Strategic Performance for Your Branch

Organizing People and Their Work in an LEA or SEA Division or Strand

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This guidebook is for a division or strand of work within an LEA or SEA where the organization has not implemented Strategic Performance Management. For a similar manual for agency-wide implementation in an LEA or SEA, see the detailed SPM implementation manual—*Strategic Performance Management: Organizing People and Their Work in the LEA or SEA of the Future* at www.bscpcenter.org/performance

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Strategic Performance Management

This publication is one of three in a suite of guidebooks on strategic performance management from the Building State Capacity and Productivity Center. See www.bscpcenter.org/performance

Strategic Performance Management: Organizing People and Their Work in the LEA or SEA of the Future
This manual describes the process by which SPM is installed agency-wide in an LEA or SEA.

Casting a Statewide Strategic Performance Net: Interlaced Data and Responsive Supports
Casting shows how SPM methods can underlie a statewide system of support for district and school improvement.

Strategic Performance for Your Branch: Organizing People and Their Work in an LEA or SEA Division or Strand
When a division of an agency (LEA or SEA), or a strand of work that runs across divisions, is ready to take SPM seriously before the whole agency is ready, this guidebook shows how.

More information and resources about Strategic Performance Management can be accessed on the SPM webpage on the BSCP Center website at www.bscpcenter.org/performance/

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A copy of this publication can be downloaded from www.bscpcenter.org

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Building State Capacity and Productivity Center

The Building State Capacity and Productivity (BSCP) Center develops publications and tools on Strategic Performance Management (SPM) and provides technical assistance to State Education Agencies (SEAs) to create performance management systems aligned with strategic plans. This work has been agency-wide, headed by the Chief State School Officer (CSSO) and his or her leadership teams.

The BSCP Center provides technical assistance for an SEA or LEA to implement SPM: (1) agency-wide; (2) in a division or strand of work; or (3) across SEAs, LEAs, and schools in a Multi-Organization System (MOS). The BSCP Center and the Center on School Turnaround (CST) combine their expertise to offer guidance for applying SPM in a state's system of support for district and school improvement.

Note: For the SEA or LEA, we always recommend implementation of agency-wide SPM, led by the CSSO or superintendent. See the detailed implementation manual—*Strategic Performance Management: Organizing People and Their Work in the LEA or SEA of the Future* (2nd ed.) by Sam Redding and Allison Layland, Building State Capacity and Productivity Center, 2017.

Part I: Introduction to Strategic Performance Management

For state education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs), the tide of work has shifted pretty dramatically in recent years. Once obsessed with regulatory fussiness, these agencies are now busy harnessing innovation in pursuit of better schools and more successful students. They are striving for big wins in a time of tight budgets. To succeed, states and districts must be strategic, and at the same time they must be nimble and creative. They must fully engage the talents and hard work of everyone in their organizations, with everyone pulling in the same direction. They need to strike a sure direction with strategic planning joined seamlessly with systematic implementation of that direction.

Strategic planning "defines where the organization is going, sometimes where it is not going, and provides focus" (Ginter, Duncan, & Swayne, 2013, p.16). Performance management is "the systematic process by which an agency involves its employees, as individuals and members of a group, in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of agency mission and goals" (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, n.d., para. 1). *Strategic performance management* folds strategic planning and performance management into one, seamless process, combining systematic focus with opportunities to challenge the routine and discover more productive avenues to success.

A branch of an SEA or LEA may be a division (department) or a strand (a program or initiative that cuts across divisions). For example, Human Resources, Learning Services, or Curriculum and Instruction may be among the half dozen or so main segments of the organization we call divisions in this guidebook. Communication or School Improvement may not be divisions, but major strands of work that include people and initiatives in different divisions.

When the whole organization—SEA or LEA—implements *strategic performance management*, the role of every division and strand is included. But what can the leader of a division or strand do when the agency as a whole is not ready to adopt the performance management methodology? Can the leader apply strategic performance management methods to a division within an agency or a strand of work that spans divisions? We propose that the leader can, and furthermore, doing so will plant the seeds for building an agency-wide system. Always, an agency-wide system is preferable to strategic performance management for a division or strand, but why should the good be sacrificed on the altar of the perfect?

Strategic Performance Management (SPM-capitalized for the process specifically advanced by the BSCP Center) is a multi-step process that marries *strategic planning* with *performance management* to guide an organization's leadership in:

- articulating vision, values, mission, and goals;
- creating an organizational structure based on strategies and functions;
- aligning resources with the structure;
- addressing human capital and productivity; and
- establishing performance measures.

SPM's logically coherent process engages every person in the organization in performance-guided, satisfying work connected to the organization's mission. The ongoing performance management enables personnel to keep a keen eye on productivity and opportunities to innovate while designing their work, routinely checking progress, and assuming clear responsibility for annual milestones.

In any organization, SPM adopts the characteristics of a system, both in terms of the organization's internal operations and its relationship to external influences and external beneficiaries of its services. SPM's consideration of the internal operations of the organization as well as its relationship to external entities of two types—those that influence the agency and those that are direct recipients of the agency's services—can be reduced to a graphical construct such as Figure 1.

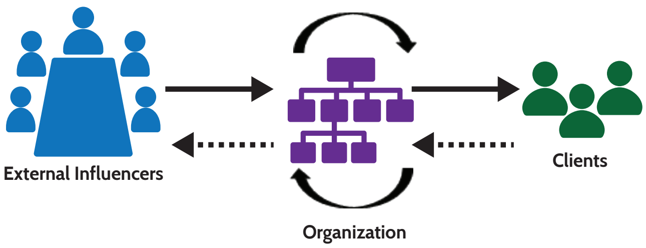


Figure 1. The organization, its external influencers, and its clients

The education system places the state, district, and school in relationship to each other and to the external influence of each, as depicted in Figure 2.

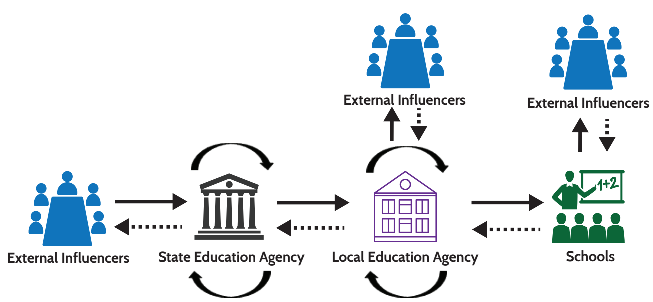
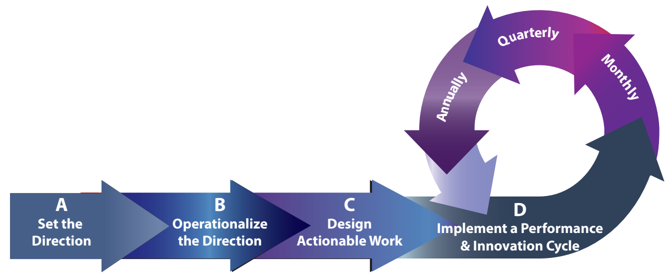


Figure 2. The context of an SEA or LEA

Building an SPM system at the SEA level is already happening in a few states (for examples, see Layland & Redding, 2016; see also BSCP, 2016a; BSCP, 2016b). Each of these SEAs is applying a process described in the manual, *Strategic Performance Management: Organizing People and Their Work in the Sea of the Future* (Redding & Layland, 2017). However, not all SEAs or LEAs are ready or willing to take on the demanding task of building an agency-wide strategic system of performance management. Short of the full, agency-wide SPM, getting a division or strand in shape is a great idea. That is what this guidebook is about—applying SPM to a single division within an organization or a strand of work across an organization.

SPM agency-wide is implemented through the four-module SPM framework and its 15-step process. SPM for a specific division or strand in an LEA or SEA is also implemented through the same four-module framework, however, several steps are combined, leaving 11 steps to complete. The four modules (or phases) for instituting SPM, as depicted in Figure 3, are:

1. Set the Direction;
2. Operationalize the Direction;
3. Design Actionable Work; and



4. Implement a Performance and Innovation Cycle.

Figure 3. SPM's Four Module Framework

A more detailed depiction of the 11 steps in the four-module framework is provided in Figure 4 (see following page).

Organization-wide SPM in an SEA or LEA takes the commitment of the Chief State School Officer or Superintendent to engage the leadership team and various staff in the modules for a minimum of 10 days (typically two days per month for five months). Installing SPM in a single division or strand of work requires the full endorsement of the CSSO or Superintendent, the engagement of the division's or strand's leader, and leadership team, and a minimum of four to six days of intense, initial engagement with BSCP Center consultants.

In Parts II and III of this guidebook, the process for installing SPM in a division or strand is detailed. Throughout the SPM process, whether it is used for a division, strand, or agency-wide, teams step aside from their work at key points in time and look back at it through a special pair of glasses. These glasses are special because they have three lenses:

- **Productivity Lens**—is what we are planning to do (or doing) the most effective use of available resources in moving the dial on performance measures, achieving milestones, and pursuing organizational goals?
- **Best Practice Lens**—is what we are planning to do (or doing) encouraging or applying what is known as best (sound) educational practice?
- **Innovation Lens**—do we have reasonable evidence that a specific deviation from best practice is likely to achieve greater productivity?

