



2018 Application
Performance Area:
Human Organizational Capital

Please complete all sections of this application form, save the file and email to Training@msbanet.org by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 9, 2018.

School District: Affton School District

Board President: Thomas Bellavia President Daytime Phone: 314-619-9023

President Email: tbellavia@afftonschools.net

Names of and Titles Who Contributed to the Application:
 Thomas Bellavia, President; Patricia Zahn, Vice President; Sue Casaleggi, Treasurer; Douglas Beck, Director; Michelle Burford, Director; Jordan Levinson, Director; Michael McNeil, Director; Stephanie True, Director of Instructional Programs; Steve Fedchak, Chief Financial Officer; Krista Dieckmann, Director of Accounting; Dr. Travis Bracht, Assistant Superintendent

We attest that this application has been completed and reviewed by the board members listed above and made with the knowledge and approval of at least a quorum of the board. We attest that the information provided in this application is true and accurate. **Signatures Required.**

Print Name:	Signature:
<u>SUSAN CASALEGGI</u>	<u></u>
<u>Thomas J. Bellavia</u>	<u></u>
<u>Patricia Zahn</u>	<u></u>
<u>Jordan E. Levinson</u>	<u></u>
<u>Michael McNeil</u>	<u></u>
<u>Michelle Burford</u>	<u></u>
<u>DOUGLAS BECK</u>	<u></u>

If selected as a winner, the Board of Education agrees to share their outstanding accomplishments through MSBA communication channels, including but not limited to publications, media outlets and/or presentations at meetings and conferences, on mutual agreement of the district and MSBA.

Yes No

Human Organizational Capital Criteria

- 1. Recruitment and Hiring:** There is evidence of board policy regarding criteria for employment decisions. Objective procedures and measures guide the recruitment, selection and assignment of administrators, teachers and staff. These procedures and measures are periodically reviewed and discussed by the board in collaboration with the superintendent. Multiple recruitment resources are used to expand pool of qualified candidates. Recruitment efforts result in effective employment decisions.
- 2. Performance-Based Evaluations:** Performance-based evaluations for the superintendent and professional staff, aligned to State guidelines, are directed by board policy. The performance-based educator evaluations result in improved district performance, instructional programming, instruction and student performance. The board reviews evidence that the implementation of the performance-

based evaluation process for the superintendent and professional staff includes on-going, timely, targeted and meaningful feedback and leads to improvement in educator performance, instructional programming and student achievement. There is evidence of improvement in administration, instruction and student performance.

- 3. Professional Growth:** There is evidence of the implementation of a high-quality professional staff development program and plan as directed by board policy. Professional development is focused on improving administrator and educator effectiveness, instructional programming and student performance. The board-approved district professional development plan focuses on research-based practices, continuous improvement and alignment with the district's strategic plan/CSIP. The board annually reviews district professional development data for evidence of improving administrator and educator effectiveness, instructional programming and student performance.
- 4. Retention of High Quality Staff:** There is a focus on retaining high quality staff in all areas, soliciting staff input and inclusion in decision making, and recognizing staff excellence. Continued employment is based on evidence of educator effectiveness and increased student performance. Programs to develop and mentor teachers and leaders meet State standards. The board periodically reviews evidence of the effectiveness of these practices to retain high quality staff and recognizes staff excellence. There is evidence of improvement in the development and retention of highly qualified staff.

Application Questions

Provide the Board of Education's response to the following questions for each of the criteria areas listed above. Responses may not exceed one page for each of the criteria areas. Additional pages, including appendices or attachments, will not be read or considered.

1. Describe what occurred that is outstanding in the criteria area. Be sure to address all areas listed in the description of the criteria.
2. Fully describe how specific board practices achieved or contributed to the outstanding accomplishment for the criteria area. Fully describe the board's role and/or actions that led to the accomplishment.
3. How do you know it worked? Describe the evidence that demonstrates the board's practices are effective in meeting the criteria area.

Application Process

On the last page of the application, describe the process the board used to complete the application so as to ensure participation of board members in the application process. Include information on the board's process for deciding to apply for the award; how board members contributed ideas for the content of the application; board member involvement in the drafting of the application; and board approval of the final application to be submitted to MSBA. The response is limited to one page.

Questions about the Application or Awards

Please contact Janet Tilley, Director, Board Development, by phone at 800-221-MSBA (6722), ext 379, or by email at tilley@msbanet.org.

