

SREB

Southern
Regional
Education
Board

Challenge to Lead

The Momentum Continues

2006 ANNUAL REPORT

SREB PURSUES THE *CHALLENGE TO LEAD* GOALS

The past year has been one of accelerated achievement for the Southern Regional Education Board states, which form America's first interstate compact for education. Headquartered in Atlanta, SREB was founded in 1948 by Southern states to help government and education leaders work together to advance education and thus improve the social and economic life of the region. Today, SREB's programs include the nation's largest school improvement network, the nation's largest educational technology collaborative of state K-12 and postsecondary agencies, and many other initiatives designed to help the organization's 16 member states lead the nation in educational progress.

SREB's central focus is helping member states meet the *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education, which were created and adopted in 2002 by the SREB Commission on Education Goals. In 2006, SREB completed the first series of reports on member states' progress on each of these goals, which set clear indicators of improvement for every level of education from pre-K to postsecondary and beyond. The goals challenge schools, colleges and universities to pursue excellence, and they challenge state leaders and policy-makers to provide the policies and support that are essential to success.

These goals reports now serve as a single and powerful voice to help state leaders raise academic standards, learn about best practices and identify the steps needed to improve student performance. Together, they show that SREB states are well on their way to leading the nation in educational improvement.

As the programs and services detailed on the following pages attest, SREB's leaders, partner organizations and staff are working aggressively to ensure that the momentum continues.

Challenge to Lead Goals for Education

1. All children are ready for the first grade.
2. Achievement in the early grades for all groups of students exceeds national averages and performance gaps are closed.
3. Achievement in the middle grades for all groups of students exceeds national averages and performance gaps are closed.
4. All young adults have a high school diploma — or, if not, pass the GED tests.
5. All recent high school graduates have solid academic preparation and are ready for postsecondary education and a career.
6. Adults who are not high school graduates participate in literacy and job-skills training and further education.
7. The percentage of adults who earn postsecondary degrees or technical certificates exceeds national averages.
8. Every school has higher student performance and meets state academic standards for all students each year.
9. Every school has leadership that results in improved student performance — and leadership begins with an effective school principal.
10. Every student is taught by qualified teachers.
11. The quality of colleges and universities is regularly assessed and funding is targeted to quality, efficiency and state needs.
12. The state places a high priority on an education *system* of schools, colleges and universities that is accountable.

SREB OVERVIEW

SREB is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with 16 member states: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. SREB is governed by a Board that consists of the governor of each member state and four other individuals from the state, at least one of whom must be a state legislator and at least one an educator. All appointments are made by the governors for four-year, staggered terms.

SREB is supported by appropriations from these states and by funds from foundations, businesses, and state and federal grants and contracts.

The Year at a Glance

SREB reached nearly 10,000 educators and other leaders at meetings and conferences, expanded the *High Schools That Work* school improvement effort to 32 states, responded quickly to the hurricanes with free online college courses for displaced students and moved forward on more than a dozen important initiatives and programs. The organization launched a host of technology-related efforts and worked to recruit more minority students into graduate-level studies, furthered its participation in the Go *Alliance* college access campaign, and expanded TheTeacherCenter.org Web resource, to name only a few.

SREB also provided a wealth of information. It maintains an extensive database about education in all 16 SREB states and publishes the biennial *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*. In the past year, staff responded daily to requests from governors, legislators, educators and the news media on education issues. SREB-sponsored meetings enabled policy-makers and educators to share information within their states and across state lines. This year, the organization also offered nearly 300 SREB reports and publications on critical aspects of improving education. SREB publications range from the multi-state *Legislative Reports* to the most-requested title in SREB history: *Literacy Across the Curriculum: Setting and Implementing Goals for Grades Six Through 12*.

Among SREB's many programs are:

- the SREB-State Data Exchange (with more than 35 years of service to SREB states) and the *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, one of the nation's longest-standing, most comprehensive higher education data reports;
- the Academic Common Market (with more than 30 years of service to SREB states), which enables college students to enroll in specialized degree programs offered by institutions in other SREB states and still pay in-state tuition;
- *High Schools That Work*, America's largest school improvement network, along with *Making Middle Grades Work*, now helping schools in more than half of the nation's states;
- the SREB Legislative Work Conference, America's first annual forum for legislators on education issues facing states;
- the Educational Technology Cooperative, the largest and most productive educational technology collaborative of state K-12 and post-secondary education agencies in the nation;
- the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program, a nationally recognized model to produce minority Ph.D.s and encourage them to seek faculty positions;
- the *Electronic Campus*, the nation's most comprehensive distance-learning marketplace, with 250 colleges and universities offering more than 15,000 courses and 550 degree programs online; and
- the SREB Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing, the nation's only regional council on collegiate nursing education, with 175 college and university members working on the nationwide nursing shortage.

Guided by Louisiana Governor and SREB Chair Kathleen Babineaux Blanco, as well as the Board, Legislative Advisory Council and President Dave Spence, SREB encourages states to pursue long-term solutions to education issues. Through many programs and publications, SREB helps state leaders build a vision for education in their states and shares its analyses of state actions to help them prepare for the issues ahead.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



GOVERNOR KATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO

Southern Regional Education Board Chair Kathleen Babineaux Blanco was elected the governor of Louisiana in 2003. A former high school teacher, she served two terms as Louisiana's lieutenant governor. She also has served as a state legislator and as an elected member and chairwoman of the state Public Service Commission. She is serving her second year as chair of SREB.

Last year in this space, I wrote about how 2005-06 would be the year of the teacher and the adult learner. In fact, 2006 turned out to be the year of the hurricanes.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita pounded the Gulf Coast region, destroying entire towns, shuttering hundreds of schools, flooding New Orleans, and dispersing students and their families across the country. As the governor of Louisiana during two of our nation's worst natural disasters, I appreciated the overwhelming response from our friends in SREB states. We are forever grateful for your offers of support and assistance.

During this time of rebuilding and economic recovery, it is easy to take our eyes off educational progress — simply for the sake of survival. However, educational progress is indeed one of the main cornerstones of our rebuilding effort and is critical to attracting our families back home.

Educational improvement remains the key to economic development, improved personal health, and many other factors that influence prosperity in the SREB states. I

remain involved in and committed to school improvements in my state. I am grateful that SREB has helped many of our students weather the storms that devastated the Gulf Coast, while still pressing state leaders to do better by our young people — even in the face of the hurricanes' aftermath and other tremendous challenges that have affected the South for generations.

