

2023–2024



Education

Commitment Level Criteria

for

Performance Excellence

Effective June 2023

Note from the CEO:

Thank you for taking the time to consider applying for the Quality Texas Foundation Regional Program (QTFRP) Commitment Level of Recognition (20 pages and a five-page Organizational Profile). Your organization may have started at our Engagement 10-page application (with five-page Organization Profile). If this is your first entry with QTFRP, welcome aboard.

It is our sincere hope that the questions embedded in the five-page organizational profile and your twenty-page application will cause your organization to evaluate exactly where you are, where you should be, and how you can significantly improve by prioritization of your improvement steps. The Baldrige Framework is used the world over (70 countries) to make systematic improvements to organizations. Proposed steps are shown below.

1) Assign a minimum of five to seven personnel in your office to become Organizational Leadership/Examiner training by the QTFRP (see www.quality-texas.org/training for dates and locations. This training is where QTFRP teaches your personnel how to become valued internal coach for your organization by informing the participants how to respond/write the responses to the questions and the reasons behind the questions. QTFRP teaches the test! You can just begin writing if you like, but past information received from applicants indicate the Examiner training was a major milestone in writing at any level. Our satisfaction rate over the past eight years has been 98%.

2) Write your responses and allow other people in your office to edit your work. Don't fall in love with your first draft. This application to be really effective will undergo several iterations with substantial improvements along the way. The application process will allow the organization to ask very difficult questions and address organizational priorities.

3) Revise multiple times and submit.

This Commitment Level of Recognition discusses approach, deployment, learning, and integration in Category 1-6 and levels, trends, comparisons, and integration in Category 7. Applicants have asked in the past about how the pages should be distributed for the Commitment Application. The following page distribution is for planning purposes only and is not a hard and fast rule.

Commitment Level (20 pages + 5 pages OP;) 5 pages OP, Cat 1 (2 pages), Cat 2 (2 pages), Cat 3 (2 pages), Cat 4 (2 pages), Cat 5 (3 pages), Cat 6 (2 pages), and Cat 7 (7 pages).

If we here at the QTFRP can be of assistance to you, please allow us that opportunity. We offer coaching and training to help maximize your positive experience. Remember always that the Baldrige Journey is never finished! Happy travels!

Dr. Mac McGuire, CEO

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About the Baldrige Excellence Framework

The Baldrige Excellence Framework empowers your organization to reach its goals, improve results, and become more competitive.

Thousands of organizations around the world use the Baldrige Excellence Framework to improve and get sustainable results. Those recognized as national role models receive the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, a Presidential award. At the Quality Texas Foundation Regional Program, there have been 21 national recipients and sixty-five state award recipients.

What can Baldrige do for my organization?

Whether your organization is new, is growing, or has existed for many years, it faces daily and long-term challenges. It also has strengths that have served you well so far. The Baldrige Excellence Framework helps you identify and leverage your strengths and prepare to face your challenges. It helps you address issues that are important to your organization:

- Understanding what it takes to be competitive or just continue organizational success and achieve long-term success in your environment
- Getting your leaders, managers, and workforce all on the same page
- Ensuring that your employees understand and can contribute to the drivers of your organization's success
- Understanding, and meeting or exceeding, customer, patient/family, or student/family requirements and expectations
- Ensuring that your operations are efficient and lead to short- and long-term success

As a result, you will be better able to position your organization to succeed and accomplish your mission—with a sense of greater clarity and with alignment among your leaders, employees, customers, and key partners.

Criteria for Performance Excellence. By answering the questions in the Criteria for Performance Excellence, you explore your strengths and your opportunities for improvement in seven critical aspects of managing and performing as an organization (called categories):

1. **Leadership: How do you share your vision and lead your organization? How do you ensure good governance?**
2. **Strategy: How do you prepare for the future?**
3. **Customers: How do you listen to, satisfy, and engage your customers?**
4. **Measurement, analysis, and knowledge management: How do you use reliable data and information to make decisions?**
5. **Workforce: How do you engage and empower your people?**
6. **Operations: How do you ensure efficient and effective operations that deliver customer value?**
7. **Results: How well are you doing?**

The linkages among these categories provide a systems perspective on your organization. Some of these linkages are:

- the connections between your approaches in categories 1–6 and the results you achieve (category 7);
- (2) the connection between workforce planning and strategic planning; and (3) the need for customer and market knowledge in creating your strategy and action plans.

Scoring guidelines. With Baldrige, just having stated processes or sets of results is not enough. You can assess the maturity of your responses based on four evaluation dimensions for the process categories and four for the results category.

Processes are the methods your organization uses to accomplish its work. With the Baldrige framework, you assess and improve your processes along four dimensions:

1. **Approach:** How do you accomplish your organization's work? How systematic and effective are your key approaches?
2. **Deployment:** How consistently are your key approaches used in relevant parts of your organization?
3. **Learning:** How well have you evaluated and improved your key approaches? How well have improvements been shared within your organization? Has new knowledge led to innovation?
4. **Integration:** How well do your approaches reflect your current and future organizational needs? How well are processes and operations harmonized across your organization to achieve key organization-wide goals?

Results are assessed along these four dimensions:

1. **Levels:** What is your current performance on a meaningful measurement scale?
2. **Trends:** Are the results improving, staying the same, or getting worse?
3. **Comparisons:** How does your performance compare with that of competitors, or with benchmarks or industry leaders?
4. **Integration:** Are you tracking results that are important to your organization? Are you using the results in decision making?

As you respond to the Criteria questions and assess your responses against the scoring guidelines, you will begin to identify strengths and gaps—first within the Criteria categories and then among them. The coordination of key processes, and feedback between your processes and your results, will lead to cycles of improvement. As you continue to use the framework, you will learn more and more about your organization and begin to define the best ways to build on your strengths, close gaps, and innovate.

Baldrige has a simple purpose.

The purpose of the Baldrige framework is simply to help your organization—no matter its size, sector, or industry—answer three questions: *Is your organization doing as well as it could? How do you know? What and how should your organization improve or change?*

By challenging yourself with the questions that make up the Criteria for Performance Excellence, you explore how you are accomplishing what is important to your organization. The questions (divided into six interrelated process categories and a results category) represent seven critical aspects of managing and performing as an organization:

1. Leadership
2. Strategy
3. Customers
4. Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management
5. Workforce
6. Operations
7. Results

Baldrige promotes a systems perspective.

A systems perspective means managing all the components of your organization as a unified whole to achieve ongoing success. The system's building blocks and integrating mechanism are the core values and concepts, the seven interrelated Criteria categories, and the scoring guidelines.

A focus on core values and concepts. Baldrige is based on a set of beliefs and behaviors. These core values and concepts are the foundation for integrating key performance and operational requirements within a results-oriented framework that creates a basis for action, feedback, and ongoing success:

- Systems perspective
- Visionary leadership
- Customer-focused excellence
- Valuing people
- Agility and resilience
- Organizational learning
- Focus on success and innovation
- Management by fact
- Societal contributions
- Ethics and transparency
- Delivering value and results

How do I get started?

However, you plan to use the Baldrige framework, the Baldrige community is there to help your organization learn, grow, and improve. See the following pages and visit <https://www.quality-texas.org> to see the possibilities.

The [Baldrige] Criteria help you link your strategy, your human capital process, your leadership development process, and all of your core operations together and help them focus on what your customers actually want.

—Scott McIntyre, President and CEO, Managing Partner, Guidehouse (formerly Baldrige Award recipient PricewaterhouseCoopers Public Sector Practice)

How to Use the Baldrige Excellence Framework

Whether your organization is large or small, you can use the Baldrige Excellence Framework for improvement. Your experience with Baldrige will help you decide where to begin.

The Quality Texas Foundation Regional Program can help you assess your level of expertise and where your journey should begin. Please contact Lin Wrinkle-McGuire, COO, at linwrinkle@quality-texas.org or Dr. Mac McGuire, CEO at drmac@quality-texas.org for more information.

There are three different applications. Business/NFP is the most often used. Healthcare has a healthcare version if the primary customers are patients and families. Education has an education version if the primary customers are students and families.

If you are just learning about the Baldrige framework . . .

Here are some ways to begin using the Baldrige framework to improve your organization.

Step 1: Scan the questions in the Organizational Profile. Discussing the answers to these questions with your senior leadership team might be your first Baldrige self-assessment.

Step 2: Study the 11 Baldrige core values and concepts. Consider how your organization measures up in relation to the core values. Are there any improvements you should be making?

Step 3: Review the criteria on the website for your particular industry (www.quality-texas.org).

Step 4: Review the questions in the titles of the 17 Criteria for Performance Excellence items of the Commitment Level (normal starting point) to reach a basic understanding of the Criteria and your organization's performance.

Step 5: Contact QTFRP for additional information and how to learn more.

Step 6: Enroll in the Pre-Examiner Training with QTFRP. This training is specifically designed for those who are new to the Baldrige process.

Step 7: Enroll in the Organizational Leadership/Examiner Training with QTFRP.

Step 8: Consider the Leadership, Strategic Planning, Writing Seminars, and Workforce Engagement Training. This training has the potential to greatly accelerate your learning and development.

Step 9: Attend the Quest for Excellence® Conference, the Baldrige Fall Conference, or the QTFRP conference. These events highlight the role-model approaches of recipients of the Baldrige Award or Baldrige-based awards. These organizations have used the Baldrige framework to improve performance, innovate, and achieve world-class results. Workshops on Baldrige self-assessment are often offered in conjunction with these conferences.

Criteria for Performance Excellence

Items and Point Values

Organizational Profile

P.1 Organizational Description

P.2 Organizational Situation

Categories and Items Point Values	Points	Value
Leadership		115
1.1 Senior Leadership	65	
1.2 Governance and Societal Contributions	50	
Strategy		90
2.1 Strategy Development	45	
2.2 Strategy Implementation	45	
Customers		85
3.1 Customer Expectations	40	
3.2 Customer Engagement	45	
Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management		90
4.1 Measurement, Analysis, and Improvement of Organizational Performance	45	
4.2 Information and Knowledge Management	45	
Workforce		85
5.1 Workforce Environment	40	
5.2 Workforce Engagement	45	
Operations		85
6.1 Work Processes	45	
6.2 Operational Effectiveness	40	
Results		450
7.1 Product and Process Results	120	
7.2 Customer Results	80	
7.3 Workforce Results	80	
7.4 Leadership and Governance Results	80	
7.5 Financial, Market, and Strategy Results	90	
TOTAL POINTS		1,000

Criteria for Performance Excellence

Begin with the Organizational Profile

The Organizational Profile is the most appropriate starting point for self-assessment and for writing an application. It is critically important for the following reasons:

- You can use it as an initial self-assessment. If you identify topics for which conflicting, little, or no information is available, use these topics for action planning.
- It sets the context for understanding your organization and how it operates and allows you to address unique aspects of your organization in your responses to the Baldrige Criteria questions in categories 1–7. Your responses to all other questions in the Criteria should relate to the organizational context you describe in this profile.
- It helps you identify gaps in key information about your organization and focus on key performance requirements and results.

Organizational Profile (OP)

The **Organizational Profile** is a snapshot of your organization and its strategic environment.

P.1 Organizational Description: What are your KEY organizational characteristics?

a. Organizational Environment

(1) EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM and SERVICE Offerings What are your main EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND SERVICE offerings? What is the relative importance (including percentage of revenue/budget) of each to your success? What modalities do you use to deliver your EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND SERVICES?

(2) Mission, Vision, Values, and Culture What are your MISSION, VISION, and VALUES? Other than values, what are the characteristics of your organizational culture? What are your organization's CORE COMPETENCIES, and what is their relationship to your MISSION?

(3) WORKFORCE Profile What is your WORKFORCE profile? What are your workforce or faculty and staff groups and segments and the KEY ENGAGEMENT drivers for each? What key changes are you experiencing in your workforce capability, capacity, and composition?

(4) Assets What are your major facilities, equipment, technologies, and intellectual property?

(5) Regulatory Environment What are your key applicable standards and regulations, and accreditation, certification, or registration requirements?

b. Organizational Relationships

(1) Organizational Structure What are your organizational leadership structure and GOVERNANCE structure? What are the key components of your organization's leadership system? What are the reporting relationships among your governance system, senior leaders, and parent organization, as appropriate?

(2) Students, Other CUSTOMERS and STAKEHOLDERS What are your KEY market SEGMENTS, student and other CUSTOMER groups, and STAKEHOLDER groups, as appropriate? What are their KEY requirements and expectations for your EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND SERVICES, student and other CUSTOMER support services, and operations, including any differences among the groups?

(3) Suppliers, Partners, and Collaborators What are your KEY types of suppliers, PARTNERS, and COLLABORATORS? What role do they play in producing and delivering your KEY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM and SERVICES and student and other CUSTOMER support services? What role do they play in contributing and implementing INNOVATIONS in your organization? What are your KEY supply-network requirements?

Notes

P.1a(1). Modalities for delivering programs and services to your students might be direct or might be indirect, through partners and collaborators.

P.1a(2). Your values are part of your organization's culture. Other characteristics of your organizational culture might include shared beliefs and norms that contribute to the uniqueness of the environment within your organization.

P.1a(2). If your organization has a stated purpose as well as a mission, you should include it in your response here and as appropriate in the process categories. Some organizations define a mission and a purpose, and some use the terms interchangeably. Purpose refers to the fundamental reason that the organization exists.

P.1a(3). As applicable, your workforce profile should include the location of your workforce, your organized bargaining units (i.e., union representation), and the special health and safety requirements of the workforce. Your workforce profile should specify any workforce groups the organization has identified for segmenting data. Organizations that also rely on volunteers and/or temporary staff members to accomplish core work (producing output that is necessary and/or student-facing) should include these groups as part of their workforce. Workforce or faculty/staff groups and segments might be based on type of employment or contract-reporting relationship, location (including remote work), work shift, work environment, use of flexible work policies, teaching vs. nonteaching role, student worker, or other factors. Current and anticipated changes impacting your workforce members might relate to scheduling, location, and their requirements and expectations.

P.1a(5). Regulations and requirements include any applicable occupational health and safety regulations; education standards; and environmental, financial, and product regulations. Education standards might include local, state, federal, or international statutory requirements, regulations, and/or sector-wide codes of conduct and policy guidance, including compliance with research ethics. Depending on the regions in which you operate, environmental regulations might cover greenhouse gas emissions, carbon regulations and trading, and energy efficiency.

P.1b(1). The Organizational Profile asks for the “what” of your leadership system. Questions in categories 1 and 5 ask “how” the system is used.

P.1b(2). Student and other customer groups might be based on common expectations, behaviors, preferences, or profiles. Within a group, there may be segments based on differences, commonalities, or both. You might subdivide your market segments or customer groups based on educational programs, services, or features; delivery modalities; geography; or other defining factors.

P.1b(2). Student, other customer, stakeholder, and operational requirements and expectations will drive your organization’s sensitivity to the

risk of program, service, support, and supply-network interruptions, including those due to natural disasters and other emergencies.

P.1b(3). Suppliers and partners may include, as appropriate, key feeder schools, organizations that supply curriculum or technology, transfer partner institutions that prepare students for your organization, and/or other businesses/industries that might be working with you to develop an education program specifically for their employees.

P.1b(3). Your supply network consists of the external entities involved in producing and delivering your programs and services to your students and offering follow-up, as appropriate. For some organizations, these entities form a chain, in which one entity directly supplies another. Increasingly, however, these entities are interlinked and exist in interdependent rather than linear relationships. The Education Criteria use the term supply network to emphasize the interdependencies among organizations and their suppliers. The term supply network represents an evolution and maturity in supply-chain management.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

P.2 Organizational Situation: What is your organization’s strategic situation?

a. Competitive Environment

(1) Competitive Position What are your size, share, and growth in your education sector or the markets you serve? How many and what types of competitors do you have? What differentiates you from them?

(2) Competitiveness Changes What KEY changes, if any, are affecting your competitive situation, including changes that create opportunities for INNOVATION and collaboration, as appropriate?

(3) Comparative Data What KEY sources of comparative and competitive data are available from within the education sector? What KEY sources of comparative data are available from outside the education sector? What limitations, if any, affect your ability to obtain or use these data?

b. Strategic Context What are your key strategic challenges, threats, advantages, and opportunities?

c. Performance Improvement System What is your overall system for performance improvement? What key tools and methods are used as part of this system?

Notes

P.2a. Education organizations are frequently in highly competitive environments. Aside from direct competition for students, they must often compete to secure financial, volunteer, and human resources (e.g., education organizations may compete with noneducation organizations where pay might be higher to recruit and retain faculty and staff). This competition may involve other education organizations, such as for appropriations, grant funding or suppliers, or the opportunity to provide supplemental services. For public education organizations, competition may involve other public agencies or departments, as in the competition for scarce budget resources.

P.2b. Strategic challenges, threats, advantages, and opportunities might be in the areas of educational programs and services, operations, societal contributions, and workforce. They might relate to finances, including funding

mechanisms; organizational structure and culture; political influences; emerging technology; digital integration; security and cybersecurity; emerging competitors; organizational resilience and risk management; changing stakeholder requirements and expectations; faculty and staff capability or capacity; brand recognition and reputation; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and the upgrade and maintenance of facilities.

P.2c. Excellence is not possible without robust evaluation and improvement of key processes, systems, and organizational results. The Baldrige Scoring System (pages 30–36) uses performance improvement through learning and integration as a factor in assessing the maturity of organizational approaches and their deployment. This question is intended to set an overall context for your approach to performance improvement. The system you use should be related to your organization’s needs and compatible with your

organization's capabilities, capacity, and culture. Specific tools and methods that might be utilized as part of the system include, for example, PDCA or PDSA methodology; completion of accreditation and certification requirements; nationally validated systems to improve teaching performance; and

independent institutional, departmental, or program assessments.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

1 Leadership

The **Leadership** category asks HOW SENIOR LEADERS' personal actions guide and sustain your organization. It also asks about your organization's GOVERNANCE SYSTEM; HOW your organization fulfills its legal and ethical responsibilities; and HOW it makes societal contributions.

1.1 Senior Leadership: How do your senior leaders lead the organization?

Process

a. VISION AND VALUES

(1) **Establishing MISSION, VISION, and VALUES** HOW do SENIOR LEADERS set and DEPLOY your organization's MISSION, VISION, and VALUES?

(2) **Promoting Legal and ETHICAL BEHAVIOR** HOW do SENIOR LEADERS' personal actions demonstrate their commitment to legal and ETHICAL BEHAVIOR?

b. Communication

HOW do SENIOR LEADERS communicate with and engage the entire WORKFORCE, KEY PARTNERS, STUDENTS, AND OTHER KEY CUSTOMERS?

c. Focus on Organizational Performance

(1) **Creating an Environment for Success** How do SENIOR LEADERS create an environment for success now and in the future?

(2) **Creating a Focus on Action** HOW do SENIOR LEADERS create a focus on action to achieve the organization's MISSION and VISION?

Notes

1.1. Your responses In Category 1 should align with the components of your leadership system listed In P.1b(1).

1.1 This item deals specifically with senior leaders and how they lead the organization. Other items focus on the organization.

1.1 Results related to the effectiveness of leadership and the leadership system should be reported in item 7.4.

1.1. In leading their organizations and focusing on success, senior leaders should consider the entire workforce (whether in-person, hybrid, or remote).

1.1a(1). Your organization's mission and vision should set the context for the strategic opportunities, strategic objectives, and action plans you describe in P.2b and items 2.1 and 2.2.

1.1b. Organizations that rely on volunteers and/or temporary staff members to accomplish core work (producing output that is necessary and/or student-facing) should also discuss efforts to communicate with these segments. See the first

note on item 5.1) Similarly, organizations that rely heavily on suppliers should discuss efforts to communicate with and engage key suppliers.

1.1c(1). In creating an environment for success, leaders should also consider both external and internal factors. Factors might include risk appetite and tolerance; the need for technological and organizational innovation, including risks and opportunities arising from emerging technology, data integration, and digitization; readiness for short- and long-term disruptions; organizational culture; work systems; the potential need for changes in structure and culture; workforce capability and capacity; resource availability; societal benefit and social equity; and core competencies.

1.1c(1). Fostering equity means supporting the fair treatment of all students and other customers, workforce members, and all other key stakeholders of the organization. Inclusion refers to promoting the full participation and supporting them to feel a sense of belonging.

1.1c(2). Senior leaders' focus on action considers your strategy, workforce, work systems, and assets. It includes taking intelligent risks and implementing innovations and ongoing improvements in performance and productivity. Senior leaders' focus on action also includes the actions needed to achieve your strategic objectives (see 2.2a[1]) and may involve establishing change management plans for major organizational change or responding rapidly to significant information from social media or other input.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

1.2 Governance and Societal Responsibilities: How do you govern your organization and make societal contributions?

Process

a. Organizational GOVERNANCE

- (1) **GOVERNANCE System** HOW does your organization ensure responsible GOVERNANCE?
- (2) **PERFORMANCE Evaluation** HOW do you evaluate the PERFORMANCE of your SENIOR LEADERS and your GOVERNANCE SYSTEM?
- (3) **Organizational PERFORMANCE** HOW does your GOVERNANCE SYSTEM review the organization's PERFORMANCE?

b. Legal and ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

- (1) **Legal, Regulatory, and Accreditation Compliance** HOW do you address your current and anticipate future legal, regulatory, and community concerns with your EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS and SERVICES, and your operations?
- (2) **ETHICAL BEHAVIOR** HOW does you require and foster ETHICAL BEHAVIOR in all interactions?

c. Societal Responsibilities

- (1) **Societal Well-Being** HOW do you incorporate societal well-being and benefit into your strategy and daily operations?
- (2) **Community Support** HOW does you actively support and strengthen your KEY communities?

Notes

1.2. Societal contributions in areas critical to your ongoing marketplace success should also be addressed in Strategy Development (item 2.1) and Operations (category 6). Key societal results should be reported as Leadership and Governance Results (item 7.4).

1.2a(1). Transparency in the operations of your governance system should include your internal controls on governance processes. For some education organizations, the parent's board or an external advisory board may provide some or all governance system functions. For education organizations that serve as stewards of public funds, areas of emphasis are stewardship of those funds and transparency in operations.

