



Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools

## National Model of Sustained Excellence Award Application

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

# Instructions

## Part 1: School System/District Information

Please provide all of the information requested in the table in the Model of Sustained Excellence application. *Note: If the contact person for this application is not in school during the summer break, please provide additional contact information (e.g., cell phone, alternate contacts) to allow EPA to contact you if necessary about your application.*

## PART 2: Telling Your IAQ Story

To merit an *IAQ TFS* National Model of Sustained Excellence Award, applicants need to tell the story of their IAQ management program in a way that demonstrates the program is comprehensive, effective, and has become an integrated component of their facility operations. Because applicants must be previous *IAQ TFS* National Excellence Award winners, it is most important to focus on how the program has evolved since your school system won the *IAQ TFS* National Excellence Award and what steps you have taken to make IAQ management an integral and enduring part of your system's day-to-day operations.

Specifically, EPA will look for evidence that:

- The critical components that lead to program effectiveness, such as the Six Key Drivers of School IAQ Program Success ([www.epa.gov/iaq/schools.excellence.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools.excellence.html)), are institutionalized in the school IAQ management program;
- The school system is deeply committed to maintaining healthy educational environments and is taking measures to continually improve school environmental health and to evaluate progress towards environmental management goals; and
- Communications between the school and stakeholders (internal and external) are a routine part of the IAQ management program and that the system is actively mentoring other school systems.

## Writing Your IAQ Program's Story

In no more than five pages (double sided), tell us the best story you can about your school IAQ management program. We recommend that you organize your story into the following sections:

- **Moving Beyond the Basics** – The Evolution of Your IAQ Management Program Over Time (addresses evaluation criteria 1)
- **Building It to Last** – Institutionalizing Your IAQ Management Program to Ensure It Will Last (addresses evaluation criteria 2)
- **Getting Results** – Evaluating Your IAQ Management Program (addresses evaluation criteria 3)
- **Financing Success** – Resourcing Your IAQ Management Program (addresses evaluation criteria 4)
- **Spreading the Word** – Communicating about Your IAQ Management Program (addresses evaluation criteria 5)



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### Tips on Writing an Effective Story:

We strongly encourage you to review the *Framework for Effective School IAQ Programs: Six Key Drivers* and the seven profiles in IAQ excellence presented in ***Envisioning Excellence: Lessons from Effective School Indoor Air Quality Programs*** (you can find this document at [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools.excellence.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools.excellence.html)). This document presents the stories of past IAQ TFS National Excellence and Model of Sustained Excellence Award winners and demonstrates how they incorporated the Six Key Drivers into their programs and achieved outstanding outcomes. The stories in ***Envisioning Excellence*** are good examples of compelling narratives that demonstrate the critical components of program effectiveness; school system commitment to continuous environmental improvement; effective IAQ program evaluation schemes; and robust communications programs that support long-term IAQ program success. It may help you to see another school's IAQ program story before you begin developing your own.

To help the Review Panel recognize the elements that you feel most contributed to your program's success, you may want to call attention to key themes, critical moments, and turning points, by calling out particularly powerful quotes from program staff, school decision-makers, building occupants, or community members; highlighting key terms; or using headings in your text to call attention to specific information. To write an effective story, remember that it is important to demonstrate not only what you did, but how you did it, and the effect of your actions.

Carefully review the criteria that the Review Panel will use to evaluate your application. (Evaluation criteria may be found at [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/awards.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/awards.html)). Where possible, indicate if specific sections of your story address particular evaluation criteria.

### Guiding Questions

*You are not required to answer the Guiding Questions in your story. They are designed solely to help you write your story by prompting you to think about critical moments in your program's history, your program infrastructure, and program results. Review the evaluation criteria to learn more about the details you should be sure to include.*

## 2a. Moving Beyond the Basics – The Evolution of Your IAQ Management Program Over Time

In this section, briefly tell the story of how your IAQ management program has evolved since your school system won the IAQ TFS National Excellence Award. The EPA Review Panel will be familiar with your IAQ Management program's foundation and general features from your previous National Excellence Award application. The Review Panel will be most interested in learning about how your program has matured in the intervening years, how you have institutionalized the program as an enduring part of your regular facility management procedures, and any key lessons you have learned about implementing sustainable school IAQ management programs that achieve demonstrable results.