In response to the hurricanes, SREB provided nearly 2,000 college students access to online courses free of charge through the *Electronic Campus*. SREB policy experts helped me and other state officials navigate tough education policy decisions we faced after Katrina and Rita. SREB continued to provide excellent research and guidance on everything from college readiness to school leadership. This outstanding organization also kept the nation's largest school improvement program rolling along and expanding.

I am proud that SREB has continued the projects I launched under my tenure, including TheTeacherCenter.org Web site for teachers who seek online courses and information about licenses and credentials. The *Go Alliance* links all

16 SREB states to campaigns that will increase public awareness of the need to finish high school and the skills young people need to earn a diploma and proceed to college and good careers.

In the coming year, the challenge for all of us is to rise above our obstacles and aggressively seek new ways to provide excellent educational opportunities for our young people. No flood, fire, hurricane, or election should stand in our way. SREB stands ready to help us make solid decisions and wise investments in our people.

If we are to save our children from the grip of poverty, education is their lifeboat. Let the South lead the way in reaching our education goals for the betterment of our children, our families and our region.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



DAVE SPENCE

Dave Spence is the president of the Southern Regional Education Board. A former vice president of SREB, from 1998 to 2005 he was the executive vice chancellor and chief academic officer of the California State University System, which enrolls more than 400,000 students. He has held several state-level leadership positions in SREB states, and he was a member of the SREB staff on two occasions, including service as vice president for Educational Policies in the mid-1980s. He has been executive director of the Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, executive vice chancellor for the University System of Georgia, and executive vice chancellor and vice chancellor for academic programs at the State University System of Florida.

Embarking on my first year as president, I knew from my previous years working at SREB of our 16 states' reputation for working together and setting impressive goals for educational progress. In learning more about today's SREB and the region's current generation of education policy leaders, I have found the willingness to measure progress and take action toward meeting these goals nothing short of remarkable.

The agenda for educational progress is good. Now we must sustain this progress, continue our willingness to measure and report on our efforts, and build momentum to meet all the challenges. The goal is nothing less than vastly improved educational opportunities for the people of the 16 SREB states, leading to a better quality of life for all.

In 2006, four years after SREB approved the *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education, SREB states are showing significant improvements in student achievement, quality teaching and early childhood learning. Some hurdles remain tall, including the stubbornly low high school graduation and college completion rates in many SREB states. We must step up efforts to help more students receive an excellent high school education, prepare for

college and careers, and obtain college degrees from schools that work diligently to meet the needs of their states. Do not forget the many adults who still need literacy and job training, even as we strive to improve high schools and college learning for young people.

The SREB *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education call for *all* young adults to have a high school diploma, or if not, to pass GED tests. The goals also call for all recent high school graduates to have solid academic preparation and to be ready for college and careers. All adults who do not have high school diplomas should further their learning, the goals say, and they challenge SREB states to beat the national averages in the percentages of adults who earn college degrees and technical certificates.

A recent SREB report outlined some of the work that must be done to ensure that more students finish high school and that high school is meaningful and prepares students well for college and work. The March 2006 *Challenge to Lead* report, *Getting Students Ready for College and Careers*, shows that all students need to take an essential core of courses to prepare for higher learning and the workplace.

All students should take four years of English and math (including Algebra II), and three years each of laboratory-based science and social studies. The fourth math course in the senior year should include a course beyond Algebra II, a course on data analysis and statistics, or another course that will prepare students for college-level mathematics. Students also need to take additional academic courses or a series of courses in a career field. End-of-course exams, including industry-developed certification exams, can promote increased rigor in high school courses.

One recent study showed that as many as four out of five college freshmen are not ready for college in all of the key academic subjects. Why? Most states do not have college- and career-readiness standards built into high school curricula, instruction and state tests. Teachers are not always focused on college and career readiness, and the same academic courses are not equally challenging from school to school, or even classroom to classroom. Policy-makers should require all high schools and all high school teachers to focus intentionally on college and career readiness. SREB states can't afford to leave college and career readiness to luck.

Higher education must shoulder some of the burden to make college and career readiness a top priority for high schools and teachers. Higher education leaders and policy-makers within each state have not agreed on what it means to be ready for higher learning, so high schools, teachers, parents and students are left without clear messages on what college readiness means.

States also should collect better data on whether taking the right high school courses makes a difference in increasing the percentage of students who meet college-readiness standards and in reducing the need for remedial courses in college. States must work to eliminate gaps in college preparation for black and Hispanic students and check on the effectiveness of high school remediation in closing those gaps. States also should monitor the effectiveness of remedial programs in colleges and work to eliminate the need for remediation.

Let us also remember the sobering data from one of last year's SREB *Challenge to Lead* reports, *Getting Serious About High School Graduation*. Roughly one-third of ninth-graders in SREB states do not earn a high school diploma on time. Some SREB states only graduate slightly more than half of their high school students on time. Worse, high school graduation rates in many SREB states have fallen in recent years. Rates are especially low for black and Hispanic males, although graduation rates for those groups in SREB states actually beat national averages for those groups of students. State policy-makers must set ambitious high school graduation targets for all groups of students and strengthen the role of graduation rates in school accountability systems. Students also must find the help they need to transition from the middle grades into high school and not become stuck in the ninth grade. Summer programs, ninth-grade academies, intensive instruction in key courses, and extra support and attention for troubled students can help boost graduation rates.

All students deserve an excellent high school education and an opportunity to successfully transition from high school into college and careers. States can help them by setting specific standards for college and career readiness for all high school students.

As SREB enters its 58th year, our work at the Atlanta headquarters must improve along with our states. The roughly 100 people who spend their days working at SREB and out in the field in our school improvement programs have brought tremendous value to our member states. The many things we do at SREB — policy work, research, school improvement, e-learning, developing education leaders and more — are evidence that we are succeeding.

Thank you for the opportunity to lead SREB as we tackle these problems together. We can, in fact, lead the nation in better preparing students for college and careers as we strive to lead the nation in educational progress.

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

Educational Goals and Indicators

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SREB tracks the progress of states in meeting the 12 *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education. The goals address school and college readiness, achievement gaps, the efficiency and effectiveness of state educational systems, and more. Indicators of progress have been identified for each goal, and these help state policy-makers and education leaders know if their states are making progress. National benchmarks and measures of improvement are important in these reports. If SREB states are to lead the nation, they must be measured in a national context and make continuous gains.

