

# Delaware and SREB

SREB

## ■ SREB and its mission

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The nation's first interstate compact for education, the Southern Regional Education Board is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that works with 16 member states to improve education at every level — from pre-K to postdoctoral study. SREB was created in 1948 by visionary governors and legislators who recognized the link between education and the economic vitality of the region.

SREB's sharp focus on policy and research, its nationally recognized school improvement programs and its other services enable the member states to share resources, partner on initiatives and achieve results that would be impossible individually. SREB also advises state government and education leaders on key issues; reports progress on important benchmarks; and works directly with colleges, public schools and states to improve instruction, student achievement, teacher quality and school leadership. Through its *High Schools That Work* and *Making Middle Grades Work* programs, SREB trains and assists more than 12,000 educators each year in research-based school improvement strategies.

SREB's current areas of emphasis include helping states develop stronger policies and practices to improve high school students' readiness for all types of postsecondary education, college-degree completion and much more.

SREB's work is guided by its *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education, which call for SREB states to lead the nation in educational progress. Meeting these goals means that SREB states must continue to raise the quality of education students receive at all levels, close achievement gaps, vastly improve high school graduation rates, and increase the numbers of adults who complete postsecondary degrees and certificates.

SREB is governed by a Board of five members from each of the 16 states: the governor and four gubernatorial appointees (including at least one state legislator and one educator), who serve four-year, staggered terms. Each state is represented on the Executive Committee, which can act for the Board between meetings. The SREB Legislative Advisory Council includes legislators from each state and is the largest standing committee advising the Board.

## ■ Delaware Board and Legislative Advisory Council members

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Board terms for appointed members expire June 30 of the specified year. Board members are: Governor Jack Markell; Lillian M. Lowery, secretary of education (2013); Robert W. Rescigno, network liaison, Vision 2015 (2011); Senator David P. Sokola (2014); and a vacancy (2012).

As a legislative member of the Board, Senator Sokola serves on the Legislative Advisory Council and is the Council's current chair. Senator F. Gary Simpson and Representatives Teresa L. Schooley and Robert E. Walls also serve on the Council as governor-appointed members.

2010

Southern  
Regional  
Education  
Board

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## ■ Where does financial support come from?

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Basic operating support comes from annual appropriations from each member state, but the bulk of the operating budget of more than \$43 million includes funds from foundations and federal sources. In addition, SREB administers the Regional Contract

Program for students in medicine, dentistry, optometry, veterinary medicine, osteopathic medicine and other fields. The operating budget for the Regional Contract Program is approximately \$12 million.

## ■ Preparing for college and careers

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National research suggests that in the next decade, the United States will fall short of the number of degrees and postsecondary certificates required to meet work force needs by nearly eight million. SREB has two initiatives to help states prepare all students to enter and succeed in college and the workplace.

SREB's **State College and Career Readiness Initiative**, begun in 2008 with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, supports work in six SREB states (Florida, Kentucky, Maryland, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia) to ensure that each develops a single set of statewide college- and career-readiness standards in reading and math that are recognized and applied by all public high schools in the state. Also, for high school juniors who are assessed and found unprepared for college-level work, Florida, Kentucky, Texas and Virginia are developing senior-year transitional courses in math and English language arts so these students can master these skills in their last year of high school.

SREB has developed a model college- and career-readiness agenda that outlines the specific steps for state leaders to establish or expand an effective, statewide college-readiness initiative. SREB helps each state review existing readiness standards or develop new ones, develop plans for helping teachers know the standards and incorporate them into the classroom, and revise senior-year curricula to strengthen the academic skills of students who need help meeting the standards before graduation. SREB also works with each state to ensure that end-of-course exams measure whether students meet college- and career-readiness standards. SREB will disseminate project results through case study reports and other papers.

SREB's **College Completion Initiative** centers on success in degree and certificate completion. Less than one-third of degree-seeking, full-time freshmen in public four-year institutions in the United States

graduate in four years, and only 56 percent graduate with a bachelor's degree in six years. To highlight this problem and identify successful solutions, SREB convened a regional College Completion Conference in partnership with Governor Joe Manchin III and the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission in April 2010. At this conference, SREB released *Promoting a Culture of Student Success: How Colleges and Universities Are Improving Degree Completion*, which illustrates how strategies at several public higher education institutions help more students achieve bachelor's degrees — with particular interest in students who enter regional colleges and universities and have academic and/or economic disadvantages.

