as a part of the Key Business Factors development. Development of a systematic process for addressing current, needed and future core competencies would provide an important piece of the strategic planning process.

- Current processes do not currently include the proactive identification of action plans in support of the strategic objectives identified at the organizational level. Development of action plans at the organizational level could assist with efforts to prioritize the assignment of key resources needed to accomplish the action plans and provide visibility to the most important initiatives for the organization.
- While the organization conducts a SWOT analysis as a part of the strategic planning process (CSIP), the follow-up step of identifying strategic challenges and advantages is not currently identified. The identification of the strategic advantages provides the opportunity to leverage and deliver on strategic objectives. The identification of strategic challenges should be included in objectives to overcome these challenges. Identification of challenges and advantages could ensure focus by the organization on the most important elements of organizational performance.
- While resource budgets are significantly impacted by the allocations from the state and federal governments, and the process for development of resource budgets is well understood by all, the process is reactive in approach. Rather than focusing resource budgets on allocation and history, a more proactive approach would be to start with the strategic objectives and develop needed resource budgets from there. They could then be compared to history and state allocation with a gap analysis and mitigation plans developed. While this comment is prescriptive in nature, it is necessary to identify how a school district can develop a proactive approach given the challenges faced by state and federal funding.

Category 3-Customer Focus

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

- Raymore-Peculiar uses a robust variety of methods for receiving feedback from their customers. These methods include informal feedback, surveys, Team RayPec, collaboration time, Facebook, student success council, and the PTA. However, much of the approaches are reactive in nature, including surveys, phone calls and contact from stakeholder groups. There is an opportunity for the development of approaches that include a systematic mix of proactive and reactive approaches to ensure good feedback is received. Also, a systematic approach would allow the organization to aggregate the information and analyze it for possible improvement opportunities.
- While many methods of gathering information used to identify products and/or service offerings to meet the requirements of customer stakeholders were articulated, the approaches appear to be reactive in approach. Development of a proactive approach within the constraints of DESE and other state and federal mandates could provide critical information to be used during the strategic planning process and proactive development of products and services.
- The cabinet leadership interviews presented the different types ways customer/stakeholder support is provided such as email, the website, Facebook, grievance procedure, an open door policy, and phone calls; however, there is not a systematic process in place for stakeholders to contact the organization or seek assistance. In addition, there was limited evidence of a systematic approach for determining the types of mechanisms provided for stakeholders to obtain support related to organizational services. Development of a systematic approach could increase communication with stakeholders, providing valuable opportunities to resolve issues and build relationships.
- The Cabinet leadership interviews revealed a perceived focus on building relationships with stakeholders, however, as identified in the interviews, there is not an organizational level, proactive approach understood by all addressing approaches for building and managing relationships. The development of an organizational level approach could provide consistency across the organization and provide key tools and processes for all members of the organization to follow.
- The basis of the organizational process for resolving formal and informal complaints focuses on resolving the complaints individually. There was no evidence of a systematic process for tracking complaints for the organization. Development of a process for tracking and aggregating complaints across the organization could provide valuable information about trends in the complaints received that could be addressed at the organizational level.
- Raymore Peculiar follows up with high school graduates with a cabinet survey, and the MSIP survey also provides follow up, but there was limited evidence of a systematic approach to following up with all stakeholders on programs and services to obtain feedback. In addition, there was limited evidence that the information gathered is analyzed and used to identify potential improvements.
- While there is evidence of some information being collected, there is limited evidence of a systematic approach that would drive the use and analysis of information from customer complaints, feedback and satisfaction, correlating it to improve stakeholder relationships.

- While some satisfaction data is available through a variety of methods, i.e. surveys, there is no evidence of measures that include aggregated information received from the multiple surveys or other methods of customer satisfaction determination. In addition, no measures have been identified to determine the success of efforts to build and manage customer/stakeholder relationships. The identification, tracking, and analysis of such measures could provide important information that could identify issues and concerns prior to a loss of customer or stakeholder satisfaction.

Category 4-Information and Analysis

Strengths

- Key measures for the organization are determined through ensuring adherence to state and federal mandates, i.e. AYP/APR, graduation rates, attendance rates, reading scores, and math scores. In addition, the cabinet leadership team determines what should be measured during the CSIP process.
- The organization ensures the security of its data through policies and procedures, technology solutions, and password protection.