SREB reports on each of the goals in a two-year cycle. The first reports were issued in spring 2004, and the first series was completed in spring 2006. A new set of reports is already under way, as part of SREB's continuous evaluation of progress and improvements in education. SREB also provides each state with a customized report on the progress it is making on key indicators for each goal. These are available in a variety of formats on the SREB Web site. New customized reports are being published in summer 2006.

In addition to reporting on the goals, SREB continues to give special attention to issues that have been important to SREB states over the years. These include, for example, the health and academic factors related to school readiness, student achievement (particularly in reading and mathematics), remediation in college, college accountability and students' college readiness, financial aid and college affordability, and teacher quality.

All 16 SREB states participated in the *Go Alliance* during the past year. The *Go Alliance* is an interstate cooperative that works to help states increase college attendance through media campaigns that encourage students to complete high school, attend college and develop the skills they need to achieve those goals.

Publications:

Challenge to Lead Education Goals Series

Building a Foundation for Success by Getting Every Child Ready for School

Mastering Reading and Mathematics in the Early Grades

Getting the Mission Right in the Middle Grades

Getting Serious About High School Graduation

Getting Students Ready for College and Careers

Investing Wisely in Adult Learning is Key to State Prosperity

Creating College Opportunity for All: Prepared Students and Affordable Colleges

Focusing on Student Performance Through Accountability

Resolve and Resources to Get a Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom

Progress Being Made in Getting a Quality Leader in Every School

Holding Colleges and Universities Accountable for Meeting State Needs

From Goals to Results: Improving Education System Accountability

High School to College and Careers: Aligning State Policies

Higher Education Studies, Reports and Surveys in the SREB States

Continuing Challenges in College Admissions Test Scores

SREB States Remain on Top in the Number of Teachers Achieving National Board Certification

Progress in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate in SREB States

Customized reports on goals and indicators for each SREB state

Quality Teachers

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“Every student is taught by qualified teachers.” This goal, one of the *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education, reinforces the central assertion that SREB has made since 1981: Preparing teachers is the number one topic that schools and colleges need to address together.

SREB’s work to ensure a qualified teacher for every classroom focuses not only on preparing new teachers. It also involves calling for better data about supply, demand and quality of teachers; licensure focused on performance; and professional development that helps teachers improve student achievement. More-focused resources are needed to help beginning teachers develop the skills and knowledge they need to improve student achievement and to reduce the numbers of teachers leaving the profession in their first five years. Well-qualified teachers are especially needed in traditionally low-performing schools.

To help states address these needs, SREB is utilizing Web technology to support both new and veteran teachers. TheTeacherCenter.org — an online SREB-state resource for teachers, in partnership with member states — provides easy access to information about teaching in the 16 states. The site provides extensive answers to key questions such as: Are scholarships, grants or loans available if I want to become a teacher in my home state? What if I want to teach in my neighboring state? What do I need to do to become a teacher through an alternative route? What are the *No Child Left Behind* “highly qualified” standards for teachers in each state?

SREB calls for all students to have well-qualified teachers in all grades, whether face-to-face in the classroom or — increasingly — in online courses in the middle grades and high school. More resources and new

ways of thinking are needed to make it happen. SREB’s teacher initiatives include a focus on states recruiting, hiring and retaining quality online teachers for middle grades and high schools, through work funded by the BellSouth Foundation.

Teacher compensation is also important in putting a high-quality teacher in every classroom. How teachers are paid — not just how much — has become more critical in light of today’s emphasis on the performance of all students. Salaries and benefits should recognize teachers with more expertise and higher student performance, as well as those who meet state needs and take on additional or different roles to improve curriculum and instruction. SREB reports and presentations suggest that state policies should reward and encourage hard work, and they should recognize marketplace differences and professional improvement in knowledge and skills. Every state, district and school must make sure that all children — regardless of location, household income or any other factor — have high-quality teachers who can help students reach high educational standards.

Publications and Resources:

Resolve and Resources to Get a Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom

SREB States Remain on Top in the Number of Teachers Achieving National Board Certification

Quality Teachers: Can Incentive Policies Make a Difference?

Focus on Teacher Pay and Incentives: 2005 Legislative Actions and Update on Salary Averages

Web site: TheTeacherCenter.org

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Education Data Services

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Published since 1956, the *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education* is a biennial source of comparative data widely used throughout SREB states and across the nation. Since 1991, the *Fact Book* has been online, interactive and updated continually. It includes more than 90 tables of detailed information related to colleges and universities in the SREB region, each SREB state and the United States. In most cases, data for each of the 50 states are available. Companion publications called *Featured Facts* for each SREB state are compiled from this information, and the *Fact Book Bulletin* provides periodic supplements and updates for policy-makers based on information gathered for the *Fact Book*. The next print edition of the *Fact Book* will be published in 2007.

Since 1970, the **SREB-State Data Exchange** partnership has brought together higher education governing and coordinating boards in SREB states to produce comparative information critical to the annual decision-making needs of higher education boards, governors' offices and legislative committees. State agency staff members meet each year to review annual collections of higher education-related data and indicators and to plan for new sets of data that will be collected for SREB states and the *Fact Book*. This sharing of data and findings is designed to help state policy-makers in higher education monitor trends, share ideas and address problems, with the ultimate goal of making better decisions that will result in improved higher learning opportunities in SREB states. In addition to the most up-to-date statistics on postsecondary education graduates, enrollment, progression and graduation rates, tuition and fees, funding, and faculty compensation, the annual survey now includes the nation's first annual interstate profiles on the extent of instruction through e-learning.

The SREB Data Library was established in 1991 as one of the nation's first online education data centers. The library contains all of the data-bases used for the *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, the reports in the *Challenge to Lead* education goals series and the SREB-State Data Exchange, and all are updated regularly.

Publications and Resources:

SREB Fact Book on Higher Education

SREB Fact Book on Higher Education Web edition — www.sreb.org

Featured Facts (state-by-state reports from the *SREB Fact Book*)

SREB-State Data Exchange Annual Statistics

SREB-State Data Exchange Highlights (annual)

SREB Fact Book Bulletins

Latest Data Confirm a College Affordability Gap for Students from Middle- and Lower-Income Families

Racial/Ethnic and Gender Differences Gain Importance as Factors in Education Progress

Funding for Public Colleges and Universities Continues to Lose Battle with Enrollment Growth and Inflation

Part-Time Faculty and Teaching/Research Assistants Now Outnumber Full-Time Faculty at Public Colleges and Universities

Latest Forecasts Project Many More Hispanic Public High School Graduates

SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program

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The **SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program** works to increase the number of minority students who earn Ph.D.s and seek careers as college faculty. In its 13-year history, the program has provided financial support and many other services to hundreds of graduates, and more than 75 percent of those graduates now are employed on college and university campuses. The program will celebrate its 300th graduate in 2006, and its efforts to be “more than a check and handshake” continue to grow.

