Raymore-Peculiar School District
Five Year Strategic Plan
2012-2017

DRAFT

Table of Contents

Contents

Raymore-Peculiar School District Leadership

School Board

Kim York, President

Joe Anthuis, Vice President

Kendra Hutsell, Treasurer

Pam Steele, Secretary

Leo Anderson

Maria Cannova-Davies

Kyle Gillespie

Dana Hille

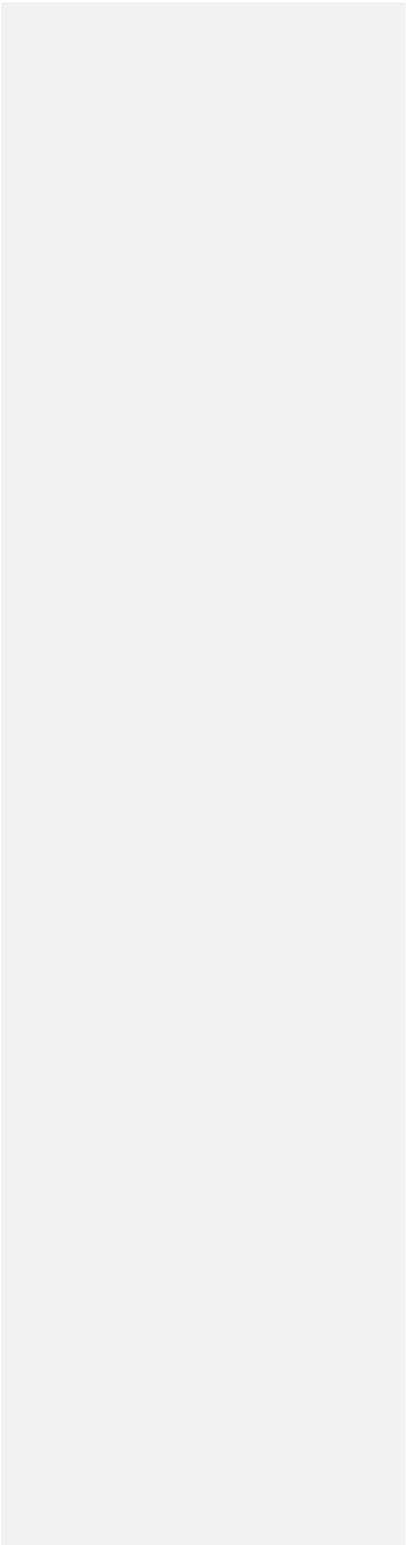**Ruth Johnson**

Raymore-Peculiar School District Leadership

DRAFT

Strategic Planning Goal Teams

Stakeholder Satisfaction and Engagement

    <u>Team Leaders</u>:

Workforce Satisfaction and Engagement

    <u>Team Leaders</u>:

Technology Optimization

    <u>Team Leader</u>:

Business Systems Focus

    <u>Team Leaders</u>:

Financial

    <u>Team Leader</u>:

Strategic Planning Process Overview – Part 1

Introduction

Raymore-Peculiar School District's strategic and tactical plans direct the organizational and improvement activities. It is written in alignment with the framework of the Baldrige performance excellence criteria. The strategic plan covers the five year period of 2012-2017.

Raymore-Peculiar School District leadership has adopted the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence as a foundation for organizational management and improvement. The strategic plan was developed using the Baldrige leadership model. A systematic and repeatable process was used leveraging the strengths of the existing strategic planning process while ensuring elements required by the Baldrige criteria were added to the process.

Raymore-Peculiar School District used the feedback received from the completion of a Baldrige internal baseline assessment of the organization, which identified the organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement, and external and internal focus groups with a resulting detailed focus group report as the basis for the development of the goals, objectives, and strategies for the organization. In addition, performance against organizational measures supported the strategic planning analysis and development. The resulting strategic plan addresses all elements identified in the Baldrige criteria for an organizational strategic plan.

Organizational Assessment-Baldrige Based Assessment-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? 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 more 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.

