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## District Recognized for IRPE Application



The Cedar Rapids Community Schools recently received kudos for its continuous improvement initiative and application to the Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence (IRPE) Program. The District was among seven state organizations honored for their applications as part of the Governor's Recognition of Performance Excellence Celebration.

"We are in wonderful company as we dedicate ourselves to continuous improvement in all aspects of our school district performance," explained Dr. Dave Markward, Superintendent. "The recognition and feedback from the IRPE program is both appreciated and helpful. To be in the midst of other organizations pursuing excellence in our area provides potentially powerful networking opportunities for CRCS.""

The IPRE application process is comprehensive and detailed. Applicants provide responses to multiple questions for the seven categories comprising the nationally-recognized Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. Teams of trained IRPE examiners review the applications and provide constructive feedback to assist organization's in their improvement efforts. Baldrige-embracing organizations have shown significantly higher levels of performance over time including more return on investment for businesses and higher student achievement for schools and school districts.



Other organizations noted for applications included St. Luke's Hospital in Cedar Rapids, Kirkwood Community College's continuing education program, and the Waterloo Community School District. Organizations honored with bronze level IRPE awards were the HON Company (Geneva Plant) and Trinity Medical Center; silver level awards went to the HON Company (Oak Steel Plant) and the Facilities, Planning and Management Division of Iowa State University.

"Pursuit of organizational excellence is an ongoing journey," Markward added. "To be recognized as a serious applicant in the IRPE process is a wonderful first step of many to be taken along the path of improvement. The District will continue to review and act upon the feedback from the examiners' report and prepare for an application at the 'medal' level in the coming year."



The event also recognized individuals trained in 2005 as IRPE examiners, including District

staff

members Suzanne Blomme, Lori Bruzek, Kay Coe, Val Dolezal, Joyce Fowler, Jay Marino, Denise Pape, and Gregg Peterson.

Examiners spend approximately 120 total hours evaluating an Iowa-based applicant to the IRPE process, and identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement as they relate to the national Baldrige Criteria. Based on the score, examiners may also visit an applicant on site to tour facilities, and meet with leadership and employees to verify and clarify the strengths and the opportunities assigned.

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