

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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November 6, 2009

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District School Superintendents

**FROM:** Dr. Eric J. Smith

**SUBJECT:** Florida Department of Education and Florida Sterling Council Partnership and Invitation

As we work to race to the top of education reform, I continue to be impressed with the innovations and best practices being applied throughout Florida's schools. From accountability data analysis to advanced technology in the classroom, the list is ongoing. However, while there are pockets of excellence, we have not found a way to systematically document and share all of our best practices in order to build a statewide education system of excellence.

With this challenge in mind, Florida's Department of Education is partnering with the Florida Governor's Sterling Council to help make this happen. Based on the Federal Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria, the Sterling Management Model provides an effective framework for leading organizations to operational excellence. Now in its 18<sup>th</sup> year, this Sterling system has been successfully applied throughout Florida's education system with two districts and numerous individual schools having received the Governor's Sterling Award and achieving the highest standards of excellence. Any district's success depends on its ability to define, problem solve, monitor, adapt, and improve its strategic plans.

Over the next few weeks, representatives from the Florida Sterling Council will be contacting each of you to obtain best practices which have enabled your schools and district to achieve excellence in specific areas. While best practices in any area are welcome, we are focusing particularly in three key areas:

District School Superintendents

November 6, 2009

Page 2

1. Accountability data systems and analysis to drive instruction
2. Community engagement to include parents, volunteers, and community partners in the education process
3. Recognizing and rewarding high performing educators

If you would like to participate in this discussion and sharing, we will provide a template to facilitate standardized documentation and retrieval of these best practices. Over the next few months, we will have a Web-based best practices sharing site ready for statewide use. Florida Sterling Council representatives will be working with you to identify and document your best practices and prepare them for statewide sharing. The representatives who will be contacting you include:

1. Don Bryant, Lee District Schools
2. Dr. Mary Beth Corace, Pinellas District Schools
3. Dione Geiger, Florida Sterling Council
4. Bob Seemer, ets, inc. / Brevard District Schools

In June 2010, we will convene in a one day Education Summit at the annual Florida Sterling Conference. The purpose of the summit is to review selected best practices to develop both statewide and district-specific strategies for moving forward. We will also review the best practices Web site so that we can leverage our collective body of knowledge and best practices to make Florida's education system the best in the nation.

Thank you for considering this opportunity and potentially participating in the annual conference.

ES/hre