8

External Assessment-Focus Groups-Key Themes

Focus groups were conducted as a means of determining workforce, customer, and stakeholder requirements. The focus groups were conducted with the following groups:

Classified Staff: K-6

Board of Education

Student Group: Grades 7-12

District Leaders/ASC Staff

Teachers: Grades 7-12

K-12 Principals and Aps

Classified Staff: Grades 7-12

Community Group

Teachers: Grades K-6

Parent Group #1: Grades K-6

Parent Group #2: Grades 7-12

The focus groups lasted approximately 1.5 hours each and featured a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions. The resulting feedback report reflected both types of results presenting information obtained from each focus group as well as the key themes identified across the different groups. The key themes are provided in the appendix of this plan in total; a high level overview of the strengths and opportunities for improvement are shown below.

Key Themes

Strengths

The focus group participants were highly engaged throughout the process. They showed hope and excitement at the opportunity to provide direct and open feedback. All participants were provided the opportunity to present information at the end of each session that may not have been addressed in the questions. While the opportunities for improvement may seem to be overwhelming, the information was provided by the participants in an earnest effort to make the Raymore-Peculiar School District a better place. There is a foundation of participants in the stakeholder groups who are open to and will embrace change. This is a strong position to be in while starting significant improvement efforts.

Opportunities for Improvement

Four areas have been identified as key theme opportunities for improvement for the Raymore-Peculiar School District. While the components of the workforce theme stand individually as a key theme, the remaining three themes are interrelated, with communication cited as a concern in Transparency, Strategic Planning, and Fiscal Responsibility. Opportunities exist to drive significant change in the district by addressing the concerns identified by the focus groups in these areas.

Workforce

Workforce focus as a whole is an opportunity for improvement for the Raymore-Peculiar School District. More specifically, opportunities were identified in the following areas:

- **Performance Management**: There was agreement across the groups that performance reviews are not conducted consistently. Some received peer reviews, but had not received an annual performance review. There was agreement that consistent feedback on job performance was desired, but not consistently delivered. Also, much of the feedback provided was reactionary, rather than providing a more formative approach to facilitate proactive improvement in job performance.
- **Feeling Valued as an Employee:** Participants in the focus groups felt they were expected to do more work with the same amount of available time. Lack of tools and resources has contributed to difficulty completing the work. Lack of recognition was also identified as a contributing factor in this area.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Lack of consistent job descriptions and training were identified as interdependent factors impacting unclear roles and responsibilities. In addition, a lack of time to take training creates a barrier to ensuring appropriate levels of training are delivered based on the employee job description.
- **Teacher Morale**: Teachers described their overall morale as very poor. There was concern expressed about the number of teachers leaving and communication issues.
- **Equality:** Lack of consistency and equality from building to building and across the district was identified as a concern.

Strategic Planning

Strategic Planning for the district was identified as a concern linked to the establishment, deployment, and clear communication of consistent priorities. While many felt they understood the most important priorities for the district, some felt there were too many priorities, meanwhile others felt the priorities changed too frequently. Concern about pursuing multiple and/or too many initiatives was also identified as a concern. The students also cited concerns about how often changes occur in the district. The long term vision for the school was also not clear and perceived as only meeting state guidelines. Strategic Planning was identified as a key needed priority by many of the groups. Some articulated the need for a comprehensive plan. Resource planning was identified as a concern by several of the staff groups, expressing concern about a lack of time to complete work with the level of quality desired.

Communication and Transparency

Significant concerns were presented from many of the stakeholder groups about the communication received, the district's openness to communication, as well as with the level of transparency provided about district operations. Examples of each are shown below:

- **Communication Received:** While some groups felt data was appropriately communicated, an opportunity exists to communicate what is going well in the district, information from district leadership after cabinet meetings, and information to the community to build community support.
- **Open Communication:** District perception of open communication was at a low level. Frustration was expressed by the Board of Education, District Leaders, Staff, Principals, and teachers. Concern was articulated that the frustration level may have reached a level where apathy may be an issue. Also, a concern was expressed that information collected was not used in decision making.
- **Transparency:** Transparency was a sensitive issue for many of the focus group participants due to a perceived connection between communication, transparency, and the failed levy. Concern was expressed about potential lack of honesty due to a lack of direct answers to questions.

Fiscal Responsibility

Concerns in the area of fiscal responsibility can be categorized in four areas: understanding of budgeting and funding process, communication, transparency, and equity.

