



THE STERLING REPORT

VOLUME XIV

Celebrating 15 Years of Performance Excellence



"During the past several years, I have visited and worked with state quality award programs. No question about it, the Florida process is the national benchmark"

R. Dale Crownover, President & CEO
Texas Nameplate
Baldrige Award Recipient 2002 & 2005

Credibility, Sustainability... Sterling: Your Strategy for the Long-Term

The Florida Sterling Council is now in its 15th year of promoting, assessing, and recognizing performance excellence in private and public organizations of all types and sizes across the state. As one of the longest running and most successful state programs, we are highly respected by Baldrige, and have been benchmarked by several states and even international quality programs. Over the past 14 years, we have:

- Assessed over 350 organizations through the Navigator and Challenge since 1998, and the Governor's Sterling Award levels since 1993.
- Trained over 2,000 Examiners who return to their organizations with a greater expertise in systems management.
- Recognized 46 organizations as Role Models for the state of Florida.
- Shared best practices with over 12,000 participants at our annual conference since 1993.
- Trained thousands of employees and leaders of private and public organizations through our Regional and Organizational Training since 1998.

Sterling is the credible, sustainable management system for the long-term that will help you address your challenges and become better tomorrow than you are today.

Miami-Dade County Health Department

Miami-Dade County Health Department (MDCHD) is a lead agency as part of the State of Florida Department of Health that provides core public health functions and essential services to disease control and prevention, environmental health, and other health services for more than 2.4 million Miami-Dade County residents. The strength of MDCHD is embedded in its leadership and relationship-building among community leaders in understanding and reacting to multiple priorities, constituents, and mandates.

- 93% customer satisfaction rating
- Among the highest in the country for immunization rates for children under the age of two
- Only Health Department to be recognized as a Governor's Sterling Award Recipient twice

Ramblewood Elementary School

Ramblewood Elementary School, located in Broward County, has a very diverse student population of more than 1,000 students. The school places an emphasis on reading as the framework for success, where reading is the foundation for the delivery of all educational programs, and every teacher is considered a reading teacher. A key strength is its team-based leadership system that gives teachers, support staff, parents and students what they need to succeed.

- "A" school rating for the past 4 years
- Adequate yearly progress in learning for all subgroups
- 82% of students meet state standards in writing

"Sometimes improvement methods/tools can only address a targeted issue and very often a consulting model can be prescriptive by design. Whereas, the Baldrige and Sterling Criteria provide a robust framework for addressing strategic challenges that are most relevant to your organization's success."

John. C. Timmerman
Vice President, Quality & Productivity,
The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, L.L.C.



Sterling, ISO, Lean, Six-Sigma: What's a Leader to DO?

Leaders ask, "Why use Sterling? How is it different from other improvement models or strategies?"

We posed that question to Steve Dickinson, President of Practical Quality Services, current Sterling board member, and previous examiner. Steve works with large and small organizations across the country in the field of performance improvement. He will also be one of our keynote speakers at the 2007 Sterling Conference. Steve's reply to the questions...

"Sterling is the ONLY set of standards that is actually a full management system. If you are interested in moving your business forward in a positive way, you will need a full management system. ISO9000 is primarily a tool for Process Management. Lean is a tool to help remove waste from processes, and Six-Sigma is a tool for the improvement cycle that Sterling incorporates, but it does not include key pieces such as all the planning and management that a company needs. Only Sterling does all of that. Most of the Six-Sigma programs I have seen are struggling, and the root cause is they have a lack of the Strategic Planning that Sterling has. Think of it this way, Sterling is the trunk of the tree, Lean, Six-Sigma, and ISO would be branches. Without the trunk, the branches have a hard time finding their place."

Sterling provides the structure to incorporate and link all your organization's efforts to truly drive your mission and the results you want to achieve.



Healthcare... Where Good Isn't Good Enough

By Bette Brotherton
Shands Health Care

One of the fastest growing sectors in Florida is the healthcare industry. For hospitals, clinics, public health departments, and other health related organizations, the primary focus is delivering high quality health services. When someone's health is at stake, good isn't good enough.