Recruitment and Hiring:

The Affton School District (ASD) utilizes an online application software called TalentEd. The software was implemented in the Spring of 2017 and is used to accept applications, track applications, and convert new hires from applicant status to active employees. All portions of the application process are done electronically from the moment an applicant decides to apply until they are transitioned to paperless employee recordkeeping. During the application process all applicants are required to complete an Educator's Professional Inventory (EPI) screening test to see how well the applicant would fit within the District's Mission and Vision. The test also indicates how well the teacher is expected to succeed in the posted position. The EPI screening scores the applicant on a scale of 0-100 with 100 being the highest. The score is posted alongside the applicant's name and is highlighted in either red, yellow, or green depending on the strength of the candidate's score. Hiring managers and principals are encouraged to use this information when determining interview candidates.

The interview process is typically done in a committee setting and often includes Board of Education members for high profile positions such as the recent hiring of the 2018-19 assistant superintendent. Interviews usually consist of two rounds with a recommendation for approval to the Board of Education (BOE) immediately following. The Board is provided with information regarding each recommended applicant including previous positions and references, as well as data on how many applicants there were for the position and how many of them were interviewed. This information is reviewed prior to each BOE Meeting with approval during the meeting. An additional step to the process will be implemented this year for all certified teaching position recommendations for 2018-19. This step involves all recommended candidates for certified teacher positions to meet with the superintendent prior to the recommendation being forwarded to the BOE. During this 20 minute meeting the superintendent will explain the District's mission, vision, and core values as well as the continuous classroom improvement system all teachers are expected to implement in partnership with students. The superintendent will ask the staff member if they can commit to working within this system established by the ASD. If they agree, the recommendation will be moved forward to the BOE for approval and the recommended candidate will be given a copy of the book *Malcolm and Me, How to Use the Baldrige Process to Improve Your School* by Richard E. Maurer and Sandra Cokeley Pedersen.

The District recruits for open positions in a variety of ways. Most applicants find posted positions through the Missouri REAP website that is used by many Missouri school districts. All Affton posts on the MoREAP website contain a link to the District's TalentEd site and instructions on how to apply electronically. Additionally, TalentEd posted positions will be available for any applicant who has previously viewed or used the system. This allows applicants to use a single site to apply for positions within any district that utilizes the software. ASD has seen very strong interest in most posted positions within the last several years. For typical teaching positions, the District has seen double and triple digit applicant pools. Occasionally, if a position does not have the desired amount of applicants, the District has used local newspaper advertisements to direct interest in the position. These positions are typically custodial or bus driving positions. Lastly, being located in St. Louis County allows Affton to work very closely with neighboring districts. Through these relationships Affton is able to use local networking to find worthy candidates for any job posting.

Affton School District has an excellent record of attracting high quality teachers to posted positions. The ASD analyzes data regarding the volume of applicants for any open position. Over the past four years, the District has posted a total of 41 teaching positions. During that time the District has received 2,191 applications for those positions, averaging almost 88 applicants per posted position. The positions posted over the four previous years included some challenging positions to fill such as Art, Foreign Language, and Physics; however, the District was still able to attract numerous high quality candidates for each position. Recruitment and hiring are top priorities in the District. This is addressed in the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan where it states, "ASD recognizes that our success today and in the future requires us to recruit, retain, and develop the best employees." The next few questions in this application address how the District strives for excellence with its staff.

Growth Oriented Culture:

The Affton School District (ASD) uses the Network for Educator Effectiveness (NEE) evaluation system. The purpose of this system is to improve teacher instructional practices. NEE's mission is to provide a simple, yet powerful and comprehensive, research-based evaluation system designed to grow educators, students, and schools. The system has multiple components: classroom observations, professional development plan, unit of instruction, and student surveys. ASD chose three primary indicators for teacher evaluations that linked directly to the District's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) and more specifically to the continuous improvement training that has been conducted district-wide: 1) Cognitively engages student in subject; 2) Uses instructional strategies leading to student problem-solving and critical thinking; and 3) Monitors effect of instruction on individual and class learning. Classroom observations of these indicators are measured on a continuum of 0 to 7 points. Teacher individual professional development plans align with these indicators as well and are directly linked to their School Improvement Plans (SIP), which are monitored by the Board of Education (BOE). Units of Instruction include student growth measures, both formative and summative, thus connecting the evaluation with student achievement. Voice of the student is gathered through the surveys in fourth grade and up. This comprehensive system, connecting the CSIP, SIP, professional learning, and student voice, represents educator evaluation that truly supports growth and encourages strong collaboration between teachers and administrators.

