



Building State Capacity
and Productivity Center



January 2019

Dear Colleagues,

All of us at the BSCP Center want to send our best wishes as we start the New Year. We hope you are successful in all that you want to accomplish in the important responsibilities that you have.

As we begin the New Year, I want to bring you up to date on progress that many SEAs and other education agencies are experiencing as they use Strategic Performance Management to define a strategic direction, develop a plan for its implementation, and work that plan. In December, the BSCP Center convened a meeting of leaders from several state agencies—Arkansas, Bureau of Indian Education, Hawaii State Charter School Authorizing Commission, Kansas, and the Virgin Islands—to learn from one another about the SPM implementation.

Collectively, these agencies run the gamut in terms of the stage of implementation. Arkansas represents the longest-term effort having initiated SPM in 2015 toward the beginning of the tenure of Commissioner Johnny Key, and, the most recent initiate being our Hawaii colleagues, who had just begun the development of a strategic direction. What we, and they, learned from our day together was both clear and affirming. SPM provides the needed framework that allows an agency to tackle very ambitious change goals and feel confident that they can be accomplished. Importantly, we all learned that the variation in contexts that each organization experiences can be accommodated by flexibility in the process. SPM is a map that guides agencies through a journey of determining their own outcomes and mobilizing their own resources to get there.

We were also able to pinpoint challenges that most every organization experiences: committing the personnel resources, trusting emerging leaders, accommodating changes in staffing, and sustaining change over time. Also, because the SPM process causes a thorough examination of the organization, operational weaknesses invariably get identified. When that occurs, improving them can be threatening to some individuals. These must be handled deftly. Not surprisingly, we found that agencies that are committed to serious improvement benefit from the ability to learn from others that are further along in the process than they are.



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



We look forward to maintaining these relationships among agencies implementing SPM to continue to learn from each other and use performance management to advance their priorities and achieve their goals.

Together we can enhance our experiences by collaborating, so I would appreciate hearing from you regarding your comments, suggestions, or experiences with Strategic Performance Management work in your state or region. Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

Dean H. Nafziger, Ph.D.
Director, Building State Capacity & Productivity Center at Westat
210-558-4101 or deannafziger@westat.com

Building State Capacity and Productivity Center

The Building State Capacity and Productivity Center (BSCP Center) focuses work on helping state education agencies (SEAs) throughout the country, as they adapt to constrained fiscal resources and increased demands for greater productivity. As State Departments of Education are facing a daunting challenge of improving student performance with diminishing financial resources, the BSCP Center provides technical assistance to SEAs that builds their capacity to support local educational agencies (LEAs or districts) and schools, and to the other 23 regional comprehensive centers and national content centers that serve them, by providing high quality information, tools, and implementation support. The partners in the BSCP Center are Westat, the Academic Development Institute, and the Edunomics Lab (Georgetown University).

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