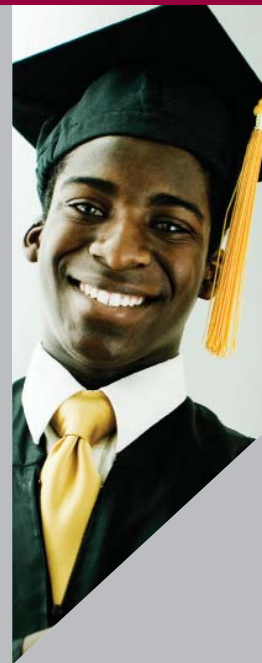


# SREB

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS  
Helping States Improve Education

## *ON THE MOVE*



Southern  
Regional  
Education  
Board

[www.sreb.org](http://www.sreb.org)

2008 ANNUAL REPORT



Fifty years ago, few adults had college degrees in SREB states. Today, it's nearly one in four.

For 60 years, SREB has been helping states improve education. The region's progress is remarkable — but many challenges remain.



# SREB STATES ARE *ON THE MOVE*

## What is SREB?

Now in its 60th year, the **Southern Regional Education Board** is a nonprofit organization that works with 16 member states — from Texas to Delaware — to improve education. The Board is chaired by a governor. Five Board members represent each state, including the governor, at least one legislator and at least one educator.

SREB states lead the nation in public prekindergarten enrollment. They are national pacesetters in improving student achievement in the early grades. They are improving academic standards, high school graduation rates and achievement, college completion, school leadership and more.

**SREB states aim to lead the nation in educational progress.** The SREB *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education call for nothing less.

## This has been a year of action.

In the past year, SREB helped state leaders look for ways to improve middle grades and high school students' reading and writing. It helped leaders search for ways to raise high school graduation rates while pushing student achievement higher. It helped thousands of teachers and principals learn how they can improve schools and classroom practices. It published major reports on higher learning, prekindergarten, school leadership and career/technical education. And much more.

## Looking ahead, SREB states will lead in improving education.

A major SREB project to help states improve students' college and career readiness is under way. SREB will advise state leaders and educators as they work to raise reading standards in the middle grades and high school. SREB will work to help states improve graduation rates *and* student achievement in high schools. It will help states examine high school testing, and it will convene higher education leaders to help more students earn degrees.

In many ways, SREB and its member states are *on the move*.

## Member states

Alabama

Arkansas

Delaware

Florida

Georgia

Kentucky

Louisiana

Maryland

Mississippi

North Carolina

Oklahoma

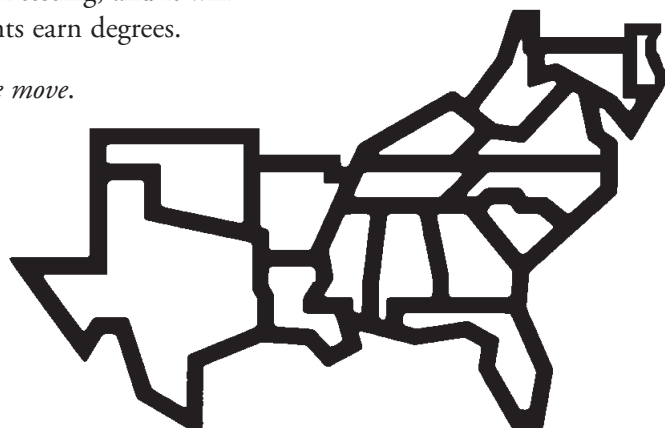
South Carolina

Tennessee

Texas

Virginia

West Virginia



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Governor Sonny Perdue, Georgia

SREB Chair **Sonny Perdue** was elected Georgia's 81st governor in 2002 and reelected in 2006. A former state senator and President Pro Tempore of the Senate, he also has served as a member of the SREB Legislative Advisory Council. He has made public education a major priority and has pushed to raise the quality of state programs that affect children's lives. As governor, he won support for the nation's first statewide "graduation coaches," to assist students in all Georgia high schools and middle grades schools as they work toward a diploma. He also has developed programs to recognize principals' and teachers' success in raising student achievement.

I have been proud to lead the Southern Regional Education Board for the past two years. During this time, SREB has started systemic and important new projects, raised more money from non-state sources, and increased Board member and legislator involvement.