In addition, communication plays a significant role throughout SPM implementation. As draft goals and strategies are created, for example, they are shared with all other members of the organization, division, or strand and feedback is gathered and used to finalize the strategic direction. The task forces create a glossary at the beginning of Module A, and terms are added throughout the process and shared with staff to keep everyone in the loop with the new way of doing business. The glossary is used to communicate and assist everyone in understanding key terms related to the strategic performance management system. For more information on strategic communication, including useful tools, see the BSCP Center's website at http://www.bscpcenter.org/communications/

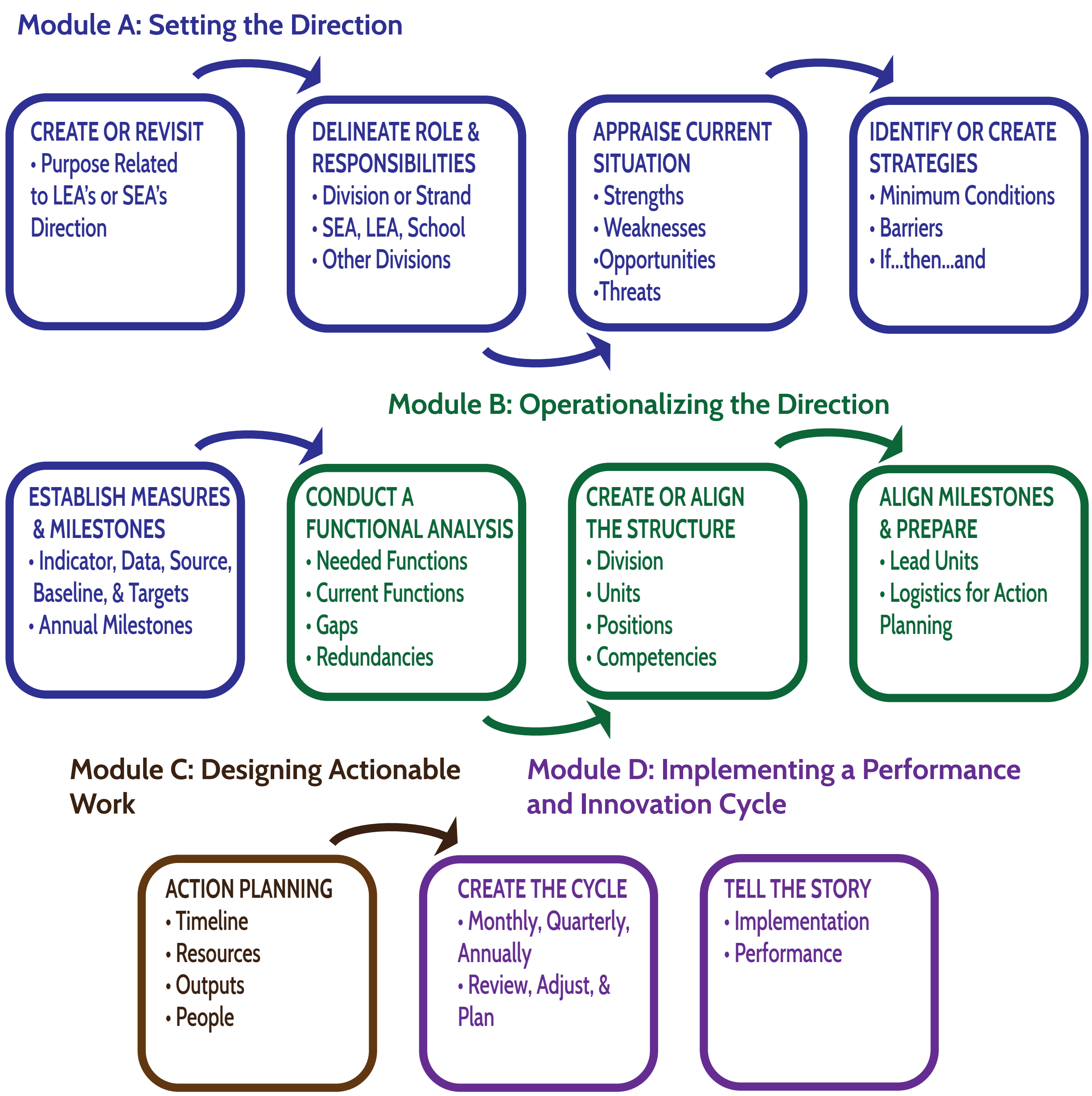


Figure 4. Strategic Performance Management process for a division or strand

Part II: SPM in an Organization's Division or Strand of Work

The SPM process can be applied to an LEA or SEA division or strand to better organize the people and their work, improve performance, and increase results. A division is easy to recognize; it is right there on the organization chart, one of the big chunks of organizational real estate with a leader at the top, sitting close to the head honcho. A unit is easy to see; it is one of the smaller fiefdoms that the divisional kingdom has been carved into, and it too is right there on the chart. A strand, on the other hand, is a slippery creature, meandering its way through the organization and leaving no obvious trace on the chart. The existence of a strand often indicates that an area of work has grown significant enough to be its own division. Alternatively, the strand exists, within the SPM world, as an interlinking of collaborating units that stretch across divisions.

Ideally, an SPM system is put in place across the entire organization, but sometimes a division within an organization wants to employ SPM methods in the absence of an organization-wide system. Similarly, a strand of work that unites a segment of people that cuts across divisions may seek more productive ways to operate. It is always best for a part in a system to be certain of its connection to the whole—its purpose in advancing the mission of the organization. For that to happen, the organization's own vision, mission, and goals must be certain, and the role of the division or strand must be made clear relative to the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Otherwise, the organization itself exists as an external influencer (albeit a powerful one) to the division or strand—the division or strand is an orphan, as shown in Figure 5.

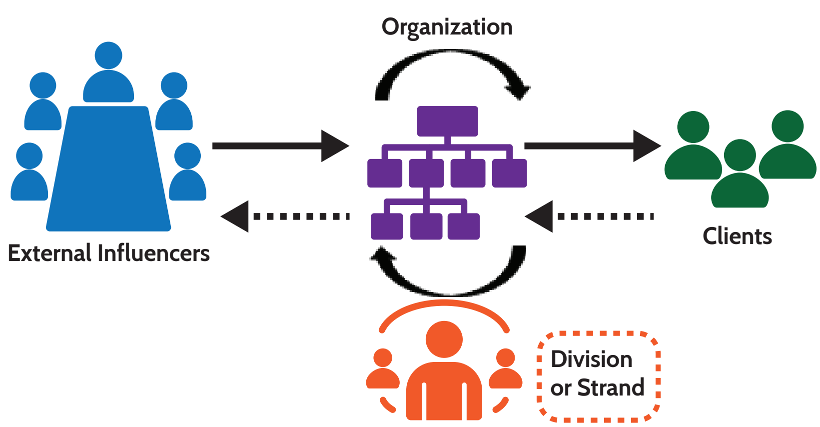


Figure 5. The orphaned division or strand

An incomplete SPM system may exist in an organization when:

1. The organization has not set *its direction* (vision, values, mission, goals, strategies, measures) or is missing some of these components, making it difficult for a division or strand to cement its purpose within the organization.
2. The organization has set its direction, but has not articulated the purpose of each division or strand relative to that direction.

3. The organization or the division or strand has not operationalized the direction by establishing an aligned organizational structure and defining the purposes and functions of each division and unit.
4. The division or strand does not plan, execute, and monitor its work aimed at clear annual milestones.
5. The division or strand does not routinely analyze appropriate data to make nimble decisions to enhance productivity.

When any of these gaps in strategic performance management exist in the organization, the first response for the division or strand is to see if some of the gaps can be filled. This may require a degree of imagination and a ton of diplomacy.

1. Will the organization's leader approve a full SPM process for the entire organization?
2. Is it possible that some elements of organization-wide SPM exist—organizational vision, mission, and goals are most common—even if they are not consequential in the daily operations of the organization? Could a divisional SPM system be grafted to these shallow roots?
3. Will the organization's leader agree to convene division leaders and other key personnel and construct the organizational mission and goals to hang the division's or strand's own SPM process on?

<u>The organization's mission and goals are the two critical roots</u> to which a division or strand may graft SPM. If they exist, fine, but if not, the division or strand will need to encourage the organization's leader to convene leadership for a day or two and construct them. Once drafted, they will enable the division or strand to move forward. The leadership may wish for these mission and goal statements to exist as a gray-out component of the division or strand's SPM. In other words, they guide the division or strand in constructing its SPM but are not public.

Given this element of mischief-making (the need to move forward even if the organization as a whole is not ready to do so), a division or strand follows the 11 steps below for installing SPM methods. In this context, a division would be a major node on the organization chart such as Learning Services or Finance, whereas a strand threads across divisions such as Communications or School Improvement.

The Division or Strand Leadership Team. Just who takes the bull by the horns and does the work of installing SPM in a division or strand? A leadership team for a division is comprised of the leader of the division and all of the unit leaders. For example, the Finance division could have a division leader and unit leaders for Procurement, Property and Assets, and Grants Management. A strand may be a more complicated consideration. A Communication strand, for example, could have a designated leader and representatives from the various divisions and units across the agency that are part of the work.

Each module in the SPM process is led by a task force. The participants for each SPM task force are identified by the division or strand leader and may consist of the same members or vary with each Module. In a small agency, or small division or strand, everyone that belongs to the branch may meet as a task force to implement SPM. Always, once the strategic direction is set and some organizational matters attended to, all the staff begins work on teams (which we call units) to create action plans aimed at milestones, do their work, collaborate, and report their progress.

Part III: Modules and Steps for a Division or Strand to Implement SPM Methods

Module A: Setting the Direction

The division or strand leader selects a team to tackle Module A as the Direction Task Force. This group's job is to clarify the organization's strategic direction (vision, mission, values, goals, and strategies, to the extent they exist) and define the purpose of the division or strand relative to the organization's strategic direction. There are at least three different ways to make a connection between the division or strand and the organization's strategic direction.