In ASD, school administrator evaluations are directly tied to how the administrators work collaboratively with their staff to develop and monitor their School Improvement Plans and design professional learning around school and individual staff needs. The BOE reviews the SIPs twice a year. In the fall, they receive an update on the previous year's SIP and are introduced to the current year's plan with data to support any adjustments made. In the spring, the current plan is updated based on formative measures and once again presented to the BOE in a workshop setting. In this way each BOE member is able to ask questions and dig deeply into the plans of all Affton schools. ASD administrators also use a continuous improvement system's check on a yearly basis to see where their schools stand as they relate to the Baldrige excellence criteria: leadership; strategic planning; customer (student) focus; measurement, analysis, and knowledge management; workforce focus; operations focus; and results. Teachers also complete surveys about the performance of their administrators. These surveys, the system's check, and the progress of the SIP are discussed in a meeting between the administrators of each school and the superintendent and assistant superintendent who then share the information with the BOE as they discuss each administrator's evaluation.

The ASD Board of Education directly evaluates the superintendent using the Superintendent Evaluation Process outlined by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Educator Evaluation System. The BOE follows the DESE seven step process, choosing in collaboration with the superintendent two focus areas from the superintendent standards and quality indicators that align with the District's CSIP. This process includes, after selecting the areas of focus, a form completed by the superintendent with baseline performance, new strategies and feedback made throughout the cycle with evidence provided, the BOE using the summative form to evaluate the focus areas, and reflective conversation between the superintendent and the Board to lead into the next plan. This could involve going deeper with the same standards or, with those firmly embedded, moving on to new standards. This is yet another example of the Plan/Do/Study/Act (PDSA) process, a key process used throughout the District.

Evaluation is truly about growth for all levels in the ASD, from teachers to administrators to the superintendent. This growth, encouraged and supported by the BOE, impacts each and every Affton student.

Professional Growth:

The Affton School District (ASD) implements a high-quality professional staff development program and plan as directed by board policy that is aligned to the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) of the district. As outlined in the district professional development manual, the District, school, and individual professional development plans are focused on the CSIP areas of student achievement and instructional programs designed to meet the individual needs of the District's diverse population. All plans are centered around the following CSIP Goals:

1. Innovative Teaching and Learning Goal: In an effort to maximize academic excellence, ASD staff will implement student-centered opportunities that promote academic excellence and engage all students in creative problem solving and social emotional learning.
2. Highly Qualified Staff Goal: ASD recognizes that our success today and in the future requires us to recruit, retain, and develop the best employees.

In aligning with the CSIP, professional learning in ASD centers around continuous improvement related to the Baldrige excellence in education framework, curriculum and standards, technology integration, and innovation. At the building level, each school has a Building Leadership Team that also serves as the Professional Development Committee. This team uses their school improvement plan (SIP), which is aligned with the CSIP, to drive the professional learning within that school. This learning takes place on district professional development days on campus as well as through allowing staff to attend conferences and workshop outside of the district that meet the needs of the students as outlined in the SIP. Affton teachers have participated in such valuable learning opportunities as Reading and Writing Workshop from the Teachers College, Project Lead the Way training, Trauma Sensitive Schools training through EducationPlus, as well as a host of other topics.

ASD utilizes an evaluation tool that requires the teachers to write Individual professional development plans. Often teachers pair up or work on a common goal in small groups. The district encourages and supports the setting of individual goals that tie back to success for students in school. Collaboration time is provided throughout the school year to encourage teachers to learn and grow together.

Administrators in the ASD also seek ways to constantly learn and grow. At the monthly Administrative Council Meetings, professional learning is a standing agenda item. At each meeting the Council explores an area, sometimes spending months on a topic. Continuous improvement, innovative teaching and learning, and social emotional awareness are some of the topics recently studied. Administrators attend professional learning opportunities outside of the district as well. For example, the secondary principals attended a Technology Leadership Academy for School Leaders in 2016-17. The elementary principals just recently attended such workshops as *Powerful Solutions for Eliminating Chronic Disruptive Behavior In Your K-12 Classroom* and *Trauma Sensitive Schools* in order to learn side by side with their teachers and counselors. All Affton administrators participate with their staff on district professional learning days.

The Board of Education annually reviews district professional development data for evidence of improving administrator and educator effectiveness, instructional programming and student performance each June when the Professional Development Annual Program Evaluation is presented. The District utilizes Kickup, a survey tool that helps school districts assess, manage, and communicate about their professional learning's impact. An annual needs assessment is conducted as well as feedback collected from each professional learning day. This data helps in keeping the professional learning in ASD aligned with the CSIP and effective and meaningful for all staff.