I am particularly proud of SREB's leadership in tackling tough policy issues. I chaired an SREB committee of state leaders to discuss how to simultaneously increase high school achievement *and* graduation rates in our states. As I have found in Georgia, high schools need the right state policies and support to meet both goals. States need to hold schools accountable for improving *both* graduation rates and student achievement, and they need to ensure that students are ready to move from the middle grades to high school.

It is also very important that students have personal relationships with adults who encourage academic success. One way is through full-time "graduation coaches," now in virtually all of Georgia's public middle grades and high schools. At the 2008 SREB Annual Meeting, we will continue to discuss how states can raise graduation rates and achievement. We plan to present our committee's recommendations by fall 2008.

I also would like to thank Governor Tim Kaine of Virginia for leading our SREB committee on improving adolescent literacy. This committee has spent many productive hours learning the research and devising recommendations for how states can focus on this sometimes overlooked issue. Their report will be issued early this fall as well.

Our SREB Board and Legislative Advisory Council have seen a surge in participation and activity over the past two years. I appreciate my fellow governors for appointing education and legislative leaders who share our enthusiasm for improving education in the Southern region.

Finally, recognizing that one of SREB's greatest strengths has been in measuring states' progress in education, I suggested last year a straightforward way to keep states informed. The result is the *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education Scoreboards, online at [www.sreb.org](http://www.sreb.org).

I look forward to remaining involved in SREB's work. Thank you for helping SREB states set the pace nationally for educational improvement.

# MESSAGE FROM THE SREB PRESIDENT

This has been another productive year for SREB. Marking SREB's 60th anniversary, we embarked on many new projects and have continued our ongoing advocacy work. We recommended policies and best practices, and we reported states' progress on the SREB *Challenge to Lead* goals. Our school improvement programs, including *High Schools That Work*, are nationally recognized and assisted educators every day.

SREB also tackled critically important state policy issues. I want to thank Governor Sonny Perdue of Georgia, the Board Chair the past two years, for leading a group of 25 Board and Legislative Advisory Council (LAC) members in identifying state policies to help more students graduate from high school *and* achieve at higher levels. He and SREB Board Vice Chair Valerie Woodruff, the secretary of education in Delaware, have been strong leaders who have contributed much toward improving education.

Also, I want to thank Governor Tim Kaine of Virginia for chairing the SREB Committee to Improve Reading and Writing in Middle and High Schools. The panel is recommending how states can improve middle grades and high school students' reading comprehension — so fundamental to learning in all subjects.

I am grateful to the more than 40 SREB Board and LAC members who are participating in these efforts to improve high school students' learning.

In the next year, we will involve state leaders in examining state high school testing policies. We also will convene higher education and legislative leaders to address how states can make college graduation a far greater priority and help states develop and implement college- and career-readiness initiatives.

SREB states are setting a new pace for educational improvement. We are privileged to work with states as they continue to make great progress.

**Dave Spence** is the president of the Southern Regional Education Board. He advises SREB Board members — including governors, state legislators, state education chiefs and other leaders in 16 states — as they strive to improve pre-K-12 and post-secondary education. A former executive vice chancellor and chief academic officer of state university systems in Florida and California, and a former executive vice chancellor in Georgia, he is a nationally known advocate for improving high school students' graduation rates and readiness for college and career training.



Dave Spence, SREB President

# STATE SERVICES

## *Helping state leaders stay informed on issues, trends and legislative actions*



The Legislative Advisory Council meets each winter to examine education issues of importance in member states and to share strategies that work.

Giving policy-makers the information they need to analyze education trends and topics is the bedrock of SREB. State Services works with state education leaders and often is the first point of contact for legislators, legislative and governors' staffs, and other policy-makers seeking updates on specific issues.

In the past year, State Services coordinated responses to SREB state leaders seeking information on education governance, college remediation rates, Advanced Placement participation, career/technical education, year-round schools, compulsory attendance, dropouts, truancy and much more.

State Services staff members meet with leaders in SREB states during their legislative sessions and prepare an annual series of *Legislative Reports* for legislators and other policy-makers, along with reports on issues that impact education and the legislative process.

State Services also works closely with the SREB Legislative Advisory Council, a group of state senators, representatives and delegates from all SREB states. The Council meets each winter to examine education issues of importance in member states and to share strategies that work. The Council also advises the Board and is the steering committee for SREB's annual Legislative Work Conference. The LWC brings together some 100 legislators to hear from education experts, share their knowledge and participate in work sessions that focus on education at every level, from pre-K through postsecondary.

