

# Innovative Quality Schools

*An approved authorizer of chartered schools in Minnesota*

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## **Processes used by IQS to authorize public schools:**

### **A. The transfer of schools to IQS that are currently authorized by other organizations**

*NOTE: While a transfer request may be initiated at any time, IQS's practice is to have requests submitted to it by December 1st to allow the IQS review process to take place and allow IQS to submit a proposed contract to the MDE at least 105 business days prior to the end of the existing contract and in compliance with Minnesota Statute 124E.10 subd. 5. The actual time line for IQS arriving at a decision may vary depending upon the the issues with the school and the current workload of IQS.*

1. The Approved Authorizing Plan for IQS includes the following basic premises:
  - a. The school has a performance history of learning success based on data in its annual report including parental satisfaction;
  - b. The enrollment projections of the school are sufficient for it to operate
  - c. Neither the current authorizer, in its most recent renewal report or annual review comments, nor the MDE report significant issues regarding school performance, governance, finance or operations;
  - d. The board of the school has demonstrated that it has been conscientious in its responsibilities as a board of a chartered school;
  - e. The school is not in statutory operating debt and has a projected fund balance;
  - f. The schools most recent audit does not include significant material weaknesses;
  - g. The school is amenable to the IQS authorizing practices
  - h. A visit to the school by a cadre from IQS results in a positive report;
  - i. The current authorizer and the school mutually agree to terminate the current contract; and,
  - j. MDE approves the authorizing transfer to IQS.
2. IQS Process for reviewing applications from current schools:
  - a. The board of a school requesting a transfer must pass a resolution making this request in order for IQS to initiate its process. Requests must be sent to IQS in writing.
  - b. The IQS Management Leadership Team will forward a written response to the school informing them of the IQS process.

- c. The IQS Management Leadership Team will select a cadre of IQS professionals to review the school. Included will always be a person knowledgeable of the school model, an evaluation expert and a person with education finance expertise.
- d. The IQS Management Leadership Team and interested school will determine a schedule for reviewing the application; including when the IQS team can make a site visit, interviews, etc.
- e. The IQS Management Leadership Team will gather information in the five areas of school performance: School Model and Standards; Governance; Student/School Performance; Finance: and, Operations. Data are gathered from the site application to IQS, student performance data from MDE website, audits, interviews with school and other staff (auditors, finance mgt personnel), MDE, current authorizer, and others.
- f. The IQS Management Leadership Team and school director prepare a report to assist the IQS Board in determining whether to recommend approval to authorize the school.
- g. If the IQS Board accepts the director's recommendation to authorize the school, the IQS director informs the school and the current authorizer of that decision. If IQS finds issues which must be addressed, these issues are included in the letter. The school must accept the IQS findings and be willing to make modifications to address the issues identified in the letter in order for IQS to proceed with authorizing the school;
- h. IQS will file a "Transfer Request" with MDE which will address all issues identified by both the current authorizer and IQS.
- i. MDE will review the "Transfer Request" and approve or disapprove the request. In cases of disapproval, IQS may address those issues and resubmit.
- j. When MDE approves the "Transfer Request" IQS will inform the board of the school and begin to develop a contract with the school consistent with the IQS requirements and also with the findings of the IQS review.
- k. Following acceptance, IQS will submit the contract to MDE for review and comment.
- l. Once the MDE acknowledges the transfer, the process is complete.