

# FISH! FOR SCHOOLS™ SUPPORTS EXCELLENCE

## AN ALIGNMENT OF THE 2005 BALDRIGE EDUCATION CRITERIA FOR PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE WITH FISH! FOR SCHOOLS.

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### LEADERSHIP

The Leadership Category examines how your organizations senior leaders guide and sustain your organization. Also examined are your organizations governance and how your organization addresses it ethical, legal, and community responsibilities.

FISH! For Schools provides senior leaders with a valuable communication tool to sustain positive learning environments for teachers and students. The principles of The FISH! Philosophy® (Be There, Play, Make Their Day and Choose Your Attitude™) provide leaders with a simple, yet powerful common language and philosophy inviting them to LIVE and MODEL productive behaviors they want to see in other areas of the organization.

One of the most powerful philosophical aspects of FISH! For Schools is the concept of getting educators to work together and collaborate in unique ways regarding issues that impact schools. When people work together and establish supportive work and learning communities, adults and students alike take ownership and feel safe and empowered to take more risks and strive for higher levels because of that supportive culture.

FISH! For Schools also introduces students early on to the concept of contributing to the “larger community” as they focus on the principle of Make Their Day. The focus at each grade level takes this principle from Make Their Day for individuals to making the day of the larger community through public service projects that relate directly to their local community. Students establish an understanding of the need to contribute and the power it holds in any given community.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Strategic Planning Category examines how your organization develops strategic objectives and action plans. Also examined are how your chosen strategic objectives and action plans are deployed and changed if circumstances require, and how progress is measured.

In order to develop strategic objectives and action plans, “student needs” must consistently be taken into account. FISH! For Schools takes a proactive approach to learning about the emotional and social needs of students. Formal, yet fluid processes for positive change are taught through both staff development (The Guided Journey) and classroom instruction (The Expedition Guide), both components of the FISH! For Schools curriculum. FISH! For Schools provides students with communication tools and opportunities to address social issues head-on so that they can focus on reaching for their highest academic levels. FISH! For Schools provides a forum for students and teachers to communicate about school and classroom issues daily. Through a process of collaboration students and staff work to establish mission statements and behavior standards that align with the mission of the District.

## STUDENT, STAKEHOLDER, AND MARKET FOCUS

The Student, Stakeholder, and Market Focus Category examines how your organization determines requirements, expectations, and preferences of students, stakeholders, and markets. Also examined is how your organization builds relationships with students and stakeholders and determines the key factors that attract students and lead to student and stakeholder satisfaction and loyalty, student persistence, increased educational services and programs, and organizational sustainability.

A core focus of FISH! For Schools is on how we interact on a daily basis to build strong, supportive relationships with students and staff which impact the entire learning community! FISH! For Schools uses the four principles of The FISH! Philosophy as a personal checkpoint for behavior standards for both educators and students alike. Collaboration and activities focus on the value of the FISH!® principles strengthening relationships among colleagues and between teachers and students. If we as educators expect students to come to school and act respectfully (Choose Their Attitude) and be supportive of one another (Make Their Day and Be There), then we must LIVE and MODEL these expectations as well even when we don’t agree with a person or a mandate. Educators cannot can not improve schools on their own. Students, parents and educators need to develop partnerships and be fully involved in creating and maintaining the learning community so all can experience the value of their participation and take ownership for what is created.

FISH! For Schools provides teachers with developmentally appropriate tools to establish classroom management expectations in a fun and effective manner. Students are invited into the conversations and the development of expectations through collaboration and conversation. This shared ownership provides students and teachers with a “partnership” in striving to meet their mission!

## **MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

The Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management Category examines how your organization selects, gathers, analyzes, manages, and improves its data, information and knowledge assets. Also examined is how your organization reviews its performance.

FISH! For Schools assessment tools are available for measuring student and teacher perspectives of the school and classroom. Teacher surveys focus on how educators feel about teaching, students, support, school climate, job satisfaction. This measurement will help educators understand faculty needs. Student surveys focus on how students feel about school, their sense of belonging, emotional and physical safety, and the relationships they have with teachers and classmates.

ChartHouse Learning can collaborate with district research and assessment departments to decide on tools to look at and measure student achievement data and student behavior data and the overall impact FISH! For Schools has on the school climate over time.

## **FACULTY AND STAFF FOCUS**

The Faculty and Staff Focus category examines how your organization's work systems and faculty and staff learning and motivation enable faculty and staff to develop and utilize their full potential in alignment with your organization's overall objectives, strategy, and action plans. Also examined are your organization's efforts to build and maintain a work environment and faculty and staff support climate conducive to performance excellence and to personal and organizational growth.

The Guided Journey is a personalized staff-development course, designed especially for educators. By completing this self-guided DVD/Video course and journal, you'll deepen your skills in classroom cultural management through new techniques for building relationships, developing shared ownership, and creating a safe and effective learning environment with the common language of The FISH! Philosophy.

FISH! For Schools also provides staff development trainings and workshops that remind educators of why they chose to become a teacher. These inspiring regional workshops allow educators to network and connect with educators from around the country and encourages creative contributions and collaboration on current academic and educational issues. On-site training workshops bring the inspiration home as educators work with those in their school or district and learn about the impact FISH! For Schools can have on students and educators alike. This curriculum, training, collaboration and networking opportunities provide communication tools to help educators maintain positive learning environments in classrooms and schools.

## PROCESS MANAGEMENT

The Process Management category examines the key aspects of your organization’s process management, including key learning-centered processes for your educational programs, offerings, and services that create student, stakeholder, and organizational value. It also includes key support processes. This category encompasses all key processes and all work units.

FISH! For Schools impacts all aspects of learning as it sets forth a way of interacting in the school and classroom. Open communication among colleagues and between teachers and students is encouraged with the underlying principles of FISH! The principles establish the guidelines for interaction as educators and students work together to meet and support the academic and social needs in the classroom and school. FISH! For Schools is a “learning centered” process tool as it involves students and educators in gathering information about how things are going in the classroom. This framework serves as a communication tool to address issues and provide a safe forum for students and teachers to have input that would create better classroom processes and a supportive learning community. This leads to the creation of physically and emotionally safe learning environments as educators learn first-hand what their student needs are. Content delivery is impacted as educators often feel the freedom to express themselves passionately and playfully in teaching all subject areas.

## ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE RESULTS

The Organizational Performance Results Category examines your organization’s performance and improvement in key area—student learning results; student- and stakeholder-focused results; budgetary, financial, and market performance; faculty and staff results; operational performance; and leadership and social responsibility. Performance levels are examined relative to those of competitors and comparable organizations.

Assessment tools are available from ChartHouse Learning to learn about student attitudes toward school, teacher attitudes regarding job satisfaction, and administrative observations of how FISH! For Schools is impacting the learning community. Further consulting is available on how to best utilize these results to make changes that are necessary, based on input from staff, students and administrators. Student achievement and student behavior data may also be used as an additional tool to measure the effectiveness of FISH! For Schools.



FISH! For Schools was created as a proactive approach to improving learning cultures through relationship building, communication structures that invite participation with fun ways of interacting. Students are drawn to the high standards of FISH! For Schools as fulfills the natural human need to play and the common language addresses what they need and want in life and learning!