In addition, State Services holds a meeting of legislative committee and governors' education staffs each fall to share information about education issues and trends. Plus, State Services regularly makes presentations in state capitals and assists with SREB's Annual Meeting, which brings legislators together with other state leaders to discuss ideas for moving forward in education policy.

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# COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

## *Helping states ensure high school graduates are well-prepared for college and career training*

For the first time, most Americans need some form of education beyond high school to succeed economically. SREB is launching a major project to help states improve students' readiness for college and career preparation.

SREB will evaluate states' progress in implementing comprehensive statewide college- and career-readiness initiatives. SREB then will work with states to ensure they each have a single set of statewide college- and career-readiness standards in reading and math. These readiness standards need to be recognized and applied by all public high schools and colleges within each state.

SREB will assist states as they develop and approve their own readiness standards, and it will work with states to develop plans for helping teachers know the standards and incorporate them into classroom instruction.

States will revise senior year curricula and teaching to address the needs of students who need help meeting the standards before graduation. SREB also will work with states to ensure that state high school exams specifically measure whether students meet college- and career-readiness standards.

This project is under the direction of SREB President Dave Spence, who led a similar statewide effort for the 400,000-student California State University System. The system's Early Assessment and Academic Preparation Program is a nationally recognized model for helping prepare more students for college and career studies — and for linking high school standards with college placement.

The SREB project's goal is to help more students graduate from high school on time and proceed to college and career preparation. SREB states need far more people who enter college and career studies to complete degrees and industry certification, raising the education levels and prosperity of the region.



The SREB project's goal is to help more of the region's students complete college and career preparation.

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The SREB *Challenge to Lead Scoreboards* highlight state progress in key areas such as graduation rates and teacher salaries, along with SREB commentary and live links to more information on each issue.



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## Education Goals and Progress

### *Helping states track progress and achievement toward the SREB Challenge to Lead Goals for Education*

Just six years ago, the region's leaders set out to lead the nation in educational progress. Today, the region already has made two particularly remarkable achievements: leading the nation in state-funded prekindergarten and in improving fourth-grade reading scores.

SREB states lead the nation both in access and in setting high standards of quality for public pre-K programs. And the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) showed that 14 of the 16 SREB states saw significant increases in fourth-grade reading scores over the past decade. In fact, fourth-graders from low-income families in SREB states are performing better in reading than their counterparts across the nation.

Reporting good news like this — and analyzing state progress in every other area addressed in the SREB *Challenge to Lead Goals for Education* — is the focus of SREB's Education Policies team. Education Policies researchers use NAEP results, higher education data and other information from SREB education agencies to track each SREB state's progress on the goals and to recommend policy changes and next steps for state leaders to pursue.

Recent reports to state leaders called for continued improvement and expansion of pre-K programs, higher achievement in the early grades, more rigorous academic standards in most SREB states, and other actions. Another recent highlight in reporting state progress on the goals was the launch of the *Challenge to Lead Scoreboards*, available at [www.sreb.org](http://www.sreb.org).

In pursuit of the goals, SREB states also participate in the Go *Alliance*, developing and sharing media campaigns that encourage students to finish high school and go to college.



## SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program

*Helping states increase the number of minority faculty members at colleges and universities*

Now in its 15th year, the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program was created to address the severe national and regional shortage of minority students who earn Ph.D.s and the lack of faculty diversity on college and university campuses. The program today is a recognized leader in boosting the number of minority students who earn their Ph.D.s and become faculty members.

In the past year, the Doctoral Scholars Program celebrated several milestones, including the program's 400th Mark Musick Scholar graduate, named for SREB's president emeritus. About 80 percent of program graduates currently work in education, and more than 70 percent work in SREB states. The program saw the 16th program graduate earn tenure and promotion, the largest incoming class of doctoral scholars to date (80), and more than 300 scholars working toward the doctoral degree. The program also established a Service Grant Award that encourages graduates to promote and support academic excellence among young people in their communities.

The program's motto, "more than a check and a handshake," describes its multi-layered support for scholars and institutions. The program provides scholars with financial support, professional development, mentoring, networking, employment counseling and other services. Participating institutions benefit from free job listings, recruiting opportunities, professional development for faculty members, and resource sharing.