Which approach will the division or strand take to establish its connection to the organization? Check one.

_____ **Option 1**: Convince the organization's leadership to launch an organization-wide SPM that will include the division or strand.

_____ **Option 2**: Connect the division's or strand's purpose statement to existing elements of the organization's vision, mission, goals, and strategies.

_____ **Option 3**: Convince the organization's leader to convene division heads and other key leaders and at least construct an organizational mission and goals, even if they are not yet to be considered public.

If Option 1—Waiting for the organization to implement SPM and include the division or strand in it. Congratulations! Your orphaned division or strand will soon be adopted. See the detailed SPM implementation manual—*Strategic Performance Management: Organizing People and Their Work in the LEA or SEA of the Future* (Redding & Layland, 2017; www.bscpcenter.org/performance).

If Option 2—Connecting to extant pieces of the organization's vision, mission, values, goals, and/or strategies. Round up what is available and make use of the material in Module A. Proceed to Step 1.

If Option 3—Take a couple days with leadership and, at a minimum, construct a likely mission for the organization, two to five organizational goals, and performance measures for each goal. See definitions for mission, goals, and goal performance measures below. Then proceed to Step 1.

Step 1. Create or Revisit Purpose

In Step 1, the Direction Task Force defines the purpose of the division or strand within the context of the organization's direction. Completion of Step 1 results in the alignment of:

1. LEA or SEA Mission Statement
2. LEA or SEA Goals and Goal Explanations
3. LEA or SEA Goal Performance Measures
4. Division or Strand Purpose Statement

By the end of Step 1, the Direction Task Force will have a purpose statement representing the role and work of the division or strand in relation to the LEA's or SEA's vision, mission, values, and goals (or at least mission and goals).

LEA or SEA Mission Statement. The mission statement succinctly presents the organization's purpose. It describes what the organization does and for whom. It aims at the organization's ideal vision of itself and provides direction for its employees, clients, and partners.

Example of an SEA Mission Statement
The Department of Education advocates for state policy; develops and implements state regulations; conducts effective oversight of school districts; and provides high-quality technical assistance to districts and communities to maximize educational opportunities and academic and personal success of all students throughout the state.

LEA or SEA Goals. The Direction Task Force identifies which <u>organizational</u> goals the division's or strand's purpose most supports. Goals in education organizations are typically <u>not</u> restricted by time as they express an ongoing execution of the agency's mission. The goals are aimed at results for students, and they are expressed for **all** students (or every student).

For example, the SEA or LEA may have a manageable set of broad goals that: (1) highlight desired results for **all** students; (2) take into account both the student outcomes at the time of graduation and the ongoing progress during the years of schooling; and (3) include academic outcomes and student personal competencies (desired personal attributes not directly measured by academic markers).

Don't worry that the goals seem to lack quantitative measures. That comes with the goal performance measures.

Example of an LEA or SEA Goal
Each student will meet his or her annual growth targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.

LEA or SEA Goal Explanation. A goal explanation is simply a paragraph or two describing the intent of the goal. The goal explanation is a way to ensure that everyone understands the goal in the same way.

LEA or SEA Goal Performance Measures. Performance measures are defined for each goal so that progress toward the goal can be determined. Progress toward the goals demonstrates that the organization's mission is being carried out and is closer to reaching the ideal state of the vision. Does the division have a role in the collection and reporting of performance measure data? If so, how is this role reflected in its defined purpose? If the organization has not identified performance measures for its goals, the Direction Task Force should identify performance measures for those goals that the division's or strand's purpose most supports. The measures would focus on student results that are indirectly impacted by the work of the specific division or strand.

Example of an LEA or SEA Goal Performance Measure

Indicator: Percent of students who meet or exceed annual growth target.
Data Source: Growth analysis of annual state standards assessment.
Baseline: 67%
Year 1 Target: 73%
Year 2 Target: 77%

Division/Strand Purpose Statement. The purpose statement represents why the division or strand exists and how it is part of the greater organization's strategic direction. The purpose statement also represents what the division or strand does for its clients (the beneficiaries of its products and services), both internally and externally. Who are the clients, and what services do they receive from the division or strand? Who are the future clients, what would their needs be, and how will the division or strand meet those needs within the context of the greater direction of the organization? If a defined purpose statement is already in place, the Direction Task Force considers its current and future relevance and revises the statement, if needed. The purpose statement is the equivalent of the organization's mission statement but focused on the work of the division or strand. Below is an example of a division's and strand's purpose statement.

Human Resources Division Purpose Statement: *The purpose of the Human Resources Division is to hire, develop, support, and retain a high-quality workforce of professionals committed to providing exceptional services to districts, schools, partners, and other agencies.*

School Improvement Strand Purpose Statement: *The purpose of school improvement across the agency is to provide leadership and differentiated supports to districts and schools to improve the quality of education services so each student graduates prepared for college or a career.*

Attachment A: The Division or Strand Purpose Statement Related to the Organization's Direction is provided to assist with Step 1.

Quality Check

- [ ] 1. At a minimum, SEA or LEA mission and goals with goal explanations and measures have been identified.
- [ ] 2. The Direction Task Force identified SEA or LEA goals relevant to its purpose and clients.
- [ ] 3. The division or strand purpose statement describes its role relative to the organization's direction (vision, mission, values, goals, and measures; or at least mission and goals).
- [ ] 4. The purpose statement describes the division's or strand's work, what it does, how it serves internal and external clients to advance the organization's direction.

Attachment A: The Division or Strand Purpose Statement Related to the Organization's Direction

Use the chart below to document the organization's vision, mission, values, and goals and the division or strand purpose.

PART I: Organization Direction		
Vision:		
Mission:		
Values:		
	Goals and Goal Explanations Those relating most to the division or strand have an * and include a brief statement of why the goal most relates to the division or strand.	**Goal Performance Measures** Those relating most to the division or strand have an *. If no goal measures exist, the Direction Task Force creates measures for the goals most closely related to the division or strand. More than one indicator may be necessary for a goal.
1.	Goal:	Indicator:
		Data Source:
	Explanation:	Baseline:
		Year 1 Target:
		Year 2 Target:
2.	Goal:	Indicator:
		Data Source:
	Explanation:	Baseline:
		Year 1 Target:
		Year 2 Target:

PART II: Division or Strand Purpose

Division or strand clients and needs (to be met by division or strand):

External	Internal

Division or strand purpose (relative to the organization's mission and its clients):

Step 2. Delineate Roles and Responsibilities

Whether the organization is an SEA or an LEA, a division or strand within the organization stands in relationship both to other divisions and strands within the organization and to other parts of the education system outside the organization. Clarifying the division's or strand's goal-related roles and responsibilities relative to other parts of the organization and to other parts of the education system outside the organization is important.

Delineating the roles and responsibilities of the state, district, and school in relationship to the division or strand brings needed clarity to what the division or strand should and should not do. Bringing clarity to the roles and responsibilities of the division or strand in relationship to the organization's goals is helpful when later identifying a division's or strand's goal-aligned strategies.

This exercise helps inform the Direction Task Force of roles and responsibilities of other divisions, strands, or even units within the agency, especially those internal clients of the division or strand.

Attachment B: Goals, Roles, and Responsibilities for Division or Strand is provided to assist with Step 2.

Quality Check

- ☐ 1. For each relevant goal, roles and responsibilities of the SEA or LEA, the division or strand, other divisions or strands, and districts and schools were identified.
- ☐ 2. Discussions included input from internal and external clients, including districts and schools.
- ☐ 3. Gaps and conflicts have been identified and resolved or possible solutions have been identified.

Attachment B: Goal, Roles, and Responsibilities for Division or Strand

For each relevant organizational goal, the Direction Task Force delineates the role of the division or strand, the SEA, the LEA, and the school. The Task Force may choose to seek input from external and internal clients including state, district, and school representatives before completing the table below.

PART I: Goal, Role, and Responsibilities Relative to Other Parts of Education System			
Organization Goal # Organization Goal:			
Name of This Division or Strand:			
Division or Strand Role and Responsibilities Relative to Goal	SEA Role and Responsibilities Relative to Goal	LEA Role and Responsibilities Relative to Goal	School Role and Responsibilities Relative to Goal
Current Conflicts or Gaps			

PART II: Goal, Role, and Responsibilities Relative to Other Key Divisions and Strands in the Organization

Organization Goal #   Organization Goal:

Name of This Division or Strand:

Name of Other Division or Strand	Other Division's/Strand's Role and Responsibilities Relative to This Division or Strand	This Division's/Strand's Role and Responsibilities Relative to Other Division or Strand

Current Conflicts or Gaps

Step 3. Appraise Current Situation

Before moving on to strategies, the Direction Task Force conducts a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of each relevant organizational goal in relation to its role and responsibilities. **Strengths** are capabilities that enable the division or strand to perform well, ones that should be leveraged to sustain or increase performance. **Weaknesses** are characteristics that hinder the division's or strand's performance and need to be addressed. **Opportunities** are trends, variables, events, and forces that could be capitalized on to improve the division's or strand's performance. **Threats** are forces or events outside of the division's or strand's control that need to be planned for, responded to, or mitigated. Data on past and current work, feedback from clients and partners both within and outside of the division, and projected work including upcoming legislation should be used in the SWOT analysis.