Opportunities for Improvement

- The school district selects measures for daily operations at the departmental level and through mandates from DESE and other regulatory groups. However, there is limited evidence of a systematic approach to the selection of measures for daily operations at the organizational level. Development of such measures could assist the organization's ability to view organizational results holistically, allowing for meaningful corrective actions.
- While some ad-hoc approaches are in place for tracking organizational performance such as the MSIP review, audits, CSIP tracking and APR, MAP and ACT data, there is limited evidence of a systematic approach for tracking organizational performance. The Cabinet leadership interviews indicated that this was not an area of strength for the organization. Development of an approach for tracking organizational performance could provide cohesiveness at the organizational level and provide cabinet leadership the opportunity to focus daily operations on the areas of most significant need.
- The Cabinet leadership interviews revealed a focus on comparative information as evidenced by examples given of comparative information sought, however, there is limited evidence of a systematic process for determining the organization's needs for comparative process information. Development of a systematic approach for gathering comparative information could assist the organization in improving organizational performance.
- While the Cabinet leadership interviews revealed a number of approaches for managing organization environment, process and workforce knowledge such as providing professional development, sharing of information from high level meetings, policy reviews and collaboration with other departments, there is limited evidence of a systematic process for managing organizational process and workforce knowledge. The development of a systematic approach could provide the organization significant opportunities for improving organizational performance through the systematic sharing of information.
- The Cabinet leadership interviews and walk arounds revealed a variety of responses around the accessibility of data. Two systems were noted by the leadership interviews as Keystone and SIS as the sources for information. Not all members of cabinet leadership were able to access the systems and walk arounds revealed mixed responses about the availability of data to do their jobs. Work in this area could support improved organizational performance through ensuring the data is available as needed to support job performance.
- While there are several approaches for reviewing organizational performance such as program reviews, review of CSIP, APR review, and Board, Cabinet and Administrative retreats, there is mixed evidence of a systematic approach for the review of organizational performance and capabilities. Development of an organizational approach for reviewing organizational performance

and capabilities could provide the information needed for the organization to respond quickly to potential issues as identified by the results reviewed.

- Performance results were not presented for this category.

Category 5-Workforce Focus

Strengths

- The approach to assessing staffing needs in terms of the number of employees needed and the types of skills, knowledge and experience needed is data driven. Analysis is conducted based on MSIP recommendation, student needs, the annual performance report, job descriptions, and financial analysis. Most Cabinet leadership members were able to articulate this approach.
- The organization ensures a safe and healthy work environment through its Wellness Committee, assistance from BCBS, development of a crisis plan, training of administrators to ensure a safe environment, and monitoring the environment (i.e. air quality, moisture, lighting, etc).

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Opportunities for Improvement

- The Cabinet leadership interviews revealed several approaches to the design of work and job systems including the use of teams, PLC, job handbooks, and organizational structure, but these approaches are not proactively systematic and the interviews indicated a lack of formal approaches. Development of an organizational level approach to the design of work and job systems could provide a more cohesive environment and ensure all within the organization are working together as effectively as possible.
- Recognition incentives to reinforce organizational objectives vary with many interviewees reporting that they were not aware of any approaches. Teacher of the Year and Support Staff of the Year were identified as approaches, but most interviewed felt there is a lack of systematic approaches in this area. Tying recognition to organizational objectives could provide a clear message to the staff of the linkages between organizational objectives and performance.
- Significant variances in responses from the leadership team indicated a lack of a cohesive understanding of the performance management system and how it supports high performance. Some were able to identify PBTE, and several talked about audits. Development and/or execution of a performance management system across the organization could provide for better alignment with organizational objectives and potentially increased performance.
- While employee development is a focus for some of the Cabinet leadership, and professional development was prevalent through the cabinet leadership and walk around interviews, there is limited evidence of a systematic approach to determining the training needs of the organization. The development of a systematic approach that considers the strategic objectives and the skills needed to execute the plan could provide a more cohesive and integrated approach at the organizational level that would drive the efforts at the department and building level.
- Cabinet leadership interviews revealed a couple of approaches for determining employee satisfaction and engagement. Team Ray-Pec was identified as an approach as was a variety of surveys (including the CSIP Survey). However, interviews also indicated that some leaders did not believe the approaches were proactive or systematic. Development of a systematic approach to determining employee satisfaction and engagement may reveal critical and

actionable information the organization can use to improve the performance of the organization.

- Although the organization solicits the types of employee support services desired through feedback from Team Ray-Pec, review by HR, comparisons to other schools, and staff input, there is limited evidence of a systematic approach for determining the types of employee support services that will be offered.