In October 2007, SREB led the 14th annual Compact for Faculty Diversity Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, the nation's largest gathering of minority Ph.D. scholars and faculty mentors. With support from the National Science Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the National Institutes of Health and the Wright-Hayre Fund, more than 1,000 participants met in Arlington, Virginia, for leadership training, networking, professional development and job recruitment. The fall 2008 Institute in Tampa, Florida, is expected to be even larger.



The program provides scholars with financial support, professional development, mentoring, networking, employment counseling and other services.

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## Educational Technology Cooperative

*Helping states move to the leading edge of digital and online frontiers in education*



Through the work of the Cooperative, SREB states lead the nation in providing state virtual (or online) schools and in the number of middle grades and high school students successfully completing online courses — more than 150,000 in the last school year.

Now in its 13th year, the SREB Educational Technology Cooperative brings together state K-12 and postsecondary agencies from the 16 SREB states to capitalize on current technology at every education level. More than three dozen state agencies participate in this one-of-a-kind program, a national leader in the use of technology, especially online learning. The Cooperative gathers states' educational technology leaders to share resources and ideas at an annual meeting, smaller conferences and on the Web.

Through the work of the Cooperative, SREB states lead the nation in providing state virtual (or online) schools and in the number of middle grades and high school students successfully completing online courses — more than 150,000 in the last school year. The Cooperative also worked with SREB states to develop the nation's first *Standards for Quality Online Teaching*, which were recognized nationally. In early 2008, the North American Council for Online Learning endorsed the standards as the basis for its new standards, which will be used globally.

Over the past year, the Cooperative expanded the work of SREB-SCORE, launched in 2007 to address an emerging area of educational technology: digital learning content. By transforming traditional classroom materials into online “building blocks” of information, SREB-SCORE will create an extensive library of Web-based resources and tools that all of the region's teachers and faculty members can share in the coming years. Fourteen K-12 and post-secondary state education agencies have joined this effort.

The Cooperative's *EvaluTech* Web site continues to give teachers access to more than 10,000 free, up-to-date resources for their classrooms and their own training.

With support from the AT&T Foundation, the Cooperative also has launched a new program to help online teachers, including a new Web site.

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## Education Data Services

*Helping states stay up to date on the latest interstate comparisons and trends in higher education*

SREB's Education Data Services program collects, analyzes and shares demographic, economic, pre-K-12 and higher education data among SREB states.

The program publishes the *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, one of the nation's most comprehensive collections of comparative data, which is used throughout the SREB region and across the country. The 50th anniversary edition of the *Fact Book* was published in June 2007. A new edition is published every two years, and the interactive online edition is updated continually. The *Fact Book* includes more than 90 tables of detailed information on colleges and universities in SREB states, plus regional and national data. All 50 states are included in much of the online version.

State leaders in each SREB state also receive *Featured Facts* reports on higher education trends, and periodic *Fact Book Bulletins* provide additional updates on key issues for policy-makers. These publications receive much attention in the national and regional news media.

The backbone of the *Fact Book* is the SREB-State Data Exchange, which compiles the most detailed and up-to-date comparisons of higher education data in the region. Since 1969, the Data Exchange has brought together higher education governing and coordinating boards in SREB states to produce comparative information critical to the work of governors' offices, higher education boards and legislative committees. State agency staff members meet each year to review the information and plan for new sets of data that can help state policy-makers monitor trends and improve higher education in SREB states. The Data Exchange's annual survey includes the nation's first and most detailed annual interstate profiles on e-learning.

The SREB-State Data Exchange — the backbone of the *Fact Book* — provides state leaders with the latest comparisons on higher education, including e-learning.



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## *Helping states transform high schools into places where all students learn at high levels*

Because of the program's research-proven effectiveness, many more schools in SREB states adopted *HSTW* as their reform initiative in the past year.



SREB's *High Schools That Work (HSTW)* program is nationally recognized for its effectiveness in helping schools improve the achievement of *all* students. Offering a results-based school improvement design, *HSTW* partners with state agencies to raise achievement in more than 1,200 high schools in 32 states, including all 16 SREB states. Its strong framework of 10 Key Practices blends career/technical studies with rigorous academics and emphasizes using data to help schools drive continuous improvement.

Because of the program's research-proven effectiveness, many more schools in SREB states adopted *HSTW* as their reform initiative in the past year. Leading the growth was South Carolina, which added more than 100 schools and expects to add 42 more in the next school year. A record-setting 70,000-plus students from 1,049 schools also participated in the 2008 *HSTW* Assessment of reading, math and science achievement, which was revised recently to include new college- and career-readiness standards for high schools.

In addition to its on-the-ground improvement efforts in schools, *HSTW* provides workshops and forums for educators and state leaders. The 21st Annual *HSTW* Summer Staff Development Conference in 2007 in New Orleans brought together more than 7,300 middle grades and high school educators. *HSTW* also held 11 other national workshops for 1,471 educators, delivered 34 local workshops and made Technical Assistance Visits to more than 160 schools.

Two forums helped state leaders develop recommendations on using career/technical education to improve student achievement and high school graduation rates. Co-sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Perkins Legislation High School Reform Forum brought together education and policy leaders from 12 states to leverage the Carl Perkins federal legislation in high school reform efforts. At the annual State Leaders Forum, leaders from all 16 SREB states focused on how to make career/technical studies an essential part of high school reform and worked to help shape career/technical education's future agenda.

As always, *HSTW* also published dozens of reports on topics in education policy and practice, along with materials for professional development workshops for educators. Visit [www.sreb.org](http://www.sreb.org) to search the *HSTW* catalogue.

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## ***Making Middle Grades Work***

### ***Helping middle grades schools prepare students for high school***

*Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW)* focused in the past year on increasing the number of schools it serves with research-based improvement services and professional development workshops. *MMGW*'s network grew to 354 schools in the 2007-2008 school year, up 68 from a year ago. The program held more than 45 workshops in at least 14 states and made 37 school visits to help educators with improvement strategies.

The annual Middle Grades Leadership Forum was held in April 2008 in Atlanta, drawing more than 70 education officials from 13 states to focus on improving middle grades education and helping more students make successful transitions to high school. SREB states are among the first in the nation to implement strategies that address key transition issues.

More than 19,000 eighth-grade students and 13,000 teachers at 313 middle grades schools in 19 states participated in the 2008 Middle Grades Assessment, a diagnostic tool for educators. Dozens of schools in three states are using *MMGW* Student Survey results to improve instruction.

## **Direct Services to Districts and Schools**

### ***Helping schools raise achievement through research-based classroom strategies***

*High Schools That Work* and *Making Middle Grades Work* contract with schools and entire school districts to provide traditionally low-performing schools with a school improvement model that is proven to raise achievement.

In the past year, this program served 65 high schools, 32 middle grades schools and 22 school districts in SREB states, helping them implement SREB's school improvement practices through coaching and on-site professional development. It also served 72 high schools and 15 middle grades schools in 46 school districts outside the SREB region.

The program worked extensively with schools in Arkadelphia, Arkansas; Mobile, Alabama; and Robeson County, North Carolina. By customizing services for each school, it helped them identify and implement strategies to challenge students academically; strengthen ninth-grade instruction; improve career/technical education; use state reading standards in all academic subjects; adjust middle grades curricula to prepare students for high school; and align curricula in grades nine and 10 with grade-level academic standards.

For more information:  
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SREB also partnered with the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC) at Edvantia and the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC) at The George Washington University to help state education agencies work with leadership teams in traditionally low-performing schools. This included a study on how 10 states served by ARCC and MACC are improving the middle grades to high school transition.

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# HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK

## Supporting Transitions from Middle Grades to High School and High School to Postsecondary Studies and Careers



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**SREB and the Communities Foundation of Texas helped the Houston Independent School District reorganize its leadership structure to improve the link between schools and the district.**

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### *Helping students prepare for the next level of education*

SREB continued its work to support critical education transitions for students. In the past year, two subject-matter guides were completed that outline college-readiness indicators in English/language arts and mathematics and provide examples of classroom assignments and assessments for each indicator. A teachers' guide to designing and delivering standards-based instruction also was developed.

The program's weeklong transitions institute was expanded and redelivered at the request of state education agencies and local school districts in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, South Carolina and Texas. *High Schools That Work* will hold a Transitions Summer Institute in Atlanta in June 2008 to help teams of educators design standards-based courses to prepare students for challenging high school or postsecondary studies. This year, the institute will add a new dimension for ninth-grade students who are identified as not ready for high school. DeKalb County, Georgia, plans to send at least 30 participants as part of a major effort to redesign its ninth-grade experience.