The 2005-2006 Doctoral Scholars class represented the largest state-funded class (75 scholars) in the history of the program. In total, more than 650 Ph.D. scholars have found support through the program, and another 300 participating scholars currently are on track to earn a doctoral degree. Seven program graduates have achieved tenure at colleges and universities, and several have been nationally recognized for their academic achievements and research.

The Doctoral Scholars Program retention/graduation rate remains a remarkable 90 percent — more than double the national persistence rate for minority doctoral students. The program was identified by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation as one of the most successful doctoral diversity initiatives in the nation. It was highlighted in the foundation’s May 2005 report, *Diversity & the Ph.D.: A Review of Efforts to Broaden Race & Ethnicity in U.S. Doctoral Education*.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation currently support the Doctoral Scholars Program with more than \$3 million to extend program services to scholars who participate in their affiliated doctoral programs. SREB has provided mentoring, networking and help with job searches to more than 300 scholars in NSF’s 23 Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) programs, located at colleges and universities across the nation. More than 200 Sloan Scholars at 89 institutions also have received such services.

The Doctoral Scholars Program is the host of the Compact for Faculty Diversity’s annual **Institute on Teaching and Mentoring**, which provides students with leadership training and development, community building and networking opportunities, and skills preparation for graduate school and work in higher education fields. The 12th annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, held in Arlington, Virginia, in October 2005, was the largest to date, attracting 930 scholars and their faculty mentors. The Institute is sponsored by the Compact for Faculty Diversity, a unique partnership of regional, federal and foundation programs that focus on minority graduate education and faculty diversity.

Despite the successes of the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program in boosting the number of minority faculty members and doctoral students, faculty diversity continues to be a challenge across the nation. In 2004, only 5.3 percent of full-time college faculty members were black, 3.1 percent Hispanic and 0.5 percent American Indian — and more than half the total number of minority faculty members taught in mostly minority-serving institutions. Rates of minority faculty members are increasing, but slowly. With college teaching projected as one of the fastest-growing fields in the United States through 2012, this is an important time to keep the recruitment of minority faculty members growing.

In 2005, SREB Board members named the scholars the Mark Musick Doctoral Scholars to honor the former SREB president’s role in developing the scholars program.

Publications:

Milestone Graduates: The First 100

A Decade, A Difference ... But Still Far to Go

Milestone Graduates: 200 and Counting

Compact for Faculty Diversity Institute on Teaching and Mentoring

Capstone Graduates: The SREB-AGEP Doctoral Scholars Program

Distance Learning Policy Laboratory and Adult Learning Campaign

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SREB's **Distance Learning Policy Laboratory** was established to discover and promote solutions to a number of policy barriers facing distance learners. Seven reports have been published, and new projects are ongoing. Each report details a policy problem in distance learning, provides in-depth background information and analysis of the problem, and concludes with a set of recommendations targeting specific actions by states, colleges and universities, and SREB. A capstone report — *Technology Can Extend Access to Postsecondary Education: An Action Agenda for the South* — outlines the aggressive agenda that drives SREB's Adult Learning Campaign today. The action agenda sets a key objective for SREB states to use technology to expand the reach and effectiveness of adult education. The number of young adults with too little education is a tremendous, growing problem in SREB states.

The **Adult Learning Campaign**, supported by a \$1 million grant from the Lumina Foundation for Education, is helping SREB states find ways to increase educational opportunities for young adults. The campaign is working to help three groups:

- young adults ages 18 to 24 who can get a GED credential and then move to additional training or postsecondary education.
 - More than 2.6 million of these adults in SREB states did not have a high school diploma in 2000.
- adults ages 25 to 44 who may need a GED credential and/or college preparation to pursue postsecondary certificates, diplomas or degree programs.
 - More than 5 million of these adults in SREB states did not have a high school diploma in 2000.
 - Nearly 7 million of these adults in SREB states have attended college but do not have a degree.

- adults of any age who have at least an associate's degree and are seeking to advance their postsecondary education via supplemental courses (both credit and noncredit), certificates or degree programs.

Three initiatives of the Adult Learning Campaign include:

- actions to help more adults take advantage of the expanded *Electronic Campus* — especially associate's and bachelor's degree-holders (including nurses and teachers) who seek continuing education and advanced degrees. Efforts in 2006 include a redesigned and improved version of TheTeacherCenter.org Web site and the creation of a major promotional campaign, including a Web initiative, to reach the 2.2 million K-12 educators in SREB states.
- a partnership with Patrick County, Virginia, that has focused on reaching adult learners in rural areas. A model program created by the Patrick County Education Foundation has developed strategies that other rural communities could use.
- a planned project in Louisiana, targeting state employees and building on SREB's earlier work with Louisiana's Adult Learning Task Force, which was suspended because of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. A new initiative is focusing on work force development as the Gulf Coast region rebuilds after the storms.

Publications and Resources:

Targeting the Adult Learning Challenge in SREB States

Investing Wisely in Adult Learning is Key to State Prosperity

Reducing Barriers and Increasing Access to Financial Aid for Adult Learners

The Adult Learning Campaign Web site —

www.ecinitiatives.org/adult_learning/adultindex.asp

Adult Learning Profiles for SREB states, online — www.sreb.org

STATE SERVICES

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Serving member states is the intent of all SREB programs. State services are at the heart of everything that SREB does best.

Staff members in **State Services** often are SREB's initial link to executive and legislative officials and staff in the 16 SREB states. SREB is known for its commitment to helping policy-makers accurately analyze trends and issues. Staff members respond to questions with timely, concise information, and they prepare reports on pressing issues.

The annual series of *Legislative Reports* follows the events in the 16 state legislatures, beginning with governors' legislative and budget proposals and ending with final legislative actions. The final report of the series each year, the *Legislative Briefing*, is a topical summary of final legislative and budget actions. These reports are shared with officials throughout the SREB region and are available on the SREB Web site.