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) sets and addresses minimum standards for safe patient care that we all must meet. But what do you do to manage your entire healthcare organization to ensure **excellent** client services and **excellent** business functions? It's about alignment...do we have the right approaches to what we do, do we consistently implement them how and when we are supposed to, and how well do they support one another? The Sterling Management System is the route to and validation of performance against universally proven standards of excellence no matter what your specific organization does.

I have worked as Director of Quality in two hospitals, Sarasota Memorial Hospital and Morton Plant Mease Health Care, which have been recognized as Governor's Sterling Award recipients. Based on my experience in helping to drive the building of systems to ensure excellence for all stakeholders, these are my recommendations and the steps I am now taking as Vice President of Clinical Improvement for Shands HealthCare.

1. Get bench strength. Get some people trained as Sterling Examiners so they really understand the Criteria requirements, how different parts of the organization link, and how these strong linkages drive consistently predictable results.

2. Do a self-assessment against the Sterling Criteria through the Navigator, Challenge, or Governor's Sterling Award application, or some other way to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement through a feedback report.

3. Act on the opportunities. Make needed corrections and changes, and measure how well those are working.

4. Apply again. Take the feedback and work some more to improve your processes and links between and among processes.

5. Celebrate the successes, large and small. When you are recognized by others as a Governor's Sterling Award Role Model for Performance Excellence, it is a huge morale builder for employees and leaders. Instead of just thinking the organization is good, they know it has been validated against national and international standards of excellence.

The journey never ends because the healthcare industry must continue to evolve as it faces existing and new challenges on a local, national, and global scale.

For information and application forms for the Navigator, Challenge, or Governor's Sterling Award, go to www.floridasterling.com click on the *Performance Improvement* tab.

For **Examiner** information and application forms, and click on the *Examiner* tab.



Sterling 10+ year Examiners

Why Become an Examiner?

By Laura McNeil, Citigroup

Ever wonder how successful leaders of role model organizations think? Ever wonder how to make your organization more efficient and positioned for role model status?

Expand your personal and professional learning and development by becoming a Sterling Examiner. There is no other experience that affords the opportunity to witness strategies used by leaders in some of Florida's top public organizations and private businesses to drive great performance and to create high-performing individuals.

Examiners develop and refine teamwork, leadership, writing, and analytical skills, and an intensive knowledge of the Sterling Criteria. Being a Sterling Examiner means receiving extensive training and the hands-on experience required to identify characteristics that distinguish organizations from their competition. Being a Sterling examiner equates to: saving lives by working with organizations to improve healthcare outcomes; saving dollars through interactions with state agencies, improving educational offerings for our children, and understanding what it takes to move a business or organization forward to role model status.

Become part of the network of over 200 professionals from across the state who work together to make "Florida. A state of excellence."



Miami-Dade County Health Department

2006 Governor's Sterling Award Role Models



*Ramblewood Elementary School,
Coral Springs*

"FLORIDA. A STATE OF EXCELLENCE"

www.floridasterling.com

Miami-Dade County Health Department

The Miami-Dade County Health Department (MDCHD) is one of 67 County Health Departments within the state under the Florida Department of Health. Although the MDCHD dates back to the 1940s, the current organizational structure dates to 1997 when the Legislature created the Department of Health and the Department of Children and Families from the former Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. MDCHD provides services to the county's 2.4 million residents and over 12 million annual visitors and is responsible for assessing, maintaining, and improving health and safety within the county.

Due to the size, demographics, and diversity of Miami-Dade County, the eighth largest in the United States, Miami-Dade County is generally categorized with the nation's largest cities in terms of public health issues. MDCHD is at the forefront of public health departments by anticipating and quickly responding to changes taking place in the public health arena on a national and international level. Examples of current challenges include bioterrorism, identification and treatment of emerging diseases due to immigration and drug resistance, and the development of a Public Health Institute to further public/private community partnerships and the establishment of a Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade to oversee health promotion and chronic disease prevention.