## Texas High School Initiatives

### *Helping Texas schools boost student achievement*

SREB collaborates with the Texas Education Agency and the Communities Foundation of Texas (a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation intermediary) in 47 schools to link school, district and state efforts to raise student achievement. The project expanded into 19 more schools in the past year.

Among other activities, SREB and the Communities Foundation of Texas helped the Houston Independent School District reorganize its leadership structure to improve the link between schools and the district. SREB also held workshops for teachers from 35 schools to help them embed high-level mathematics instruction in career/technical classes.

Evidence of the program's effectiveness is growing. A Texas Enhanced *HSTW* Network school was one of only two schools in the state to be named a Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education in the past year, and all of the Enhanced *HSTW* Network schools in the project's first class earned an Acceptable rating or higher on the 2007 Texas Accountability Rating System.

## ***Technology Centers That Work***

### *Helping career/technology centers in SREB states improve student readiness for college and careers*

Created in 2007, *Technology Centers That Work (TCTW)* helps career/technology centers embed college- and career-readiness academic standards into instruction and work with high schools to ensure that career/technical students receive a coherent program of academic, career and technical studies. The goal of *TCTW* is to help centers produce graduates who can succeed in postsecondary studies or careers and become leaders in high-demand, high-skill, high-wage fields.

In the first year of implementation, 60 schools in eight states joined the *TCTW* network. Other states are in the process of identifying schools and developing their plans for participation next year.

A national *TCTW* council was established in 2008 to plan for a national technology center conference to be held in 2009. And two national workshops brought teams of educators from technology centers together to develop school improvement plans. The first workshop, held as a pre-conference before the 2007 *High Schools That Work* Summer Staff Development Conference, had more than 100 participants. As a result of that workshop, Arkansas committed to joining the initiative, and eight schools were identified for participation. More than 140 participants attended a second workshop in March 2008. During this workshop, Maryland and Georgia each committed to have at least one school participate during the coming year.

Other actions included nine technical assistance visits, five state site development workshops, and other professional development activities on a variety of topics. About 2,800 students and 800 teachers at 49 *TCTW* sites also participated in the 2008 *High Schools That Work* Assessment. The assessment will help the centers work more closely with their feeder schools so that students earn industry certification, leading to employment or postsecondary studies.

The goal of *TCTW* is to help centers produce graduates who can succeed in postsecondary studies or careers and become leaders in high-demand, high-skill, high-wage fields.



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# HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK



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**Project Lead The Way® Inc.**  
works to increase the  
number and diversity of  
students preparing for  
college studies in  
engineering, science  
and technology.

**For more information:**  
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## **High Schools That Work Urban Network**

*Helping schools face their challenges and find success*

The Urban Network works closely with leaders in schools and school districts to improve classroom instruction and provide staff development to address urgent needs. The network helps teachers hone their classroom practices, trains career/technical teachers to stress literacy and mathematics in all courses, and helps teachers raise the quality of their instructional planning.

It expanded in 2007-2008 into Clayton and Bibb counties in Georgia. The Orleans Parish Schools returned after withdrawing in 2005 following Hurricane Katrina, and Lusher Charter School in New Orleans also joined.

The Network focuses on helping schools improve the ninth grade through summer programs, ninth-grade academies, student advising and more. Many Network schools now successfully use ninth-grade English and mathematics catch-up courses in Little Rock, Arkansas, and DeKalb County, Georgia.

The 11th Annual Urban Council meeting in March 2008 in Atlanta gathered 75 educators from 11 cities to focus on graduation rates, the ninth grade and helping special education students meet test score goals.

## **Project Lead The Way®**

*Helping schools link students to career studies in science and math*

SREB's partnership with the national nonprofit organization Project Lead The Way® Inc. (PLTW Inc.) will provide 792 middle grades and high schools with engineering-related courses in the 2008-2009 school year. It works to increase the number and diversity of students preparing for college studies in engineering, science and technology. Many of its graduates pursue further education in engineering-related fields.

PLTW Inc. and SREB focused in the past year on improving and ensuring course quality. They created a system to monitor quality and provide technical assistance in schools. They also linked state education agencies with engineering colleges to monitor courses. Forty-two educators from six states now can conduct school visits, expanding soon to 10 more states.

PLTW Inc. also launched an online data system and a long-term study to measure student performance in its courses. A four-year biomedical science program will expand to 52 schools in the near future.



## Learning-Centered Leadership Program

### *Helping states provide a highly qualified principal for all schools*

The SREB Learning-Centered Leadership Program helps school districts, universities and states raise the quality of training for pre-K-12 school leaders across the region. The program helps states improve their preparation programs for aspiring school principals, along with licensure, professional development and evaluations for school leaders. In the past year, the program focused on helping states create stronger school leadership systems.

In the past year, the program assisted states by:

- consulting with officials in Louisiana, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky and Mississippi — states that are redesigning their school leadership preparation and professional development programs. Eight other states and an urban school district also tapped the program's services as they sought to improve school leadership.
- publishing a third biennial SREB report benchmarking states' progress in creating learning-centered systems of school leadership, drawing national attention. SREB published guest columns on the report in *Education Week* and major newspapers in the region.
- preparing a report on research into how high school principals' working conditions affect their efforts to improve schools and achievement.
- convening the annual SREB Leadership Forum for state policy-makers and leaders to share research and best practices, generate cross-state dialogue on critical issues, and plan for the redesign and improvement of statewide school leadership systems.
- securing federal funds for comprehensive evaluations of redesigned leadership preparation programs at East Tennessee State University and the University of Memphis.
- developing two new Leadership Modules and updating 13 others for use in university, state leadership academy and school district courses — and training 650 workshop leaders from 46 states.

The Wachovia Leadership Academy, now in its fourth year, provides training for leadership teams in schools to help improve classroom instruction and student achievement. Academy districts have increased in number to 261. Educators who have attended the Academy are more likely to work collaboratively on school improvement, and school leaders report steady gains in student achievement.

The program helps states improve their preparation programs for aspiring school principals, along with licensure, professional development and evaluations for school leaders.



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# STUDENT ACCESS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

*Helping college students of all ages take courses and earn degrees — no matter where they live and work*



**For more information:**  
Contact Bruce Chaloux at  
[bruce.chaloux@sreb.org](mailto:bruce.chaloux@sreb.org).

In early 2008, SREB restructured several student-related programs under a new banner — Student Access Programs and Services — to reflect a greater focus on increasing college access and graduation rates. This new unit of SREB encompasses online efforts (the *Electronic Campus*, the TeacherCenter.org, the Distance Learning Policy Laboratory and Adult Learning) and two longstanding, traditional-campus programs (the Regional Contract Program and the Academic Common Market), all aimed at providing students with more access to post-secondary education — wherever, however and whenever they wish.

The focus of Student Access Programs and Services' work in the past year has been on adult learners, highlighted by the successful launch of the innovative CALL initiative in Louisiana. The Continuum for All Louisiana Learners, or CALL, is a joint project of the Louisiana Board of Regents and SREB. CALL helps working adults take accelerated online courses at their own convenience — and even provides college credit for prior education, work and life experiences — so they can complete an associate's or bachelor's degree. The program was launched at Bossier Parish Community College and Northwestern State University, where some 50 adults will complete associate's and bachelor's degrees in the first year. CALL II will launch in August 2008 with four additional institutions and several new degree programs.

Until all SREB states can push college graduation rates higher, the number of adult learners with some college education and no degree will continue to grow. CALL is an important model for the region, and SREB is working with states to help more adults further their education.

## ***Electronic Campus***

One of the nation's leading online learning programs, the *Electronic Campus* offered college students and adult learners a record-setting 20,000 online courses in the past year from colleges and universities in all 16 SREB states. Providing access to more than 700 degree programs, it features a rapid admissions system and a variety of tools and services to help students — particularly adults — find the courses they need to complete a degree at their own convenience.

A related effort, the SREB-State Teacher Center (TheTeacherCenter.org) is a “one-stop shop” of online resources for the million-plus educators in the SREB region. Teachers and aspiring teachers enjoy anytime access to professional development courses and information on financial aid, licensure and more.

**For more information:**  
Contact Mary Larson at  
[mary.larson@sreb.org](mailto:mary.larson@sreb.org).

## Regional Contract Program

College students from all 16 SREB states benefit from two programs that provide greater access to postsecondary education through shared resources among the states. Nearly 50,000 students have benefited from these programs.