- **Budgeting and funding process**: Frustration and confusion was voiced by some about the perceived increase in spending at the end of the budgeting period to ensure full spending of the

budget. Perception was that some of the spending was frivolous. Others expressed the thought that spending could be redistributed to utilize the available funds more efficiently.

- **Communication**: Parent groups articulated the desire for the district to communicate fiscal decisions. An example provided was the budget reduction issue. The parents would like for the district to identify where budget cuts were made, the justification for the cuts, and the impact to the students.

- **Transparency**: A desire for greater transparency in the financial area was identified. Concern was identified that a lack of education and communication about the budgeting and funding process was contributing to the perception of a lack of transparency.

- **Equity**: Equity concerns were addressed by several groups. Students identified concerns that some sports programs were provided more money than others, staff identified concerns about the equity of technology provided across departments, and staff identified inequities in spending across departments, citing large amounts of money spent on the football field while the Early Childhood program is housed in a trailer.

The key focus areas reflected in the baseline assessment, focus groups, and leadership analysis were integrated into the organizational analysis described below.

Organizational Analysis

In addition to the information gathered as inputs to the development of the strategic plan, several organizational analyses were conducted to ensure appropriate alignment of the organization's goals and objectives to the environmental situation. An environmental analysis was conducted that addressed the impacts of the shifts in technology, markets, services provided, stakeholder preferences, competition, the economy, and the regulatory environment. Also, an analysis to address the organization's sustainability, including current and needed core competencies was conducted. Finally, an analysis was developed to identify the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). The SWOT analysis was then used to identify Raymore-Peculiar School District strategic advantages and disadvantages.

Raymore-Peculiar School District Vision, Mission and Goals

The organizational analysis also identified and confirmed the organization's Vision, Mission, Core Values, and Core Competencies.

Mission, Vision, Core Values, Core Competences

Mission, Vision, Core Values, Core Competences

**Will hold another mtg to discuss mission/vision changes – RK will facilitate, will need an individual or 2 to lead this team (not identified at this time) + Collective Commitments, do they need to be shortened? Realigned?

Vision Defined: The term "vision" refers to the desired future state of your organization. The vision describes where the organization is headed, what it intends to be, or how it wishes to be perceived in the future.

Raymore Peculiar School District Vision:

The Ray-Pec School District will be purposeful in our commitment to excellence by focusing on our students, their results and improvement.

Mission Defined: The term "mission" refers to the overall function of an organization. The mission answers the question, "What is this organization attempting to accomplish?" The mission might define customers, stakeholders, or markets served, distinctive or core competencies or technologies used.

Raymore-Peculiar School District Mission:

The Raymore-Peculiar School District is a community of learners partnering to maximize each student's achievement, encourage lifelong learning and develop productive citizens.

Raymore-Peculiar School District Core Values

Current Collective Commitments:

- We are committed to consistency and accountability for each student's success.
- We are committed to a system of support for students and adults.
- We are committed to a safe, trusting and collaborative environment.
- We are committed to best practices.
- We are committed to high expectations for learning, behavior and citizenship.
- We are committed to quality communication and positive relationships with all stakeholders.
- We are committed to effective communication regarding student progress.
- We are committed to data-driven decision making.
- We are committed to appropriate use of appropriate channels for communication.

- We are committed to a guaranteed (consistent) and viable (doable) curriculum.
- We are committed to maintaining fiscal responsibility while improving student achievement.

Core Competencies

Current Core Competencies:
- Culture of Collaboration
- High graduation rates

Needed Core Competencies
- Culture of collaboration across all levels of the organization
- Professional Learning Community (PLC)
- Internal and External Communication
- Deployments of strategic direction throughout the district
- Workforce Focus
- Organizational performance management
- Connection of BoE Governance to Leadership execution

Raymore-Peculiar School District - Five Year Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives identified will remain in place for the five year timeframe of the strategic plan. They will be reviewed annually, but unless significant changes occur in the direction of the organization or the industry, they will remain in place for the duration of the plan. Five goal areas were identified with

Goal One: Student Success
Objectives:

