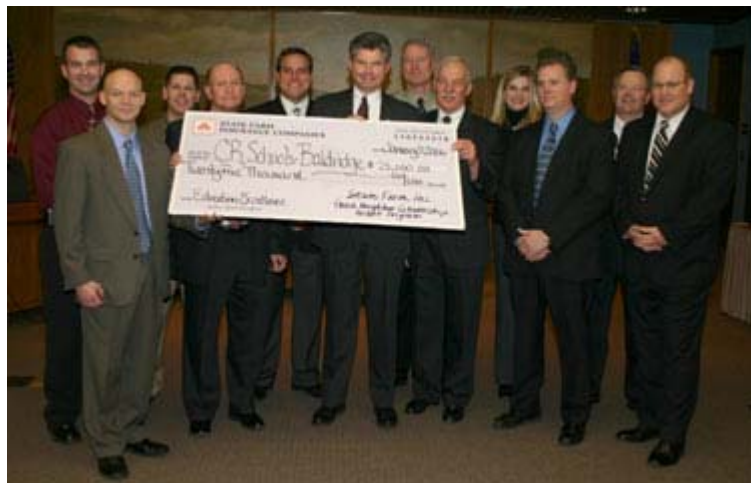


Cedar Rapids Community Schools

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District Receives Grant to Support Continuous Improvement



The Cedar Rapids Community School District received a \$25,000 Good Neighbor Citizenship Grant from State Farm Insurance Companies. The funds will help to advance continuous improvement initiatives across the District, specifically supporting training for teachers and other staff members.

The District uses the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence as a framework for its continuous improvement efforts. The Baldrige criteria focus on leadership, customers, data analysis, process improvement, human resources, and student achievement results.

"By focusing on customer satisfaction, data driven decision making, being better tomorrow than today, using quality tools, and implementing the Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) process of continuous improvement, the District has embarked on a journey that will help all students achieve at high levels," explained Jay Marino, Associate Superintendent for Accountability and Organizational Effectiveness.

During the 2004-05 school year, the District gathered stakeholder input to update the Strategic Plan, including a Vision, Mission statement, Core Values, Goals, and Guiding Philosophy of continuous improvement to direct the work of the school district. District employees, including teachers, administrators, custodians, bus drivers, food service workers, and other support services staff, are currently participating in Action Research training to learn how to implement quality in their work area.

"We are very appreciative of partners like State Farm who generously contribute to our continuous improvement efforts," added Dr. Dave Markward, Superintendent. "With a work force of over 2700 employees, funding for training is critical to achieving our vision of Excellence For All." Through the Good Neighbor Citizenship Grant, State Farm supports educational programs across the nation, ranging from Baldrige National Quality Standards to community service-learning projects.

"State Farm is proud to be a member of the Cedar Rapids community and honored to support the implementation of Baldrige National Quality Standards in the Cedar Rapids School District." said Cedar Rapids resident and State Farm Agency Field Executive Pat Kappes.

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