***Productivity* Lens.** The analysis is conducted with a productivity lens—strengths must be efficient and effective; weaknesses include the identification of inefficiencies in resource utilization. Division or strand strengths can be used to capitalize on external opportunities. Do the opportunities capitalize on productivity, or can productivity increase with the opportunity? What are external threats, and could they be the cause of any weaknesses? Could the threats be addressed or eliminated? What threatens division or strand productivity?

***Innovation* Lens.** Analysis also includes an innovation lens—do current conditions support collaboration, creative thinking, and reasonable risk taking to encourage innovation?

Analysis of data, recognition of patterns, and honest discussions lead to a consensus listing of three to five division or strand strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for each relevant goal. Completing a SWOT is a constructive exercise that sets the stage for determining the division's or strand's goal-aligned strategies.

Attachment C: Division or Strand SWOT Analysis is provided to assist with Step 3.

Quality Check

- ☐ 1. The Direction Task Force gathered and used information from clients, partners, and other influencers in SWOT analysis.
- ☐ 2. Data (information) from multiple sources were analyzed to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- ☐ 3. Strengths and weaknesses were identified and accurately reflect the current state of the division or strand.
- ☐ 4. Opportunities and threats represent current context, including community, business, financial, and technology environments.
- ☐ 5. Analysis included examination of strengths with opportunities and weaknesses with threats.

Attachment C: Division or Strand SWOT Analysis

For each relevant organizational goal, identify the division's or strand's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in engaging and completing work to realize its purpose in relationship to the goal.

Goals	Strengths	Weaknesses
Goal 1		
	Opportunities	Threats
Goal 2	Strengths	Weaknesses
	Opportunities	Threats
Summary of Analysis		

Step 4. Identify or Create Goal-Aligned Strategies

If the organization has already created strategies, the Direction Task Force will work to get the strategies into proper SPM form, as per the instructions that follow (see the Strategy Lens Analysis and Format below before moving to Step 5). But if the organization has not identified such organizational strategies, the Direction Task Force will create strategies that link each organizational goal to the work of the division or strand. These strategies, then, will apply primarily to the work of the division or strand.

A strategy describes an <u>organization's</u> work in pursuing a goal. If the organization has already enumerated its strategies and aligned them with its goals, then the division or strand simply determines which strategies describe its work and moves forward with them by creating milestones and actions. In the absence of such strategies, the Direction Task Force must create them.

If the Direction Task Force must create strategies, it creates them for the goals that it flagged as being most relevant to the division's or strand's own work. A "possibilities" approach is utilized to create a few powerful strategies aligned to each <u>relevant organizational goal</u>. The Task Force brainstorms possible strategies and identifies the minimum conditions and barriers for each strategy. Strategies with minimum conditions that can be or are in place and the fewest barriers are ones that are more likely be implemented.

Strategy Lens Analysis and Format

Strategies focus on the "what" and "how" of the division's or strand's work and the direct and indirect impact of that work. Strategies do not necessarily represent what the division or strand has been doing, but what it could do to effectively support the relevant organizational goals, carry out its role, meet its responsibilities, and realize its purpose. A strategy should take <u>multiple years</u> to implement. If a strategy can be accomplished in a year, it is too narrow and may actually be a milestone. Lenses are also applied to narrow in on the few potent strategies needed to get the maximum results:

- **Productivity Lens**—is what we are planning to do (or doing) the most effective use of available resources?
- **Best Practice Lens**—is what we are planning to do (or doing) encouraging or applying what is known as best (sound) educational practice?
- **Innovation Lens**—do we have reasonable evidence that a specific deviation from best practice is likely to achieve greater productivity?

Whether the strategies have already been created for the organization or the Direction Task Force must create them, the strategies need to be constructed in the form of a theory of action. Strategies are composed as **If … then … and …** statements. The **If** part of the statement describes the work the division or strand engages in relative to the organizational goal. The **then** part refers to the direct impact of the work on the division's or strand's clients (internal or external) related to the goal. The final **and** part relates back to the student-focused <u>organizational goals</u>. It is in the **If** part of a division's or strand's goal-aligned strategy that a division or strand finds its work. The direct impact is found in the **then** statement, and the indirect (but very significant) impact in the **and** statement.

A final review of each selected strategy in relation with the SWOT is conducted to make sure strengths and opportunities are capitalized on and weaknesses or threats are addressed. In addition, the **If** part of the statement is scrutinized against the roles and responsibilities to ensure the division's or stand's work is within its proper purview. An explanation of the Direction Task Force's intent for the strategy is created for each strategy. The strategy explanations help others understand the reason and meaning of each strategy, which is critical when creating the strategy measures and milestones. The following are some examples of strategies.

Human Resources Division Purpose Statement: *The purpose of the Human Resources Division is to hire, develop, support, and retain a high-quality workforce of professionals committed to providing exceptional services to districts, schools, partners, and other agencies.*

LEA or SEA Goal: *Each student will meet his or her annual growth targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.*

Human Resources Strategy: ***If** we implement an employee evaluation process based on growth, rather than retribution, to build and retain high-quality employees, **then** more high-quality employees will be providing exceptional services to districts, schools, partners, and other agencies to meet the needs of all students, **and** each student will successfully meet his or her annual targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.*

School Improvement Strand Purpose Statement: *The purpose of school improvement across the agency is to provide leadership and differentiated supports to districts and schools to improve the quality of education services so each student graduates prepared for college or a career.*

LEA or SEA Goal: *Each student will meet his or her annual growth targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.*

School Improvement Strategy: ***If** we implement a system of differentiated technical assistance and supports matched to district and school needs, **then** more districts and schools will have the capacity to implement high-quality education services to meet the needs of each student **and** each student will successfully meet his or her annual targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.*

Attachment D: Strategy Development and **Attachment E: Strategy Theory of Action** are provided to assist with Step 4.

Quality Check

- [ ] 1. If the SEA or LEA has strategies for its goals, those strategies relevant to the division or strand's purpose have been identified.
- [ ] 2. For each relevant goal, possible strategies were identified or suggested without judgment.
- [ ] 3. Minimum conditions were listed for each possible strategy and represent what must happen for the strategy to become a reality.
- [ ] 4. Barriers that can and cannot be removed were identified for each strategy.
- [ ] 5. Decision-making included analysis of conditions in relation to barriers to select the most viable strategies.
- [ ] 6. Productivity, Best Practice, and Innovation lenses were applied to each strategy before final selection.
- [ ] 7. Strategies align with the roles and responsibilities of the division or strand.
- [ ] 8. Strategies are written as If...then...and... statements.

Attachment D: Strategy Development

Using a *possibilities approach*, the Direction Task Force brainstorms possible strategies for each relevant goal. For each possible strategy, list the conditions that must occur for the strategy to be accepted, supported, and implemented, as well as the barriers. If organizational strategies exist, identify those most relevant to the purpose of the division or strand and list the conditions and barriers relative to the division or strand work supporting the organizational strategies.

Goal	Possible Strategies	Must Have Conditions	Barriers
1.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
2.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
3.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
4.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
5.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		

Attachment E: Strategy Theory of Action

After discussing the conditions and barriers, the Direction Task Force determines which strategies have the most significant impact relative to the organizational goals, have conditions that are right for implementation, and have the fewest barriers that cannot be removed. Each selected strategy is then written as an **If …then …and** … statement. If working with organizational strategies, revise those identified relative to the division's or strand's work as **If …then …and** … statements.

Organization Goals	Division or Strand Strategies (State as If …then …and … statements)	Explanation of Why Strategy Was Created/Selected
Goal 1	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
Goal 2	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
Goal 3	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
Goal 4	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
Goal 5	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.

Step 5. Establish Strategy Performance Measures and Milestones

Once strategies are determined (either organizational strategies or strategies created for the division/strand) and expressed in If ...then ...and ... statements, performance measures are identified for each strategy. A performance measure includes one or more indicators, each with a data source, baseline, and two annual targets for each indicator. As part of an ongoing SPM cycle, targets are adjusted annually, based on data. By creating two years of targets and using data from Year 1 to either confirm or adjust Year 2 targets, a process is built that allows for adjustment based on changing contexts and conditions.

The strategy performance measure focuses on the **then** part of the strategy statement, the direct impact of the division's or strand's work. For example, a strategy performance measure for the following strategy statement could have one indicator on employee ratings (how many are of high quality) and another on the quality of services to clients (how many districts, schools, partners, and other agencies indicate services were exceptional).

> ***If*** *we implement an employee evaluation process based on growth, rather than retribution, to build and retain high-quality employees,* <u>***then*** *more high-quality employees will be providing exceptional services to districts, schools, partners, and other agencies to meet the needs of all students,*</u> ***and*** *each student will successfully meet his or her annual targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.*

In addition to the quantitative performance measures set for each strategy, qualitative, annual milestones are set for each strategy, describing work to be completed relative to the strategy in that timeframe. A milestone should take one year to complete. If a milestone can be completed in less than a year, then it may be too narrow and could be an action towards completing the milestone. If a milestone takes more than a year to complete, it is too broad and may indeed be a strategy. Two years of milestones will provide enough planning, yet allow for adjustments each year based on progress.

Creating milestones includes reviewing current work. In most cases, there are many initiatives, projects, and routines that personnel are already doing that support the goals, strategies, and milestones. If a current project or initiative supports a milestone, then it should be noted so the project or initiative can be represented as an action step for that milestone. If the current project or initiative supports the strategy, but there is no milestone for it, then a milestone should be created.