1.2a(1). In protecting stakeholder interests, the governance system should consider and approve appropriate levels of risk for the organization, recognizing the need to accept risk as part of running a successful organization.

1.2a(2). The evaluation of leaders' performance might be supported by peer reviews, formal performance management reviews, reviews by external advisory boards or the governance system, and formal or informal feedback from and surveys of the workforce and other stakeholders.

1.2b(2). Measures or indicators of ethical behavior might include instances of unethical conduct or compliance breaches and responses to them, survey results showing workforce perceptions of organizational ethics, ethics hotline use, percentage of allegations substantiated, the results of ethics reviews and audits, the integrity of testing, equal access to resources, and implementation of institutional review board principles in research involving human and animal subjects. Such measures or indicators might also include evidence that policies, workforce training, and monitoring systems are in place for conflicts of interest; protection and use of sensitive data, information, and knowledge generated through

synthesizing and correlating these data; harassment; giving and receiving gifts; and proper use of funds.

1.2c. Some organizations may contribute to society and support their key communities totally through the mission-related activities described in response to other Criteria questions. In such cases, it is appropriate to respond here with any “extra efforts” through which you support these and/or broader communities

1.2c(1). Societal well-being has become both an organizational differentiator and a strategic mandate across sectors. Areas of societal well-being and benefit to report are those that go beyond the compliance processes you describe in 1.2b(1). They might include organizational or collaborative efforts to improve the environment and advance the sustainability of natural resources (e.g., through a circular economy); strengthen community services, education, health, economic and workforce development, and emergency preparedness; address social inequities; and improve the practices of professional associations. These efforts may have local, regional, national, or global impacts.

1.2c(2). Areas for organizational involvement in supporting your key communities might include areas that leverage your core competencies or may focus on helping to address systemic challenges that impact health, education, or economic opportunities.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

2 Strategy

The STRATEGY Category asks HOW your organization develops STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and ACTION PLANS, implements them, changes them if circumstances require, and measures progress.

2.1 Strategy Development: How do you develop your strategy?

Process

a. Strategy Development PROCESS

- (1) **Strategic Planning PROCESS** HOW do you conduct your strategic planning?
- (2) **Strategy Considerations** HOW do you collect and analyze relevant data and develop information for your strategic planning PROCESS?
- (3) **STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES and INTELLIGENT RISKS** HOW do you identify STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES and stimulate INNOVATION?
- (4) **Outsourcing and CORE COMPETENCIES** How do you decide which KEY processes will be accomplished by your WORKFORCE and which by external suppliers, PARTNERS, and COLLABORATORS?

b. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- (1) **KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES** What are your organization's KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and their most important related GOALS?
- (2) **Considerations** HOW do your STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES achieve appropriate balance among varying and potentially competing organizational needs?

Notes

2.1. This item deals with your overall organizational strategy, which might include changes in customer engagement processes and product offerings. However, you should describe the student and other customer engagement and program and service design strategies, respectively, in items 3.2 and 6.1, as appropriate.

2.1. Strategy development refers to your organization's approach to preparing for the future. In developing your strategy, you should consider your level of acceptable enterprise risk. Strategy development might involve key suppliers, collaborators, distributors, partners, students, and other customers.

2.1. The term strategy should be interpreted broadly. Strategy might be built around or lead to any or all of the following: new, changing, or discontinued programs and services; changing modalities to support teaching and learning; services to new, changing, and special student populations; definition or redefinition of your role in your organizational ecosystem (your network of partners, suppliers, collaborators, competitors, students, other customers, communities, and other relevant organizations inside and outside the education sector that serve as potential resources); differentiation of your image; new core competencies; acquisitions; new services to improve access, grow revenue, or reduce costs; regional accreditation and professional accreditation; and new staff or volunteer relationships. It might also be directed toward meeting a community or public need.

2.1a(1). Your strategic planning should address your ability to mobilize the necessary resources and knowledge to execute the strategic plan. It should also address your ability to develop and execute contingency plans or, if circumstances require, to shift strategy and rapidly execute new or changed plans.

2.1a(2) Your overall approach to risk management should be described in 6.2c(3).

2.1a(3). This question focuses on identifying strategic opportunities that stimulate innovations. Report your process for determining which innovations to pursue in 4.2c.

2.1b. Strategic objectives should focus on your specific challenges, advantages, and opportunities—those most important to your ongoing success and to strengthening your overall performance and your success now and in the future. Strategic objectives should align with your short- and long-term horizons/milestones.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

2.2 Strategy Implementation: How do you implement your strategy? Process

a. ACTION PLAN Development and DEPLOYMENT

- (1) **ACTION PLAN Development** HOW do you DEVELOP your ACTION PLANS?
- (2) **ACTION PLAN Implementation** HOW do you DEPLOY your ACTION PLANS?
- (3) **Resource Allocation** HOW do you ensure that financial and other resources are available to support the achievement of your ACTION PLANS while meeting current obligations?
- (4) **WORKFORCE Plans** What are your KEY WORKFORCE plans to support your StRATEGIC OBJECTIVES and ACTION PLANS?
- (5) **PERFORMANCE MEASURES** What KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES or INDICATORS do you use to track the achievement and EFFECTIVENESS of your ACTION PLANS?
- (6) **PERFORMANCE PROJECTIONS** For these KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES or INDICATORS, what are your PERFORMANCE PROJECTIONS for both your short- and longer-term planning horizons?

b. Action Plan Modification HOW do you recognize and respond when circumstances require a shift in ACTION PLANS and rapid execution of new plans?

Notes

2.2. The development and deployment of your strategy and action plans are closely linked to other Education Criteria items. The following are examples of key linkages:

Item 1.1: how your senior leaders set and communicate organizational direction

Category 3: how you gather student and other customer and market knowledge as input to your strategy and action plans and to use in deploying action plans

Category 4: how you measure and analyze data and manage knowledge to support key information needs, support the development of strategy, provide an effective basis for performance measurements, and track progress on achieving strategic objectives and action plans

Category 5: how you meet workforce capability and capacity needs, determine needs and design your workforce learning and development system, and implement workforce-related changes resulting from action plans

Category 6: how you address changes to your work processes and educational program and service offerings resulting from action plans

Item 7.5: results for overall strategy and action plan achievement

2.2a(4). In developing your workforce plans, consider the impacts on your different workforce segments in relation to and alignment with organizational objectives around workforce demographics, diversity, and location (e.g., in-person, hybrid, and remote).

2.2a(6). Projected performance might consider new programs and services; new value creation; market entry and shifts; new legislative mandates, legal requirements, education standards, or accreditation standards; and significant anticipated innovations. Your process for projecting future performance should be reported in 4.1b

2.2b. Circumstances that might require shifts in action plans and rapid execution of new plans include disruptive internal or external events, changes in your competitive environment, changing economic conditions, the emergence of disruptive technologies, the changing political landscape, and sudden changes in student and other customer requirements and expectations.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

3 Customer

The CUSTOMERS category asks how your organization engages its students and other CUSTOMERS for ongoing success, including HOW your organization listens to them, determines programs and services to meet their needs, builds long-term relationships with them, and enhances the CUSTOMER experience.

Process

3.1 Customer Expectations: How do you implement your strategy? **Process**

a. CUSTOMER Listening to Students and Other Customers

- (1) **Current Students and Other CUSTOMERS** HOW do you listen to, interact with, and observe CUSTOMERS to obtain actionable information?
- (2) **Potential Students and Other CUSTOMERS** HOW do you listen to potential students and other CUSTOMERS to obtain actionable information?

b. STUDENT AND OTHER CUSTOMER Segmentation, and Program and Service Offerings

- (1) **Student and Other Customer Segmentation** HOW do you determine student and other CUSTOMER groups and market segments?
- (2) **Product and Service Offerings** HOW do you determine EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM and SERVICE offerings?

Notes

3.1. Customer data and information should be used to support your strategy development process in item 2.1, your performance analysis and review in 4.1, and your product design in item 6.1. Voice-of-the-customer and market data and information to use might include aggregated data on satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and complaints and, as appropriate, data and information from social media and other web-based or digital sources.

3.1. Your results on performance relative to key product and/or service features should be reported in item 7.1.

3.1a(1). Your listening methods should include all stages of your involvement with students and other customers. These stages might include relationship building, the active relationship, and a follow-up strategy, as appropriate.

3.1b(2). In identifying educational program and service offerings, you should consider all their important characteristics and their performance in each stage of students' and other customers'

relationships with you. The focus should be on features that affect students' and other customers' preference for and loyalty to your organization and your brand—for example, unique or innovative features that differentiate your programs and services from those of competing or other organizations. Those latter features might include curricular focus, delivery modality, career outcomes following completion, workforce composition, extracurricular and co-curricular activities, or tuition and associated costs. Key program and service features might also take into account technology, ease of access, student support, environmental or social stewardship, and the privacy and security of student and other customer (including alumni and donor, as appropriate) data. In addition, organizations must be increasingly prepared to modify and adjust programs and services to ensure access and continuity.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

3.2 Customer Engagement: How do you build relationships with customers and determine satisfaction and engagement? Process

a. Student and Other Customer Experience

(1) Relationship Management How do you build and manage student and other CUSTOMER relationships?

(2) Student and Other CUSTOMER Access and Support How do you enable students and other CUSTOMERS to do business with you, seek information, and obtain support?

(3) Complaint Management How do you manage student and other CUSTOMER complaints?

(4) Fair Treatment How do your student and other CUSTOMER experience PROCESSES ensure fair treatment for different students, student groups, and other CUSTOMER groups?

b. Determination of Student and Other CUSTOMER Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction, and ENGAGEMENT

How do you determine student and other CUSTOMER satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and ENGAGEMENT?

Notes

3.2. Results for student and other customer perceptions and actions (outcomes) should be reported in item 7.2.

3.2a. You should ensure that your approaches for managing student and other customer relationships, enabling students and other customers to seek information and support, and managing complaints promote fairness, equity, and inclusion, and that they do not inadvertently discriminate.

3.2b. Determining student and other customer dissatisfaction should be seen as more than reviewing low customer satisfaction scores. It should be independently determined to identify

root causes and enable a systematic remedy to avoid future dissatisfaction.

3.2b. Information on relative satisfaction with other organizations may include comparisons with competitors, comparisons with organizations that deliver similar educational programs or services in a noncompetitive marketplace, or comparisons with benchmarks obtained through education sector or other organizations. Such information may also include information on why students and other customers choose your competitors over you.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

4 Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

The Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management category asks **HOW** your organization measures, analyzes, reviews, and improves organizational **PERFORMANCE** and **HOW** you manage your information and organizational **KNOWLEDGE ASSETS**.

4.1 Measurement, Analysis, Review, and Improvement of Organizational Performance: How do you measure, analyze, review, and then improve organizational performance? Process

a. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

- (1) **PERFORMANCE MEASURES** HOW do you track data and information on daily operations and overall organizational **PERFORMANCE**?
- (2) **Comparative Data** HOW do you select comparative data and information to support fact-based decision making?

b. PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS and Review, and Improvement

- (1) HOW do you analyze and review your organization's **PERFORMANCE** and capabilities?
- (2) HOW do you use findings from **PERFORMANCE** reviews to develop priorities for continuous improvement and opportunities for **INNOVATION**?