State Services staff work closely with the SREB Legislative Advisory Council, which is composed of state senators, representatives and delegates from all SREB states. In the past year, SREB has helped Legislative Advisory Council members to focus on the development of state policies to help more students make a successful transition from high school into college and careers, to ensure that more students complete college and career

certification, and to follow best practices as states develop virtual schools that students can access via the Web. State Services staff also regularly make presentations to legislative and educational groups, and they coordinate SREB's annual Legislative Work Conference and meetings of the Legislative Advisory Council and legislative and executive staff.

Other meetings and efforts respond to continuing and emerging issues. SREB, for example, helped states develop policies on school accountability by convening early meetings on school report cards and, later, on issues relating to the use of high school assessments as a part of graduation requirements. Another effort brought together policy-makers and staff from states with recent or impending court decisions on school finance. These activities exemplify interstate sharing, a cornerstone of what SREB is about.

Publications:

Legislative Report series

Legislative Briefing

Focus on Teacher Pay and Incentives: 2005 Legislative Actions and Update on Salary Averages

State Notes (published annually)

Educational Technology Cooperative

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The **Educational Technology Cooperative**, now in its 12th year, brings together state K-12 and postsecondary coordinating and governing boards from the 16 SREB states to address educational technology issues and topics linking education from preschool through graduate studies. More than three dozen state agencies participate in the Cooperative. This is a one-of-a-kind, multistate program.

State Virtual Schools are just one important area of emphasis. Many SREB states have implemented some form of program to provide Web-based courses to students within their states. Through the SREB Educational Technology Cooperative, these states are able to share information and support one another in establishing state virtual schools. The BellSouth Foundation supports SREB efforts to support and expand online learning.

The goals of the **Sharable Content Object Repositories for Education (SCORE)** initiative are to improve the quality of digital learning course content (learning objects and tools), improve teaching and learning, and achieve cost savings. This Cooperative undertaking began over two years ago as a proof-of-concept project to determine whether K-12 and higher education could place digital content in repositories, or databases, and share content with each other across multiple states. This multistate, K-20 learning initiative is being launched in 2006. A major conference involving many stakeholders in SCORE was held in April 2006 to begin expansion of this work.

Digital Learning Content is another part of the Cooperative’s work. Use of digital learning content by schools and colleges is rapidly increasing. To help ensure quality course development and to address cost issues, it is important for these institutions to be able to access and use digital content with a minimum of time and effort. Digital learning content includes sharable content objects, learning objects and media materials. This work of the Cooperative is directly linked to SCORE.

EvaluTech, another initiative of the Cooperative, provides teachers with free, up-to-date and reliable resources for their classrooms and for their own training. These include:

- more than 11,000 reviews of recommended software and other resources;
- Web resources in language arts, mathematics, social studies and science;
- links to lesson plans, real-world teaching examples and other learning resources provided by SREB states’ departments of education;
- accessible technology resources for students with disabilities; and
- links to online learning and online professional development resources.

The resources on the *EvaluTech* Web site continue to expand to meet teachers’ instructional needs. An increasing number of teachers and other education professionals access this site regularly.

Multi-State Online Professional Development (MOPD) is an initiative that provides training for online professional development and supports the sharing of course content among participating states. The need for high-quality professional development is greater today than ever. Online instruction has proven to be especially effective because it can reach teachers regardless of where they live or teach. MOPD works closely with all SREB states’ departments of education.

The **American TelEdCommunications Alliance (ATAlliance)** links education and telecommunications to provide schools, colleges, state education agencies, libraries and other nonprofit entities with benefits in telecommunication services. It provides low-cost access to telecommunication products and services and helps guide technology policy and standards. The ATAlliance contracts for online course management software were initiated by SREB and are now in use by many SREB states, resulting in savings for virtually everyone. The ATAlliance was formed by SREB, along with the three other regional education compacts and a successful national nonprofit telecommunications organization (MiCTA).

Publications:

Technical Guidelines for Digital Learning Content

Why Are Wireless Services Important to State and Education Leaders?

Technology Use in Rural High Schools Improves Opportunities for Student Achievement

Principles of Effective Learning Objects

Report on State Virtual Schools

Electronic Campus

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SREB's expanded *Electronic Campus* (ElectronicCampus.org) is a gateway to e-learning opportunities and online services in SREB states. The *Electronic Campus* partners with colleges and universities throughout the SREB region to make online courses and programs available to e-learners around the world. The *Electronic Campus* currently provides access to more than 15,000 courses and 550 degree programs from regionally accredited public and private colleges and universities in all 16 SREB states. These include 4,800 "e-rate" courses that offer consistent tuition costs for online classes across many states.

The *Electronic Campus*, a regional learning network for SREB states, is America's first fully integrated Web site for e-learners and adult learners. It provides regional-level services and connectivity across the 16 SREB states and their colleges and universities. The *Electronic Campus* takes advantage of existing state Mentor™ systems, currently in place in 11 of the 16 SREB states (and soon to launch in a 12th state), and extends services to distance learners across state lines. The *Electronic Campus* creates new learning opportunities — and easier access to those opportunities — for K-12 students and adults.

The **SREB-State Teacher Center** (TheTeacherCenter.org), provides a convenient "one-stop shop" of online resources designed to help the 2.2 million educators in the 16 SREB states. TheTeacherCenter.org integrates with the *Electronic Campus* to provide professional development, information on financial assistance specifically for educators, licensure and certification requirements, and ways for teachers to become "highly qualified" as required by federal law — all at one site. An improved version of

TheTeacherCenter.org includes additional resources for educators, such as Praxis™ II Subject Matter "testlets" to help teachers meet Praxis testing requirements in the majority of SREB states.

The **Regional Consortium for Nurse Educators**, which provides master's and doctoral online courses to nurse educators, grew out of the work of the Distance Learning Policy Laboratory and can be reached through the *Electronic Campus* Initiatives Web site, www.ECInitiatives.org. It began offering courses in fall 2004.

The five-year-old Academic Common Market/*Electronic Campus* program continues to grow and expand. This program allows students in SREB states to cross state lines and still pay in-state tuition rates for college degree programs not offered in their home states. This academic year, nearly 150 students were certified in 50 online academic programs, such as master's degrees in aviation systems, library and information studies, education and other professional fields.

A significant part of the past year was devoted to supporting hurricane response efforts along the Gulf Coast. SREB's leadership in the Sloan Semester effort, in partnership with the Sloan Consortium, utilized the *Electronic Campus* infrastructure and the new Visiting Electronic Student Authorization (VESA) system to assist college students affected by the storms. More than 1,300 free online courses were made available to college students in an accelerated academic term. More than 1,750 students took advantage of the Sloan Semester (SloanSemester.org) offerings, showing the potential of online learning and the *Electronic Campus*.

HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK

High Schools That Work

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High Schools That Work (HSTW) is the nation's largest school improvement effort, focusing on combining challenging academic courses and modern career/technical studies to improve student achievement. More than 1,100 high schools in 32 states (including all 16 SREB states) are involved in *HSTW*.

High Schools That Work is nationally recognized for its effectiveness in guiding schools to raise student achievement and is noted for its program design, its emphasis on using data for continuous improvement, its national staff development opportunities and its technical assistance to the *HSTW* network. At the March 2006 Governor's Education Summit in Michigan, Tom Vander Ark, the executive director for education initiatives at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, complimented *HSTW* for its endorsement of a required academic core of challenging courses along with a concentration in career/technical skills.

HSTW was the only uniquely high school-level improvement design featured on Hedrick Smith's PBS program, "Making Schools Work," broadcast in 2005. The program highlighted the accomplishments of Corbin High School, a *HSTW* site in Kentucky. *HSTW* also was recommended as one of five possible reform efforts for the American high school by the K-12 Committee of the National Association of Scholars in a position paper presented to the nation's governors at the 2005 National Education Summit on High Schools in Washington, D.C. *HSTW* was referenced as one of the nation's best comprehensive, whole-school reform efforts.

The North Central Regional Education Laboratory cited *HSTW* in its 2005 publication *Strategies to Improve High Schools* for the program's efforts to make the curricula more relevant and for preparing students for postsecondary education and work. Also, the Education Commission of the States recognized *HSTW* for its products dedicated to high school improvement in its 2005 online report *High School Agenda: Who's Doing What*. In addition, the Association for Career and Technical Education describes *HSTW* on its Web site as a high school reform model showing promising results.

HSTW has begun work on an enhanced design that states can customize to meet their educational needs. The enhanced design places greater emphasis on transitions from the middle grades to high school, from high school to college and careers, and on benchmarking classroom instruction to employment and college-readiness standards. The state of Texas has adopted the enhanced design and has funded 15 high schools to join the new network. The schools will receive \$30,000 grants for a period of 18 months. Five high-performing *HSTW* sites will receive \$10,000 awards to serve as mentor sites for the 15 schools. *HSTW* is currently working with Kentucky and West Virginia to adapt the design to fit their school improvement needs.

In 2005, *HSTW* presented the 19th Annual **Summer Staff Development Conference** in Nashville, Tennessee, for more than 8,000 high school and middle grades administrators, teachers and counselors. In the 2006 academic year, *HSTW* also held 10 training workshops for more than 3,000 educators and held a leadership forum to help state officials examine the critical transition from high school to college and careers.

In 2006, *HSTW* assessed 62,000 high school seniors with National Assessment of Educational Progress-referenced exams in reading, mathematics and science. *HSTW* also conducted a follow-up study of 6,535 graduates from 2004. The findings will be published in the coming year.

Publications:

Establishing Benchmarks for New and Maturing HSTW Sites

Actions States Can Take to Place a Highly Qualified Career/Technical Teacher in Every Classroom

High Schools That Work Follow-up Study of 2002 High School Graduates: Implications for Improving Transitions from High School to College and Careers

Developing Effective Leadership Teams — Implementing the High Schools That Work School Improvement Design

A series of 14 best practices newsletters from the 2005 Summer Staff Development Conference

Making Middle Grades Work

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Anna Marie Farnish, director, Contracted Schools Network: annamarie.farnish@sreb.org

Making a smooth transition from the middle grades to high school continues to be the focus of *Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW)*. SREB believes that requiring all students to succeed in a rigorous core curriculum — aligned to high school readiness standards — is the best way to prepare all students for challenging high school studies.

During the 2006 academic year, *MMGW* served more than 50 contracted school sites and 200 state network schools. Services provided to contracted school sites — in which schools or districts contract with *MMGW* directly — include site-development workshops, technical assistance visits and targeted professional development. The state network schools — in which states enter into agreements with SREB and *MMGW* — are offered a menu of services that include technical assistance visits and statewide or regional training workshops.

SREB also is working with contracted *MMGW* school sites to align their curricula, classroom assignments and assessments to readiness standards for

college-preparatory English, Algebra I and science. This year, 29 schools participated in three, two-day training sessions and have made progress aligning mathematics or science courses with high school readiness standards.

More than 250 middle grades schools and 18,000 eighth-graders have participated in the *Making Middle Grades Work* Assessment, which is referenced to the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Students at schools participating in the *MMGW* network that strongly implement the *MMGW* framework demonstrate significant improvement in achievement.

Publications:

Research Brief: Improving Reading Achievement in Middle Grades Schools

Implementing School Reform: Making Middle Grades Work for All Students

The Enhanced Making Middle Grades Work Design

A Comparative Study of High- and Low-Implementation Middle Grades Schools

Project Lead The Way

Carolyn Helm, director: carolyn.helm@sreb.org

A partnership between SREB and **Project Lead the Way (PLTW)**, a separate nonprofit organization, has helped more than 500 high schools and middle grades schools in SREB states adopt a nationally recognized pre-engineering curriculum. The program helps prepare students to earn an associate's degree in engineering technology or a bachelor's degree in engineering — fields that are increasingly important to America's economy.

In fall 2006, 140 high schools and middle grades schools in SREB states will implement PLTW for the first time. New PLTW teachers from these

schools will attend a two-week, intensive professional development program at one of 26 partner universities.

Publications:

Research Brief: Project Lead the Way: A Pre-Engineering Curriculum That Works

HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK (CONTINUED)

Urban Network of *High Schools That Work* Sites

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The *HSTW* **Urban Network** works with 93 schools in 13 urban districts. The network assists school and district leaders as they align policies, resources and district initiatives to improve student achievement. Network schools received technical assistance visits, coaching and workshops customized for their school improvement plans.

In the past year, the Urban Network began working with four high schools in Baltimore, Maryland, and 11 schools in Memphis, Tennessee. Because of Hurricane Katrina, urban consultants were unable to work with New Orleans schools this year. A total of 31 technical assistance and technical review visits to network schools were conducted during the 2006 academic year, and the Urban Council had its largest number of participants in its nine-year history — 117 representatives from 12 districts shared their successes and challenges with each other during a two-day meeting.

