

Letter from the Director

March 2015

Dear Colleagues,

In this month's letter, I want to focus on two matters that have the attention of so many state agencies right now—communicating effectively about reform activities and preparing useful state equity plans. We are working with several states and Regional Centers on these topics and I would like you to know about our progress.

How successfully are you communicating your reform message?

Mark your calendar to attend the meeting, *SEAs of the Future: Using Strategic Communication to Engage Stakeholders*, in Denver, Colorado on July 1 and 2, 2015. This meeting is intended for SEA teams consisting of chiefs, key leaders, policymakers, communicators, and Regional Comprehensive Center representatives. We will address areas critical to effective communication including: creating and leading strategic communication systems; crafting messages to gain clarity and support; aligning communications between policymakers and policy implementation; strategies to address controversial or important key issues; and feedback tools to evaluate communications processes. We have scheduled this convening with the assistance of Jeremy Anderson, President of Education Commission of the States (ECS), to follow the ECS 2015 National Forum on Education Policy. This meeting will allow representatives from the Central, South Central, Great Lakes, Northwest, and Midwest Comprehensive Centers, and the BSCP Center to attend both meetings, share ideas, network with colleagues, and discuss ways to implement recommendations from the benchmarking report, *State Education Agency Communications Process: Benchmark and Best Practices Project* (available at <http://www.bsccenter.org/benchmarking>). If you wish to be involved or want more information, contact Kerri White from the South Central Comprehensive Center (SC3) at kkwhite@ou.edu.

State equity plans benefit from supply chain management concepts

At the invitation of the Western Comprehensive Center we are working with the Great Teachers and Leaders Center to apply a well-established practice called *supply chain management* to the creation of the state equity plans. In this circumstance, supply chain management focuses on tracing the flow of teachers into schools and enhancing the ability of SEAs and LEAs to work effectively with teacher preparation programs. (See our recently published *Solutions* [Issue 7], *Talent Pipeline Management in Education* for elaboration.) Last week we discussed this approach with state teams from Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, and Utah. Work with the states emphasized a particular aspect of supply chain management called *supplier relationship management*. As its name suggests, it is about creating good relationships between school

districts that need teachers and the programs that provide them, all for hiring the right teachers, with the appropriate training and capabilities, in the right places at the right time. Working with the regional relationships of the Western Comprehensive Center and the programmatic expertise of the Great Teachers and Leaders Center, we expect to have two or more projects emerge soon. We will report on them as they progress.

Do you know the blue bird?



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Sincerely,



Dean H. Nafziger, Ph.D.
Director
Building State Capacity & Productivity Center at Edvance Research
210-558-4101
dnafziger@edvanceresearch.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 21 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 Edvance Research, Inc., the Academic Development Institute, and the Edunomics Lab (Georgetown University).

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