Retention of High Quality Staff:

The Affton School District (ASD) recognizes that in order to retain a teacher, that teacher must be made to feel at home. The District has a two-year induction program for new teachers that embraces the idea of collaboration. Each new teacher is assigned a mentor and attends a two-day orientation that familiarizes them with the district, their school, and continuous classroom improvement. Each school also conducts their own orientation to walk their new teachers through standard procedures and protocols. From there, they become part of a grade level or department team which further serves as a source of support through weekly collaborations. Being observed with immediate feedback from peers as well as the opportunity to observe others is provided for new teachers. Technology integration specialists stay in close touch with new teachers to support their use of technology in the classroom. The professional development coordinator checks in with them quarterly to make sure their learning needs are met. In fact, here's a response from a recent check-in: *No concerns from me. I've had such a great experience at Affton this year, Mesnier is such a warm and welcoming school. Erin has been absolutely wonderful and I would have been lost without her this year. Thanks for checking in!* It really is a team approach in welcoming and growing new teachers in Affton.

The Affton Board of Education (BOE) supports many programs to develop leaders in the ASD. For example, each school has a Building Leadership Team with representatives from all grade levels, departments, and special areas. These teachers help monitor the school improvement plan (SIP) and help determine the professional learning needs of their staff. Another example comes from the technology department. They encourage teachers to lead in the area of innovation. They spotlight innovative practices implemented throughout the district on social media as well as in a district newsletter. During this current school year, they have encouraged teachers to become Google Certified Educators and are hosting a Google Show and Tell workshop to highlight their leading and learning. There are many other opportunities that exist to develop leaders such as serving on the curriculum monitoring committee, as department chairs, or on the safety and security committee.

ASD prides itself on the ability to retain high quality staff in all classrooms. The BOE regularly reviews data regarding salary and benefit packages offered to employees. The BOE strives to ensure that the compensation for staff members in Affton is near the median in St. Louis County. Affton's BOE has also elected to provide a premium health, dental, vision, and life insurance package for all full-time employees. The benefit package offered to staff members is at or near the top tier of benefit packages offered at other school districts throughout St. Louis County.

The BOE has recently begun to review data regarding turnover and retention rates to ensure high quality staff members are not being lost to other districts. Over the past four years a total of 38 teachers have resigned or retired from the District. Of those 38, only four have moved to another school district within the area. The other 34 have either retired, moved out of the area, or left the education industry. With an overall FTE of 172 teachers, the loss rate to other area districts is 0.58% per school year. A total of 20 people have retired from Affton in the last four years, many of whom took advantage of a voluntary early separation incentive agreement offered by the BOE during the 2014-2015 school year. The retention data proves that Affton has been able to retain high quality staff members and has no issues with turnover.

In the District's strategic plan, one of the objectives is to provide employees with the best possible work conditions and resources. Affton staff members are continually supported with new initiatives and allowed to provide input on the direction of the District. With positive morale, a collaborative culture, excellent communication throughout the District, and a competitive compensation package, ASD is able to attract and retain high quality staff members in all positions.

Application Process: Describe the process the board used to complete the application so as to ensure participation of board members in the application process. Include information on the board's process for deciding to apply for the award; how board members contributed ideas for the content of the application; board member involvement in the drafting of the application; and board approval of the final application to be submitted to MSBA.

The Affton Board of Education (BOE), in reviewing the categories available for the Outstanding Boards of Education Award, decided that Human Organizational Capital was an area that the Affton School District (ASD) has not yet applied for but has experienced great growth and success in over the past few years. With the adoption of the Baldrige Continuous Improvement process as the District's systems thinking approach to establishing the best processes and procedures a few years ago, the District has been able to systemically review and update many of its processes. This includes the implementation of a new evaluation system (Network for Educator Effectiveness), the use of TalentEd software in our hiring processes, and establishing Building Leadership Teams in each school to monitor School Improvement Plans and guide professional learning. The BOE has been the driving force behind this push to follow the Baldrige Excellence Criteria. To that end, the BOE considered this a worthy area to share the ASD story.

The BOE President, Thomas Bellavia, assembled a team of writers for this application from the District Central Office. He discussed the criteria with them and they drafted responses to each section. As the writers drafted their responses, the Google document was shared with each of the BOE members for their input. The superintendent also shared the document a few times in his Friday update to the BOE to call their attention to this opportunity to provide feedback. This feedback came in written form as well as in conversations between the writers and individual BOE members.

The BOE gave a final review of the document on Friday, March 2. The writers made any necessary updates and the document was prepared to submit to MSBA.