

Independent Public Schools – questions and answers

How do Queensland *Independent Public Schools* differ from other state schools?

Queensland *Independent Public Schools* have greater flexibility to enable innovation that improves performance through:

- managing their planning and review processes
- determine staffing options
- determining the departmental policies and procedures that best suit their individual communities.

All *Independent Public Schools* remain part of the strong state school system. They need to operate within the system enacting the same core values, beliefs and priorities.

How can schools become an *Independent Public School*?

All Queensland state schools, irrespective of size, geographical location or school type, can apply to become an *Independent Public School* in 2014 through an open Expression of Interest (EOI) process.

Prior to submitting an EOI, it is essential that principals undertake broad consultation with their school communities.

Principals may use existing consultative groups to ensure the whole school community has the opportunity to provide input and to gain an understanding of all stakeholder views.

Consultation will gauge community interest in becoming an *Independent Public School*.

When submitting an EOI, schools need to provide documentation of no more than three A4 pages to demonstrate:

- the consultation that has occurred across groups, including a summary of their views

- the school's capacity to assume greater responsibility for their affairs
- the potential benefits for students and the broader school community
- the innovative educational programs or practices that the school will implement to improve student performance.

How are schools selected for the initiative?

A Department of Education, Training and Employment internal panel considers all *Independent Public School* applications. Schools that are in the best position to use increased autonomy to improve student outcomes are selected. Additionally, the schools selected represent the diversity of state schools across Queensland.

How many schools are involved?

There is an opportunity for at least 120 schools to become *Independent Public Schools* over a four-year period from 2013 to 2016. This includes the selection of 26 schools for the program in 2013. Thirty-four schools will be selected to take part in 2014.

Further opportunities to express interest to become an *Independent Public School* will be provided each year, with a minimum of 30 schools to be selected annually until 2016.

From 2017 the *Independent Public Schools* program will be expanded through *Great teachers=Great results*.

What does school governance look like in an *Independent Public School*?

Independent Public Schools are required to have a school council. This enables greater involvement of the school community and other stakeholders, such as industry, in setting the strategic direction of the school. School

councils approve and monitor the school's strategic direction, strengthening local decision-making. In addition, principals have a performance agreement with the Director-General.

How do staffing processes differ for *Independent Public Schools*?

Principals at *Independent Public Schools* can choose between directly recruiting teachers (where vacancies exist) or by filling vacancies through existing department applicant pools or the transfer system. They can also access the relocation process for classified teaching staff.

Do *Independent Public Schools* follow departmental policies?

While *Independent Public Schools* are not required to follow a number of operational procedures, they are required to operate within legislation, industrial instruments, directives, delegations, whole-of-government policy and national agreements.

Want to know more?

For more information about the *Independent Public Schools* initiative visit the Education Queensland website at www.education.qld.gov.au/schools/independent-public-schools/index.html or email IPS@dete.qld.gov.au