There may be an initiative, project, or routine that does not fit into a logical strategy or milestone. If that is the case, reexamining the intent of the division's or strand's purpose and strategies may provide clarity. Is this work required? Does it support a goal, the division's or strand's purpose, and strategies? If the answer is "yes," then a milestone can be added. If the answer is "no," the team should consider discontinuing or phasing out the work. Examples of strategy performance measures and milestones are provided below.

Human Resources Division Purpose Statement: *The purpose of the Human Resources Division is to hire, develop, support, and retain a high-quality workforce of professionals committed to providing exceptional services to districts, schools, partners, and other agencies.*

LEA or SEA Goal: *Each student will meet his or her annual growth targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.*

Human Resources Strategy: ***If*** *we implement an employee evaluation process based on growth, rather than retribution, to build and retain high-quality employees,* ***then*** *more high-quality employees will be providing exceptional services to districts, schools, partners, and other agencies to meet the needs of all students,* ***and*** *each student will successfully meet his or her annual targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.*

Strategy Performance Measure:

Indicator 1: Percent of clients (districts, schools, partners, and other agencies) indicating services were of high quality
Data Source: Client satisfaction survey
Baseline: 59%
Year 1 Target: 63%
Year 2 Target: 68%

Year 1 Milestone: Develop a professional growth plan process to be part of our employee evaluation system.

Year 2 Milestone: Pilot the professional growth plan process, and make adjustments based on feedback and plan for full implementation.

School Improvement Strand Purpose Statement: *The purpose of school improvement across the agency is to provide leadership and differentiated supports to districts and schools to improve the quality of education services so each student graduates prepared for college or a career.*

LEA or SEA Goal: *Each student will meet his or her annual growth targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.*

School Improvement Strategy: ***If*** *we implement a system of differentiated technical assistance and supports matched to district and school needs,* ***then*** *more districts and schools will have the capacity to implement high-quality education services to meet the needs of each student* ***and*** *each student will successfully meet his or her annual targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.*

Strategy Performance Measure:

Indicator 1: Percent of districts and schools indicating increased capacity as a result of technical assistance
Data Source: Post-technical assistance evaluations
Baseline: To be determined using 2017–18 evaluation data
Year 1 Target: To be determined using 2018–19 baseline data
Year 2 Target: To be determined using 2019–20 actual data

Year 1 Milestone: Create a technical assistance framework to differentiate supports by kind, frequency, intensity, and duration.

Year 2 Milestone: Pilot the technical assistance framework and gather feedback and make adjustments needed for full implementation.

Attachment F: Strategy Performance Measures and Milestones is provided to assist in Step 5.

Communicating the Direction. At the end of Module A, the entire strategic direction is communicated with staff, even if it has already been communicated throughout the creation process. In addition, a glossary is created during Module A, and terms are added throughout the other three modules. **Attachment G: Glossary of Terms** may assist in creating a glossary.

Quality Check

- ☐ 1. Performance measures were identified for each strategy and include indicators, data sources, baseline, and annual targets.
- ☐ 2. Measures can realistically be collected, analyzed, and used in making decisions related to the strategies and goals.
- ☐ 3. Specific, relevant milestones were identified for each strategy.
- ☐ 4. The milestones are necessary for the strategy to be implemented.
- ☐ 5. Milestones are specified for each year for at least two years.
- ☐ 6. Current work was reviewed and is either included in milestones, will be included as actions under specific milestones, or plans to investigate the need for the work have been created.
- ☐ 7. The direction is being communicated to all staff and input is being used to finalize the direction.
- ☐ 8. A glossary has been started to define and communicate key terms.

Attachment F: Strategy Performance Measures and Milestones

Milestones apply only to the work of the division or strand.

The Direction Task Force documents performance indicators, data sources, baseline, and targets for each strategy and creates milestones for the first two years.

Goal	Strategies	Strategy Performance Measures				Strategy Milestones
		Strategy Performance Indicators	Data Sources	Baseline	Strategy Indicator Targets	
Goal 1	Strategy 1.1				Year 1	Year 1
						Year 2
					Year 2	Year 1
						Year 2
	Strategy 1.2				Year 1	Year 1
						Year 2
					Year 2	Year 1
						Year 2
Goal 2	Strategy 2.1				Year 1	Year 1
						Year 2
					Year 2	Year 1
						Year 2
Goal 3	Strategy 3.1				Year 1	Year 1
						Year 2
					Year 2	Year 1
						Year 2
	Strategy 3.2				Year 1	Year 1
						Year 2
					Year 2	Year 1
						Year 2

List any current initiatives, projects, or other work that need to be included as actions under milestones:

Current Initiatives, Projects, Work	Related Milestone(s)	Comments

Attachment G: Glossary of Key Terms

Key Terms	Definition	Example or Reference

Module B: Operationalizing the Direction

Step 6. Conduct a Functional Analysis

For Module B, an Operations Task Force is formed, which may consist of some members of the Direction Task Force and others appropriate to the task, or it may simply be the same people with a new task force name. Rather than setting the direction, the group is now operationalizing the direction.

Form follows function. A functional analysis is a key step in the SPM process. Pursuing goals and executing strategies requires the performance of specific functions—the work to be done. By identifying the unique and overlapping functions required to effectively implement the strategies, personnel in a division or strand can be more productively organized for their work. Information from the analysis can guide decisions on how to streamline work, how to address gaps in functions, and how to address redundancies that lead to inefficiencies.

In this step, the Operations Task Force identifies the functions that relate to each strategy. Functions relate to the **If** portion of a strategy statement, the broad description of the work (functions) to be done to carry out that strategy. First, a list of functions and their definitions is created. In general, LEAs and SEAs engage in work related to leadership, management, program or product development, and support to schools or districts. Using **Attachment H: Functions and Definitions**, the Operations Task Force identifies functions common to the LEA or SEA. Examples of functions common among most SEAs or LEAs are provided in each section to help the group get started. A definition for each function, along with the minimum skills or competencies needed to carry out the function, is created so everyone has a common understanding and expectation of each function.

Next, the Operations Task Force identifies the functions needed to implement each strategy, again focusing on the **If** portion. It is critical that the Task Force identify the functions needed, not necessarily those the division or strand already perform, so a critical function is not omitted. For example, take a look at the strategy statement below. What functions are needed to *implement a system of differentiated technical assistance and supports?*

> ***If** we implement a system of differentiated technical assistance and supports matched to district and school needs, **then** more districts and schools will have the capacity to implement high-quality education services to meet the needs of each student **and** each student will successfully meet his or her annual targets and graduate ready to pursue post-secondary study and/or a career.*

Research (program and product development), as well as policy and practice guidance (service to the field) are likely to be needed.

Once functions have been identified for each strategy, the Operations Task Force utilizes the function list again and identifies the *current* functions being carried out by the division or strand. For a division, each unit would be listed, and the functions carried out by the unit's members would be identified. For a strand, the task is a bit more complicated. A strand would be comprised of one or more units within several divisions across the agency; therefore, each unit within each division within the strand would be listed.

Candor is truly the best approach here if the division or strand work is going to be effectively carried out. A comparison is then made between the needed functions and the current functions to identify gaps and redundancies. Is there a function the division or strand is engaged in that was not identified as a needed function? If yes, why was it not identified in the previous part of the analysis process? Is this function being carried out so poorly that no one recognizes it as a function? If no, should people be engaged in this function? Are some of the functions also carried out by other divisions or strands? If so, is there coordination or collaboration between the divisions or strands? Finally, solutions are identified for any issues, gaps, or redundancies identified through the analysis.

In addition to **Attachment H: Functions and Definitions**, **Attachment I: Functional Analysis** is provided to assist with Step 6.

Quality Check

- ☐ 1. Common division/strand functions were identified and defined.
- ☐ 2. Functions have been identified that are needed to implement each strategy.
- ☐ 3. Gaps and redundancies have been identified, including those related to capacity, and ways to address them were created.

Attachment H: Functions and Definitions

Using the examples provided under each section title, generate a list of functions common to the LEA or SEA and create definitions for each function. The functions are then placed in **Attachment I** to use in the functional analysis.

Functions	Definitions	Minimum Competencies
Leadership and Advocacy (e.g., Communication, Establishment and Maintenance of Partnerships, Government or Community Relations, Legal, Policy Development)		
Management (e.g., Financial Management, Procurement, Resource/Facility Management, Contract Management, Information Management, Compliance and Reporting, Performance Management and Reporting)		
Program and Product Development (e.g., Proto-Type Development and Testing, Research, Data Analysis, Grant Writing, Professional Learning)		
Service to Field (e.g., Policy/Practice Guidance, Continuous Improvement, Intervention, Program Evaluation, Resource Allocation, Standards/Assessment, Licensure		

Attachment I: Functional Analysis

Needed Functions

Insert the functions from Attachment H, and check the functions needed to implement each strategy.

Strategies	Function 1	Function 2	Function 3	Function 4	Function 5	Function 6	Function 7	Function 8	Function 9	Function 10	Function 11	Function 12	Function 13	Function 14	Function 15	Function 16
Strategy 1																
Strategy 2																
Strategy 3																
Strategy 4																
Strategy 5																

Current Division Functions

Insert the groups or units within the division and the functions from **Attachment H**. Check the functions being carried out by each unit.

Units Within the Division	Function 1	Function 2	Function 3	Function 4	Function 5	Function 6	Function 7	Function 8	Function 9	Function 10	Function 11	Function 12	Function 13	Function 14	Function 15	Function 16
Unit 1																
Unit 2																
Unit 3																
Unit 4																
Unit 5																

Current Strand Functions

For a strand, the unit and its division are inserted as well as the functions from Attachment H. Check the functions being carried out by each unit.