After SREB Board review and discussion at its Annual Meeting in June 2010, SREB released a second report, *No Time to Waste: Policy Recommendations for Increasing College Completion*, which challenges states to work toward a bold goal: To increase significantly the numbers of students who complete postsecondary career certificates and associate's and bachelor's degrees, so that 60 percent of each state's adults ages 25 to 64 will have one of these credentials by 2025. The report calls on states to set a statewide priority and direction that lead to action in three areas:

- Increase students' access to higher education.
- Increase the rates at which students complete postsecondary education at all levels.
- Make the path to degrees and certificates more cost-efficient, both for the student and the state.

Ten broad recommendations provide a framework to make college completion a top priority. To measure progress toward the overall goal, SREB will report periodically by state and region on the numbers of certificates and degrees awarded. These projects are geared toward stronger academic preparation and higher college completion rates, which are critical to SREB states' future prosperity.

## ■ Charting states' educational progress

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SREB's central focus is helping member states meet the *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education. The set of 12 goals, adopted in 2002, begins with an ambitious statement: "SREB states can lead the nation in educational progress." To do this, students at every level must be ready to learn: in first grade, the middle grades, high school, college and the workplace. Schools and colleges must close gaps in academic achievement among groups of students. And every state must ensure that its educational agencies and institutions work together as a single system so that students can transition smoothly from one level to the next.

SREB completed the first series of 12 reports on the *Challenge to Lead* goals — one per goal — by 2006. Since then, SREB has issued many additional goals reports and focus reports on topics related to the goals. SREB also has issued four sets of customized, biennial state progress reports to assist state education leaders and policy-makers. These reports highlight the

progress of individual SREB states in meeting the goals, point out significant improvements by most SREB states in many areas, and make recommendations on next steps to pursue. Under the theme *Moving Ahead*, the latest set of state progress reports was issued in June 2010. Other recent reports include:

- *A Smart Move in Tough Times: How SREB States Can Strengthen Adult Learning and the Work Force*
- *Keeping Middle Grades Students on the Path to Success in High School: Increasing Engagement and Achievement in SREB States*
- *Participation and Success in the Advanced Placement Program Continue to Grow in SREB States*
- *Gaining Ground on High School Graduation Rates in SREB States: Milestones and Guideposts*

Look for upcoming reports on high school exams, high school graduation, teacher effectiveness, college completion and college transfer. All reports are available at [www.sreb.org](http://www.sreb.org).

## ■ Encouraging more students to stay in school

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SREB's *Go Alliance* is a partnership of SREB states that share marketing strategies to encourage more students — particularly minority students and those from low-income families — to complete high school and go to college.

Representatives from SREB states meet each fall, and the *Go Alliance* hosts a workshop series that provides professional development in college access marketing strategies. The series has focused on general campaign planning, evaluation strategies, engaging community-based organizations, and using "new media" (media other than radio and TV) to reach students. The events have been praised highly and well attended by all participating states.

*Go Alliance* owns and manages the national College Access Marketing website. In addition,

[www.goallianceonline.org](http://www.goallianceonline.org) is hosted within this site. These sites provide information about campaigns that urge students to pursue further education. They help states save dollars and time by producing, replicating and sharing marketing ideas.

*Go Alliance* has provided technical assistance to SREB states in implementing their federal, noncompetitive College Access Challenge Grants (CACG). Six states, together with *Go Alliance*, used CACG funds to form a collaborative to develop professional development training modules to help middle grades and high school counselors promote high school completion and college access among students. The online, trainer-facilitated modules are fully implemented in those states. They have been enthusiastically received and currently are being formally evaluated.

## ■ Improving schools

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SREB's *High Schools That Work (HSTW)* program, active in 1,500 schools in 30 network states and the District of Columbia, is America's largest high school improvement effort. Delaware currently has eight member schools in the network.

Delaware schools participate in a variety of professional development activities to support continuous school improvement. In July 2010, six Delaware teachers attended the *HSTW* Staff Development Conference in Louisville, Kentucky.