Under SREB's leadership, 11 Atlanta Public Schools science teachers participated in writing standards-based science units for physical science. The Georgia Performance Standards were the basis for these units. Teachers taught the units in spring 2006 and saw increased student motivation and engagement.

Eleven urban high schools in Georgia and Texas participated in ninth-grade catch-up or 12th-grade transitions courses in English and mathematics. Through funding from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, schools involved in the catch-up and transitions courses benefited from 10 days of coaching by urban school improvement consultants.

Publications:

Case Study: Henry W. Grady High School, Atlanta, Georgia

Research Brief: Improving Urban High Schools

Texas High School Project

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The **Texas High School Project** began in 2005 as a joint effort with the Communities Foundation of Texas (CFT). CFT serves as the intermediary agency for the funding partnership of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, the Office of the Governor of Texas and the Texas Education Agency. The project's goal is to support seven low-performing, high-minority schools in Texas as they implement small learning communities to improve student achievement. Lessons learned will provide the Texas Education Agency and other states with specific actions that may assist other low-performing schools.

The seven schools have received services, such as project-wide workshops, school-site workshops and coaching from *HSTW*'s school improvement consultants. During this first year of the project, *HSTW* assisted schools with organization and focused on creating small learning commu-

nities that will serve mainstream students, teach all students a rigorous academic core, create schedules that allow teachers to plan together and connect every student to an adult adviser, and develop learning-centered school leaders.

In fall 2007, all seven schools will open semi-autonomous small learning communities of 300 to 400 ninth- through 12th-grade students. Every student and teacher in each school will participate in the small learning communities and, in many cases, will choose a small learning community that interests them. Each school and small learning community will teach the *High Schools That Work*-recommended curriculum, will be organized around a career theme and will have its own instructional leader and guidance counselors. Participating schools will develop three to five small learning communities on each campus.

High Schools That Work Contracted Schools Network

Rhenida Rennie, director: rhenida.rennie@sreb.org

High Schools That Work worked with teachers and staff in 128 low-performing schools in the past year to improve student achievement by more deeply implementing the *HSTW* Key Practices. Financial support for this work came from state and local funding and various national grants.

Twenty highly qualified, full- and part-time school improvement consultants provided on-site support to the schools, including more than 400 coaching visits, 46 technical assistance visits and 13 technical review visits. *HSTW* provided an average of two on-site professional development workshops at each school and had an average of eight staff members from each school attend national workshops.

With national grants coming to an end, most schools are using local funding sources to maintain their SREB contracts for technical assistance, so they can more fully implement the *HSTW* design. Schools need continued support to maintain and accelerate improvement efforts. From this work in schools, SREB is gaining valuable lessons for states about what works in improving low-performing schools.

Publications:

Comprehensive School Reform: Making a Difference in Improving High Schools

Case Study: Garden City High School, Garden City, Kansas

High School to College and Career Transitions Initiative

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This initiative helps states identify strategies to improve students' transition from high school to postsecondary education and careers.

In the first year of this initiative, *HSTW* facilitated state forums on high school-to-college transitions in eight states: Kentucky, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia. In the second year of the initiative, forums were scheduled in Alabama, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, New York, Oklahoma and Texas. The forums — sponsored by SREB and the League for Innovation in the Community College and supported by the U.S. Department of Education — brought state education leaders and policy-makers together to discuss improving students' transitions from high school to postsecondary education and careers. Discussion focused on five goals: 1) decreasing the need for postsecondary remediation; 2) increasing academic and technical achievement at the secondary and postsecondary levels; 3) increasing

enrollment and persistence in postsecondary education; 4) increasing attainment of postsecondary degrees, certificates or other recognized credentials; and 5) increasing entry into employment or further education.

Also, the SREB initiative partnered with the League for Innovation in the Community College on two telecasts that were broadcast nationwide to secondary and postsecondary leaders and faculty. The first focused on strengthening the senior year of high school to improve students' chances for success in college and careers. The second showcased best practices that can help community colleges support their students as they move from high school to higher learning and careers.

Publications:

Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers
(Customized reports for nine states)

HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK (CONTINUED)

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

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Focusing on the critical transition points from middle grades to high school and from high school to college and careers, this project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education that extends into 2007. To date, 27 high schools and 17 middle grades schools have participated with *High Schools That Work (HSTW)* and *Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW)* on this project. Consortium members have worked on five key aspects of secondary school comprehensive reform: transitions, content literacy, blended academic and career/technical instruction, leadership development and capacity building.

For the transitions aspect of the project, *HSTW* and *MMGW* developed and pilot-tested two intensive catch-up courses for ninth-graders identified as unprepared for college-preparatory English and Algebra I, and two transitional courses in reading and mathematics for 12th-graders not scoring as college-ready in local community colleges. The ninth-grade courses include

skills middle grades students must know and be able to do to be successful in rigorous high school courses. The senior year courses are based upon essential indicators of success in community/technical college credit-bearing courses developed for SREB by advisory panels. SREB school improvement coaches worked with each site on the pilot-testing, assisting teachers as they began teaching the courses. Professional development for teachers consisted of weeklong summer institutes, with follow-up calls during the academic year. About 40 percent of participating 12th-graders tested as college-ready after taking the one-semester transitional courses, and 98 percent of ninth-graders successfully completed the catch-up course in college-preparatory English.

HSTW and *MMGW* continue to work with state education agencies, regional consortia and local districts to make the Middle Grades Mathematics Series available to help middle grades mathematics teachers earn a major or minor in mathematics. Classes were offered in fall 2005 and spring 2006.

Leadership Initiative

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Betty Fry-Ahern, director, Leadership Research and Publications: betty.fry@sreb.org

Cheryl Gray, coordinator, Leadership Curriculum Development and Training: cheryl.gray@sreb.org

The **Learning-Focused School Leader (LFSL)** program creates leadership training that prepares aspiring principals and school leadership teams to aggressively lead improvement in curriculum, instruction and student achievement. The LFSL program stimulates and supports states by researching school principal preparation and development and by tracking the progress of SREB states in achieving the *Challenge to Lead* goal that: "Every school has leadership that results in improved student performance — and leadership begins with an effective school principal." It also develops training modules to support both aspiring and current principals, provides guid-

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ance and technical assistance to states, keeps policy-makers aware of the urgency for change and assists states with policy development.

