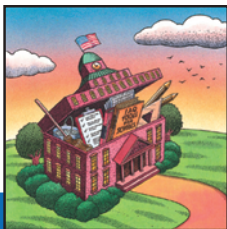
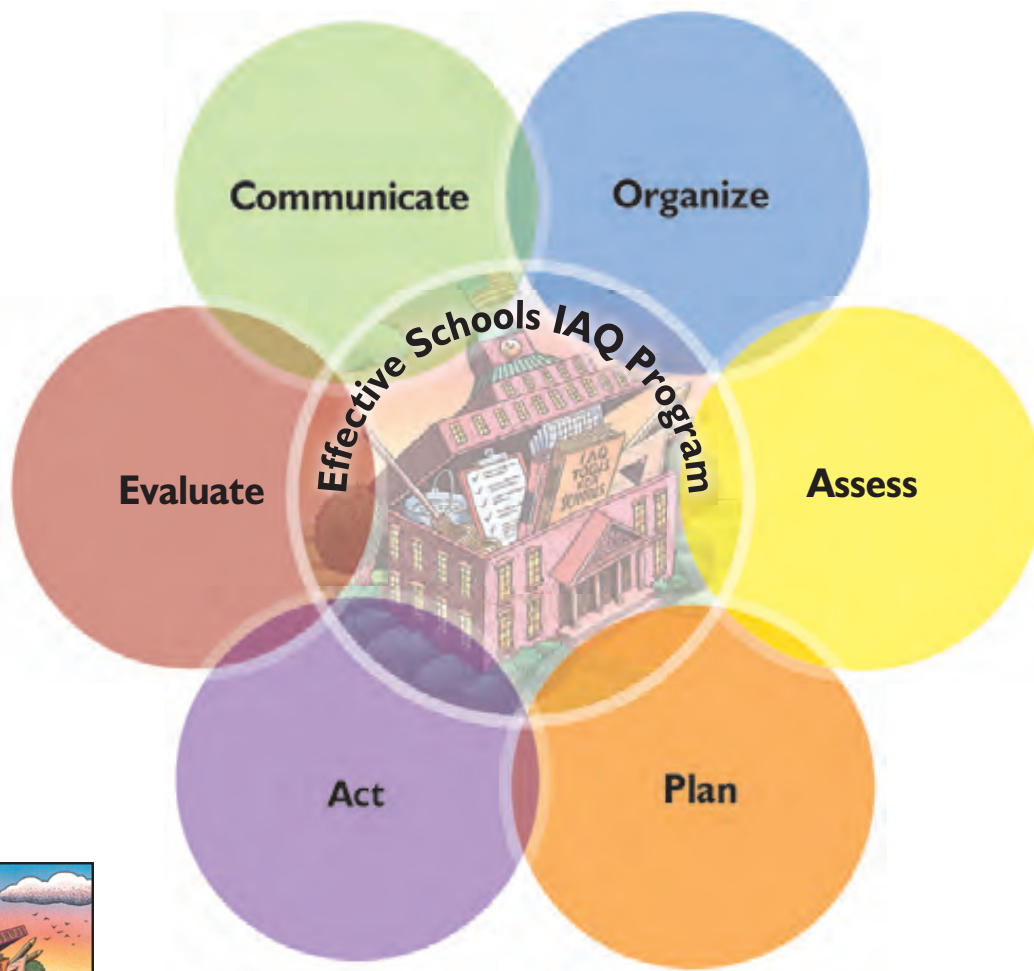


Envisioning Excellence— The IAQ TfS Program Change Package

***Accelerating Action to Create Healthier
and Safer Learning Environments***



Envisioning Excellence—The IAQ TFS Program Change Package

Accelerating Action to Create Healthier and Safer Learning Environments

A tremendous knowledge base built on the accumulated learning of more than 1,000 schools and 10 years of research on IAQ program success exists to help schools take action to create healthier, safer learning environments. The *Framework for Effective School IAQ Programs* synthesizes this knowledge base and EPA’s *Envisioning Excellence* materials provide in-depth access to it. The *Envisioning Excellence* materials include actionable guidance, program strategy suggestions, examples from leading programs, and detailed descriptions of approaches school districts can take to apply the *Framework* in their environmental, health, and safety programs.

Envisioning Excellence Materials

Access all of the *Envisioning Excellence* materials to learn how to achieve success in your school district. Visit www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/excellence.html

What is the IAQ TFS Program Change Package?