- While approaches for developing current and future leaders are articulated, such as job specific training, conferences, BLT's, committees, summer school, etc, there is limited evidence of a systematic approach at the organizational level for the development of current and future leaders.

- While the Cabinet interviews revealed some measures for workforce performance and satisfaction such as the turnover rate, student performance data, measures in the school improvement plan, the MSIP survey, SBR, etc, there is limited evidence of measures to directly evaluate the workforce satisfaction. Development of measures to ensure employee satisfaction and workforce performance evaluated in alignment with an organizational plan could allow the organization to specifically target improvements to improve in this area.

Category 6-Process Management

Strengths

- The organization prepares for emergencies through a variety of approaches. Every building has a crisis plan and team, routine building drills are conducted, there is close collaboration with the police and fire department, a school resource officer is on the main campus, additional security personnel are at the middle and high schools, arrangements to protect data are in place, and financial procedures have been established in the event of a crisis.

Opportunities for Improvement

- There is no evidence of an organizational process to ensure current and needed core competencies are addressed when work systems are being designed. Core competencies were developed as a part of the key business factor development of the SMC, therefore there is an opportunity for improvement in the area of designing work systems considering current and needed core competencies. Leveraging core competencies in the design of work systems could allow the organization to focus where it has competencies and address those areas that may be weaker.
- The school district uses an ad-hoc process to determine whether or not processes or functions should be outsourced. While some cabinet leaders could articulate the analysis process, it is not clear that the process is proactive or systematic. The development of a proactive, systematic process to identify potential areas for outsourcing could allow the organization to ensure the most significant focus is on the areas of core competencies.
- While responses were received on the identification of key work systems, the responses were not consistent across the cabinet leadership team. This would indicate that there is awareness, but the identification of the key work systems is not systematic. The systematic identification of key work systems could provide a cohesive focus for the organization and potentially improve performance.
- Consistent with the response above on the identification of key work systems, the design of key work process responses also varied significantly across the Cabinet leadership team. While the responses for the design of key work processes were appropriate, there is not evidence of an organizational level, cohesive approach to the design of key work processes. Development of a systematic approach could improve organizational and operation performance and improve communication across work areas.
- As with the key work processes, responses to the key outcome measure identification were mixed. Examples included financial solvency, student achievement and pending legislation simulations. There is a key opportunity to systematically identify, design and measure key work processes.
- There is limited evidence of a proactive, systematic approach for ensuring customer requirements are built into the design and development of new products, programs and services. The Cabinet leadership team discussed the creation of the alternative school and early childhood as new programs, but no information was provided as to how stakeholder requirements were integrated into the implementation of these programs. Others indicated that customer requirements are provided by the state. Development of a consistent, organizational level approach for ensuring stakeholder needs and requirements are integrated into new

programs and services could avoid the implementation of programs that do not address stakeholder needs and allow the organization to prioritize the services provided.

- Cabinet leadership interviews indicate that there is an opportunity for improvement in how the district measures work systems and processes, and then utilizes data to manage key processes, make decisions and establish priorities. There is some data being gathered, not all responding felt it was being used effectively.

Category 7-Results

Category Comment

- While the organization measures and uses data, there is no evidence of a systematic measurement system that provides in-process, effectiveness and outcome measures for all criteria categories that connect performance across the organization.

Show Me Challenge
Plus/Delta-Process Perspective

Plus

- Cabinet was open and honest, made themselves accessible. We appreciate the courage to put themselves out there and share information openly. It will also take their courage to accept change.
- Great information
- Interview process was manageable.
- Aha moments
- There is a clear desire to improve from the top down. Dedication and passion to want to be better and to grow.
- Look at things differently now versus before we started. Thinking more strategically.
- Those in walk arounds wanted to support their leadership, didn't want to provide negative feedback because they wanted to support their building leaders. (Shows passion, support and loyalty)
- Process was very worth our time.

Delta

- There is not enough representation in the cabinet reflecting education focus. Need to get representation of all education levels and departments to be able to make organizational decisions
- Timing was hard, compressed.
- There was some fear in the organization during walk arounds. Some were very concerned that they had given the "right" answer.
- Now what? We've gone through all of this work, will the information be used and acted upon? See it, own it, solve it, do it. We get lost in the "own it, solve it, and do it) Unless we get to the doing it, all of this information is a waste.
- What about the communication of the results? How do we inform the workforce the outcomes and what we will do with them? You asked for our input, now what will be done with it?