Two Delaware high schools, POLYTECH High School and Sussex Technical High School, received the designation of *HSTW* Pacesetter School at the 2010 Annual *HSTW* Staff Development Conference. These schools are model *HSTW* sites that deeply implement the *HSTW* design, teach students a college-ready academic core linked to a concentration, have high achievement, and meet Adequate Yearly Progress requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* or have a graduation rate above 85 percent.

The 2010 *HSTW* Assessment was conducted in February 2010, with a total of 46,534 12th-grade students participating from 868 schools in 37 states. More than 100 students from two Delaware high schools participated. The *HSTW* readiness goals were met by at least 83 percent of students in all three subject areas, and 74 percent of the state's participating students earned the *HSTW* Award of Educational Achievement.

SREB's *Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW)* initiative is active in nearly 500 schools in 23 states. These schools are committed to improving student achievement and readiness for challenging high school studies. One Delaware school is an active member of the network, but Delaware does not participate in *MMGW* as a state initiative.

SREB's *Technology Centers That Work (TCTW)* initiative addresses the specific school improvement needs of centers that are attended by high school students during a portion of their school day. The *TCTW* improvement framework assists these centers in raising academic and technical achievement to prepare students for both careers and further studies. Since the initiative began in 2007, the network has

grown to nearly 160 sites in 16 states. Delaware does not participate in *TCTW* as a state school improvement initiative.

From 2008 to 2010, 21 of the original 50 *TCTW* sites significantly improved their *HSTW* Assessment reading scores. This gain can be attributed, in part, to a focus on embedding reading into career/technical (CT) courses. Eighteen *TCTW* sites significantly improved their mathematics scores, which may be attributed to higher percentages of students reporting that they used mathematics daily or weekly to complete assignments in their CT classrooms.

In 2009, SREB launched a five-year, 12-state *Preparation for Tomorrow* consortium. The purpose of this project is to develop and implement curricula, assessments, instructional materials, and teacher and counselor training that provide at least 100,000 students with relevant and challenging CT courses. Nine SREB states (Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina and West Virginia) and three non-SREB states are participating in this project. Each participating state will design a sequence of four CT courses in a career field with embedded college- and career-readiness standards and will share the materials with other collaborating states. Each sequence will be in a high-demand, high-wage field that is important to the state's economy and will lead students to a full range of postsecondary options.

The **SREB Learning-Centered Leadership Program** helps states improve principal preparation, professional development and working conditions to focus school leadership on improved student achievement. The program conducts research, publishes reports and tracks states' progress on indicators of a learning-centered school leadership system.

In 2009-2010, the program conducted the SREB school leadership benchmark study, including a regional survey that assessed states' adoption and implementation of improved school leadership policies. The expanded study examined not only state policy and actions, but also reports of implementation from superintendents and university preparation programs. The findings will be published in late 2010.

SREB's Leadership Curriculum Modules prepare leaders to improve curriculum, instruction and student achievement. Nearly 150 participants from the region, including 10 from Delaware, have been trained this year as module instructors.

In 2009-2010, SREB began to transition these trainings to an online format. Face-to-face and online learning opportunities are available for schools, districts, universities or states. Facilitated learning

can be customized to incorporate specific initiatives and schedules.

The Leadership Program convenes annual forums to address critical school leadership issues and spur state leaders and policy-makers to action. Ten leaders from Delaware attended the 2010 Leadership Forum, which focused on the role of collaboration and partnerships in the work of preparing a new generation of school leaders.

## ■ Using technology to improve teaching and increase learning

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The **SREB Educational Technology Cooperative** brings together state-level technology leaders from K-12 and higher education agencies across each of the 16 SREB states to create and expand effective uses of technology in public schools and colleges. More than 3,400 school districts and nearly 800 two- and four-year institutions are represented by the Cooperative membership. The Delaware Department of Education is a member.

Now in its 15th year as a nationally recognized leader in educational technology, the Cooperative connects its members, communicates research and trends, and catalyzes projects and educational technology policy leadership, enabling its members to better achieve their state's academic goals. It has published more than 60 updates for state policy- and decision-makers since its inception. The Cooperative addresses ongoing and emerging technology issues through conferences and other events for its member network; provides several innovative websites with the information that state leaders, educators and online teachers need; and assists with state planning in educational technology, helping members identify opportunities and obstacles, providing information and guidance on next steps and budget options, and pinpointing the most effective strategies for improving educational technology. Above all, the Cooperative provides leadership, helping states share resources and information in fast-growing technology arenas.