- Ensure an environment that is conducive to learning
- Ensure the relevancy of educational programming for preparation of students for post secondary opportunities.
- Maximize academic proficiency for all students

Goal Two: Workforce Satisfaction and Engagement
Objectives:

- Hire and develop high quality staff
- Maximize staff satisfaction and engagement

Goal Three: Fiscal Responsibility
Objectives:

- Maintain Fiscal Stability by optimizing resources

- Maintain facilities to meet staff, student, and community needs.
- Ensure stakeholder satisfaction through transparency in all fiscal actions

Goal Four: Technology Optimization
Objectives:

- Develop and implement a systematic approach to technology planning
- Maximize technology applications and resources to facilitate effective instructional delivery and student learning
- Maximize technology applications and resources to facilitate efficient and effective operations

Goal Five: Leadership & Governance
Objectives:

- Develop and sustain effective leadership and governance for the Raymore-Peculiar school district
- Assure effective partnership between district leadership and the Board

Goal Six: Performance Measurement
Objectives:

- Optimize and enhance organizational performance through the use of an effective performance measurement system.

Goal Seven: Stakeholder Satisfaction and Engagement
Objectives:

- Maximize stakeholder satisfaction and engagement

Goal Eight: Communication
Objectives:

- Provide a systematic process to external communication
- Provide a systematic process to internal communication

Raymore-Peculiar School District Tactical Plan Development

Action Plan Development

Action plans were developed by teams for each of the strategies identified for execution in the first year of the strategic plan. The teams were led by a member of the management team and included employees with subject matter expertise in each of the goal areas. Milestones for completion, measures, resources, and level of effort were identified. A systematic, repeatable process was used by each of the six goal teams to develop the action plans.

Capacity Analysis

A detailed capacity analysis was conducted based on the development of the action plans to determine the impact of the work imposed on the organization as a result of the strategies selected for execution in the first year of the strategic plan. Resource load was identified for each of the goal areas by objective and strategy, for each department, and for highly leveraged individuals in the organization. Capability analysis will be conducted as a part of the deployment process at the departmental level.

Capacity Analysis-Risk Area

The outcome of the capacity analysis indicated a total resource load of 32,998 hours based on the tactical plans prioritized for implementation in the first year. This resource load, in addition to heavy workloads by much of the staff as identified in the focus groups is a significant risk to the organization. The leadership conducted two rounds of prioritization and resource identification to reduce the load on the organization, but the resulting resource load is still greater than the organization can carry with the current workforce.

Quarterly review of the action plan completion will be an important factor in managing the number of action plans prioritized for completion in the first year. Reprioritization and realignment of timelines should be a key focus area. Addition of staff will assist with the management of the action plans and facilitating timely completion within the first year.

The resource matrix analysis conducted by the organization is included in the appendix

Balanced Scorecard Development

Parallel to the strategic planning development process, a new Balanced Scorecard strategy map was developed using the theoretical framework of Kaplan and Norton. The goals and objectives were directly aligned with the four Balanced Scorecard perspectives of: Stakeholders, Learning and Growth, Operational, and Financial. The strategy map was developed to ensure the alignment of the goals and objectives to the scorecard perspectives.

Comment [RK1]: This is not part of the scope of this engagement, but I have everything I need to develop your strategy map as the start of your balanced scorecard. Let me know if you would like for me to do that for you.

Strategic Planning Process Overview - Part 2

Strategic Plan Implementation-Tactical Plan

The strategic planning process is a systematic and repeatable process to be followed each time an annual update is developed. Upon approval of the organizational strategic plan, the plan will be deployed from the leadership to all levels of the organization. A review of progress to ensure achievement of the strategic objectives is managed through the scorecard and action plan reviews. Adjustments to action plans will be identified during the reviews, with adjustments implemented as needed to ensure organizational agility in balancing the strategic planning deliverables and the daily needs of the organizations.

Insert Action Plan Implementation Chart Here

Strategic Planning Process Overview – Part 3

Organizational Performance Review Process

Raymore Peculiar School District's Strategic Planning review process is conducted quarterly and follows a systematic process where organizational measures in the scorecard are reviewed (????? We don't have a scorecard yet, which is needed for a robust review of your organizational performance) as well as the measures reflecting the performance against the action plans.