The *IAQ TFS Program Change Package*, one component of the *Envisioning Excellence* suite of materials, provides quick access to the strategies and actions that successful school districts have followed to build effective and enduring IAQ management programs. The Change Package provides an overview of the *Framework for Effective School IAQ Programs*, the *Six Key Drivers* that comprise the *Framework*, and the strategies that school districts can apply to incorporate the *Key Drivers* into their programs.

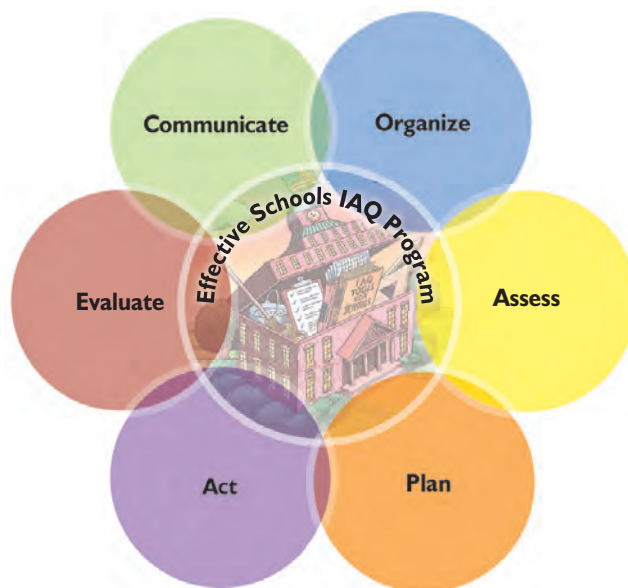
What Is ‘The Framework’ and How Can I Use It?

Years of research led to the discovery of a clear program *Framework* that underlies successful IAQ management programs. The *Framework* is flexible and adaptable and any school, regardless of location, size, budget, or facility conditions, can follow it to launch and sustain an effective IAQ program. The *Framework for Effective School IAQ Programs: Six Key Drivers* presents the system for success and provides a common language for discussing the *Key Drivers* that contribute to IAQ management program effectiveness:

- Organize for Success
- Assess Your Environments Continuously
- Plan Your Short and Long-Term Activities
- Act to Address Structural, Institutional, and Behavioral Issues
- Evaluate Your Results for Continuous Improvement
- Communicate with Everyone, All the Time

The *Framework for Effective School IAQ Programs* is a self-reinforcing system. As school districts incorporate each *Key Driver* into their programs, overall program effectiveness increases. In addition, the strategies that support the *Key Drivers* are complementary (see the table below for the strategies); working to develop one *Key Driver* will support and contribute to the development of another. It is important to remember that effective school IAQ management programs are works in progress and most districts put the components of success in place over time. **Effective IAQ management is a marathon and not a sprint.**

The Framework for Effective School IAQ Programs: Six Key Drivers



KEY to ABBREVIATIONS:

Blue Valley School District (BVSD)

West Carrollton School District (WCSD)

Hartford Public Schools (HPS)

Katy Independent School District (KISD)

School Board of Broward County Florida

(Broward)

Saugus Union School District (SUSD)

Visalia Unified School District (VUSD)

Organize

KEY DRIVER #1—ORGANIZE FOR SUCCESS

Strategy I.1 – Develop Systematic Approach

- **Apply a systematic approach to coordinate and enhance *existing* activities and build a sustainable IAQ initiative.**
 - Follow the *IAQ TFS* Program model to tie disparate facility functions together, and to get the right people talking about environmental management.

Strategies In Action – Develop Systematic Approach

- BVSD used the *IAQ TFS* Program to identify which procedures, resources, and personnel to coordinate to improve their facilities management. By integrating disconnected pieces, BVSD created a stronger program from existing parts.
- WCSD used the *IAQ TFS* Program model as a leaping-off point for designing an environmental, safety, health, and wellness program.

Strategy I.2 – Identify Existing Assests

- **Assess your assets and build your IAQ management program around what already works.**
 - Integrate IAQ management into effective management processes, reporting and response protocols, staff functions, resource allocations, etc.

Strategies in Action – Identify Existing Assets

- When launching their IAQ program in the wake of a mold crisis, the Broward team asked an institution that the community viewed as effective and trust-worthy for help. The Facilities Task Force—composed of staff, parents, and community leaders—led the initiative.
- Elementary school principals in VUSD are responsible for school health and safety issues. When launching the IAQ initiative, VUSD added IAQ issues to principals’ responsibilities and trained them on what to look for and how to report their findings through the same channels already in use for other safety and health issues.