Notes

4.1. The questions in this item are closely linked to each other and to other Education Criteria items. Your performance measurement, analysis, and review system should include measures for all key parts of your organization, including your leadership (category 1, strategy (category 2), customers (category 3), workforce (category 5), and operations (category 6).

4.1a(1). Modifying or adjusting your measures To provide timely data to address rapid or unexpected organizational or external changes may involve adopting difference performance measures or adjusting the intervals between measurements. These modifications might be necessary to respond to regulatory or other changes in the political or societal environment, disasters and emergencies, innovations in organizational processes or business models, new competitor offerings, or productivity enhancements.

4.1a(2). The comparative data and information you select should be used to support operational and strategic decision making. Comparative data and information are obtained by benchmarking and by seeking competitive comparisons. Benchmarking is identifying processes and results that represent best practices and performance for similar activities, inside or outside the education sector. Competitive comparisons relate your performance to that of competitors and other organizations providing similar products and services.

4.1b. Performance analysis includes examining performance trends; organizational, education sector, and technology projections; and comparisons, cause-effect relationships, and correlations. These analyses should support your performance reviews, help determine root causes, and help set priorities for resource use. Accordingly, such analyses draw on all types of

data: student learning; student- and other customer-related; workforce-related; budgetary, financial, and marketplace; operational; and competitive/comparative. These analyses should also draw on regulatory and other publicly mandated measures, when appropriate. The analyses may involve digital data analytics and data science techniques that detect patterns in large volumes of data (“big data”) and interpret their meaning. Such activities may be conducted internally or in partnership with suppliers, partners, or collaborators with the requisite expertise.

4.1b(1). Organizational performance reviews should include data on your strategic objectives and action plans (category 2), as well as data on your leadership (category 1), customers (category 3, workforce (category 5), and operations (category 6). The results of organizational performance

analysis and review should inform your strategy development and implementation, operations, priorities for continuous improvement, and opportunities for innovation. Rapid response to changes in your operating environment might include the need to adjust your performance expectations.

4.1b(2). Priorities for continuous improvement should be considered as part of your performance improvement process in 6.1b. Opportunities for innovation should be considered as part of your process for pursuing potential innovations in 4.2c.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

4.2 Information and Knowledge Management: How do you manage your information and organizational knowledge assets? Process

a. Data and Information

(1) **Quality** How do you verify and ensure the quality of organizational data and information?

(2) **Availability** How do you ensure the availability of organizational data and information?

(3) **Cybersecurity** HOW do you secure sensitive or privileged data and information, information technology assets, and Internet-enabled SYSTEMS?

b. Organizational Knowledge

(1) **Knowledge Management** How do you build and manage organizational knowledge?

(2) **Best Practices** How do you identify and share best practices in your organization?

c. **Pursuit of INNOVATION** HOW do you determine which opportunities for INNOVATION to pursue?

Notes

4.2a(2). Information technology systems include, for example, physical devices and systems (hardware); software platforms and applications; externally based information systems, such as those stored in the cloud or outside your organization's control.

4.2a(3). Managing cybersecurity includes protecting against the loss of sensitive information about employees, students and other customers, and organizations; protecting assets, including intellectual Property; and protecting against the financial, legal, and reputational aspects of breaches.

4.2b(1). Building and managing organizational knowledge from different sources may involve handling big data sets and disparate types of data and information, such as data tables, video, audio, photos, and text. Analyzing data and information may involve using artificial intelligence, digital data analytics, and data science techniques that detect patterns in large volumes of data and interpret their meaning. Using these techniques to make decisions with human consequences requires deploying technology and leveraging data in a way

that protects information about organizations and individuals.

4.2b(1). Embedding learning in the way your organization operates means that learning (1) is a part of everyday work; (2) results in solving problems at their source; (3) is focused on building and sharing knowledge throughout your organization; and (4) is driven by opportunities to bring about significant, meaningful change and to innovate; and (5) enables agile and sustainable processes.

4.2c. Your process for pursuing potential innovations should carefully evaluate all opportunities, including those Identified In your strategic planning process (2.1a), your customer listening (3.1a), your program and service determination (3.1b[2]), your performance reviews (4.1b), your knowledge management system (4.2b[1]), and by your workforce and other stakeholders. Your assessment should consider which opportunities are Intelligent risks worth pursuing and should balance the need for thoughtful assessment with importance of implementing the innovation in a timely manner.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

5 Workforce

The **WORKFORCE** category asks **HOW** your organization assesses **WORKFORCE CAPABILITY** and **CAPACITY** needs and builds a **WORKFORCE** climate to support **HIGH PERFORMANCE**. The category also asks **HOW** your organization engages, manages, and develops your **WORKFORCE** to utilize its full potential in **ALIGNMENT** with your organization's overall business needs.

5.1 Workforce Environment: How do you build an effective and supportive workforce environment?

Process

a. WORKFORCE CAPABILITY and CAPACITY

- (1) **CAPABILITY and CAPACITY NEEDS** HOW do you assess your **WORKFORCE CAPABILITY** and **CAPACITY** needs?
- (2) **New WORKFORCE Members** HOW do you recruit, hire, and onboard new **WORKFORCE** members?
- (3) **WORKFORCE Change** HOW do you prepare your **WORKFORCE** for changing **CAPABILITY** and **CAPACITY** needs?
- (4) **Work Accomplishment** HOW do you organize and manage your **WORKFORCE**?

b. WORKFORCE Climate

- (1) **Workplace Environment** HOW do you ensure workplace health, security, and accessibility for the **WORKFORCE**?
- (2) **WORKFORCE Benefits and Policies** HOW do you support your **WORKFORCE** via compensation and benefits?

Notes

5. Results related to workforce environment and engagement should be reported in item 7.3. People supervised by a contractor should be addressed in categories 2 and 6 as part of your larger work system strategy and your internal work processes. Organizations that rely on volunteers and/or temporary staff members to perform core work (producing output that is necessary and/or student-facing) should include them as members of the workforce. Workforce approaches should include these segments as appropriate to the functions they fulfill for the organization.

5.1a. Workforce capability and capacity planning addresses the organization's needs; individual workforce members' needs are addressed in other areas of category 5.

5.1a(1) Your assessment of workforce capability and capacity needs should consider not only current needs, but also future requirements based on the strategic objectives and action plans you identify in category 2.

5.1a(3). Preparing your workforce for change might include preparing for (1) alternate workplaces or telework, (2) changes in student, other customer, or program/service requirements that lead to the use of new technology, (3) redesigned work systems, or (4) organizational transformation. Such preparation might include training, education, frequent communication, consideration of workforce employment and employability, career counseling, and other services. Preparing your workforce for change might also include addressing

potential workforce burnout in times of staffing shortages or increased workload caused by emergencies or other unplanned circumstances.

5.1a(4), 5.1b(1). Your organization should consider the multiple sites where employees work, including those who regularly work at home or other alternate sites through telework or remote-work arrangements.

5.1b(1). Workplace accessibility eliminates barriers that can prevent people with disabilities from working to their potential. Fully inclusive workplaces are physically, technologically, and attitudinally accessible without bias.

5.1b(1). If environmental factors and the related performance measures or targets differ significantly for your different work sites or hybrid work, you should include these differences in your response.

5.1b(1). Workplace safety and security should be addressed in item 6.2c(1) as part of your overall safety system, which fosters the safety of employees and all other people in your workplace.

5.1b(2). Fair compensation can be defined as adequate and appropriate pay for an employee's work based on the individual's experience and performance in relation to job requirements, as well as in alignment with relevant education sector market, and/or competitor comparisons.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

5.2 Workforce Engagement: How do you engage your workforce for retention and high-performance? Process

a. Assessment of WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

- (1) **Drivers of ENGAGEMENT** HOW do you determine KEY drivers of WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT?
- (2) **Assessment of ENGAGEMENT** HOW do you assess WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT?

b. Organizational Culture HOW do you foster an organizational culture that is characterized by open communication, HIGH-PERFORMANCE, and an engaged WORKFORCE?

c. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND Development

- (1) **PERFORMANCE Management** HOW does your WORKFORCE PERFORMANCE management system support HIGH PERFORMANCE?
- (2) **PERFORMANCE Development** How does your LEARNING and development SYSTEM support the personal development of workforce members and your organization's needs?
- (3) **Career Development and Succession Planning** HOW do you manage career development for your WORKFORCE and your future leaders?
- (4) **Equity and Inclusion** HOW do you ensure that your PERFORMANCE management, PERFORMANCE development, and career development PROCESSES promote equity and inclusion for a diverse WORKFORCE and different WORKFORCE groups and SEGMENTS?

Notes

5.2a(1). Drivers of workforce engagement (identified in P.1a[3]) refer to the drivers of workforce members' commitment, both emotional and intellectual, to accomplishing the organization's work, mission, and vision. Organizations should review these drivers periodically to ensure that they reflect any significant changes affecting workforce members; for example, a transition to regular off-site work or hybrid work-site arrangements.

5.2a(2). Other indicators to use in assessing and improving workforce engagement might include workforce retention, absenteeism, grievances, safety, and productivity. Determining workforce dissatisfaction should be seen as more than reviewing low workforce satisfaction scores. It should be independently determined to identify

root causes and enable a systematic remedy to avoid future dissatisfaction.

5.2c(2). Your response should include how you address any considerations for workforce development, learning, and career progression that are unique to your organization. These might include development opportunities that address your organization's core competencies, strategic challenges, and action plans; organizational change and innovation; improvements in student focus; and the reinforcement of new knowledge and skills on the job. Your response should also consider the breadth of development opportunities you might offer, including education, training, coaching, mentoring, and work-related experiences.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

6 Operations

The Operations category asks **HOW** your organization designs, manages, improves, and innovates its **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES** and **WORK PROCESSES** and ensures operational **EFFECTIVENESS** to deliver **VALUE** to students and other **CUSTOMERS**, and achieve ongoing organizational success.

6.1 Work Processes: How do you design, manage, and improve your key products and work processes? Process

a. Product, Service, and PROCESS Design

- (1) **Program and Service Requirements** HOW do you determine **KEY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND SERVICE** requirements?
- (2) **Program and Service Design** What are you design your programs and services to meet these **KEY** requirements?
- (3) **PROCESS Requirements** HOW do you determine your **KEY WORK PROCESS** and support **PROCESS** requirements?
- (3) **PROCESS Design** How do you design your **KEY WORK PROCESSES** and support **PROCESSES** to meet your **KEY** requirements?

b. PROCESS Management and Improvement

- (1) **PROCESS Implementation** HOW does your day-to-day operation of your **KEY WORK PROCESSES** and support **PROCESSES** ensure that they meet your **KEY PROCESS** requirements?
- (2) **PROCESS Improvement** HOW do you improve your **KEY WORK PROCESSES** and support **PROCESSES** to increase student **LEARNING** and improve **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES** and **PROCESS PERFORMANCE**?

Notes

6.1. The results for educational program and service performance and process performance should be reported in item 7.1.

6.1a(1) Your program and service requirements should address the key student and other customer requirements and expectations identified in your Organizational Profile and inform applicable process requirements asked for in 6.1a(3), such as your internal process capability, supply-network capability, and partner and collaborator capability.