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### Questions to Consider:

- Since winning the National Excellence Award, what steps have you taken to put in place policies or procedures that ensure your IAQ Management Plan will be sustained on a long-term basis?
- How has the role of your IAQ Coordinator/IAQ Team changed over time? How have you ensured the continued buy-in from team members, decision-makers, staff, and the community over the years? How do you keep staff and others up-to-date on your program and changes in policies or procedures related to IAQ?
- What steps have you taken to ensure that your IAQ management program maintains top-level administrative support? For example, how do you engage new system administrators about IAQ issues and your IAQ management program? How have you used administrators as advocates for your IAQ management program?
- What obstacles have you encountered in advancing and sustaining your IAQ management program? What steps have you taken to address these obstacles? How has receiving a National Excellence Award helped you to advance your program and address challenges?
- How do you maintain awareness of and support for your IAQ management program now that it is established (and may be “old news”)? How has receiving a National Excellence Award helped you to raise and sustain program awareness?

## 2b. Getting Results – Evaluating Your IAQ Management Program

In this section, describe how you evaluate the effectiveness of your IAQ management program. Successful, sustainable IAQ management programs use data to assess progress towards goals, refine program implementation in real time, and to demonstrate that the program has a measurable, beneficial impact. Describe any qualitative and quantitative information you collect related to your IAQ management program and how you use that information to improve your program, build your program, and secure support for sustaining your program.

### Questions to Consider:

- What do you evaluate? What are the most important outcomes that you track? How do you determine the best way to track these outcomes? How have you improved your evaluation mechanisms over time?
- What short-and long-term goals have you established for your IAQ management program? What evaluation components have you put in place to ensure you are making progress towards these goals? How do you know when you have achieved a program goal?
- How do you use the data that you collect for making improvements to your IAQ management program, to secure additional funding and to motivate staff? How has your use of data evolved as your program has matured? What components of your program have you changed based on evaluation findings?



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- What are some of the results (qualitative and quantitative) that can be tied to your IAQ management program and improvements to the school environment? Provide measurable data on any improvements in your school system (e.g., decreased number of IAQ-related complaints, decreased school nurse visits, increased employee satisfaction, improved student performance, decreased school absenteeism).
- How do you communicate IAQ management program evaluation data to your school stakeholders? How has this data helped you maintain or expand support for your program?

### 2c. Building it to Last – Institutionalizing Your IAQ Management Program to Ensure it Will Last

In this section, describe how your IAQ management program has developed from its initial implementation phase to a mature, sustained program. Tell the story of what steps you took to make sure your IAQ program is an enduring and integrated part of your day-to-day facility operations.

#### Questions to Consider:

- What steps did you take to establish the infrastructure you needed to sustain your IAQ management program (e.g., training staff, securing funding, encoding written IAQ goals)? What have been the keys to your success that have allowed you to maintain an active and effective IAQ management program?
- What goals have you set for your IAQ management program? How have these goals changed as your program has matured? How do you ensure that your IAQ management program, goals, and milestones are continually reviewed and revised? How do you keep your program up-to-date?
- How has the assessment component (e.g., occupant surveys, building walkthroughs) changed as your program has matured? Do you use technology to assist in your assessment process? How does the information gained from assessments factor into school improvements and IAQ management program improvements?
- How do you prioritize building repairs and upgrades related to IAQ issues? How has your system for prioritizing repairs changed as your program has matured? How has the nature of IAQ problems identified changed over time? What actions have you taken to address or prevent IAQ problems that you believe have had the greatest impact on environmental health in your facilities? What steps did you take to ensure those actions were successful?
- How have you ensured that the momentum behind your IAQ Management program lasts? What policies or procedures have you put in place to ensure that your IAQ Management program will be sustained, even if all of the current key players were to leave the system?



## 2d. Financing Success – Resourcing Your IAQ Management Program

In this section, describe how your system funds your IAQ management program and any facility improvements related to IAQ. Provide information about how funding has been sustained over time, how preventive IAQ management has led to return on investment for your program, and how you ensure top-level support for ongoing funding for your program.