MDCHD established its original mission statement, vision, and values in 1997 upon the restructuring of the department and re-examines them each year. The organizational culture of the MDCHD is as old as the concept of community public health: employees working together in the spirit of public service to prevent and resolve any of the significant health concerns that may impact the community.

Miami-Dade County Health Department's Mission:

The Mission of the Miami-Dade County Health Department is to promote and protect the health of our community through prevention and preparedness today, for a healthier tomorrow.

Miami-Dade County Health Department's Vision:

To Be a World-Class Public Health System

Miami-Dade County Health Department's Values:

Integrity, Customer and Community Focus, Accountability, Teamwork, Excellence

Miami-Dade County Health Department's Strategic Priorities:

- Prevention and Preparedness
- Return on Investment
- Service Excellence

In order to best achieve its mission and vision, the organization is divided into a number of program areas that focus on the surveillance, prevention, detection, and treatment of the most significant health and environmental issues within the county. Major services provided by the MDCHD include:

Disease Control and Prevention

- HIV/AIDS Prevention
- Immunization
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases Prevention
- Tuberculosis Control
- Epidemiology (Communicable Disease Control, Prevention, and Surveillance)
- Health Promotion

Health Services to Targeted Populations

- School Health
- Women's Health Services
- Healthy Start (pregnant women; children ages 0-3)
- Special Supplemental
- Nutrition Program for
- Women, Infants and
- Children (WIC)
- Refugee Health



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- ❑ **Community Partnerships**
 - Consortium for a Healthier Miami Dade
- ❑ **Environmental Health Services**
- ❑ **Public Health Preparedness**
 - Emergency/Disaster Response
 - Special Needs Evacuation Centers
 - Bioterrorism Response
- ❑ **Vital Records**

The MDCHD has utilized the Sterling Criteria for Organizational Performance Excellence as the basic framework of its quality improvement initiative since 1997. The MDCHD is in the advanced stages of building a fact-based performance improvement system and has made considerable progress in the areas of Leadership, Strategic Planning, Customer Focus, Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management, Human Resource Focus, and Process Management. The Sterling model has been invaluable in assisting the MDCHD on its quality journey and will continue to do so in the future.

LEADERSHIP

MDCHD has moved from a traditional government bureaucratic organization to a more flattened organization that utilizes a team-based leadership structure. Within the leadership structure are two leadership teams — Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Leadership Team (LT). The SLT is responsible for setting direction, executing the mission and making high-level policy decisions for the MDCHD. Recent reorganization under respective Directors promotes cross-functional teamwork, thus eliminating programmatic “silos.” Monthly business reviews are conducted to ensure the MDCHD is meeting local and state strategic priorities. Business reviews are held with all leadership level staff, with each program, and an Annual Employee Retreat is held with all employees.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

MDCHD’s annual strategic planning process is designed to align MDCHD’s Strategic Priorities with those of the State Department of Health, coupled with needs, expectations and recommendations of various customer and stakeholder groups. It also ensures the alignment of services, resources, and capabilities with its vision and mission statements to ensure future success. Performance indicators and action

plans are established for each Strategic Priority. Monthly performance reviews of program performance as it aligns with the Strategic Priorities are held at the Senior Leadership Level. The MDCHD has identified four peer counties within Florida and five nationally for benchmark comparisons with its performance indicators. MDCHD’s performance is targeted to meet or exceed the performance of other comparable providers. In addition, national benchmarks are set by the Centers for Disease Control’s Healthy People 2010.

CUSTOMER AND MARKET FOCUS

Customers of the MDCHD fall into two categories: the public at large and direct service recipients of the MDCHD. Customer requirements and service needs are determined by state statutory mandates as well as by the MDCHD’s approach to targeting services to those with the greatest need based on statistical data. MDCHD employs various listening and learning approaches to understand customer needs. This includes an annual external customer satisfaction survey conducted in three languages, random client interviews and comment cards, an automated Client Complaint/Inquiry System, a website that allows the general public to submit inquiries or comments, and input from advocacy groups. Employee quality teams are often utilized to respond to customer issues identified through these techniques.

MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

MDCHD participates in statewide outcome measures and criteria established by the federal government to assess performance. These measures link either to strategic priorities or are drivers for core processes. Data used to drive performance improvement include key health indicators such as low birth weight infants, teenage pregnancy and reportable diseases. An internal database has been established to track these indicators. Statistical analysis is used to track and analyze epidemiological data throughout the county’s 72 zip code areas. MDCHD programs are linked through a local area network and a state intranet system.

HUMAN RESOURCE FOCUS

MDCHD promotes individual initiative, innovation, and flexibility among employees. Employee quality teams are

utilized as a major strategy for involving employees in decision-making. Quality teams are formed to address issues of concern to clients and employees and all team members to resolve problems utilizing a structured problem-solving methodology. Various communication strategies are used with staff including multi-level business review meetings, quarterly town hall meetings, employee newsletters, and an annual employee-driven educational conference. The key factors that affect employee satisfaction and motivation are determined and addressed through an annual employee satisfaction survey, which has shown improvement each year.

PROCESS MANAGEMENT

The MDCHD utilizes a systematic process to develop new services or improvement activities to enhance customer satisfaction and service. Process and outcome measures are utilized to manage core and support processes. MDCHD has invested in training its workforce in process management techniques in order to improve outcomes and achieve greater efficiencies.

RESULTS

MDCHD is proud of its achievements in key areas that impact the health of Miami-Dade County residents. For example, immunization rates for children under age two are among the highest in the country, the infant mortality rate has been reduced significantly, more people are living past age seventy-five, and fewer high school students are using tobacco. These accomplishments have been made while attaining a 93% customer satisfaction rating and an employee opinion rating that has increased from 59% to 76% in five years. Although there are many opportunities and challenges that confront the MDCHD in achieving its mission of a healthy community, MDCHD is constantly raising the bar by setting high standards for excellence and investing in training its workforce.

For More Information Contact:

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Ramblewood Elementary School

Ramblewood Elementary opened in 1976 and is one of 138 public elementary schools in Broward County. Each year, over 1,000 students from within the designated geographic boundaries established by the Broward County School Board attend grades K-5.

Ramblewood Elementary provides elementary level education using coursework as directed by the State of Florida Department of Education with a unique and broadened emphasis on reading as the framework for success. Programs are delivered through classroom instruction with the support of technology.

Ramblewood Elementary has earned an "A" from the Florida Department of Education's School Accountability Report for the past five years. Ramblewood Elementary began incorporating the Sterling Criteria into its school improvement process during the 2001-2002 school year. All staff members are considered critical to our success, and everyone believes that "together, we help the school succeed."

Ramblewood Elementary manages processes by committees that recommend, implement and monitor issues critical to the school's success. The school leadership teams communicate and reinforce the school mission, vision, and values for deploying performance expectations and monitoring the school improvement plan.

OUR VISION

Many STARS working together to achieve more

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Increase achievement for ALL students through effective instruction

WE BELIEVE

All children have the ability to learn.

Everyone is treated with respect.

All children are unique and have their own prescriptive style of learning.

All children should be given the equal opportunity to excel.

In balancing the curriculum (integration).

All children can read.

In meeting individual needs (small groups).

In using the 8-step process to foster effective instruction.

That our school improvement plan is a cooperative effort and a guiding force.

In using the process of Plan Do Study Act for all areas of operation.

In the integration of technology in all school operations.

All Ramblewood staff contribute to the success of our program.