6.1a(3). Your key support processes should support your key work (value-creation) processes. They might include processes that support leaders and other workforce members engaged in, for example, design and delivery of educational programs and services, interactions with students and other customers, and business and enterprise management. Other examples might include accounting, purchasing, and human resource management. In for-profit institutions or statewide education systems, many support processes are managed according to shared-services agreements with parent organizations. Such agreements usually address payment for services, scope of services,

procedures for amending and terminating the shared services, liability insurance, confidentiality, and processes to resolve disputes.

6.1a(4). Process design may include the need to innovate or extensively redesign a process due to changes in requirements or technology, or the need to incorporate digital technology, such as enhanced automation, the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, and cloud operations. Agility may be needed when work processes need to change as a result of overall work system changes,

such as bringing a supply-chain process in-house to avoid disruptions in supply due to unpredictable external events, or conversely outsourcing a process formerly carried out in-house.

6.1b(2). Your tools and methods to improve process performance should be part of the performance improvement system you describe in P.2c in the Organizational Profile.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

6.2 Operational Effectiveness: How do you ensure effective management of your operations?

Process

In your response, include answers to the following questions:

a. Operational Efficiency and EFFECTIVENESS How do you manage the cost, efficiency, and EFFECTIVENESS of your operations?

b. Supply-Network Management How do you manage your supply network?

c. Safety, Business Continuity and RESILIENCE, and Risk Management

(1) **Safety** HOW do you provide a safe and secure operating environment for your WORKFORCE, your students, and other people in your workplace?

(2) **Organizational Continuity and RESILIENCE** How do you ensure that your organization can participate, prepare for, and recover from disasters, emergencies or other disruptions?

(3) **Risk Management** What is your organization's overall APPROACH to risk management?

Notes

6.2a. The impact of your operations on society and the environment is increasingly becoming an important expectation of many students, other customers, and stakeholders and should be among your considerations.

6.2b. To ensure that suppliers are positioned to meet operational needs and enhance your performance and your students' and other customers' satisfaction, you might partner with suppliers or form alliances among multiple organizations within your ecosystem to form a supply network. Such networks reduce dependencies on sole-source suppliers and provide greater resilience than a traditional supply chain. Communication of expectations and feedback to suppliers should be two-way, allowing suppliers to express what they need from you and other

organizations within the supply network. For many organizations, these mechanisms may change as marketplace, student, other customer, or stakeholder requirements change.

6.2c(2). Disasters and emergencies might be short- or longer-term and might be related to weather; climate; utilities; security; or a local or national health or other emergency. The extent to which you prepare such events will depend on your organization's environment and its sensitivity to short- and longer-term disruptions of operations. Acceptable levels of risk will vary depending on the nature of your products, services, supply network, and stakeholder needs and expectations.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

7 Results

The **RESULTS** category asks about your organization's **PERFORMANCE** and improvement in all **KEY** areas—student learning and **PROCESS RESULTS**, **CUSTOMER RESULTS**, **WORKFORCE RESULTS**, leadership and **GOVERNANCE RESULTS**, and financial, budgetary, marketplace, and strategy **RESULTS**.

7.1 Student Learning and Process Results: What are your student learning and process performance results? Results

- a. **STUDENT LEARNING AND CUSTOMER-Focused Service RESULTS** What are your **RESULTS** for student learning **PROCESSES**?

- b. **WORK PROCESS EFFECTIVENESS RESULTS**
 - (1) **PROCESS EFFECTIVENESS and Efficiency** What are your **PROCESS EFFECTIVENESS** and efficiency **RESULTS**?
 - (2) **Safety and Emergency Preparedness** What are your safety and emergency preparedness **RESULTS**?

- c. **Supply-Network Management RESULTS**

What are your supply-network management RESULTS?

Notes

7. Results should be considered systemically, with contributions to individual results items frequently stemming from processes in more than one Criteria category.

The Baldrige scoring system asks for current, trended, comparative, and segmented data, as appropriate, to provide key information for analyzing and reviewing your organizational performance (item 4.1), building organizational knowledge (item 4.2), and providing the operational basis for customer-focused results (item 7.2); workforce-focused results (item 7.3); leadership results (item 7.4); and financial, budgetary, marketplace, and strategy results (item 7.5).

In a few areas, your results may be qualitative or not amenable to trending over time. Some examples are results for governance accountability, for accreditation, and for limited or one-time projects.

Comparative data and information are obtained by benchmarking (inside and outside the education sector, as appropriate) and by seeking competitive comparisons. In a few cases, such as results for projects or processes that are unique to your organization, comparative data may not be available or appropriate. In those situations, other sources might include best past performance, organizational budget, internal targets or goals, or internal projections.

7.1. Results should include those for representative key measures that are publicly reported and/or mandated by accreditors and regulators. These might include results for educational outcomes and for student retention, persistence, completion, and student learning assessments

7.1a. Results for student learning and customer service processes should relate to the key program and service requirements that you identify in 6.1a(1) and your student and other customer requirements and expectations identified in P.1b(2). These are based on information gathered through the processes you describe in category 3. The measures or indicators should address factors that affect student and other customer preference, such as those listed in the notes to P.1b(2) and 3.1b.

7.1b. Results should address the key operational requirements you identify in the Organizational Profile and in category 6.

7.1b. Efforts to reduce waste in your processes and programs and services should be reported here. Overall efforts to contribute to society and the environment should be reported in 7.4a(5).

7.1b(1). Report your results for key measures or indicators of innovation in 7.5b.

7.1b(2). When possible, the effectiveness of your emergency preparedness should focus on outcomes, learning, and results, beyond training activities and compliance.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

7.2 Customer-Focused Results: What are your customer-focused performance results?

Results

a. STUDENT- AND OTHER CUSTOMER-Focused RESULTS

- (1) **STUDENT AND OTHER CUSTOMER Satisfaction** What are your student and other CUSTOMER satisfaction and dissatisfaction RESULTS?
- (2) **STUDENT AND OTHER CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT** What are your student and other CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT RESULTS?

Notes

7.2. Results for student and other customer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement should relate to the student and other customer groups and market segments you identify in P.1b(2) and the listening

and determination methods you report in category 3.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

7.3 Workforce Outcomes: What are your workforce-focused performance results?

Results

a. WORKFORCE-Focused RESULTS

- (1) **WORKFORCE CAPABILITY and CAPACITY** What are your **WORKFORCE CAPABILITY and CAPACITY RESULTS**?
- (2) **WORKFORCE Climate** What are your **RESULTS** for workplace health and for **WORKFORCE compensation and benefits**?
- (3) **WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT and Retention** What are your **WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT RESULTS**?
- (4) **WORKFORCE Development** What are your **WORKFORCE and leader development RESULTS**?

Notes

7.3. Results reported in this item should relate to the processes, measures, and indicators you report in category 5. Your results should also respond to the key work process needs you report in category 6 and to the action plans and workforce plans you report in item 2.2. Responses should report results for all workforce segments identified in the Organizational Profile, including those working

virtually (from their homes or other alternate sites) or those who have hybrid work-site arrangements. Organizations that rely on volunteers or temporary staff members to accomplish core work (producing output that is necessary and/or student-facing) should report results for them, as appropriate.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

7.4 Leadership and Governance Outcomes: What are your senior leadership and governance results? Results

a. Leadership, GOVERNANCE, Legal, Ethics, and Societal Contribution RESULTS

- (1) **Leadership** What are your RESULTS for SENIOR LEADERS' communication and engagement with the WORKFORCE, PARTNERS, students, and other CUSTOMERS?
- (2) **GOVERNANCE** What are your RESULTS for GOVERNANCE accountability?
- (3) **Law, Regulation, and Accreditation** What are your legal, regulatory, and accreditation RESULTS?
- (4) **Ethics** What are your RESULTS for ETHICAL BEHAVIOR?
- (5) **Society** What are your RESULTS for societal well-being and support of your KEY communities?

Notes

7.4. Responses should relate to the communication processes you identify in item 1.1 and the governance, legal and regulatory, ethics, and societal contribution processes and measures you report in item 1.2. Workforce-related occupational safety and health results (e.g., OSHA-reportable incidents) should be reported in 7.1b(2) and 7.3a(2).

7.4a(2). Responses might include financial statement issues and risks, important internal and external auditor recommendations, and management's responses to these matters, as well as financial reviews required by accrediting bodies .

7.4a(4). For examples of measures of ethical behavior and stakeholder trust, see the note to 1.2b(2).

7.4a(5). Measures of contributions to societal well-being might include those for environmental protection and those for support of communities, whether local, nationwide, or worldwide. Examples are results for reduced energy consumption, the use of renewable energy resources and recycled water, reduction of your carbon footprint, waste reduction and utilization, alternative approaches to conserving resources.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldrige Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)

7.5 Budgetary, Financial, Marketplace, and Strategy Results: What are your results for financial and marketplace performance and strategy implementation? Results

Provide data and information to answer the following questions:

a. Budgetary and Financial PERFORMANCE

(1) **Budgetary and Financial PERFORMANCE** What are your financial PERFORMANCE RESULTS?

(2) **Marketplace PERFORMANCE** What are your marketplace PERFORMANCE RESULTS?

b. Strategy Implementation and INNOVATION RESULTS

What are your RESULTS for the achievement of your organizational strategy?

Notes

7.5a. Results should relate to the financial measures you report in 4.1a(1) and the financial management approaches you report in item 2.2, and should include those mandated by accreditors and regulators.

7.5a(1). Measures might include those for liquidity, days cash on hand, asset utilization, cash flow, and bond ratings; revenue projections; overall expenditures; instructional and general administrative expenditures per student or as a percentage of the total budget; fund balance and other efficiency measures; reserves and endowments; tuition and fee levels; cost per academic credit; lowering of costs to students or return of funds as a result of increased efficiency; grants and awards; cost performance to budget; cost avoidance or savings; program expenditures as a percentage of budget; annual budget increases or decreases; resources redirected from other areas to direct instruction of students; scholarship growth; and financial results mandated by accreditors.

7.5b. Measures or indicators of strategy and action plan achievement should relate to the strategic objectives and goals you report in 2.1b(1), the action plan performance measures and projected performance you report in 2.2a(5) and 2.2a(6), respectively.

7.5b. Results for your efforts to innovate should link to your approach for pursuing innovations and taking intelligent risks, as noted in 4.2c. The results should report the innovations as well as the impact on your organization's performance. Examples of such results include significant gains in market share related to new markets entered or programs or services launched, or significant gains in effectiveness related to redesigned processes, facilities, or operations.

For additional guidance on this item, see [Baldridge Criteria Commentary \(Education\) | NIST](#)



Glossary of Key Terms

The terms below are those in small caps in the Baldrige Excellence Builder, as well as terms in the scoring rubric.

ACTION PLANS. Specific actions that your organization takes to reach its short- and longer-term strategic objectives. These plans specify the resources committed to and the time horizons for accomplishing the plans. Action plan development is the critical stage in planning when you make strategic objectives and goals specific so that you can effectively deploy them throughout the organization in an understandable way. In the ED Criteria, deploying action plans includes creating aligned measures for all affected departments and work units. Deployment might also require specialized training for some workforce members or recruitment of personnel. Deployment often relies on engagement and integration of the leadership system at the organizational and/or subunit levels.