The **SREB-State Virtual Schools** initiative helps SREB states work together to share information on policy and finance issues and ensure quality online teaching and courses. States' progress is updated in the annual *SREB Report on State Virtual Schools*, and the Cooperative also published the nation's first

*Standards for Quality Online Teaching* — which have been adapted nationally and internationally — plus *Standards for Quality Online Courses* and *Guidelines for Professional Development for Online Teachers*.

The Cooperative has been especially active in quality professional development for online teachers — helping improve teaching and student learning through the use of the Web, guidelines and materials. With funding by the AT&T Foundation, SREB has developed **SREBOnlineTeachers.org**. This site provides links to resources that teachers can use to identify and select leading-edge teaching applications and a forum where online teachers can find and share information that aids in instruction and boosts student achievement. Also at the site is the "It Happens Online" video, co-produced in association with the Pearson Foundation, featuring online teachers from SREB state virtual schools talking about their teaching experiences. In 2009, the Cooperative established a National Online Teacher of the Year program for K-12 online teachers, in partnership with the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL). The program recognized its first awardee in September 2010. The Cooperative also co-sponsored the Online Learning Institute with the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and the Educational Development Center at the ISTE conference in June 2010.

**Sharable Content Object Repositories for Education (SCORE)** helps improve teaching and learning and lowers costs to states by sharing quality digital content and learning tools among schools, colleges and universities. Many SREB states are working together to develop and share digital learning content. Over the past four years, the SCORE initiative

has developed a prototype learning object repository, created a learning object metadata standard that works for finding content, and conducted digital content training across 12 SREB states. A March 2010 report, *An Expectation of Sharing: Guidelines for Effective Policies to Respect, Protect and Increase the Use of Digital Educational Resources*, provides recommendations to help states maximize returns on their investments in digital content. Learn more about this work at [www.sreb.org](http://www.sreb.org).

The *Electronic Campus* is one of the nation's leading distance learning programs, enabling students to pursue their college studies on the Internet and across state lines. It provides online access to 30,000 courses and 1,000 degree programs from colleges and universities throughout the SREB region. It now offers an even wider range of services, especially for adults and e-learners. Users can easily reach specialized services such as online applications, financial assistance, career planning, and searches for courses and programs. The *Electronic Campus* is part of the Regional Mentor™ System (in partnership with Xap Corporation) and connects with all State Mentor™ programs for high school students. It also provides opportunities to help persons of any age who need a college course, degree program or additional education/training to get or keep a job. Visit the *Electronic Campus* at [www.ElectronicCampus.org](http://www.ElectronicCampus.org).

The **SREB-State Teacher Center**, part of the *Electronic Campus*, provides one-stop access to courses, programs, services and information for the nearly 2.5 million educators in SREB states. It offers teachers direct links to state departments of education and certification/licensure agencies, alternative paths to teaching in each state, and professional development opportunities, among other services. Visit the SREB-State Teacher Center at [www.TheTeacherCenter.org](http://www.TheTeacherCenter.org).

The **Academic Common Market/Electronic Campus** program combines the best of two SREB programs and enables students in SREB states to enroll in selected online degree programs offered by institutions outside of their home states at in-state tuition rates. More than 78 degree programs are available, and nearly 137 students were certified by their home states for study in ACM/EC programs during the past year. The program provides a growing number of working adults with the flexibility and affordability they need to earn a degree.

SREB's **Adult Learning Campaign** targets the more than 20 million working adults 25-55 years old in the region who have some college experience but no degree. This population is critical to local, state and regional economic development. SREB's adult learning work has focused recently on a project with the Louisiana Board of Regents: the CALL initiative. CALL connects adult learners with fast-track online degree programs. In less than two years since its inception, hundreds of adults have earned their degrees. Kentucky, Oklahoma, Tennessee and West Virginia also have statewide degree completion efforts. Several more SREB states are establishing degree completion programs, including Georgia and Texas.