LEADERSHIP

The leadership team has established and continually maintains a sustainable school. This is accomplished through the team's personal commitment to the use of process improvements and systematic monitoring of performance related to mission and vision. The principal and assistant principal model the behavior of empowerment, learning and innovation. All our processes are designed and improved to support our key process, which is to develop and educate our students to be successful in middle school.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The strategic planning process is a two-pronged, inclusive process focusing on academics (the School Improvement Plan) and operation (high performing plans). The School Improvement Plan is prepared by the school committees and the School Advisory Council, and its objectives are based on FCAT performance to improve student achievement.



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The Operational Plan is developed as a parallel process and is focused on staff development, technology, compliance and safety. Both plans address key stakeholders, data, and factors through the involvement of partners, parents and staff during the planning process.

CUSTOMER AND MARKET FOCUS

Ramblewood Elementary surveys its parents and students every year to assess the needs of the customer groups through a District developed survey. In addition the school also solicits input through a School Advisory Council survey which helps to identify needed areas for improvement and any suggestions for the School Improvement Plan. A middle school survey was developed to gain feedback on our value creation process. Exiting fifth grade students and middle school teachers participated.

All school customers have access to information regarding the school, its programs, and our students. We have an open door policy that encourages communication between customers. Newsletters and flyers are sent home, and websites are utilized to keep our customers informed. A complaint management process was developed to share concerns with staff, find solutions, and address issues with the next year's strategic plan.

MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

At Ramblewood Elementary we rely on knowledge and information as the foundation for tracking and measuring student learning. Ramblewood Elementary maintains a database with current student instructional reading levels, District benchmark test scores, and standardized test scores from the present and previous school year. All teachers disaggregate and analyze their own student data to design and deploy effective instructional strategies to meet student needs.

HUMAN RESOURCE FOCUS

Ramblewood Elementary functions as an interrelated system of teams. Every staff member serves on at least one team. The structure of the team allows staff members to participate along with administrators and parents in different roles, some as leaders, and some in advisory roles. The cross-functional sharing allows for diverse views and different styles of thinking. This process also allows teams to share ideas while resolving issues and concerns. High performance is recognized and reinforced by celebrations, appreciation activities, and gifts. Mentoring, shadowing other positions, and responsibility on teams supports the career succession of all staff members.

Employee development is critical to the success of our strategic plans and career progression. Each action step in the School Improvement Plan, as well as the Operational Plan, includes the necessary training components in support of successful implementation. Our staff is motivated to reach their full potential as opportunities for professional development are offered.

PROCESS MANAGEMENT

Ramblewood Elementary uses federal, state, and district mandates, as well as student achievement data and surveys, to determine its core services and value creation processes. Ramblewood Elementary then develops an instructional program designed to achieve high levels of student achievement through quality instruction. The curriculum and grade level teams work collaboratively to share best practices, conduct research, and review student performance data. The principal and team members visit competitive schools to make sure their review process includes opportunities to adapt the best practices of those schools. The 8 Step Process Improvement Model is used to improve the schedules and design delivery of instruction as teachers constantly monitor individual student progress.

Ramblewood Elementary derives its key support processes by aligning services with those vital to promote high student achievement. Our Operational Plan, Child Study process, administration support and community partners all link and align with the goals and objectives of our School Improvement Plan.

RESULTS

Learning Gains

74% of students made gains in reading

68% of struggling students made gains in reading

78% of students made gains in math

82% of students meet state standards in writing

AYP guidelines met

Parent Satisfaction

97% of the parents rate this school an "A or B"

Audit Results

No budget exceptions or deficits for the past ten years

School grade

"A" grade for six out of seven years

FUTURE

Ramblewood Elementary is committed to continuing the process of performance excellence. The Sterling Criteria will be utilized to improve all aspects of the school program. Visionary leadership, customer-driven excellence, and management by fact will continue our journey on creating a sustainable organization. "Many STARS Working Together to Achieve More"

For More Information Contact:

Ramblewood Elementary

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Email betty.colyer@browardschools.com



Volunteers: A Sterling Team

Many people and organizations do not realize that the Florida Sterling Council is a small group of employees, seven full-time and one part-time staff. Because of our small office we rely heavily on our corps of volunteers, our year round, unsung heroes. There is a select group of volunteers within this category that deserves special recognition for their selfless contributions and numerous hours of hard work.

