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Education Institute Announces Operators for Third Group Of Independent Schools

Doha, February 5, 2006: The SEC's Education Institute today announced the names of the third group of Independent School Operators for the academic year 2006/2007. The twenty-one (21) new operators will open schools of different levels of schooling in the coming academic year.

"This new addition is a remarkable step in Qatar's Education Reform Initiative. It brings the total number of Independent Schools to 54, covering different stages of schooling," said Sabah Al Haidous, the Education Institute's Director. "Since the launch of the second group, the selection process has been examined and modified to incorporate new developments. Transparency rules were adopted and applied in the selection of the third group of operators. Operators will be responsible for managing and running Independent Schools, which will shape and frame the sentiment and mentality of Qatar's future generations. In view of that, we applied all the appropriate measures and procedures to ensure objectivity and neutrality in the selection process. Realizing the importance of community participation in the education process, educational and social experts as well as lawyers took part in the selection committee," she added.

The selection committee members included:

- Rabea Al Kaabi – Undersecretary, Ministry of Education.
- Abdullah Al Khalifa - Secretary General, Supreme Council for Family Affairs.
- Dr. Yousif Obeidan – Lecturer of Political Science, University of Qatar
- Mohammed Al Saadi – Commercial Department Director, Ministry of Economy and Commerce.
- Sabah Al Haidous – Director, SEC's Education Institute.
- Dr. Nafez Alyan - Director, Office of Finance at the Education Institute.
- Dr. Jan Wilson - Director, Professional Development Office at the Education Institute.
- Dr. Josiah Haig – Director, Independent School Office at Education Institute.

The selection process for the third group of Independent School operators took nine months from the day the Education Institute began receiving applications – April 23, 2005. Interested applicants were invited to attend an orientation seminar which covered many aspects of the Independent Schools, including the Independent Schools' philosophy; how to

become an operator; the role of operators; how to operate an Independent School; and the legal and operational requirements and best practices of opening and managing a school.

The selection process was conducted in two phases: the preliminary application phase, in which the initial application was submitted, and a second phase for those who passed the preliminary screening. The Education Institute received 167 preliminary applications, seven of which were eliminated because of their failure to meet submission criteria. The remaining applications were assessed by three evaluators in addition to a reviewer. Seventy-eight (78) applications were short listed to compete in the final phase of the evaluation process.

The second phase (final applications phase) began in October 2005. Out of the 78 finalists, the Education Institute received 71 final applications, all of which were checked, scrutinized and assessed by a panel comprised of five international and Qatari experts in addition to a reviewer.

Finally, all applications were submitted to the final applications assessment committee in order of the most likely to the least likely candidate to become an operator. The final assessment process covered all aspects of educational plans offered by the applicants, particularly their vision for school mission; submission criteria; school curricula; teaching methods; students assessment plans; student behavior and discipline; student support services; leadership; management; employment policies; professional development plans; accountability and development plans; and external relations plan. Applicants' experience, personal abilities and career in general were also assessed.

The selection process is computerized and all data and relevant information are coded. Each application is given a confidential number and handled with complete objectivity and neutrality.

All finalists will be invited to attend a series of in-depth training programs to assist them in preparing and designing school plans along with financial, academic and management plans. The training programs will be conducted by internationally renowned experts.

*The Supreme Education Council was established by Emiri decree in 2002. It serves as the primary authority on education policy in Qatar and, with its three Institutes, is leading the effort to transform the nation's schools into a modern, world-class education system. More information about Qatar's education reform effort, **Education for a New Era**, is available at www.education.gov.qa.*

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