For example, a strategic objective for an education organization in a highly competitive market might be to achieve student performance in the top quartile of the state's schools on an annually administered normalized test. Action plans could entail determining in which subjects students have scored the lowest, understanding skill deficiencies in those subjects, and developing curricula that enable students to master those skills. To deploy the action plans, the organization might need to train faculty in instructional and assessment methods. Organizational level analysis and review would likely emphasize student learning, budgetary performance, and student and other customer satisfaction.

See also STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.

AGILITY. A capacity for rapid change and flexibility in operations. Agility may be needed to respond to emergencies or address changes in your operating environment, to take advantage of an immediate opportunity, and/or to address a strategic challenge.

ALIGNMENT. A state of consistency among plans, processes, information, resource decisions, workforce capability and capacity, actions, results, and analyses that support key organization-wide goals. Effective alignment requires a common understanding of purposes and goals. It also requires the use of complementary measures and information for planning, tracking, analysis, and improvement at three levels: the organizational level, the key process level, and the program, school, or class level.

See also INTEGRATION.

ANALYSIS. The examination of facts and data to provide a basis for effective decisions. Analysis often involves determining cause-effect relationships. Overall organizational analysis guides you in managing work systems and work processes toward achieving key organizational results and attaining strategic objectives.

Although individual facts and data are important, they do not usually provide an effective basis for acting or setting priorities. Effective actions depend on an understanding or relationships, which is derived from the analysis of facts and data and information.

ANECDOTAL. In a response to an Education Criteria item, information that lacks specific methods; measures; deployment mechanisms; and evaluation, improvement, and learning factors. Anecdotal information frequently consists of examples and describes individual activities rather than systematic

processes. For example, in an anecdotal response to how senior leaders deploy performance expectations, you might describe a specific occasion when a senior leader visited all of your organization's facilities. On the other hand, in describing a systematic process, you might include the methods all senior leaders use to communicate performance expectations regularly to all locations and workforce members, the measures leaders use to assess the effectiveness of the methods, and the tools and techniques you use to evaluate and improve the methods.

See also SYSTEMATIC.

APPROACH. The methods your organization uses to carry out its processes. Besides the methods themselves, approach refers to the appropriateness of the methods to the item requirements and your organization's operating environment, as well as how effectively your organization uses those methods.

Approach is one of the factors considered in evaluating process items.

BASIC QUESTION. The most central concept of a Criteria item, as presented in the item title question.

BENCHMARKS. Processes and results that represent the best practices and best performance for similar activities, inside or outside your organization's industry. Organizations engage in benchmarking to understand the current dimensions of world-class performance and to achieve discontinuous (nonincremental) or "breakthrough" improvement.

Benchmarks are one form of comparative data. Other forms include education-sector data collected by a third party, data on competitors' performance, comparisons with similar organizations that are in the same geographic areas or that provide similar programs and services in other geographic areas, and information from the open

literature (e.g., outcomes of research studies and practice guidelines).

CAPABILITY, WORKFORCE. See WORKFORCE CAPABILITY.

CAPACITY, WORKFORCE. See WORKFORCE CAPACITY.

COLLABORATORS. Organizations or individuals who cooperate with your organization to support a particular activity or event or who cooperate intermittently when their short-term goals are aligned with or are the same as yours. Typically, collaborations do not involve formal agreements or arrangements.

See also PARTNERS.

CORE COMPETENCIES. Your organization's areas of greatest expertise; those strategically important, possibly specialized capabilities that are central to fulfilling your mission or that provide an advantage in your marketplace or service environment. Core competencies are frequently challenging for competitors or suppliers and partners to imitate, and they may provide an ongoing competitive advantage or create opportunities in your business ecosystems. . The absence of a needed core competency may result in a significant strategic challenge or disadvantage for your organization in the marketplace.

Core competencies may involve technological expertise, unique program and service offerings that respond to the needs of your students, other customers, and market.

CULTURE. The shared beliefs, norms, and values that characterize your workforce and are demonstrated within your organization. In high-performing organizations, senior leaders create and reinforce an organization's culture based on the organization's mission, vision, and values.

See also ETHICAL BEHAVIOR and VALUES.

CUSTOMER. An actual or potential user of your organization's education programs and services. Customers include the direct users of your programs and services (students and possibly parents), as well as others who pay for your programs and services. The Baldrige framework addresses customers broadly, referencing your current and future students and other customers, as well as your competitors' students and other customers.

Student-focused excellence is a Baldrige core value embedded in the beliefs and behaviors of high-performing organizations. Student focus impacts and should be a factor in integrating your organization's strategic directions, work systems and work processes, and organizational performance results.

See also STAKEHOLDERS for the relationship between customers and others who might be affected by your programs and services.

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT. Your students' and other customers' investment in or commitment to your organization and your educational program and service offerings.

It is based on your ongoing ability to serve their needs and build relationships so that they will continue using your programs and services. Characteristics of engaged students and other customers include retention, brand loyalty, willingness to make an effort to use and support—and to continue to use and support—your programs and services, and willingness to actively advocate for and recommend your brand and offerings.

DEPLOYMENT. The extent to which your organization applies an approach in addressing the requirements of an ED Criteria item. Evaluation of deployment considers how broadly and deeply the approach is applied in relevant work units throughout your organization.

Deployment is one of the factors considered in evaluating process items.

DIVERSITY. Personal differences among workforce members that enrich the work environment and are representative of your hiring and student communities. These differences address many variables, such as race, religion, color, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, age and generation, education, geographic origin, and skill characteristics, as well as ideas, thinking, academic disciplines, and perspectives.

The Education Criteria refer to valuing and benefiting from the diversity of your workforce hiring and student communities. Capitalizing on both in building your workforce increases your opportunities for high performance; student and other customer, workforce, and community satisfaction; and student, and customer and workforce engagement. When embraced, diversity can drive cultural, economic, and social vitality and innovation.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES. Educational programs are activities that engage student in learning or contribute to scientific or scholarly investigation, including credit and noncredit courses, degree programs, research, outreach, community service, cooperative projects, programs leading to licensure, and overseas studies.

Educational program design requires the identification of critical points (the earliest points possible) in the teaching and learning process for measurement, observation, or intervention. These might relate to curricula, course catalogs, programs of study, intervention, or extension programs.

Educational services are the services considered most important to student matriculation and success. These might relate to student counseling, advising, and tutoring; libraries and information technology; and student recruitment, enrollment, registration, placement, financial aid, and housing. They might also include food services, security, health services, transportation, and bookstores.

EFFECTIVE. How well a process or a measure addresses its intended purpose. Determining effectiveness requires (1) evaluating how well the process is aligned with the organization's needs and how well it is deployed, (2) evaluating the outcome of the measure as an indicator of process, program, or service performance, or (3) evaluating how well student and other customer requirements have been met or exceeded.

EMPOWERMENT. Giving people the authority and responsibility to make decisions and take actions. When people are empowered, decisions are made closest to the students and other customers (the front line), where work-related knowledge and understanding reside.

The purpose of empowering people is to enable them to satisfy students' needs, satisfy students and other customers on first contact, improve processes and increase productivity, and improve student learning and your organization's performance results, as well as to encourage collaboration. An empowered workforce requires information to make appropriate decisions; thus, your organization must provide that information in a timely and useful way.

ENGAGEMENT, CUSTOMER. See CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT.

ENGAGEMENT, WORKFORCE. See WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT.

ETHICAL BEHAVIOR. The actions your organization takes to ensure that all its decisions, actions, and stakeholder interactions conform to its moral and professional principles of conduct. These principles should support all applicable laws and regulations and are the foundation for your organization's culture and values. They distinguish right from wrong.

Senior leaders should be role models for these principles of behavior. The principles apply to all people involved in your organization, from temporary workforce members to members of the board of

directors. These principles benefit from regular communication and reinforcement. Senior leaders have the responsibility for the alignment of your organization's mission and vision with its ethical principles. Ethical behavior encompasses interactions with all stakeholders, including your workforce, students, parents, other customers, partners, suppliers, and local community members.

Well-designed and clearly articulated ethical principles empower people to make effective decisions with great confidence. In some organizations, ethical principles also serve as boundary conditions restricting behavior that otherwise could have adverse impacts on your organization and/or society.

See also the related core value, Ethics and Transparency.

EXCELLENCE. See PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE.

GOALS. Future conditions or performance levels that your organization intends or desires to attain. Goals can be both short- and longer-term. They are ends that guide actions. Quantitative goals, frequently referred to as targets, include a numerical point or range. Targets might be desired performance based on comparative or competitive data. Stretch goals are goals for desired major, discontinuous (nonincremental) or "breakthrough" improvements, usually in areas most critical to your organization's future success.

Goals can serve many purposes, including:

- clarifying strategic objectives and action plans to indicate how you will measure success,
- fostering teamwork by focusing on a common end,
- encouraging out-of-the-box thinking (innovation) to achieve a stretch goal, and,
- providing a basis for measuring and accelerating progress.

See also PERFORMANCE PROJECTIONS.

GOVERNANCE. The system of management and controls exercised in the stewardship of your organization. Governance includes the responsibilities of your organization's governing body (e.g., board of education, board of trustees, or overseers) and senior leaders; in some private education institutions, it may include owners/shareholders.

A combination of federal, state, and municipal regulations, bylaws, and policies document the rights and responsibilities of each of the parties and describe how they will direct and control your organization to ensure (1) accountability to stakeholders, (2) transparency of operations, and (3) fair treatment of all stakeholders. Governance processes may include the approval of strategic direction, policy creation and enforcement, the monitoring and evaluation of senior leaders' performance, the establishment of senior leaders' compensation and benefits, succession planning, financial auditing, and risk management. Ensuring effective governance is important to stakeholders' and the larger society's trust and to organizational effectiveness.

HIGH PERFORMANCE. Higher levels of overall organizational and individual performance, including quality, productivity, innovation rate, and cycle time. High performance results in improved service and value for students, other customers and other stakeholders.

Approaches to high performance vary in their form, their function, and the incentive systems used. High performance stems from and enhances workforce engagement. It involves cooperation among senior leaders, administrators, faculty, and staff, which may involve workforce bargaining units; cooperation among work units, often involving teams; empowerment of your people, including personal accountability; and workforce input into planning. It may

involve learning and building individual and organizational skills; learning from other organizations; creating flexible job design and work assignments; maintaining a flattened organizational structure, where decision making is decentralized and decisions are made closest to students and other customers (the front line); and effectively using performance measures, including comparisons. Many organizations encourage high performance with monetary and nonmonetary incentives based on factors such as organizational performance, team and individual contributions, and skill building. Also, approaches to high performance usually seek to align your organization's structure, core competencies, work, jobs, workforce development, and incentives.

HOW. The systems and processes that your organization uses to achieve its mission requirements. In responding to "how" questions in Criteria categories 1–6, you should include information on approach (methods and measures), deployment, learning, and integration.

INDICATORS. See MEASURES AND INDICATORS.

INNOVATION(S). Making meaningful change to improve programs, services, processes, the organization, or societal well-being and create new value for stakeholders. (The Criteria use the term innovation as a process/activity and the term innovations to refer to the outcomes.) Innovation involves adopting an idea, process, technology, program, service, or business model that is either new or new to its proposed application. Innovations are discontinuous or "breakthrough" improvements in results, programs, services, processes, or societal well-being. Innovation benefits from a supportive environment, a process for identifying strategic opportunities, and a willingness to pursue intelligent risks.

Successful organizational innovation also entails knowledge sharing, a decision to implement, implementation, evaluation, and learning. Although innovation is often associated with technological innovation, it is applicable to all key organizational processes that can benefit from change through innovation, whether breakthrough improvement or a change in approach or outputs. Innovation may be present in organizations of all sizes, sectors, and maturity levels; in some cases, an organization's genesis is an innovative idea, process, technology, product, or change in organizational structure or business model.

See also BENCHMARKING, INTELLIGENT RISKS, and STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES.

INTEGRATION. The harmonization of plans, processes, information, resource decisions, workforce capability and capacity, actions, results, and analyses to support key organization-wide goals. Effective integration goes beyond alignment and is achieved when the individual components of an organizational performance management system operate as a fully interconnected unit.

Integration is one of the factors considered in evaluating both process and results items.

See also ALIGNMENT.

INTELLIGENT RISKS. Opportunities for which the potential short- or long-term gain or benefit outweighs the potential harm or loss to your organization if you do not explore them (sometimes referred to as a calculated risk). Taking intelligent risks requires a tolerance for failure and an expectation that innovation is not achieved by initiating only successful endeavors. At the outset, educational organizations must invest in potential successes while realizing that some will lead to failure.

The degree of risk that is intelligent to take will vary by the pace and level of threat and opportunity in the industry. In a rapidly changing environment with constant introductions of new programs, services,

processes, or business models, there is an obvious need to invest more resources in intelligent risks than in a stable industry. In the latter, organizations must monitor and explore growth potential and change but, most likely, with a less significant commitment of resources.

See also STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES.

KEY. Major or most important; critical to achieving your intended outcome. The Education Criteria, for example, refer to key challenges, plans, work processes, and measures—those that are most important to your organization's success. They are the essential elements for pursuing or monitoring a desired outcome. Key is generally defined as around the most significant five (e.g., around five key challenges).

KNOWLEDGE ASSETS. Your organization's accumulated intellectual resources; the knowledge possessed by your organization and its workforce in the form of information, ideas, learning, understanding, memory, insights, cognitive and technical skills, and capabilities. These knowledge assets reside in your workforce, curricula, software, databases, documents, guides, policies and procedures. Knowledge assets also reside within students, other customers, suppliers, and partners.

Knowledge assets are the know-how that your organization has available to use, invest, and grow. Building and managing knowledge assets are key components of creating value for your stakeholders and sustaining a competitive advantage.

LEADERSHIP SYSTEM. The way leadership is exercised, formally and informally, throughout your organization; the basis for key decisions and the way they are made, communicated, and carried out. A leadership system includes structures and mechanisms for making decisions; ensuring two-way communication; selecting and developing leaders, administrators, department heads, and faculty leader; and reinforcing values,

ethical behavior, directions, and performance expectations.

An effective leadership system respects workforce members' and other stakeholders' capabilities and requirements, and it sets high expectations for performance and performance improvement. It builds loyalties and teamwork based on your organization's vision and values and the pursuit of shared goals. It encourages and supports initiative, innovation, and appropriate risk taking; subordinates organizational structure to purpose and function; and avoids chains of command that require long decision paths. An effective leadership system includes mechanisms for leaders to conduct self-examination, receive feedback, and improve.

LEARNING. New knowledge or skills acquired through evaluation, study, experience, and innovation. In addition to its focus on student learning, the Baldrige framework refers to two distinct kinds of learning: organizational learning and learning by the people in your workforce. Organizational learning is achieved through research and development, evaluation and improvement cycles, ideas and input from the workforce and stakeholders, the sharing of best practices, and benchmarking. Workforce learning is achieved through education, training, and developmental opportunities that further individual growth.

To be effective, learning should be embedded in the way your organization operates. Learning contributes to a competitive advantage and ongoing success for your organization and workforce.

Learning is one of the factors considered in evaluating process items.

LEVELS. Numerical information that places or positions your organization's results and performance on a meaningful measurement scale. Performance levels permit evaluation relative to past performance, projections, goals, and

appropriate comparisons.

MEASURES AND INDICATORS. Numerical information that quantifies the input, output, and performance dimensions of processes, programs, projects, services, and the overall organization (outcomes).

Measures and indicators might be simple (derived from one measurement) or composite.

The Education Criteria do not distinguish between measures and indicators. However, some users of these terms prefer "indicator" (1) when the measurement relates to performance but does not measure it directly (e.g., the number of complaints is an indicator but not a direct measure of dissatisfaction) and (2) when the measurement is a predictor ("leading indicator") of some more significant performance (e.g., a gain in student performance or satisfaction might be a leading indicator of student persistence).

MISSION. Your organization's overall function. The mission answers the question, "What is your organization attempting to accomplish?" The mission might define students, other customers or markets served; distinctive or core competencies, or technologies used.

MULTIPLE QUESTIONS. The details of an Education Criteria item, as expressed in the individual questions under each lettered area to address. Multiple questions are those listed under the boldface questions.

Even high-performing, high-scoring users of the Baldrige framework are not likely to be able to address all the multiple requirements with equal capability or success.

OVERALL REQUIREMENTS. The most important features of an Education Criteria item, as elaborated in the first question (the leading question in boldface) in each paragraph under each lettered area to address.

PARTNERS. Key organizations or individuals who are working in concert with your organization to achieve a common goal or improve performance. Typically, partnerships are formal arrangements for a specific aim or purpose, such as to achieve a strategic objective or deliver a specific program or service.

Formal partnerships usually last for an extended period and involve a clear understanding of the partners' individual and mutual roles and benefits.

See also COLLABORATORS.

PERFORMANCE. Outputs and their outcomes obtained from student learning, processes, programs, students, and other customers that permit you to evaluate and compare your organization's results to performance projections, standards, past results, goals, and other organizations' results.

The Education Criteria address four types of performance: (1) program and service, (2) student- and other customer focused, (3) operational, and (4) budgetary, financial and marketplace.

Program and service performance is performance relative to measures and indicators of product and service characteristics that are important to students and other customers. Examples include the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction, assessment of student learning, participation in professional development opportunities, and student placement following program completion.

Student- and other customer-focused performance is performance relative to measures and indicators of students' and other customers' perceptions, reactions, and behaviors. Examples include admissions, retention, student and other customer complaints, and student and other customer survey results.

Operational performance is workforce, leadership, and organizational performance (including ethical and legal compliance) relative to measures and indicators of effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability. Examples include cycle time, productivity, productivity, accreditation, waste reduction, workforce turnover, workforce cross-training rates, regulatory compliance, fiscal accountability, strategy accomplishment, and community involvement. Operational performance might be measured at the program, school, class, or individual level; key work process level; and organizational level.

Budgetary, financial and marketplace performance is performance relative to measures of cost containment, revenue, and market position, including budget utilization, asset growth, and market share. Examples include instructional and general administration expenditures per student as a percentage of budget, program expenditures as a percentage of budget; performance to budget, annual budget increases or decreases; income, expenses, reserves, endowments, and annual grants/awards; resources redirected to education from other area; scholarship growth; the percentage of budget for research; the budget for public service; and market gains.

PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE. An integrated approach to organizational performance management that results in (1) delivery of ever-improving value to student, other customers and stakeholders, contributing to improved education quality and student learning, as well as ongoing organizational success; (2) improvement of your organization's overall effectiveness and capabilities; and (3) learning for the organization and for people in the workforce. The Baldrige Organizational Profile, Education Criteria, core values and concepts, and scoring guidelines provide a framework and assessment tool for understanding your organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement and,

thus, for guiding your planning toward achieving higher performance and striving for excellence.

PERFORMANCE PROJECTIONS. Estimates of your organization's future performance.

Projections should be based on an understanding of past performance, rates of improvement, and assumptions about future internal changes and innovations, as well as assumptions about changes in the external environment that result in internal changes. Thus, performance projections can serve as a key tool in managing your operations and in developing and implementing your strategy.

Performance projections state your *expected* future performance. Goals state your *desired* future performance. Performance projections for your competitors or similar organizations may indicate challenges facing your organization and areas where breakthrough performance or innovation is needed. In areas where your organization intends to achieve breakthrough performance or innovation, your performance projections and your goals may overlap.

See also GOALS.

PROCESS. Linked activities with the purpose of producing a program or service for a customer (user) within or outside your organization.

Generally, processes involve combinations of people, machines, tools, techniques, materials, and improvements in a defined series of steps or actions. Processes rarely operate in isolation and must be considered in relation to other processes that impact them. In some situations, processes might require adherence to a specific sequence of steps, with documentation (sometimes formal) of procedures and requirements, including well-defined measurement and control steps.

In the delivery of services, particularly those that directly involve student and other customers, such as educational programs and services, process is used more generally to spell out what delivering that service entails, possibly including a preferred or expected sequence. If a sequence is critical, the process needs to include information that helps customers understand and follow the sequence. Such service processes also require guidance for service providers on handling contingencies related to customers' possible actions or behaviors.

In knowledge work, such as strategic planning, research, development, and analysis, process does not necessarily imply formal sequences of steps. Rather, it implies general understandings of competent performance in such areas as timing, options to include, evaluation, and reporting. Sequences might arise as part of these understandings.

Process is one of the two dimensions (along with results) evaluated in a Baldrige-based assessment. This evaluation is based on four factors: approach, deployment, learning, and integration.

PRODUCTIVITY. Measures of the efficiency of resource use.

Although the term is often applied to single factors, such as the workforce (labor productivity), machines, materials, energy, and capital, the concept also applies to the total resources used in producing outputs. Using an aggregate measure of overall productivity allows you to determine whether the net effect of overall changes in a process—possibly involving resource trade-offs—is beneficial.

PROJECTIONS, PERFORMANCE. See PERFORMANCE PROJECTIONS.

RESILIENCE. An organization's ability to anticipate, prepare for, and recover from disasters, emergencies, and other disruptions, and when disruptions occur, to protect and enhance workforce and customer engagement, supply-network and financial performance, organizational productivity, and community well-being.

Beyond the ability to "bounce back" to a prior state when a disruption occurs, resilience means having a plan in place that allows your organization to continue operating as needed during disruptions. To achieve resilience, leaders must cultivate the agility to respond quickly to both opportunities and threats, adapt strategy to changing circumstances, and have robust governance with a culture of trust. Organizations must adopt an ecosystem mindset, embrace data-rich thought processes, and equip their faculty and staff with ongoing learning of new skills.

RESULTS. Outputs and outcomes achieved by your organization. Results are evaluated based on current performance; performance relative to appropriate comparisons; the rate, breadth, and importance of performance improvements; and the relationship of results measures to key organizational performance requirements.

Results are one of the two dimensions (along with processes) evaluated in a Baldrige-based assessment. This evaluation is based on four factors: levels, trends, comparisons, and integration.

