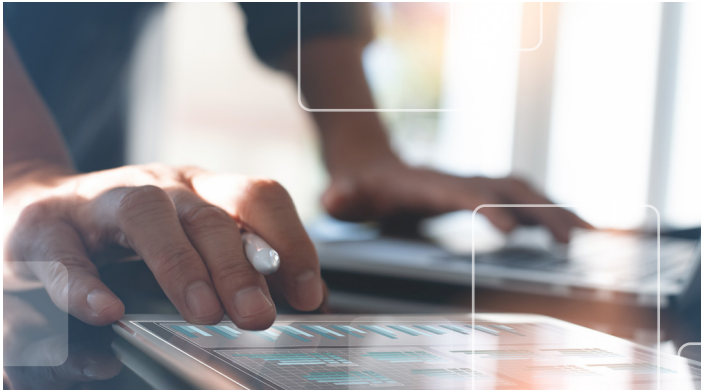


Case Study: Operational Study and Analysis of the Alabama State Department of Education



Case Study

The Client

Alabama Department of Examiners of Public Accounts

The Project

Operational Study and Analysis of the Alabama State Department of Education

The Opportunity

PCG partnered with the Alabama Department of Examiners of Public Accounts to provide strategic consulting and program assessment support for the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE). The purpose of the partnership was to address the ALSDE's recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results—the lowest in the country. The goal was to ensure that the ALSDE's core educational functions operate efficiently and effectively to contribute to the overall mission of its agency.

The PCG Approach

PCG's approach focused on three key areas: 1) conducting an education program and process review to identify areas that need to be addressed in order to improve performance; 2) identifying best practices from successful states or states improving quickly on the NAEP; and 3) a cost analysis to help the ALSDE evaluate practices and analyze expenditures. Data analysis in these key areas led to a report of findings and recommendations on a large scale—statewide and throughout the ALSDE.

At the outset, PCG met with project leadership from the Alabama Department of Examiners of Public Accounts and the ALSDE to establish project expectations and conduct a kickoff meeting with ALSDE stakeholders to promote awareness of the study and collect impressions regarding department challenges.

PCG spent several weeks in Montgomery, Alabama, conducting interviews and focus groups with the ALSDE stakeholders and collecting documents and data pertaining to ALSDE programs, operations, and staffing. PCG also conducted interviews with superintendents statewide and education leaders in NAEP states selected for comparison with the ALSDE.

PCG prepared draft and final reports of findings, which included recommendations for improvements to the ALSDE's policies, functions, programs, organizational

structure, funding, and other areas of note. The findings and recommendations were presented to stakeholders, including all members of the Alabama State Legislature.

Key Deliverables from PCG Include:

- Delivery and implementation of a detailed project management plan.
- Interviewed 145 stakeholders using a core set of questions, which were customized for their specific roles.
- Contacted state commissioners or their designees from the top five NAEP states and the three most-improved NAEP states with demographics similar to Alabama. Conducted interviews with each individual about the progress in their state and best practices for success.
- Reviewed and analyzed over 155 documents, including state data, policies, strategic plans, budgets, audits, organizational charts, legislative reports, Memorandums of Understandings, state appropriations, curriculum guidelines, and Human Resources practices.
- Facilitated focus groups and a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis with all ALSDE leaders.
- Created a 160-page final report with recommendations for the following areas: Standards, Accountability, and Assistance; Governance; Internal Functions; Communication; the Educator Workforce; Coordination of Services; and Improved Instruction and Supports to Districts.

To learn more, contact us today.

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