When it comes to the conference there is one person in particular, Craig Kenyon, who makes certain we have a place to reside in Orlando. He is co-chair of the Conference Committee. Together, Craig and Dione Geiger ensure all aspects of the hotel are managed and the relationships between Sterling and the hotel are nurtured. Debra Turner and Heather Yant manage our larger group of onsite conference volunteers. They ensure all 100+ of our onsite volunteers know where to show up and what to do. In addition, they provide support to the overall conference process. There are a few other people who manage behind the scenes at the conference, Barbara Blankenship-Hipp, LeeAnn Melton, and Ken Baker. Among the three of them, they make sure everything from overall conference logistics to each workshop attendee having a power-point presentation and a tangible take-away takes place. Last, there is Douglas Charity who makes sure all the verbal and numerical feedback is tabulated each day so the Conference Committee is able to make any necessary decisions within a 12-hour time period.

Our remaining Conference and Workshop Committee members: Angie, Barb, Barbara, Chris, Dan, Dave, Debra R., Mary Beth, Nat, Patty, Phil, Shirley, Steve, and Susie also deserve another round of thanks. One thing is certain...Sterling could not be entering its 15th year without the many volunteers who work toward the one goal of making "Florida. A state of excellence."



***Team Scan It
2006 Team Showcase Champion***



***Debra Turner & Heather Yant
Conference Volunteer Coordinators***



***Secretary Lucy Hadi & Department
of Children and Families Employees
at the Sterling Conference***



***Sterling Staff & Volunteers at the
2006 Banquet***

2006 Sterling Conference: A Blueprint for Success

The 2006 Conference was truly one of Sterling's best conferences in 14 years. There was dynamic energy resonating in the air, and networking among over 1,200 attendees was at a feverish pitch. One conference attendee stated, "the Sterling Conference was not only fun, but it was very informative, something that does not necessarily happen simultaneously."

The keynote speakers had several messages that ranged from "wowing" the customer, to how you sustain your competitive edge through creating a management system to drive high performance, to describing how the Sterling management system is nothing more than good old fashioned "common sense". The over 60 workshop sessions featured many mature as well as new topics that provided insights, tools, and techniques for people to take back to their workplace. Thanks to the many wonderful speakers who shared their knowledge and insight freely with those who were there to learn.

Overall, conference and workshop satisfaction has continued to improve and sits at 97% customer satisfaction. Indeed, the 2006 Conference was a high mark for Sterling and an excellent event to officially move us into our 15th year of performance excellence.

Plans for 2007 are well underway, so join us to "Celebrate 15 Years of Performance Excellence" next year at the JW Marriott Orlando Grande Lakes on May 29 – June 1, 2007. This will be an experience you won't want to miss and certainly won't forget.

Go to www.floridasterling.com, and click on the *Conference* tab.





2006-2007 CALENDAR of EVENTS

AWARD PROCESS

Examiner Applications Due

Governor's Sterling Award Application of Intent Due

Examiner Training

Master, Lead, & Senior Team Leader Training

Full Governor's Sterling Award Application Due

Consensus Meetings

Site Visits

2007 Sterling Conference

Governor's Sterling Award Banquet

DATES

August 1, 2006

September 18, 2006

November 1-3, 2006
or November 8-10, 2006

October 31, 2006
November 7, 2006

November 17, 2006

January 15-26, 2007

February 26- March 23, 2007

May 29- June 1, 2007

June 1, 2007

2006 GSA BEST PRACTICE SHOWCASE DATES

Miami-Dade County Health Department
October 19, 2006

Ramblewood Elementary School
Coral Springs
October 20, 2006

REGIONAL TEAM SHOWCASE COMPETITIONS

Region 6 - February 15, 2007, Davie
Region 3 - February 23, 2007, TBA

Other Dates will be posted on the web site www.floridasterling.com as they become available.

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