

Letter from the Director



September/October 2016

Greetings Colleagues,

I look forward to our fifth year working with states and regional comprehensive centers throughout the country. Our focus this year is providing support in the planning and implementation process in response to *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA). In this letter I will tell you about our progress in implementing Strategic Performance Management (SPM) in Arkansas and the Virgin Islands, and the status of the [SPM Guiding Coalition](#). In addition, I want to bring your attention to the financial transparency requirements in ESSA and the support the BSCP Center can provide.

How will states repurpose their education agencies in the era of devolved control?

This is the question Sam Redding and Allison Layland address in the recently released Solutions, Issue No. 8 entitled, [States Chart New Directions for Education with a Little Help from their Friends](#). Recognizing that ESSA will open opportunities for new thinking about the role of the SEA the BSCP Center developed a strategic performance management technical assistance process consisting of three online modules. The goal of the modules is to help SEA leaders redefine their agency's direction, create an organizational structure around that direction, and devise a performance management system to encourage productivity and innovation. The process brings strategic planning together with performance management to build a cohesive system to engage people in performance-focused work. Our Solutions 8 publication provides details on how the SPM process worked in two very different SEAs, Arkansas and the Virgin Islands, gives perspective on how each of the modules were implemented, including the impact of each module on the SEA, and highlights lessons learned about the process in different state contexts.

What is the SPM Guiding Coalition and what is their work for the year? The [BSCP Strategic Performance Management Guiding Coalition](#) comprises State Education Department leaders and staff from Regional Comprehensive Centers dedicated to exploring and using strategic performance management to improve efficiency and effectiveness of in SEAs and LEAs to optimize service quality for students.

The Guiding Coalition has been meeting virtually over the last six months. Members have discussed performance management principles from business, reflected on articles, and shared current efforts and challenges related to SEA planning and implementation. Specific topics are driven by states needs and include: performance management in districts and schools; tools and resources for strategic performance management; and discussion on creating a performance management professional association. The Coalition is planning its first face-to-face meeting this fall and a spring management institute for all interested Comprehensive Centers and SEAs. Current membership includes the states of AR, KY, NH, VI, KS, DE, ID, CO, RI, and IN as well as 6 Centers.

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What are the financial transparency requirements in ESSA and how can BSCP support implementation of those requirements?

States will be required to annually report per-pupil expenditures of Federal, State, and local funds, including actual personnel and non-personnel expenditures disaggregated by funding source for each local educational agency and EACH SCHOOL in the state for the preceding fiscal year.

This requirement presents an opportunity for SEAs to build information systems that help schools/districts leverage their dollars to do the most for students. By connecting spending and outcomes data, school and district leaders will be able to see what kinds of spending work best with different student populations and schooling contexts, and can benchmark their own progress toward getting the most for the dollars they have. Toward this end, the goal for states isn't only to promote a focus on equity, but also to build a useful tool and interface that work to drive productivity improvements across the entire schooling system.

Helping states meet the new reporting requirements will be a major focus for the BSCP Center in this year. Our partner, the Edunomics Lab, has done substantial work on financial transparency systems, and we are well poised to assist SEAs on meeting this requirement. If you are interested in learning more about how we can help your state meet the new requirements, please email Laura Anderson at laura.anderson@georgetown.edu.

Other resources available on our website:

- A [report on state information systems](#) to support productivity which can help SEAs understand the relevance of such a system for supporting improvements throughout the state's schools
- A [recorded webinar](#) designed to help SEA leaders understand the value of such an information system.

I hope you find this letter to be beneficial and that it keeps you informed on BSCP Center work as we move into year 5 of supporting centers and states. Thank you for your interest, participation, and collaboration with the BSCP Center.

Sincerely,



Dean H. Nafziger, Ph.D.

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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 Edynamics Lab (Georgetown University).

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