



CCSSO

2004 ANNUAL POLICY FORUM

AND

BUSINESS MEETING

READINGS

We are pleased to present background readings for CCSSO's 2004 Annual Policy Forum and Business Meeting.

This fall, chiefs and their staff indicated their concern about how they will be able to mobilize their state education agencies to support the work needed to improve student performance. Therefore, the 2004 Annual Policy Forum is being organized around the theme of **State Education Agency (SEA) Capacity Building**. When we talk about SEA Capacity Building, we are focusing on three areas:

- Organizational design;
- Organizational development; and
- Organizational leadership.

Of particular importance across these three areas is the question of the core function(s) of an SEA and how identifying core function(s) can help to provide clarity and direction to your work.

After an introduction to SEA Capacity Building, we will break the group into four topical small group discussions, where we will explore the topics provided *as a way to illuminate questions of SEA capacity*. The topics were identified through a survey of CCSSO members, and include:

- Leadership and Aligned Systems;
- Supporting Low Performing Schools;
- Seeing it Through: High School Reform; and
- 21st Century Standards.

If we think of SEA Capacity Building (organizational design, development, and leadership) as a *process*-driven set of issues, members also identified a series of key *content*-driven topics or issues they would also like to discuss. One breakout session will be devoted to immediately deepening the conversation on SEA leadership and capacity

building (Leadership and Aligned Systems), while the other three will spend half their time discussing their organizing topic (Low Performing Schools, High Schools, And 21st Century Standards) and the other half of the time using the issues in those topical areas as lenses *through which* participants explore questions of SEA capacity building.

Each breakout discussions will begin with the members sharing what they are doing in that topical area, where they are struggling, and what they still need to know. After, the facilitators will focus the discussions on how managing the issues in those topical areas helps to illuminate issues of SEA capacity building.

To help prepare for those breakout sessions, we have compiled background readings that support the overarching theme and each of the breakout topics:

SEA CAPACITY BUILDING

“What are Your 3 Circles” and “Who is your Council?”, by Jim Collins

LEADERSHIP AND ALIGNED SYSTEMS

“How Leadership Influences Student Learning: Executive Summary,” by Kenneth Leithwood, Karen Seashore Louis, Stephen Anderson, and Kyla Wahlstrom

STATE SUPPORTS TO LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS

“Knowing the Right Thing to Do: School Improvement and Performance-Based Accountability,” by Richard F. Elmore

“Improving Schools by Working with Districts: What Does the Research Tell Us?,” by Elaine Bonner-Tompkins

SEEING IT THROUGH: HIGH SCHOOL REFORM

“Crisis or Possibility: Conversations About the American High School,” Executive Summary and Chapter One, by James Harvey and Naomi Housman

21ST CENTURY STANDARDS

“The Road to 21st Century Learning: A Policymaker’s Guide to 21st Century Skills,” by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills