

# Strategic Mapping Process: Considering the Role of SEAs in Supporting District Improvement Efforts

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**Strategic Mapping:** A process that facilitates individual and group understanding of contextually bound strategies for supporting underperforming schools and provides strategic ways to develop and align those strategies.

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## 1 Developing a Scenario

- » Think of a particular school, or a set of schools in a district, that are “truly underperforming”.
- » List the two most central or urgent issues and challenges hindering that school (or the set of schools) from improving – record your thoughts on the graphic organizer.

**Group Activity:** Pair up and share the issues and challenges with a colleague from a different state. Did you identify similar challenges? If you were to ask this question of your colleagues in your state (and from different offices), would the answers be similar or different?

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## 2 Identifying Issues and Challenges

For each issue/challenge, consider and answer the following questions:

- » Is this issue/challenge best addressed by **District** actions or by **School-level** actions?
- » Is the expertise and support needed to address the school’s issues/challenges available in **Your Office** or in **Other SEA Offices**?

Using the quadrant graph, identify and plot each issue/challenge in one of the four quadrants.

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## 3 Considering Implications for SEA Interactions Among State Offices and with District Officials

Form a group with others who selected and identified the same quadrant, and jointly consider the following questions:

- » What state-level strategies, supports, and incentives do you have to address the identified challenges/issues?
- » Consider the quadrant you identified with and the implications for the state role in working with districts – What does this tell you about how states can most effectively work with districts?

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## 4 Articulating the Purpose and Goals of State-Level Strategies

- » Briefly list the state-level strategies, sanctions and incentives used to promote and support improvement in targeted schools.
- » Take one support strategy and explain how it addresses the issue that you identified.
- » Specifically, explain the assumptions that guide your support strategy, the goals of the support strategy, and how the strategy will assist the district/school in achieving the stated goal.

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