Agenda Topic: Baldrige in Education Update (BiE-In)

Materials: Draft System Goals

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Purpose of Agenda Item

To update the State Board of Education on the activities, progress, and future direction of the state Lincoln/Baldrige in Education initiative.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item

The Board will understand the direction and focus of the state Lincoln/Baldrige in Education effort.

Background Information

The Baldrige in Education initiative (BiE IN) established a network of seven states (Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas) to share successes and practices in implementing continuous improvement processes. Through this effort, state organizations, regional entities, local districts, schools and classrooms collaborate to align their efforts to enhance the quality of education with a focus on the Baldrige quality criteria for excellence. Sponsored by the National Alliance of Business and the American Productivity and Quality Center (in cooperation with 24 additional partners), this consortium effort is focused on aligning systems at all levels, conducting organizational assessments, providing training, support and networking and benchmarking, sharing and implementing best practices.

The Lincoln Foundation for Business Excellence, established in 1994, is Illinois’ quality award and recognition foundation. Based on the Malcom Baldrige National Quality Award, but adapted to the needs of Illinois, the Lincoln Foundation provides leadership to Illinois businesses, government, health care and education organizations through the development of a 3-tiered approach to performance excellence.

In Illinois, a structure composed of a State Leadership Team, Coordination Team and subcommittees is working to move the Lincoln/Baldrige In Education Initiative forward. The focus is on expanding coordination and alignment of the many efforts currently
underway to improve the “system” of public education in order to improve the quality of student learning.

A number of Illinois school districts have been pursuing quality efforts. Some have been part of the Lincoln Quality efforts and have been recognized by Lincoln as quality award winners. In addition, consortia of school districts exist that are actively participating in continuous improvement efforts and the use quality criteria for improvement.

**Accomplishments**

In Illinois, the focus on expanding quality efforts and continuous improvement strategies is being addressed in four ways:

1) through building relationships of State Leadership Team members and coordinating team members for support of a state infrastructure to support Baldrige implementation;
2) through efforts of individual state organizations to improve their own organization’s role within the system;
3) through building a network of pilot districts; and
4) through beginning development of a website to share best practices and other Baldrige – based resources.

Collectively, these strategies have generated beginning development and discussion of a vision and goals of the “state education system.”

Through small grants, seventeen districts are currently serving as official L/BiE IN pilot districts and receiving and/or providing some assistance to collaboratively implement quality principles through a network of consortia; 1) the Consortium for Education Change (IEA), Leadership for Accountability and Quality Assurance (ISBE), Learning Partnership Teams (Motorola), and the Illinois Learning Partnership. Their current efforts are at varying levels and range from the orientation of staff to quality principles and developing deployment plans for staff development on Baldrige to developing standardized processes for schools to report on alignment with district goals.

**Future Direction**

The State Leadership Team is committed to continue its work. The current Initiative goals and measures are under review and refinement to prioritize activity and develop a scorecard of performance.

Challenges continue in the areas of communication and engagement of all partners. Expanding the BiE-IN partnership and collaboration with other initiatives is key to the improving the quality of education in Illinois. Specific plans to address this include convening a ‘conference’ of ‘high priority’ schools to collectively look at ‘best practices’ and identify strategies that will assist and support them in their need to improve.
Other key priorities include: 1) increased support for the pilot districts by continuing to provide resources, expertise, infrastructure and opportunities for networking and learning; 2) continued development of the Baldrige in Education web-site; and 3) continued improvement of the opportunity to network with other BiE IN states through the national partnership.

**Superintendent’s Recommendation**

Support the continued work of the Lincoln/Baldrige in Education initiative.

**Next Steps**

Continue as a key partner in this effort.

Provide regular updates to the Board on progress and performance results.