



American Quality Schools Corporation

1323 Butterfield Road * Suite 114 * Downers Grove, IL 60515

(312) 226-3355 * Fax (312) 226-1027

www.aqs.org

MEMORANDUM

To: The Arkansas State Board of Education

From: Dr. Michael J. Bakalis—President, The American Quality Schools Corporation

Re: Transfer of charter from American Quality Schools to the Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy

The original approval by the Arkansas State Board of Education of a charter for the establishment of a secondary school which would combine rigorous academics with specific instruction of students to the discipline, culture, and skills of the American military, American police law enforcement, firefighters, and other first responders, was granted to the American Quality Schools Corporation.

American Quality Schools is a not for profit 501c(3) organization which is based in Illinois and was created by me in 1999. From that time until the present, we have started or managed more than 20 elementary and secondary schools in three Midwest states, as well as working as educational consultants both in the United States and internationally.

Our original intent upon receiving the charter for the school was to be physically present in the state of Arkansas to direct and manage the school. However, since that original intent, a number of professional changes and reconsiderations have led to this request for a charter transfer.

1. The serious illness of one of our partners who did much of the research and work on our original proposal, Dr. Don Hall, required him to move from Arkansas where he had established residence to oversee the school development. His physical health required that he could not function in a full-time capacity to launch the school and needed to be physically close to family members in another state.
2. A second key person in conceptualizing the school, Mr. Paul Vallas, had also planned to be involved and active in the school's operation, but his career has taken an unexpected turn. Mr. Vallas is currently a candidate in the race for mayor of the city of Chicago. If elected, he obviously would not be able to devote the full effort to the school as he had envisioned. Should Mr. Vallas not succeed in his election, he will certainly resume some key role in the school's operation.
3. I was the other individual who worked with Dr. Hall and Mr. Vallas on conceptualizing the school and writing the charter proposal. It was our original intent that my organization, American Quality Schools, would be the managers of the school. Since that time, however, I have decided that after 50 years in various leadership positions in education, that I desired to devote my time to writing, consulting, and mentoring a younger successor to my current position.

4. In addition, since our organization has operated schools at distances of more than 500 miles from our Illinois location, I have come to the strong belief that the most efficient aspect of a school operation is best done by talented professional people at the local site of the school. I firmly believe that the current AMFRA board and educational leadership team are fully capable and committed to overseeing the creation and operation of a unique high- quality school which will provide the state of Arkansas with a new model of educational excellence that will ultimately gain national attention.

For the above reasons, the American Quality Schools Corporation is giving our approvals to, and respectfully requesting of the Arkansas State Board of Education that the charter originally granted to American Quality Schools be officially transferred to the board of the Arkansas Military and First Responders Academy.

Upon official approval of this request, my organization would appreciate some official documentation verifying that the change has been duly acted upon. Please feel free to contact me if any further information is required. I can be contacted at mbakalis@aqc.org.

Kevin Durand

From: Jason Smedley
Sent: Monday, April 3, 2023 12:30 PM
To: Kevin Durand
Subject: Fwd: Memorandum for Arkansas State Board of Education
Attachments: Memorandum to Arkansas State Board of Education.pdf

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Michael Bakalis <mbakalis@aq.s.org>
Date: April 3, 2023 at 12:22:55 PM CDT
To: Jason Smedley <jason.smedley@amfra9-12.org>
Cc: Michael Bakalis <mbakalis@aq.s.org>
Subject: Memorandum for Arkansas State Board of Education

Dear Colonel Smedley,

Attached is the request of American Quality Schools to the Arkansas State Board of Education for the transfer of the charter from AQS to AMFRA. Please forward this document to the appropriate individuals who are responsible for acting on this charter request. Please stress to them that swift action on this request would be greatly appreciated, since your scheduled opening of the school this coming fall will be best guaranteed if there is a clear understanding of what entity is ultimately accountable for the school's operation.

When official action is taken and the charter is legally transferred, please inform me and forward the appropriate legal documentation to my attention.

I appreciate your assistance on this matter, and I wish you and your colleagues much success in the school, and you should always feel free to call on me if I can be helpful in any way.

Sincerely
Michael J. Bakalis
President
American Quality Schools

Sent on Behalf of Dr. Michael J. Bakalis
Wendy Stella
Human Resources and Payroll Director
Executive Assistant to Dr. Bakalis
and Patricia Yadgir

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