One of SREB's first programs, the Regional Contract Program enables SREB states to share first-professional degree programs across state borders in hard-to-find specialties such as optometry, veterinary medicine, osteopathic medicine and dentistry. States save the cost of creating their own health programs and can expand the number of professionals to serve their residents in these specialized fields. Students can prepare for these professions at in-state or reduced tuition rates.



## Academic Common Market

The Academic Common Market (ACM) enables college students to enroll in an undergraduate or graduate program in another SREB state if it is not available in their home state, yet pay in-state tuition rates. States benefit by helping state-supported institutions optimize their enrollments in these programs and by meeting the needs of all of their residents. More than 2,000 students participated in the ACM last year, making its four-year enrollment equal to that of many colleges and universities.

**Nearly 50,000 students  
have benefited from  
these programs.**

**For more information:**  
About the Regional Contract  
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[mary.larson@sreb.org](mailto:mary.larson@sreb.org).

About the Academic Common  
Market: Contact Trudy Blackmon at  
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# COUNCIL ON COLLEGIATE EDUCATION FOR NURSING

## *Helping schools of nursing and states address the shortage of nurse educators*



The Council's efforts are helping prepare more nurse educators in SREB states and across the nation.

The SREB Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing works to alleviate the shortages of registered nurses and nursing faculty members in SREB states and across the nation.

In the past year, the Council expanded its focus on Web-based learning. The Council's Nurse Educator Consortium (NEC) helped make more teacher preparation courses available online from eight schools of nursing, including the latest addition, Clemson University in South Carolina.

The Council also launched the Online Nurse Educator Learning Collaborative to help nurse educators share best practices for teaching selected courses online. Working with the SREB Educational Technology Cooperative and SREB's Student Access Programs and Services, the Collaborative provides Webinars in leadership and management, nursing research and policy issues to nurse educators in 10 SREB states.

The Council's 2007 annual meeting brought together about 150 nurse educators from all 16 SREB states and the District of Columbia to discuss making nursing education a greater part of the public agenda. Presentations highlighted new state efforts to support nurse educators: 50 new scholarships of \$15,000 each approved by legislators for nursing graduate students in Alabama, and \$10,000 stipends for graduate students in Louisiana. Council members also learned about other state efforts, such as \$6,000 pay raises for nurse educators in Mississippi and 10 percent raises in Virginia, and investments of \$3 million for collegiate nursing programs in Georgia and \$1 million in South Carolina.

The Council's directors also decided to recognize the late M. Elizabeth Carnegie, a former dean of nursing at Florida A&M University and Hampton University in Virginia, at its 2008 annual meeting in October. She was appointed in 1948 to SREB's Commission on Medical and Related Training and helped shape nursing education in the region.

**For more information:**  
Contact Eula Aiken at  
[eula.aiken@sreb.org](mailto:eula.aiken@sreb.org).

## *Helping build public awareness of crucial education issues*

SREB's Communications office promotes the key education messages and priorities of SREB and its member states via print, radio/TV, the news media, the Internet and more.

Communications assists SREB staff members in the writing, editing, graphic design, publishing and inventory of the organization's many publications. The office also advises SREB senior staff members and helps them promote important education issues in the region.

Keeping the media and the public abreast of critical issues in education is a principal focus. Communications works daily with journalists as a trusted resource, and the office regularly prepares and distributes news releases to more than 800 reporters and editors across the region and nation. Communications also coordinates interviews with national, state and community news outlets — ensuring that SREB and its member states are featured regularly in media such as *The Washington Post*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Education Week*, National Public Radio and many others.

In the past year, Communications led the development of the new and improved SREB Web site, [www.sreb.org](http://www.sreb.org), a leading source of information on education policy and practice, to be unveiled soon.

This past March, Communications held the SREB Forum for Editorial Page Editors and Writers, with featured speakers SREB President Dave Spence and 2007 Pulitzer Prize winner Cynthia Tucker of *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. Participants and panelists from SREB states came together to share ideas for covering current and emerging education issues and for strengthening public interest.

SREB works daily with journalists as a trusted resource and regularly distributes information to more than 800 reporters and editors across the region and nation.



**For more information:**  
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or Lisa Johnston at  
[lisa.johnston@sreb.org](mailto:lisa.johnston@sreb.org).

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