Strategy I.3 – Design SOPs

- **Create standard operating procedures (SOPs) to ensure regular facility assessments, prevention actions, and swift problem response for IAQ.**
 - Publicize the links between your IAQ SOPs and the educational mission so decision-makers and staff support your processes.

Strategies in Action – Design SOPs

- BVSD adapted SOPs for facility design and capital construction, building envelope, and major mechanical replacement programs to establish new IAQ protocols. BVSD also made sure that staff understood how adhering to the IAQ SOPs would contribute to outstanding learning environments that promote student success.
- Broward established SOPs that allow immediate remedial action in response to IAQ problems that cost less than a threshold amount. If actions cost more than the threshold, the problems are automatically elevated to decision-makers.

Strategy I.4 – Empower an IAQ Leader

- **Put someone in charge of the program and empower that person to make decisions.**
 - Choose a strong leader who is committed to facility health and occupant wellness, and who has the influence required to hold people accountable for progress.

Strategies in Action – Empower an IAQ Leader

- KISD designated an Environmental Assistant Director position within the Maintenance and Operations (M&O) Department to direct IAQ management, hire a team, conduct assessments, oversee prevention and response activities, and communicate with other department heads.

- **Communicate with staff, teachers, parents, and others to make sure everyone knows who is in charge.**
- BVSD chose a coordinator for its IAQ initiative whose role as Safety Manager had prepared him in many of the relevant issues (facility management, pollution prevention, etc.). He became the face of the District’s IAQ program—the “go-to guy” critical to their success.

Strategy 1.5 – Build an Effective Team

- **Build a team that represents your district and community.**
 - In large districts, consider a district-level team to coordinate activities with IAQ teams at each site.
- **Recruit members whose job functions, passions, interests, and knowledge equip them to:**
 - *Act* on IAQ management issues (e.g., facility managers, custodial supervisors, HVAC technicians, business officials);
 - *Communicate* the importance of IAQ management efforts (e.g., nurses, public health officials, principals, concerned parents);
 - *Influence* decision-makers or make required decisions, such as staff and resource allocations (e.g., department heads, board members);
 - *Provide expertise* on IAQ issues and the interaction between facilities management, occupant behaviors, and IAQ outcomes (e.g., industrial hygienists, environmental health specialists).
- **Consider ‘unusual suspects’: critics and people who do not initially trust the district can be great additions to the team.**
 - Include union representatives, disgruntled parents, and teachers who have lodged IAQ complaints.

Strategies in Action – Build an Effective Team

- Broward learned a powerful lesson about building a representative IAQ team in the wake of a mold and public relations crisis. The facilities staff had previously avoided unions, teachers, and parents as much as possible, but found that by bringing them onto the IAQ planning team, they turned them from adversaries into allies. Broward also recruited IAQ Committees at each school to serve as trainers, survey administrators, and communications channels and to coordinate IAQ work with the district-level oversight team.
- HPS’ district-level health and safety team, which took ownership of the IAQ program, augmented their resources with team members from city, state, non-profit, and local university communities. Outside experts provide training, assist with walkthroughs, and help secure grant support.
- WCSD’s team includes school board members, the Superintendent, teachers, administrators, and once skeptical parents. WCSD invited the parents who were most vocal during the IAQ problems onto its committee and gave naysayers a chance to contribute constructively.
- After facing an early IAQ crisis, SUSD created a Parent Oversight Committee, comprised of some of the district’s most vocal critics, to help plan the IAQ program and conduct walkthroughs.

Strategy 1.6 – Create Champions

- **Create IAQ champions (on your team and in the community) to promote program success.**
 - Find champions by broadcasting the link between healthy IAQ and student performance, staff health and morale, and facility health, and see who responds with energy.
- **Look for passionate, energetic risk-takers who will communicate the program’s mission, goals, objectives, activities, and results.**

Strategies In Action – Create Champions

- In BVSD, “Everyone knew how they could contribute to healthy school environments that lead to student success... principals saw that the program could keep students healthy; and custodians felt pride about being the first line of IAQ defense.”
- KISD looked for “someone with energy, a self-starter, team-focused, a risk-taker, a model of exemplary behavior, and an effective communicator,” when hiring their Environmental Assistant Director. KISD credits their IAQ success, in part, with “the force of the team leader’s personality and persistence, which have helped... to secure leadership buy-in, community trust, and motivate colleagues.”