Executive Leaders are assigned responsibility and accountability for strategic goal areas. They lead Goal Teams comprised of key employees and stakeholders to monitor action plan progress and ensure goals are met. Each goal team makes recommendations regarding needed changes in strategies or circumstances that impact resources or strategy completion. The feedback is communicated to the leadership team on a monthly basis during the performance review process. The reporting process consists of two components:

1. Progress on Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Actions

For each strategy, the status of progress on the plan is highlighted using a color coding system-green if it is complete, red if it is behind schedule (lagging), or yellow if it is on track to be completed as written. Brief narratives are submitted describing process for each strategy, including communication plans for completed strategies and action planning for lagging strategies.

2. Scorecard of Progress on Key Performance Indicators

Raymore-Peculiar's School District scorecard displays progress on the key measures that have been identified for each goal area. The scoring Criteria are highlighted to depict the level of performance on the specific measure: at risk for being reached (red), moderate progress (yellow), at goal (green), or performance at the stretch level (blue).

Comment [RK2]: Also not part of scope. Do you want me to develop a scorecard for you to use in the review process? It won't be the balanced scorecard, but it will be one you would use in the performance reviews.

Strategic Planning Process Overview – Part 4

Annual Review Process

The annual review process is pictured on the following page. The information identified in steps one and two will be analyzed to determine any changes from the original strategic planning analysis. The goals and objectives will be re-confirmed and presented to the Board for approval. The action plans completed in the previous year of the plan and the strategies prioritized for future years will be studied and a new set of strategies will be identified for execution in the new plan year. The organizational scorecard will be analyzed for effectiveness and adjusted as necessary each year. The drill-down scorecards will be adjusted based on identification of the strategies.

The planning and review process is used whether a new five-year plan or an annual update is the focus. The difference will be in the detail of the analysis. Raymore-Peculiar School District will continue to use the Baldrige process to obtain feedback on performance from outside of the organization and include that feedback in the strategic planning process.

Raymore-Peculiar School District Strategic Planning and Annual Review Process

Insert Strategic Planning and Annual Review Process chart here

Year One Linkages: Goals, Objectives, Strategies

Goal Area 1

Student Success

Objective 1.1 Ensure an environment that is conducive to learning

Strategy 1.1.1: Sustain our culture as a Professional Learning Community

Objective 1.2 Ensure the relevancy of educational programming for preparation of students for post-secondary opportunities

Strategy 1.2.1: Develop an approach to prepare students for college and career readiness

Objective 1.3 Maximize academic proficiency for all students

Strategy 1.3.1: Develop a guaranteed and viable curriculum aligned to Common Core State Standards/College and Career Readiness Standards

Strategy 1.3.2: Develop standards referenced reporting practices

Goal Area 2

Workforce Satisfaction and Engagement

Objective 2.1 Hire and develop high quality staff

Strategy 2.1.1: Identify characteristics of a high quality staff

Objective 2.2 Maximize staff satisfaction and engagement

Strategy 2.2.1: Develop a systematic approach to ensure optimum staff satisfaction. (Year one, focus on classified staff)

Strategy 2.2.2: Implement components of a comprehensive competitive compensation package.

Goal Area 3

Financial

Objective 3.1 Maintain fiscal stability by optimizing resources

Strategy 3.1.1: Develop and implement a process to maintain adequate fund balance reserves.

Objective 3.2 Maintain facilities to meet staff, student, and community needs

Strategy 3.2.1: Develop and implement a process to determine how best to maintain facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Objective 3.3 Ensure stakeholder satisfaction through transparency in all fiscal actions

Strategy 3.3.1: Develop & Implement a process to educate and inform all stakeholders on school finance

Goal Area 4

Technology Optimization

Objective 4.1 Develop and implement a systematic approach to technology planning

Strategy 4.1.1: Develop and implement a systematic process to conduct a technology needs assessment (prek-12)

Strategy 4.1.2: Evaluate and analyze the data from the needs assessment

Objective 4.2 Maximize technology applications and resources to facilitate effective instructional delivery and student learning.