### Questions to Consider:

- Where does financing for your IAQ management program come from? How does IAQ fit into your system’s facility budget? Have you seen changes in your facility or preventive maintenance budgets as your IAQ management program has matured? How will you secure administrative support for maintaining funding for your program and IAQ improvements into the future?
- What have you found to be the “big ticket” items to address as a result of your IAQ management program? How did you address them? How did you secure (or are you securing) the funding for these items? What the investments (i.e., time, funding) did you make to support your IAQ management program? Have you seen that investment increase or decrease as your program has matured?
- How have you tracked the outcomes of IAQ investments? How have you measured any return on investment from your efforts? If so, describe the return on your IAQ investments.
- Have you established any partnerships inside or outside the school system that have provided resources or assistance for your IAQ management program? Have you used bonds or capital improvement campaigns to secure sustainable funding for building repairs? If so, how did you educate your community and obtain support for these funds?
- What is the most important information you can share with other school districts about securing sustainable funding for an IAQ management program?

## 2e. Spreading the Word – Communicating about Your IAQ Management Program

An effective communications strategy (both internal to the school system and external to the broader community) is a critical component of an effective, sustainable IAQ management program. In this section, describe how you communicate to your school community your IAQ management program’s goals, outcomes, and improvements, paying particular attention to how your communications have changed as your program has matured. It is also important to describe how you have used effective communications to ensure continued support for your program and whether you have provided assistance to other school systems seeking to improve their IAQ.



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### Questions to Consider:

- Describe how you communicate about the IAQ management program. How has your IAQ management program's communications evolved as your program has matured? How do you assess the effect of your communication efforts?
- How have your internal communications raised awareness about your IAQ management program; and about health, performance, comfort, and productivity improvements tied to improved IAQ? How do you communicate program successes?
- How do you communicate with audiences outside of the school system (i.e., parents, community groups, businesses, local media)? How has that communication changed over time?
- How do you recruit new champions into your IAQ management program? Are there individuals involved with your program now that were not involved from the start? If so, why are they involved now? What role do they play? How did you recruit these individuals to get them on board?
- How are you reaching out to other school systems in your area/state to talk about IAQ issues and *IAQ Tools for Schools*? What types of mentoring or support activities have you undertaken to assist other schools with addressing IAQ issues? What lessons have you shared with them about your own program's design and successes?

### Part 3: Supplemental Materials

Applicants may attach supplemental materials that document or provide additional support for the information in the application if they are:

- Clearly titled, referenced, and their relevance is explained in the body of the application. Materials that are not referenced, explained, and given a title will not be considered during the evaluation. Examples of supplemental materials may include: IAQ policies, articles, or descriptions of news media or video spotlights, etc.; and
- Not in excess of five double-sided or 10 single-sided additional pages of information.

All application and supplemental materials for the 2009 *IAQ TFS* National Model of Sustained Excellence Award must be submitted or postmarked by **September 30, 2009**, in order to be evaluated.



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### Part 1: School System/District Information

Please provide all of the information requested in the table below. The individual who is listed as the first contact will be considered the point person for all future communications regarding the status of your award submittal.

<b>Key Contact(s) Information</b>	
School System/District Name	
Name of Key Contact(s) or IAQ Coordinator	
Title	
Department	
Address	
City, State, Zip Code	
Telephone	
Fax Number	
E-mail Address	
<b>School System/District Profile</b>	
Year District Won the <i>IAQ TFS</i> National Excellence Award	
Total Number of Students	
Total Number of Staff	
Total Number of Facilities in Your System/District (e.g., 45 schools, five educational support buildings)	
Age Range of All System/District Facilities (e.g., five-90 years old)	
Total Square Footage (ft <sup>2</sup> ) of All System/District Facilities (e.g., 1.5 million ft <sup>2</sup> )	
Total School District Budget	
Number of School Facilities in Your School System/District Participating in the <i>IAQ TFS</i> Program	



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### Participation in Other School-Based Programs

If applicable, please select any additional school-based federal or state voluntary projects or programs in which your school system participates.

- Clean School Bus USA
- ENERGY STAR for K-12 Schools
- Healthy School Environments Assessment Tool (HealthySEAT)
- WasteWise School Program
- SunWise for Schools
- School Chemical Cleanout Campaign (SC3)
- U.S. Green Building Council LEED for Schools
- Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS)
- American Lung Association Open Airways for Schools
- Centers for Disease Control Environmental Tracking Project
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

If applicable, please list any community partners or other organizations that have assisted you in implementing your IAQ management program.



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Specifically, EPA will look for evidence that:

- The critical components that lead to program effectiveness, such as the Six Key Drivers of School IAQ Program Success ([www.iaqsymposium.com](http://www.iaqsymposium.com)), are institutionalized in the school IAQ management program;
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