SEGMENT. One part of your organization's student, other customer, market, program or service offering, or workforce base. Segments typically have common characteristics that allow logical groupings. In Education Criteria results items, segmentation refers to disaggregating results data in a way that allows for meaningful analysis of your organization's performance. It is up to each organization to determine the

factors that it uses to segment its students, other customers, markets, programs, and services, and workforce.

Understanding segments is critical to identifying the distinct needs and expectations of different student and other customer, market, and workforce groups and to tailoring programs and service offerings to meet their needs and expectations. For example, you might segment your market based on program or service delivery channel (e.g., classroom or web); by students' career interests, learning styles, living status (e.g., residential versus commuter), mobility or special needs; or, if applicable, by designated accountability subgroups. You might segment the workforce based on geography, skills, needs, work assignments, or job classifications.

SENIOR LEADERS. Your organization's senior management group or team. In many organizations, this consists of the head of the organization and his or her direct reports. Senior leaders might include administrators, department heads, and faculty leaders.

STAKEHOLDERS. All groups that are or might be affected by your organization's actions and success. Key stakeholders might include customers, parent organizations, the workforce, collaborators, governing boards, alumni, employers, other schools, regulatory bodies, funders, taxpayers, policy makers, suppliers, partners, and local and professional communities.

See also CUSTOMER.

STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES. Those benefits that exert a decisive influence on your organization's likelihood of future success. These advantages are frequently sources of current and future competitive success relative to other providers of similar educational programs and services. Strategic advantages generally arise from either or both of two sources: (1) core competencies, which focus on building and expanding on your organization's internal capabilities, and (2) strategically important external resources,

which your organization shapes and leverages through key external relationships and partnerships.

When an organization realizes both sources of strategic advantage, it can amplify its unique internal capabilities by capitalizing on complementary capabilities in other organizations.

See STRATEGIC CHALLENGES and STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES for the relationship among strategic advantages, strategic challenges, and the strategic objectives your organization articulates to address its challenges and advantages.

STRATEGIC CHALLENGES. Those pressures that exert a decisive influence on your organization's likelihood of future success. These challenges are frequently driven by your organization's anticipated collaborative environment and/or competitive position in the future relative to other providers of similar educational programs and services. While not exclusively so, strategic challenges are generally externally driven. However, in responding to externally driven strategic challenges, your organization may face internal strategic challenges.

External strategic challenges may relate to student, other customer, or market needs or expectations; changes in educational programs and services; technological changes; or budgetary, financial, societal, and other risks or needs. Internal strategic challenges may relate to capabilities or human and other resources. Politically based perspectives may drive challenges at the local, regional, and/or national levels with a direct or indirect impact on the organization.

See STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES and STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES for the relationship among strategic challenges, strategic advantages, and the strategic objectives your organization articulates to address its challenges and advantages.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES. The aims or responses that your organization articulates to address major change or improvement, competitiveness or social issues, and business advantages. Strategic objectives are generally focused both externally and internally and relate to significant student, other customer, market, program, service, or technological opportunities and challenges (strategic challenges). Broadly stated, they are what your organization must achieve to remain or become competitive and ensure its long-term success. Strategic objectives set your organization's longer-term directions and guide resource allocation and redistribution.

See ACTION PLANS for the relationship between strategic objectives and action plans and for an example of each.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES. Prospects for new or changed products, services, processes, business models (including strategic alliances), or markets. They arise from outside-the-box thinking, brainstorming, capitalizing on serendipity, research and innovation processes, nonlinear extrapolation of current conditions, and other approaches to imagining a different future.

The generation of ideas that lead to strategic opportunities benefits from an environment that encourages nondirected, free thought. Choosing which strategic opportunities to pursue involves consideration of relative risk, financial and otherwise, and then making intelligent choices (intelligent risks).

See also INTELLIGENT RISKS.

SYSTEM. A set of interrelated leadership and management elements of an organization used to integrate approaches, establish policies and objectives, and manage processes to achieve those objectives. The overarching performance system depicted by the Baldrige Excellence Framework consists of six process categories and a results category. Organizational systems establish

processes, procedures, and responsibilities for achieving policies and objectives; and they may contain elements such as management structures (e.g., groups or committees), measurements, and multiple integrated systematic approaches used to conduct the work and support the organization. Organizational systems are generally focused internally, whereas the broader concept work systems includes internal work processes and external resources of the organization.

See also WORK SYSTEMS.

SYSTEMATIC. Well-ordered, repeatable, and exhibiting the use of data and information so that learning is possible. Approaches are systematic if they build in the opportunity for evaluation, improvement, and sharing, thereby permitting a gain in maturity.

TRENDS. Numerical information that shows the direction and rate of change of your organization's results or the consistency of its performance over time. Trends show your organization's performance in a time sequence.

Ascertaining a trend generally requires a minimum of three historical (not projected) data points. Defining a statistically valid trend requires more data points. The cycle time of the process being measured determines the time between the data points for establishing a trend. Shorter cycle times demand more frequent measurement, while longer cycle times might require longer periods for a meaningful trend.

Examples of trends called for by the Education Criteria and scoring guidelines include data on student learning; results for student, other customer, and workforce satisfaction and dissatisfaction, budgetary and financial performance, market performance, and operational performance, such as cycle time and productivity.

VALUE. The perceived worth of a program, process, asset, or function relative to its cost and possible alternatives. Organizations frequently use value considerations to determine the benefits of various options relative to their costs, such as the value of various educational program and service combinations to students and other customers. Your organization needs to understand what different stakeholder groups value and then deliver value to each group. This frequently requires balancing value among customers and other stakeholders, such as your workforce and the community.

VALUES. The guiding principles and behaviors that embody how your organization and its people are expected to operate. Values influence and reinforce your organization's desired culture. Values influence and reinforce your organization's desired culture. They support and guide the decisions made by every workforce member, helping your organization accomplish its mission and attain its vision appropriately. Examples of values include demonstrating integrity and fairness in all interactions, exceeding students' and other customers' expectations, valuing individuals and diversity, protecting the environment, and striving for performance excellence every day.

VISION. Your organization's desired future state. The vision describes where your organization is headed, what it intends to be, or how it wishes to be perceived in the future.

VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER. Your process for capturing student- and other customer-related information. Voice-of-the-customer processes are intended to be proactive and continuously innovative to capture stated, unstated, and anticipated student and other customer requirements, expectations, and desires. The goal is to achieve customer engagement. Listening to the voice of the customer might include gathering and

integrating various types of student and other customer data, such as survey data, focus group findings, social media data and commentary, complaint data, that affect students' and other customers' relationship and engagement decisions.

WORK PROCESSES. Your organization's most important internal value-creation processes.

They might include program and service design and delivery; student support; business and support processes. They are the processes that involve the majority of your organization's workforce and produce student, other customer, and stakeholder value.

Your key work processes are always accomplished by your workforce. They frequently relate to your core competencies, the factors that determine your success relative to competitors and organizations offering similar programs and services, and the factors your senior leaders consider for important for organizational growth. In contrast, projects are unique work processes intended to produce an outcome and then go out of existence.

WORK SYSTEMS. The coordinated combination of internal work processes and external resources that you need to develop and produce educational programs and services, deliver them to your students, and succeed in your market.

Within your work systems, internal work processes are those that involve your workforce. External resources may include processes performed by your key suppliers, partners, contractors, and collaborators, as well as other components of your supply network needed to produce and deliver your educational programs and services and carry out your business and support processes. These internal work processes and external resources function together to accomplish your organizations work.

Decisions about work systems are strategic. These decisions involve protecting and capitalizing on core competencies and mitigating risk. These decisions you make have implications for your organizational structure, people, work processes, and equipment/technology.

WORKFORCE. All people actively supervised by your organization and involved in accomplishing your organization's work, including paid faculty and staff (e.g., permanent, part-time, temporary, on-site, and remote, as well as contract faculty and staff supervised by your organization) and some volunteers (e.g., students/interns), as appropriate. Your workforce includes administrators and supervisors at all levels.

WORKFORCE CAPABILITY. Your organization's ability to ensure sufficient staffing levels to accomplish your work processes and deliver your programs and services to students and other customers, including the ability to meet seasonal or varying demand levels.

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT. The extent of workforce members' emotional and intellectual commitment to accomplishing your organization's work, mission, and vision. Organizations with high levels of workforce engagement are often characterized by high-performance work environments in which people are motivated to do their utmost for their students' and other customers' benefit and the organization's success.

In general, workforce members feel engaged when they find personal meaning and motivation in their work and receive interpersonal and workplace support. An engaged workforce benefits from trusting relationships, a safe and cooperative environment, good communication and information flow, empowerment, and accountability for performance. Key factors contributing to engagement include training

and career development, effective recognition and reward systems, equal opportunity and fair treatment, and family-friendliness.

Process Scoring Guidelines (For Use with Categories Commitment Level 1–6)

0% or 5%	<p>No SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to item requirements is evident; information is ANECDOTAL. (A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no DEPLOYMENT of any SYSTEMATIC APPROACH is evident. (D) • An improvement orientation is not evident; improvement is achieved by reacting to problems. (L) • No organizational ALIGNMENT is evident; individual areas or work units operate independently. (I)
10%, 15%, 20%, or 25%	<p>The beginning of a SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the item is evident. (A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The APPROACH is in the early stages of DEPLOYMENT in most areas or work units, inhibiting progress in achieving the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the item. (D) • Early stages of a transition from reacting to problems to a general improvement orientation are evident. (L) • The APPROACH is ALIGNED with other areas or work units largely through joint problem solving. (I)
30%, 35%, 40%, or 45%	<p>An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, responsive to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the item, is evident. (A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The APPROACH is DEPLOYED, although some areas or work units are in early stages of DEPLOYMENT. (D) • The beginning of a SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to evaluation and improvement of KEY PROCESSES is evident. (L) • The APPROACH is in the early stages of ALIGNMENT with the basic organizational needs identified in response to the Organizational Profile and other process items. (I).
	<p>Because the Criteria is written at the Commitment Level, the organization cannot score above the 30-45% Scoring Range.</p>

Results Scoring Guidelines (For Use with Category 7)

0% or 5%	<p>There are no organizational PERFORMANCE RESULTS, or the RESULTS reported are poor. (Le)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TREND data either are not reported or show mainly adverse TRENDS. (T) • Comparative information is not reported. (C) • RESULTS are not reported for any areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's MISSION. (I)
10%, 15%, 20%, or 25%	<p>A few organizational PERFORMANCE RESULTS are reported, responsive to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the item, and early good PERFORMANCE LEVELS are evident. (Le)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some TREND data are reported, with some adverse TRENDS evident. (T) • Little or no comparative information is reported. (C) • RESULTS are reported for a few areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's MISSION. (I)
30%, 35%, 40%, or 45%	<p>Good organizational PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported, responsive to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the item. (Le)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some TREND data are reported, and most of the TRENDS presented are beneficial. (T) • Early stages of obtaining comparative information are evident. (C) • RESULTS are reported for many areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's MISSION. (I)
	<p>Because the Criteria is written at the Commitment Level, the organization cannot score above the 30-45% Scoring Range.</p>