Strategy 4.2.1: Develop a process to provide training and resources to help teachers integrate technology into the classroom

Strategy 4.2.2: Develop a process to determine new technology related initiatives to address the evolving needs of the district

Goal Area 5

Leadership & Governance

Objective 5.1 Develop and sustain effective leadership and governance for the Raymore-Peculiar school district

Strategy 5.1.1: Assure effective district leadership and governance in alignment with the strategic plan.

Strategy 5.1.2: Assure effective partnership between district leadership and the Board.

Strategy 5.1.3: Assure effective processes Board of Education leadership and governance with the strategic plan.

Goal Area 6

Performance Measurement

Objective 6.1 Optimize and enhance organizational performance through the use of an effective performance measurement system

> *Strategy 6.1.1:* Develop and implement a system to identify and monitor key performance measures to ensure accountability for school performance and district operations

Goal Area 7

Stakeholder Satisfaction and Engagement

Objective 7.1 Maximize stakeholder satisfaction and engagement

> *Strategy 7.1.1:* Develop and implement systematic approach to determine stakeholder satisfaction

Goal Area

Communication

Objective 8.1 Provide a systematic process to external communication

> *Strategy 8.1.1:* Develop and implement a systematic approach to external communication

Objective 8.2 Provide a systematic process to internal communication

> *Strategy 8.2.1:* Develop and implement a systematic approach to internal communication

Raymore-Peculiar School District Balanced Scorecard Strategy Map

This is outside of scope. You can let me know if you want me to develop this.
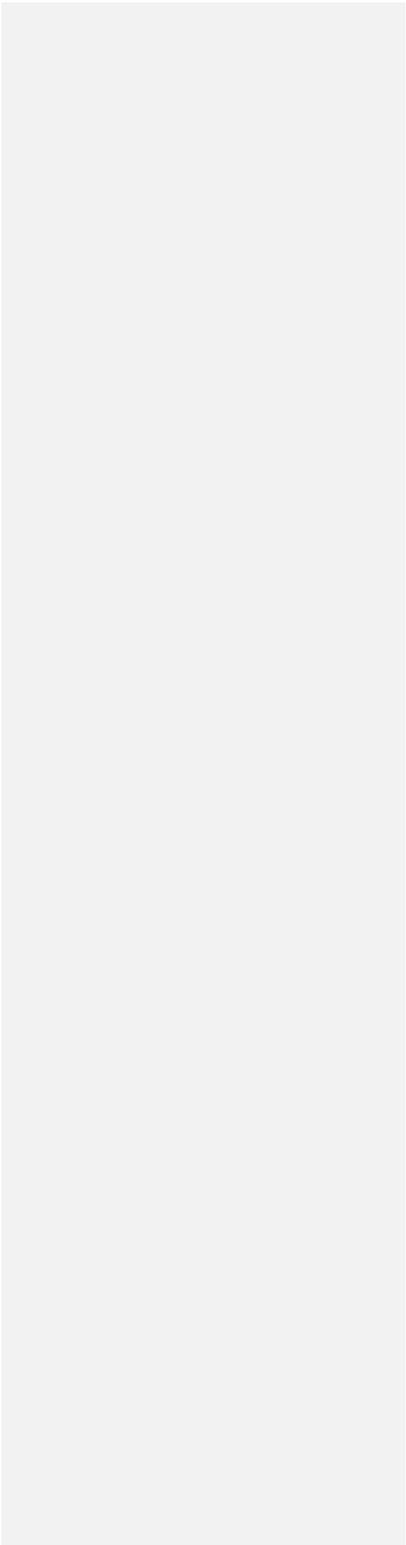
APPENDIX

<u>**Show Me Challenge Feedback Report Results**</u>

Organizational Assessment-Baldrige Based Assessment-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? 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 more 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.

Focus Groups Feedback Report-Key Themes

Key Themes

Strength

The focus group participants were highly engaged throughout the process. They showed hope and excitement at the opportunity to provide direct and open feedback. All participants were provided the opportunity to present information at the end of each session that may not have been addressed in the questions. While the opportunities for improvement may seem to be overwhelming, the information was provided by the participants in an earnest effort to make the Raymore-Peculiar School District a better place. There is a foundation of participants in the stakeholder groups who are open to and will embrace change. This is a strong position to be in while starting significant improvement efforts.

