Putting ISO 9000 Standards and Baldrige Quality Criteria To Work Now in Public Education.

The National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation (NAIEC) creates an approach for school system improvement that combines the necessary standards for achieving mileposts of the Baldrige Quality Criteria and the International Organization of Standardization (ISO) 9000 Standards for Education. Together, the Baldrige Criteria and ISO Standards meet the requirements for developing a high-performance educational system that successfully delivers students who have mastered state-mandated curriculum and student work standards. ISO 9000/Baldrige Criteria provides public education with a quality management system that achieves measurable quality and continuous improvement. A school system that undertakes ISO compliance gains many operational benefits plus improved efficiency and effectiveness through a bottoms-up planning and organizing system. With ISO/Baldrige, schools now have a single, cogent, understandable, and workable methodology to apprise them of their greatest opportunities for systemic reform. A decade-long effort of industry-education collaboration has succeeded in getting states to include two of three elements for school system accountability and a total quality assurance system: standards and assessment. Quality control, the keystone element, is missing. Quality assurance instills an attitude of disciplined caring toward poor results in education. NAIEC is uniquely suited to conduct the ISO 9000/Baldrige initiative as the nation's principal advocate and resource for fostering industry-education collaboration. (YLB)
PUTTING ISO 9000 STANDARDS AND BALDRIGE QUALITY CRITERIA TO WORK NOW IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Dr. Don Clark, NAIEC President & CEO

Highly regarded Washington Post columnist David Broder's recent editorial "Using Business Methods to Improve Schools" casts a national spotlight on what the National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation is already doing. Broder shows how the power of Baldrige quality in a few places are full of promise for school system improvement. He advises that "Baldrige in Education" is almost ready for a national rollout. NAIEC is way ahead. It has a Baldrige approach tailored to the realities of school capability for implementation already on the road.

Broder focuses solely on the Baldrige Criteria. He neglects the fact that these criteria are simply milestones, necessary but not sufficient for education. NAIEC adds the necessary standards for achieving the mileposts, the ISO 9000 Standards for Education. Together, Baldrige Criteria and ISO Standards meet the requirements for developing a high performance educational system that can successfully deliver students who have mastered the state-mandated curriculum and student work standards.

NAIEC has plans in place and the know-how and experience to implement an industry-education collabora-

tive initiative on a state-by-state basis. This effort is underway at a time when state education leaders have embarked on a high-stakes decision to raise academic standards in public schools. ISO 9000/Baldrige Criteria provides public education with a quality management system "that works" in achieving measurable quality and continuous improvement which are central in helping successfully implement the new mandated academic standards.

The starting point for school improvement is an acceptance of new standards, and standards, as every business person understands are the *sine qua non* of an enterprise. ISO 9000 for education is a series of industry management standards developed by the International Organization of Standardization (ISO) that identify the basic elements of a quality system. Many Baldrige recognized businesses become interested in getting registered to ISO 9000 because they are required to do so by the customer. Companies have increasingly found that total quality improvement is absolutely necessary to remain competitive in today's global markets. More than 20,000 U.S. companies are currently ISO certified.

The ISO standards, like all other standards, are simply tools to be used by an organization to help guarantee success in achieving a set of its objectives. In this case, the broad objective is achieving measurable quality and continuous improvement—the key ingredients of quality in education—through a voluntary multi-step strategy. A school system that undertakes ISO compliance gains many operational benefits plus improved efficiency and effectiveness through a bottoms-up

(continued pg. 2, col. 1 see Putting)
Putting planning and organizing system that will require the system, as in business, to document its processes, follow its own procedures, have complete and accurate record keeping, and maintain continuous improvement. These motivate educators to say what they do, do what they say, document, and let an independent review take place.

The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria sets forth categories for achieving quality management in any organization. The basic thrust is to align all management and employee activities with strategic plans aimed at improving internal and external results. Alignment in a school system refers to consistency of plans, processes and actions, information, and decision making among the units in the system in support of key state and system goals. ISO 9000 gives specific directions for making progress toward the categories.

ISO 9000 and the Baldrige Criteria are best viewed as two circles that intersect. ISO adds the documentation, the standardization, and the common language that are set up by the school. They both have a common intersection in customer satisfaction and the quality system that actually manages and governs the system. Baldrige criteria helps to establish a system that focuses on the customer, facilitates a long-term approach to continuous improvement, promotes prevention rather than remediation, and values results.

What makes Baldrige married to ISO 9000 work is that its approach to quality is total; it asks that quality be put in place or presented to the proper personnel who have the know-how, or are best viewed as two circles that intersect. ISO adds the documentation, the standardization, and the common language that are set up by the school. They both have a common intersection in customer satisfaction and the quality system that actually manages and governs the system. Baldrige criteria helps to establish a system that focuses on the customer, facilitates a long-term approach to continuous improvement, promotes prevention rather than remediation, and values results.

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