

Building State Capacity and Productivity (BSCP) Center

Technical Assistance for State Education Agencies (SEAs)

Performance and Productivity in the SEA of the Future

The BSCP Center

The BSCP Center is one of seven national content centers in the U. S. Department of Education’s comprehensive center system that also includes 15 regional comprehensive centers (RCCs). This network of technical assistance centers is charged with supporting the work of state education agencies (SEAs). At the BSCP Center, we specialize in enhancing SEA performance and productivity by developing and providing high quality information, tools, and implementation support.

The Center’s Mission

The BSCP Center’s mission is to help **Chief State School Officers** and their leadership teams to:

- **Lead Change:** Transform the SEA for performance improvement
- **Advance Productivity:** Develop infrastructure and systems to incentivize and promote productivity
- **Differentiate Systems:** Balance and target accountability, recognition, support, and intervention for districts and schools
- **Stimulate Innovation:** Eliminate barriers, facilitate collaboration and new thinking, and incentivize innovation within the SEA and across the state

The Center’s Priorities

Chief Performance Officers (CPOs). *The BSCP Center promotes and supports the position of Chief Performance Officer in the SEA.* The CPO gathers performance data for the organization and analyzes this information to determine how organizational performance can improve. The CPO then reports recommendations to other executives. The CPO communicates with departments and divisions about specific objectives. At the end of a set period, the CPO provides a detailed report and analysis of organizational performance.

SEA of the Future. *The BSCP Center supports SEAs in their transition to performance-oriented organizations.* As state departments of education are facing a daunting challenge of improving student performance with limited financial resources, the SEA of the Future will be “performance-oriented” rather than “compliance-based” to provide leadership and capacity building for local education agencies.

Performance and Productivity. *The BSCP Center promotes performance management and productivity as the bedrock of practice for the SEA of the Future.* Performance management is a holistic approach to improve the functioning of an organization by focusing on clear, measurable, and well-communicated goals and managing organization performance at all levels to attain those goals. Productivity is the ratio of effectiveness to cost. Advancing productivity means finding ways to maximize student outcomes with the money at hand.

The Center’s Current Focus Areas

- Performance Management
- Productivity
- Strategic Planning
- Strategic Communications
- Talent Development
- Systems of Recognition, Accountability, and Support
- Integrating Services for All Students (SPED)

Technical Assistance from the BSCP Center

State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Regional Comprehensive Centers (RCCs) may learn more about technical assistance services from the BSCP Center by contacting Lois Myran at: info@BSCPcenter.org

Like any effective organization, the SEA must be proactive in crystalizing and projecting a course of action that, while adaptable to external pressures, is sufficiently centered to provide its personnel with a sense of direction and purpose. At some point in time, the SEA lays out its vision, mission, goals, and theory of action, amending these key elements of organizational operation as required. Within this framework of SEA purpose and direction, performance management systems can be constructed to continuously elevate the agency's effectiveness and efficiency. The BSCP Center provides technical assistance to SEAs, in conjunction with their RCCs, to enhance SEA performance and productivity.

BSCP Center provides three types of technical assistance for SEAs:

- 1. Resources and Tools.** The BSCP Center maintains a website (www.bscpcenter.org) that is stocked with original and vetted resources on the Center's focus topics. The BSCP Center regularly publishes research and practice briefs and monographs and conducts webinars by authors of its publications. See especially *The SEA of the Future* series, *Solutions* reports, reports from completed benchmarking projects, and rubric-based tools. The BSCP Center's director releases a monthly Letter from the Director with updates on Center activity and announcement of new publications and events.
- 2. Working Groups and Collaborative Projects (multiple states).** The BSCP Center assists groups of SEAs with common interests in projects such as the following:
 - The **Association of Chief Performance Officers**, facilitated by the BSCP Center, is a professional community of key SEA personnel with primary responsibility for performance management within their agencies; and
 - **Collaborative Benchmarking.** To help SEAs learn about and adapt best practices that exist in other SEAs and other organizations, the BSCP Center, working closely with the Regional Comprehensive Centers, creates multi-state groups through a Collaborative Benchmarking Best Practices Process that allows SEAs to develop a deep understanding of best practices targeting matters of common interest.
 - **Productivity Infrastructure Consortia.** In collaboration with CCSSO, this BSCP working group of SEAs develops new infrastructure to support productivity improvements such as information systems.
- 3. Consultancies and Intensive Assistance with an Individual State.** A consultancy may be as simple as arranging a conference call between SEA personnel and a BSCP consultant to discuss a topic of particular interest to the SEA. A second level of technical assistance is a one-day, on-site meeting (Organizing for Performance Management) between BSCP Center consultants and the CSSO and leadership team. The purpose of the meeting is to assess the SEA's current status relative to performance management and productivity. The BSCP Center consultants follow the meeting with a quick-turnaround report synthesizing the outcomes of the meeting and suggesting next steps. Next steps may include up to a year of continuing technical assistance, including use of the BSCP Center's IndiSEA™ performance management system, with:
 - Strategic Planning
 - System of Recognition, Accountability, and Support
 - Integrated Services for All Students (SPED)

Other customized technical assistance plans may also be developed with the SEA.