Divisions and Units Within the Strand	Function 1	Function 2	Function 3	Function 4	Function 5	Function 6	Function 7	Function 8	Function 9	Function 10	Function 11	Function 12	Function 13	Function 14	Function 15	Function 16
Division 1 Unit 1																
Division 1 Unit 2																
Division 2 Unit 1																

Summary of Functional Analysis

Identify functional gaps and possible solutions to address the gaps.

Function Gaps	Solutions

Step 7. Align or Create a Structure

To achieve maximum performance, it is important to have a structure that optimizes people with the right competencies to carry out the functions needed to do the strategy work. Having such an aligned structure also supports the success rate of innovation (Spruijt, Spanjaard, & Demouge, 2013). All too often, as structures evolve over time, they become conflated with funding streams and are frequently modified to meet the interests and abilities of specific personnel. The existing structure—how units and positions are arranged on the organization chart for the division or strand—may not be ideal for carrying out the division's or strand's functions to execute its strategies and pursue the organization's goals.

Terms used to describe structural components vary from organization to organization. For our purposes, a division is the major branch or department under the chief or superintendent, and a unit is a smaller entity within the division. The basic structure consists of functional units organized into divisions. A strand may cut across such divisions and units. In creating or revising the structure, each unit, its purpose, functions, and the minimum competencies of staff required to successfully carry out the functions are identified.

Division

For a division, aligning structure and function is pretty straightforward. The Operations Task Force maps out the current structure (each unit, unit purpose, unit functions, and minimum competencies needed to carry out the functions). Next, the Task Force creates a chart of the unit positions, status (people filling or to fill the position, or vacant), major responsibilities, and the competencies of the current people.

A structural analysis is then conducted comparing the needed functions with the current structure and positions. Function definitions and competencies created in Step 6 are key data to consider. The ultimate goal is to align knowledge, learning, and work so the division or strand has the capacity to realize its purpose. The following questions can guide analysis and discussions:

- Are there multiple units doing the same function? Should those units be combined into one?
- Are there any units of one position? Is this unit really needed, or could the position be included in another unit doing similar functions?
- Are there one or two units doing the majority of functions? Is there a better structure to ease the burden on these units?
- Are there any gaps in function? Could they be filled within the unit, within the organization, or by an external partner?
- Are there gaps in positions and competencies? Are there others within the division, within the organization, or externally that could fill the gap? Could professional learning address any of the gaps?
- Are there any vacant positions? Are the competencies of the vacant position needed, or could that position be repurposed?

Division leadership may be able to make some adjustments to structure, functions, and positions pretty quickly; others may take some time. If that is case, a plan should be developed to move to the ideal structure over time. Once the analysis and plan are completed, the charts can be revised to reflect the new or changed structure, functions, positions, and people. This information will then be used in the following steps.

Strand

The structural analysis for a strand is another beast altogether, and the ability to alter the structure may be far more limited. Figure 6 (see next page) shows one possible configuration of a strand. In this example, the strand has a leader, two consultants, and three strand units comprised of others from units and divisions throughout the organization.

Not only is the structure created or analyzed, so are the procedures related to creating and sustaining the strand structure and work. The SPM suggestion is that the organization's leader designates a leader for the strand and that representatives of all the divisions and units working in the strand form the strand leadership team. The strand leadership team maintains communication and coordination across divisions within the strand and keeps the organization's leadership team informed, since the work is cross-divisional.

Strand units function as collaborative teams. Collaboration occurs when two or more people, groups, or organizations have a common goal or task, but no one person, group, or organization has all that is needed to accomplish the goal or task. It is time intensive, and the process, which includes the development of strong relationships between two or more entities, evolves over time through the development of procedures as well as human and resource structures. This is accomplished by developing a shared vision of collaboration, clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of all collaborators, and equally sharing power, resources, risks, and rewards, among other things.

If the organization has an identified process to establish collaborative teams, then the strand leader follows that process to identify, request, and assign needed members from other divisions and units to assist in the strand work. If a process is not in place, then the strand leader and other leaders identify what collaboration is in the context of the strand work and what it looks like when people across divisions are effectively collaborating to implement the strategies of the strand. A clear definition of collaborative procedures and expectations should be agreed upon by the strand and division leaders.

Regardless of whether we are focusing on a division or strand, Productivity and Innovation lenses are applied to the structural work. What structure is needed to address gaps and inefficiencies to more efficiently and effectively accomplish the work? Will this new or revised structure maximize efficiency and get the work done more effectively? Does the new or revised structure support creativity and innovation?

Attachment J: Structural Analysis and **Attachment K: People Assignments** are provided to assist with Step 7. Step 8 further details collaboration and provides **Attachment M: Procedures for Creating Collaborative Teams**, which can also be used for Step 7.

Quality Check

- [ ] 1. Structural units were defined according to the functions required to implement strategies.
- [ ] 2. Current structure was compared to needed structure, and gaps and redundancies were identified.
- [ ] 3. Personnel have been assigned to each unit based on matching people with needed competencies identified for each unit. Vacancies have also been identified.
- [ ] 4. Professional learning needs have been identified.
- [ ] 5. Changes to structure and people assignments either have been made or a plan to phase in the needed changes in structure or people assignments has been developed and presented to leadership for approval.
- [ ] 6. Procedures have been identified for creating strand units and securing members from other divisions and units across the agency.

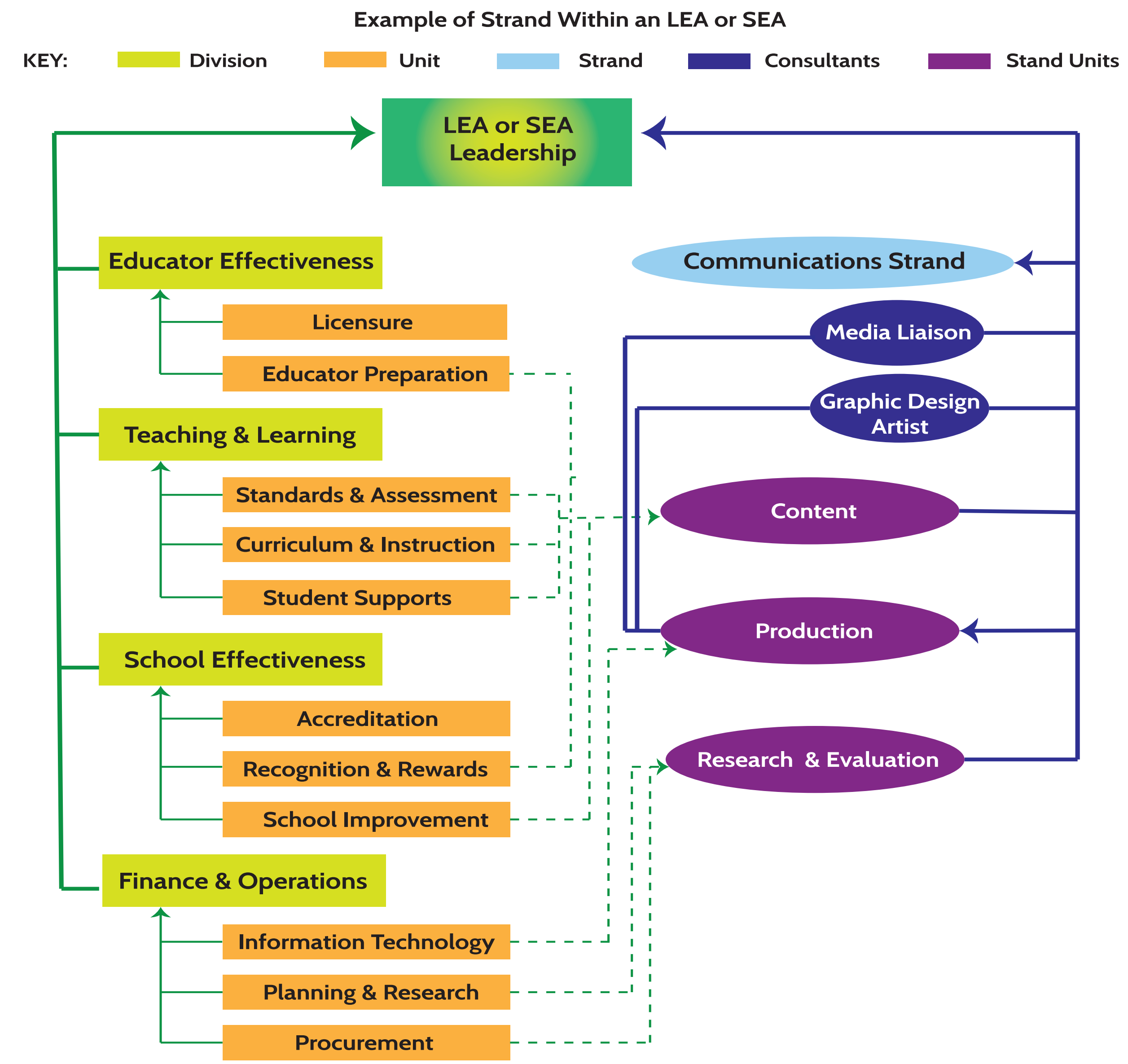


Figure 6. Possible strand structure

Attachment J: Structural Analysis

The Operations Task Force documents results of the structural analysis including the units and functions. Note any concerns or issues that were addressed or need to be addressed.

Unit	Unit Purpose	Unit Functions	Minimum Competencies Needed for Functions
Comments/Issues		**Solutions**	

For a strand, document the procedure for proposing and approving strand units.