Opportunities for Improvement

Four areas have been identified as key theme opportunities for improvement for the Raymore-Peculiar School District. While the components of the workforce theme stand individually as a key theme, the remaining three themes are interrelated, with communication cited as a concern in Transparency, Strategic Planning, and Fiscal Responsibility. Opportunities exist to drive significant change in the district by addressing the concerns identified by the focus groups in these areas.

Workforce

Workforce focus as a whole is an opportunity for improvement for the Raymore-Peculiar School District. More specifically, opportunities were identified in the following areas:

- **Performance Management**: There was agreement across the groups that performance reviews are not conducted consistently. Some received peer reviews, but had not received an annual performance review. There was agreement that consistent feedback on job performance was desired, but not consistently delivered. Also, much of the feedback provided was reactionary, rather than providing a more formative approach to facilitate proactive improvement in job performance.
- **Feeling Valued as an Employee:** Participants in the focus groups felt they were expected to do more work with the same amount of available time. Lack of tools and resources has contributed to difficulty completing the work. Lack of recognition was also identified as a contributing factor in this area.

- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Lack of consistent job descriptions and training were identified as interdependent factors impacting unclear roles and responsibilities. In addition, a lack of time to take training creates a barrier to ensuring appropriate levels of training are delivered based on the employee job description.
- **Teacher Morale**: Teachers described their overall morale as very poor. There was concern expressed about the number of teachers leaving and communication issues.
- **Equality:** Lack of consistency and equality from building to building and across the district was identified as a concern.

Strategic Planning

Strategic Planning for the district was identified as a concern linked to the establishment, deployment, and clear communication of consistent priorities. While many felt they understood the most important priorities for the district, some felt there were too many priorities, meanwhile others felt the priorities changed too frequently. Concern about pursuing multiple and/or too many initiatives was also identified as a concern. The students also cited concerns about how often changes occur in the district. The long term vision for the school was also not clear and perceived as only meeting state guidelines. Strategic Planning was identified as a key needed priority by many of the groups. Some articulated the need for a comprehensive plan. Resource planning was identified as a concern by several of the staff groups, expressing concern about a lack of time to complete work with the level of quality desired.

Communication and Transparency

Significant concerns were presented from many of the stakeholder groups about the communication received, the district's openness to communication, as well as with the level of transparency provided about district operations. Examples of each are shown below:

- **Communication Received:** While some groups felt data was appropriately communicated, an opportunity exists to communicate what is going well in the district, information from district leadership after cabinet meetings, and information to the community to build community support.
- **Open Communication:** District perception of open communication was at a low level. Frustration was expressed by the Board of Education, District Leaders, Staff, Principals, and teachers. Concern was articulated that the frustration level may have reached a level where apathy may be

an issue. Also, a concern was expressed that information collected was not used in decision making.

- **Transparency:** Transparency was a sensitive issue for many of the focus group participants due to a perceived connection between communication, transparency, and the failed levy. Concern was expressed about potential lack of honesty due to a lack of direct answers to questions.

Fiscal Responsibility

Concerns in the area of fiscal responsibility can be categorized in four areas: understanding of budgeting and funding process, communication, transparency, and equity.

- **Budgeting and funding process**: Frustration and confusion was voiced by some about the perceived increase in spending at the end of the budgeting period to ensure full spending of the budget. Perception was that some of the spending was frivolous. Others expressed the thought that spending could be redistributed to utilize the available funds more efficiently.
- **Communication**: Parent groups articulated the desire for the district to communicate fiscal decisions. An example provided was the budget reduction issue. The parents would like for the district to identify where budget cuts were made, the justification for the cuts, and the impact to the students.
- **Transparency**: A desire for greater transparency in the financial area was identified. Concern was identified that a lack of education and communication about the budgeting and funding process was contributing to the perception of a lack of transparency.
- **Equity**: Equity concerns were addressed by several groups. Students identified concerns that some sports programs were provided more money than others, staff identified concerns about the equity of technology provided across departments, and staff identified inequities in spending across departments, citing large amounts of money spent on the football field while the Early Childhood program is housed in a trailer.

Resource Allocation Matrix