Summer 2016: Constellation Priorities & Decision-Making

The USBC would like to apologize for any confusion or miscommunication last spring surrounding the activities of this Constellation with regard to state legislative and policy mechanisms. Although the USBC as a whole has always been a coalition of organizations, the USBC’s use of the Constellation model as its structure for collaborative sub-group/sub-topic work is still in its infancy.

The Constellation model comes from the burgeoning field of Collective Impact, focused on cross-sector collaborative change work. A Constellation is an action-focused work team populated by interested member and partner organizations. While the USBC provides infrastructure supports for their convening and facilitates or “stewards” in topic areas where it is funded, the strategies prioritized as Constellations’ common agendas are entirely driven by the collective will of the participant organizations themselves. The USBC Board does not attempt to influence or involve itself in these decisions and actions in any way: the decision-making power remains in the hands of the Constellation participants. Therefore, the LSP Constellation’s Priority Strategies and Declaration of Intent noted on this webpage are joint work products of the participant organizations, not the USBC Board of Directors or staff team.

When a USBC staff member performs actions in service of her steward role with, or the provision of infrastructure supports to, a Constellation (see Objectives and explanation of Goal 3 of the USBC Strategic Framework), it is important to distinguish that these activities are not reflective of the position of the USBC as a whole, nor its board or staff. Rather, these activities are reflective of the collective voice and common agenda of the Constellation’s participant organizations, as articulated in its Priority Strategies, Declaration of Intent, and sub-strategy action plans. Specifically, neither the USBC as a whole nor its board or staff takes positions on individual state bills, laws, policies, or regulations.

As application of this structural model continues to develop, the USBC staff team is working carefully on methods to better articulate both the process and content of Constellation activities to the broader field.