Procedure for Proposing and Approving the Formation or Termination of a Strand Unit **Approval is required from the leaders of each division and unit involved.**					
Strand of Work:		**Division or Strand Leader:**			**Request Date:**
Representatives Needed for Strand		**Purpose/Rationale**			
Division	Unit				
Duration (or Ongoing):					
Approved by:					**Date:**

Attachment K: People Assignments

The Operations Task Force charts personnel assignments. In Position Status, name current staff either in the position or to fill the position. Indicate VACANT if the position needs to be filled. Any professional learning needed to address competency gaps is also noted.

Unit	Position (Title)	Position Status	Responsibilities	Competencies/Skills
Unit 1	Position 1a			
	Position 1b			
	Position 1c			
Unit 2	Position 2a			
	Position 2b			
	Position 2c			
Unit 3	Position 3a			
	Position 3b			
	Position 3c			
Unit 4	Position 4a			
	Position 4b			
	Position 4c			
Unit 5	Position 5a			
	Position 5b			
	Position 5c			
Needed Professional Learning				

Step 8. Assign Milestones and Prepare for Action Planning

The Operations Task Force next assigns milestones to units within the division or strand. The division or strand itself is **accountable** for the thorough completion of each milestone, while each assigned **lead unit** is **responsible** for the day-to-day work leading to milestone completion. Milestones should be assigned to units that carry out the most functions related to each milestone. Other units that contribute to the work will be identified as collaborating units during the Action Planning process (see collaboration below). Thought is given to the overall distribution of responsibility. If one or two units are assigned most of the milestones, the Task force should review the function and structure documents and decisions to see if more refinement is needed before proceeding with milestone assignments.

Often, others are needed to assist the lead units in action planning because they may have information that could inform action planning, or perhaps they are currently engaged in work that links to a milestone. Additional divisions and units needed for planning are identified at this time. Note: Divisions and units needed for planning are not necessarily those needed for collaboration to complete the work. Collaboration is addressed below.

Collaboration

In Step 7, collaboration was discussed in relation to a strand. However it is important that collaboration be addressed by divisions, as well as strands, in preparation for action planning. Highly effective, innovative organizations, as well as the divisions and strands within an organization, are those in which personnel collaborate to learn, create, solve problems, and innovate. Collaboration is not the same as coordination or communication, so it is critical to have a clear understanding of what it means within the context of the division or strand.

During the Action Planning process, units within the division or strand, as well as those in other divisions or strands, are identified as collaborators on actions. Collaboration occurs when two or more entities have a common goal or task, but no one person, group, or organization has all that is needed to accomplish the goal or task. It is time intensive, and the process, which includes the development of strong relationships between two or more entities, evolves over time through the development of organizational procedures as well as human and resource structures. This is accomplished by developing a shared vision of collaboration, clearly defining the roles and responsibility of all collaborators, and equally sharing power, resources, risks, and rewards, among other things.

Unfortunately, collaboration is often misused to the detriment of performance. We have all been part of or seen groups at one time or another that collaborated just for the sake of collaboration, resulting in dysfunctional teams, broken relationships, and even inadequate use of resources (especially human capital). In general, people tend to over-identify the need for collaboration, identifying most people across the organization. Collaborators are only those that have a competency, skill, or knowledge that is needed through the majority of the work. Divisions, and units which need to be kept informed or consulted for a small piece of information or advice are not considered collaborators.

If the organization has an identified process to establish collaborative teams, then the division or strand leadership follows that process to identify collaborators from other divisions and units to assist in the work. If a process is not in place, then the division or strand leadership identifies what collaboration is in the context of their work and what it looks like when people across divisions are effectively collaborating to accomplish common goals, strategies, milestones, or actions. The discussion should also cover what collaboration does not include and what red flags signal that collaboration is not happening.

At a minimum, a clear definition of collaborative procedures and expectations should be agreed upon by all within the division or strand before action planning begins.

Attachment L: Milestone Assignments and Action Planning Logistics and **Attachment M: Procedure for Creating Collaborative Teams** are provided for Step 8.

Quality Check

- ☐ 1. Each milestone has been assigned to lead units.
- ☐ 2. The divisions involved in a strand were included in the discussions and decisions regarding lead units.
- ☐ 3. Other needed divisions or units have been identified and involved in the logistics setting.
- ☐ 4. A schedule, location, and other logistics have been identified and communicated to all identified for action planning.

Attachment L: Milestone Assignments and Action Planning Logistics

The Operations Task Force uses the chart below to document lead units, as well as others, needed for action planning for each milestone.

Goal	Strategy	Milestone	Lead Unit and Its Division	Others Needed for Action Planning	Planning Time	Location
YEAR 1						
Goal 1	Strategy 1.1	Milestone 1.1.1				
		Milestone 1.1.2				
		Milestone 1.1.3				
		Milestone 1.1.4				
		Milestone 1.1.5				
	Strategy 1.2	Milestone 1.2.1				
		Milestone 1.2.2				
		Milestone 1.2.3				
		Milestone 1.2.4				
		Milestone 1.2.5				
Goal 2	Strategy 2.1	Milestone 2.1.1				
		Milestone 2.1.2				
		Milestone 2.1.3				
		Milestone 2.1.4				
		Milestone 2.1.5				
Goal 3	Strategy 3.1	Milestone 3.1.1				
		Milestone 3.1.2				
		Milestone 3.1.3				

Attachment M: Procedure for Creating Collaborative Teams

The Operations Task Force creates a common vision or definition of collaboration and creates a procedure for approving and terminating collaborative teams, if one does not already exist. Approval is required from the leaders of each division and units involved.

Creating Collaborative Teams			
Common Vision of Collaboration			
Procedure for Creating Collaborative Teams			
Step 1.			
Step 2.			
Step 3.			
Step 4.			
Step 5.			
Collaborative Team Approval			
Strand of Work:		Division or Strand Leader:	Request Date:
Representatives Needed for Strand		Purpose/Rationale	
Division	Unit		
Duration (or Ongoing):			
Approved by:			Date:

Step 9. Engage Personnel in Action Planning

Division and strand leadership, each lead unit, key unit members, and any other staff identified during the logistics planning in Step 8 work together and develop actions to complete assigned milestones by the end of one year. Each team engages as many people who will be doing the work as possible in action planning. This creates ownership of not only the actions, but the milestones and strategies themselves. Ownership fosters commitment and productivity. An action plan includes actions, timeline, resources, personnel, outputs, and supports needed to accomplish the milestone.

Actions are the incremental steps needed to meet the milestone, including the start date and anticipated end date (**timeline**). An action takes more than a month to complete, but less than a year. There is no set number of actions needed to have a high-quality plan, however, if a milestone only has a couple of actions, the planning may not be detailed enough. If a milestone has more than 15 actions, the planning may be too detailed. Actions should start with an action verb and generally describe the work to be completed. If personnel are not used to action planning, the team may want to generate a list of steps leading to the milestone and then review the list identifying any that should be combined, eliminating redundancy, ordering the steps, and turning the steps into actions. Once the team feels the actions are in place, they should share the milestone and actions with others, including the division leaders, other unit leaders, and leadership. Feedback refines the actions.

Resources and **budgets** may be identified for each action. This is not the time to detail a budget, line by line, funding source codes, etc. Rather, the entries are general in nature and reference the amount and source of resources or funds, especially if beyond the current or anticipated budget for the upcoming year. This field is meant to be a reminder for the team to pursue resources needed. For example, if a media spot is needed, the funds may not have been included in the annual budget. The estimated amount is noted here and discussed with the division leader and others, as appropriate, when reviewing the final plan.

Outputs are the tangible products created as a result of the completed action. Outputs could be documents, web postings, slide shows, or rubrics, for example. They should not be confused with outcomes, which are the milestones themselves. The outputs provide evidence that the action was completed and contribute to the milestone and strategy. If the team is having difficulty identifying an output, they may want to review the action to determine if it is an action or minute step of a larger action. Is it stated as an action? Does the action support the milestone? The action statement may need to be revised.

Personnel are specified as *responsible person* and *supports*. A person within the lead unit is identified as the *responsible person* for an action. The responsible person ensures the day-to-day action work of the team is occurring, progress in completing the action is occurring, and updates are reported to the unit leader so monthly status reports can be completed by the unit leader and shared with the accountable division leader. The responsible person does not do all of the action work, but contributes to the work as a team member while also facilitating and supporting other team members in completing the action. *Supports* are those people within the lead unit that will contribute to completing the action by either completing work or supporting others in completing the work. For a strand, the responsible person and supports may be people in other divisions and units, as the units in a strand are comprised of members throughout the organization.

Collaborating Units are also identified at this stage, using the procedures previously developed by either the organization or by the division or strand (see Steps 7 and 8). Keep in mind, that each strand unit is a collaborative team in itself, so other collaborating units may or may not be needed. Once collaborating units have been identified, division leaders and units are notified of the collaboration request so they can identify the collaborating personnel.

Action plans are easily converted into a monthly progress reporting format so progress and challenges can be noted as the work progresses and timely adjustments can be made to ensure all milestones are completed by the end of each year.

Attachment N: Action Planning Template is provided to assist in Step 9.

Quality Check

- [ ] 1. An action plan has been developed for each milestone.
- [ ] 2. All plans include actions, timeline, resources and budget, outputs, and personnel.
- [ ] 3. Collaborators have been identified to support completion of milestones using procedures previously developed by the organization, division, or strand.
- [ ] 4. Action plans are rigorous, yet attainable.
- [ ] 5. The combined completion of the actions will result in completion of the milestone.

Attachment N: Action Plan Template

The Operations Task Force uses this template to develop an action plan for each milestone.

Year 1 Action Plan		
Goal		
Strategy		
Milestone		
Action		
	Start Month:	End Month:
Resources/Budget		
Outputs		
Personnel	Responsible Person (in Unit):	
	Supports (in Unit/One or More):	
Add Units Needed for Collaboration on the Action		
	Need:	
	Unit(s) in My Division	Unit(s) in Other Divisions

Module D: Implementing a Performance and Innovation Cycle

A Performance and Innovation Cycle uses both implementation and performance data to continuously improve routines and processes to ultimately realize better results. An SEA, and even an LEA, only indirectly impacts students, even though its goals are student-focused and goal measures track progress on student outcomes. The work of an SEA more directly impacts districts and that of an LEA more directly impacts schools. In order to get a true picture of the impact of an LEA's or SEA's work, we need to know both the direct and indirect impact of what they do. The goal and strategy measures provide the *performance* data. Strategy measures demonstrate the direct impact on districts and schools, whereas goal measures demonstrate the indirect impact on students.

Implementation data let leadership and others know that the work an LEA or SEA planned to do is actually getting done, that the strategic plan is being carried out. The same is true for a division or strand. Monthly status reports, outputs from actions, and the completion of milestones provide *implementation* data.

A Performance and Innovation Cycle recognizes the importance of both implementation and performance and enables leadership, divisions, and units to utilize the data to make timely adjustments and identify more innovative ways to increase performance.

Step 10. Create the Performance and Innovation Cycle

The cycle is the regularity with which progress toward milestones is reviewed and necessary adjustments in actions are made. The cycle also includes less frequent review of the milestones (implementation data) and strategies themselves, as well as periodic review of goals and student results (performance). The division or strand leadership and units manage, monitor, and adjust the work on a continuous basis. Status reports on each action, submitted by the unit team leaders monthly, give teams necessary information to keep work on pace, and seek even better ways to complete the milestones to carry out the strategies. Some teams may need to meet more frequently, but at a minimum, monthly status reporting and quarterly implementation reporting is advised. Suggested status reporting and frequencies are listed below; however, the frequencies may be adjusted based on the context and need.

Monthly Status Reporting
Each month, units meet to review progress on actions, report status, and make adjustments in people and resources, as needed. Division or strand leadership reviews the progress of their units and assists unit leaders in addressing issues.

Quarterly Leadership Team Performance Review
Each quarter, division or strand leadership reviews the progress of their units and irons out any cross-divisional collaboration issues. Adjustments to milestones are considered, and adjustments to actions are recommended to units in light of data from status reports.

Annual Division (or Strand) Leadership Team Performance Review
At least once a year, division or strand leadership and all unit leaders meet to review data relative to milestones, strategies, and goals. The team adjusts milestones for the coming year if needed and adds performance measures and milestones for the following year.

In a Performance and Innovation Cycle, two years of planning are in place at any one time. Both implementation and performance data are used to make adjustments to the next year's planned work while planning continues for the following year's work. For example, when starting a cycle, two years of milestones are created, and actions to meet the milestones for the first year have been identified. During the fourth quarter of the year, progress on year one milestones is used to make adjustments to year-two milestones and unit teams plan year-two actions. At the beginning of Year 2, milestones for Year 3 are created, and the process of review, adjust, and plan continues each year.

Why not just develop a 5-year plan? Unless you have a crystal ball and can predict future conditions, the education landscape, and especially for any particular agency, will change dramatically over the course of two or three years. Planning beyond two years is a guessing exercise. Planning for two years at a time keeps planning practical while also making the process nimble enough to react as the unexpected occurs. Figure 7 illustrates the review, adjust, and plan process of the Performance and Innovation Cycle (see next page).

Remember:

Action and Milestone Completion = Implementation Measures

Strategy and Goal Performance Measures = Performance Measures

Adjustments in Course to Enhance Productivity = Innovation

Step 11. Tell the Story

At least annually, the division's or strand's story of its work and impact is told based on data collected through the multiple measures identified throughout the SPM process. Think of a literary piece of work. It is just as important to read the narrative and work through the plot as it is to know the conclusion—the end results. Actions and outputs tell about the work to complete each milestone at the end of the year, the implementation narrative. They describe what the LEA or SEA did, the tangible products created through the work, the challenges encountered, and adjustments made to address the challenges. The monthly status reports graphically show how the work evolved through the course of a year.

The goal and strategy measures represent the conclusion, the impact of the work accomplished throughout the year. Strategy measure data show the direct impact of the LEA or SEA work, whereas the goal measure data show the indirect impact on students. Together these provide the performance narrative.

An annual report should include both the implementation and performance narratives. As implementation strengthens, so should the capacity of districts and schools. As the districts and schools strengthen implementation, so should the capacity of students.

Who receives the annual report is up to the leadership of the division or strand as well as the organization's leaders. The report could be shared internally, externally, or both. Whatever is decided, the same stakeholders should receive the reports each year. The SPM suggestion is that it is best to build and maintain transparency with all stakeholders regardless of whether they are internal or external to the division, strand, or organization.

In summary, SPM is a multistep process that can guide the leadership of a division or strand in designing and revising a system of performance management. The SPM process combines strategic planning with performance management by creating an organizational structure based on strategies and functions, aligning resources to the structure, addressing human capital and productivity, and establishing performance measures. SPM is nimble, enabling the organization to make adjustments to plans and processes in response to data that provide information about progress toward quantitative markers. A division or strand can successfully engage in the SPM process to improve productivity and encourage innovation, even if the larger organization is not ready to take on SPM.

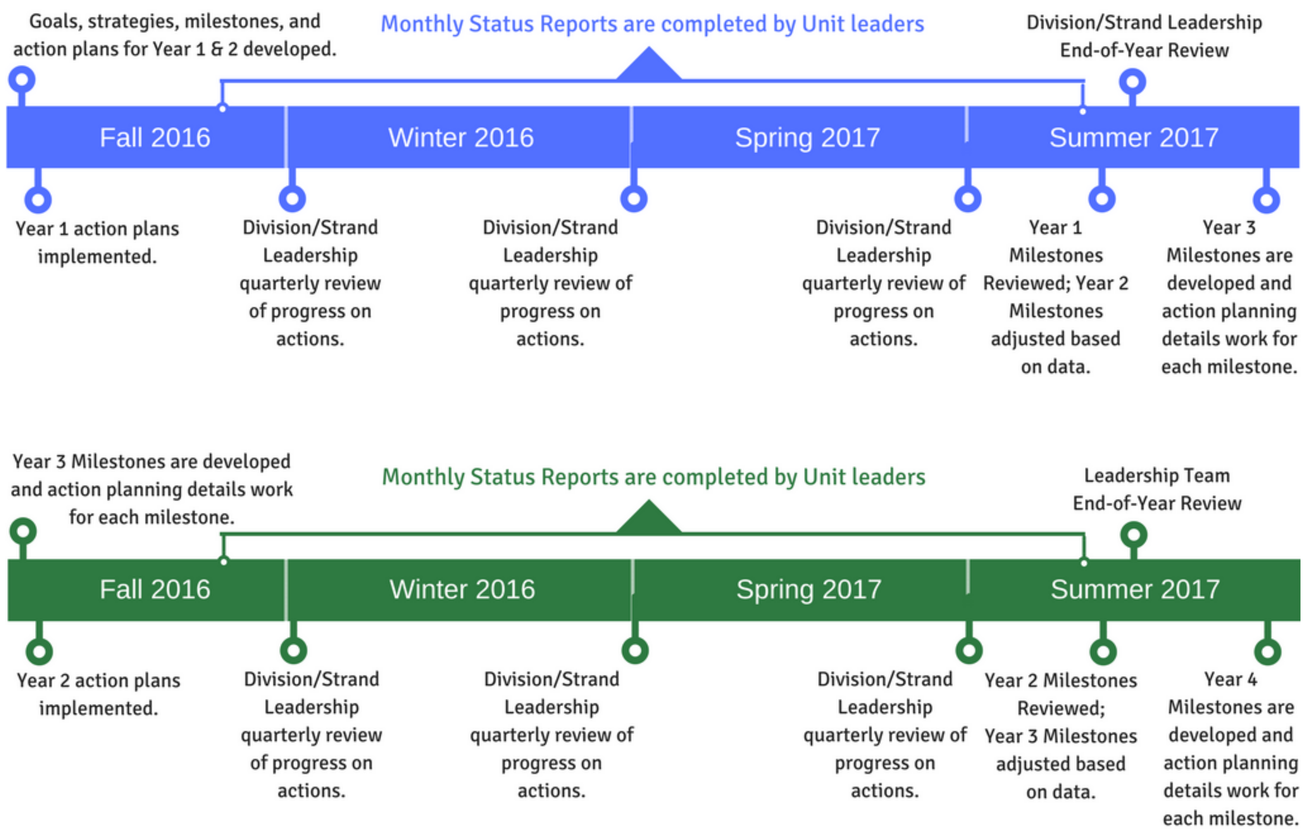


Figure 7. SPM Continuous Review, Adjust, and Plan Process

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At the BSCP Center website (www.bscpcenter.org) see:

- Section on **Performance** for additional information and materials about Strategic Performance Management
- Section on **Communication** for information about organizational communication, including a communication tool box

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The Building State Capacity and Productivity Center (BSCP Center) focuses on helping state education agencies (SEAs) throughout the country, as they adapt to reduced 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 21 regional and content comprehensive 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.

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