Focus on Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is based on the philosophy of continually seeking ways to improve operations to achieve better results. It involves identifying effective practices and addressing areas in need of improvement. Structurally, continuous improvement involves a cycle of feedback and refinement. As illustrated in the figure below, a continuous improvement process consists of inputs, processes and outcomes.

Minnesota Department of Education is incorporating the concept of continuous improvement when evaluating authorizers. It is important to understand that in order to achieve desired outcomes such as a portfolio of high-performing charter schools, an authorizer must explore its core processes and inputs. A continuous feedback loop occurs as authorizers engage in refining inputs and processes to achieve desired outcomes.

Continuous improvement is an undercurrent to the Authorizer Performance Evaluation System. While the main objective is to evaluate authorizers’ performance, a secondary objective is to recognize and promote effective authorizing practices. A focus on continuous improvement will support individual authorizers as well as Minnesota’s collective authorizer community toward better results.