February 2019

Greetings Colleagues,

During the past few years the BSCP Center had the opportunity to work with many regional and content centers, states departments of education, and numerous educational organizations across the country. We have learned much from all of you. It is always a pleasure to share the success stories that you helped us create. This month’s highlight is on the collaborative work that is currently underway in Puerto Rico.

**Multiple Centers collaborate to assist hurricane ravaged Puerto Rico**

Early last summer, the U.S. Department of Education, at the request of Secretary Keleher at the Puerto Rico Department of Education, reached out to the Center on School Turnaround and the Florida & Islands Comprehensive Center for assistance designing and supporting the implementation of a School Improvement Initiative. A new school year was approaching following massive reorganization of the school system, with the closing of nearly 400 schools due to financial distress and the ravages of Hurricane Maria. By the time the school year began, it was obvious that Puerto Rico also needed the Building State Capacity & Productivity (BSCP) Center to help PRDE develop communication strategies and vehicles, especially related to the School Improvement Initiative. In addition, the BSCP Center engaged with FLICC and CST to advise PRDE on changes in its organizational structure and systems.

Working closely with FLICC, CST designed a School Improvement Initiative based on 14 effective practices aligned with CST’s *Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement*. CST and FLICC created the training materials to accompany a *School Improvement Guide*, the *Guide* and training materials were translated to Spanish, and FLICC staff assisted PRDE personnel with implementation. The BSCP Center joined the collaboration in late summer. Weekly conference calls with all three centers and PRDE personnel continue to guide the work. The BSCP Center created a variety of communication tools, and designed PRDE webpages for the initiative that also serve as channels of communication, including blogs about specific schools.

143 of Puerto Rico’s 800 schools—identified as CSI, TSI, or additional TSI schools—receive the services of the School Improvement Initiative, supported by regionally-based Auxiliary Superintendents coordinated by a central administration consultant. The communication needs are great for a project of this magnitude in a system rapidly repairing itself.
LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Sam Redding, representing the BSCP Center and CST at roll-out of Culture Shift Initiative in Puerto Rico

In November, PRDE requested from CST and FLICC a Culture Shift Initiative, rooted again in CST’s Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement. CST and FLICC responded with rapid development of an initiative to be taken to 700 schools through the regional offices. Again, communication needs were extensive, and the BSCP Center aided in meeting them. The Culture Shift Initiative was launched this month—February—with training for teams from the seven regions.

Announcing the BSCP Center’s webinar: “Taking stock in ESSA’s school-by-school financial requirement as SEAs begin releasing data”

Join the BSCP Center on April 4, 2019 at 2:00pm ET for an interactive webinar hosted by BSCP Center partner Edunomics Lab on ESSA’s financial reporting requirement. We’ll examine early state releases of school-by-school expenditures in those states where data are now available. During this webinar, participants will see how leading states are incorporating financial transparency data in school and district report cards. Edunomics will assess what can be learned from these early adopters and applied to states that plan to publish in late 2019 or early 2020. Please register here.

I am looking forward to updating you on the Comprehensive Center Network-CCN progress and highlight some of the features that are underway with the CCN in the next director letter.

Sincerely,

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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).