The **Distance Learning Policy Laboratory** remains an important forum for member states to review and develop policies for expanding distance learning. SREB's aim is to increase access to high-quality, affordable postsecondary education by identifying barriers to distance learning; to support the development of innovative programs to test distance learning models and interstate partnerships; and to encourage colleges, universities and legislatures to make necessary policy changes. Visit the Distance Learning Policy Laboratory at [www.sreb.org](http://www.sreb.org).

## ■ The most current comparative information for state leaders on colleges

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For 41 years the annual **SREB-State Data Exchange** has provided Delaware officials in government and higher education with timely, comparative information on postsecondary education enrollments, state and local appropriations, faculty salaries and benefits, degrees awarded, student persistence and progression toward graduation, tuition and fees, and

higher education revenues. Most recently, comparisons on e-learning, college credits taken by high school students, and time- and credits-to-degree have been added. The Delaware Department of Education Higher Education Office furnishes campus-by-campus information to the Data Exchange. States use Data Exchange information in planning and

coordinating activities, in making budget decisions about higher education and in setting tuition and fees. The Data Exchange also enables states to work together to develop new interstate comparisons to measure progress.

The biennial *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education* (to be released in June 2011) has been a standard reference for policy-makers since 1956. The *Fact Book* provides information on national, regional and state trends in population, schools, the economy, college enrollments, degrees awarded, student finance,

college budgeting, and salaries and benefits for faculty and administrators. State leaders and planners who access the *Fact Book* online can see trends graphically highlighted and, in almost all cases, find comparisons for all 50 states and retrieve the latest updates.

*Fact Book Bulletins* update and emphasize key items, and SREB also publishes customized state *Featured Facts* reports. The “Education Data” section at [www.sreb.org](http://www.sreb.org) gives states access to SREB’s extensive databases and comparative reports.

## ■ 2010 SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program — Making a difference

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Now in its 17th year, the **SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program** continues to help increase the number of minority faculty members on college and university campuses. With its total graduates reaching 524 this year, it is a testament to what states and institutions can achieve when they allocate resources and work collectively toward a common goal.

The SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program is nationally recognized as one of the most successful and thriving programs of its type in the country. The program’s retention/graduation rate is about 88 percent, nearly double the national average. More than 80 percent of program graduates work in an academic setting, about 60 percent are employed in SREB states, and 46 graduates have achieved tenure.

## ■ States and students save money as SREB programs help Delaware residents earn specialized college degrees

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What happens to residents of your state who want to earn undergraduate, graduate or professional degrees — such as broadcast meteorology, nursing practice or veterinary medicine — but must leave the state to study these programs? Can they afford out-of-state tuition to pursue the programs they have dreamed about that are not offered in Delaware? Two longstanding SREB programs can help.

The **Regional Contract Program** makes it possible for Delaware residents to enroll in veterinary medicine programs at Oklahoma State University and the University of Georgia because these programs are not available in the state. SREB is the fiscal agent for the Regional Contract Program and handles administrative duties for the states.

The **Academic Common Market (ACM)** enables Delaware residents to pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees in programs of study available in other SREB states, but not in their home state, at in-state tuition rates. Both the states and students save significantly: States save the cost of creating specialized programs, and students save by paying in-state tuition for ACM programs. Through the ACM and ACM/EC, Delaware residents have access to 596 programs, including 26 online programs, in other SREB states. Delaware institutions offer eight programs to residents of other SREB states.

## ■ Preparing the nurses and nurse educators that SREB states need

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One of Delaware's college-based nursing programs is a member of the **SREB Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing**. The Council — unique in America — enables nurse educators to address trends in nursing education and health care.

The theme for the annual meeting in October 2010 was *Toward a New Vision of Nursing Education*. Eight institutions in the SREB Nurse Educator Consortium offer teacher preparation courses online for graduate students.

## ■ Legislators play major roles

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Legislative involvement in SREB is extensive:

- Legislators serve as members and officers of the Board.
- Legislators are members of the Board's Executive Committee.
- Legislators are members of the Board's Finance Committee, which is chaired by the treasurer, who is a legislator.
- Legislators also serve on other SREB program committees, panels and task groups.

The Southern Regional Education Board states are Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.