This year, the LFSL program published *Schools Can't Wait: Accelerating the Redesign of University Principal Preparation Programs*, a research report on the progress universities in the SREB region are making in redesigning principal preparation programs. Mentors and principal-candidates were surveyed to determine the quality of mentoring provided to aspiring leaders. Research on working conditions needed to lead change that improves

schools and student achievement is under way. A benchmark report on the progress SREB states are making on the six indicators related to the *Challenge to Lead* goal for leadership will be published in summer 2006.

During the 2006 academic year, SREB equipped over 525 prospective trainers from 31 states and Canada to use its leadership training modules in university preparation programs, state leadership academies, schools and districts.

SREB is working in partnership with local school districts, universities and state agencies and with policy-makers in Tennessee, Alabama and Louisiana to align preparation, licensure, professional development and evaluation to state school leadership standards.

The **District Leadership Academy Project** works with selected urban and rural school districts in Georgia and South Carolina to create stronger leadership. This project will improve student achievement and school and classroom practices, ensure schools meet requirements for adequate yearly progress on test scores as required by federal law, and engage districts and states to develop ongoing leadership team institutes.

Partnership to Build State Capacity

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SREB began a partnership with two federally funded comprehensive centers to provide training and technical assistance to state departments of education. The Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC) at The George Washington University and the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC) at Edvantia partner with the Office of School Improvement to identify services that build the capacity of states to offer differentiated technical assistance to low-performing schools. SREB takes lessons learned from its school improvement and school leadership work to help states assist schools with the requirements of *No Child Left Behind*.

MACC and ARCC joined SREB, *High Schools That Work* and *Making Middle Grades Work* to sponsor a state leaders' forum in April 2006 in

Publications:

Schools Can't Wait: Accelerating the Redesign of University Principal Preparation Programs

A District-driven Principal Preparation Program Design: The Providence School Department and the University of Rhode Island Partnership, Providence, Rhode Island

The Principal Internship: How Can We Get It Right?

Professional development modules

“Leadership Redesign: A Workshop on Statewide Initiatives”

“Fostering a Culture of High Performance: Changing Practice by Using Data”

“Developing Internship Programs for School Leaders: A How-To Guide for University and School District Partners”

“Mentoring Competency-Based Internships: A Skills Training Program for Mentors of School Leader Interns”

Richmond, Virginia, that examined strategies for improving student achievement and completion rates for all groups of students. Eleven SREB states and six other states sent teams to the forum to dissect the middle grades-to-high school transition issues that hinder student success in ninth grade and beyond, and to identify actions states can take to prepare all middle grades students for challenging high school work, such as: secondary and postsecondary institutions agreeing on common readiness standards; increasing dual enrollment; incorporating transitional courses in reading/language arts and mathematics courses into the senior year of high school; improving career/technical courses through alignment of standards, assessments and programs of study; and having postsecondary institutions implement strategies to improve college persistence and completion.

REGIONAL CONTRACT PROGRAM AND ACADEMIC COMMON MARKET

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The **Regional Contract Program** enables SREB states to share degree programs in the health professions and thus postpone — or even avoid — the costs of creating these programs for a limited number of students. It also enables states to give their residents access to programs that are not available in their states. The Regional Contract Program, which began in the early years of SREB, today is a model that other regional compacts in the United States have adopted or adapted.

Thanks to the Regional Contract Program, more than 22,000 students in states without schools of dentistry, optometry, osteopathic medicine, podiatry and veterinary medicine have earned degrees at nationally recognized colleges and universities. Each year, more than 900 contract spaces are awarded to SREB states participating in the program.

The program benefits states, students and participating institutions in several ways:

- States that contract for spaces for their qualified residents avoid the expenses of new programs.
- Students who live in SREB states without certain health programs may be able to enroll in other states' programs.
- States and universities that reserve spaces for other states' students receive outstanding students and per student subsidies from students' home states. These fees are in addition to tuition and help maintain operations and strengthen programs.

The **Academic Common Market** has for more than 30 years been a winning plan for states, students and universities by allowing students from participating states to enroll in specialized graduate and undergraduate programs offered by institutions in other SREB states. The students pay in-state tuition and fees. States benefit because they can increase enrollments with qualified students from other states and can operate more efficiently, especially with specialized programs that typically do not have large enrollments. States also benefit because they can avoid creating programs that are available to their residents through the Academic Common Market. More than 2,000 students are certified each year for the Academic Common Market, making its four-year enrollment equal to that of many universities.

The **Academic Common Market/Electronic Campus** combines the tuition benefits of the Academic Common Market with the distance-learning capacity of the *Electronic Campus*. The program makes selected distance-learning degree programs available at in-state tuition rates. The Academic Common Market programs available on campuses in the 16 SREB states are available via the *Electronic Campus* and also can be found at the Academic Common Market Web site at www.sreb.org.

Publications:

Academic Common Market

Regional Contract Program

COUNCIL ON COLLEGIATE EDUCATION FOR NURSING

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Working for more than four decades to strengthen and expand nursing education, the **SREB Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing** today is a proactive model for the support of nursing education and scholarship in colleges and universities in SREB states. The Council is the only regional organization for nurse educators in the nation that is affiliated with an interstate compact for education. Over the past year, the Council continued to achieve its mission to:

- foster academic community partnerships;
- promote faculty and student diversity in nursing education;
- support nontraditional approaches to the study of nursing; and
- participate in the development of health policy that influences nursing education at local, state and national levels.

The Council focuses primarily on the shortage of nurses — and nursing faculty — that persists in SREB states and is echoed nationwide. The 2005 SREB regional survey confirmed that this lack of faculty prevented the acceptance of more students in undergraduate and graduate nursing programs. Disparities among racial/ethnic and gender groups continued in all of the nursing programs surveyed. More than 500 nurse educators expect to retire during the next three years in SREB states.

To help alleviate this unprecedented demand, the Council initiated the Nurse Educator Consortium (NEC), in collaboration with SREB's

Electronic Campus, in 2004 to augment classroom faculty with online nursing instruction. Over the past year, four universities — Delta State University in Mississippi, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, and the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio — offered online courses for graduate students and faculty in nursing at Baylor University in Texas, the University of North Carolina Wilmington, the University of South Florida, and the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. The Council responded to the needs of displaced nursing students following the 2005 hurricanes by posting on its Web site several nursing programs that could accept these students on short notice.

Nurse educators from each of the SREB states and the District of Columbia also attended the 2005 annual meeting of the Council in Atlanta to explore the theme: “Who will teach tomorrow’s nurses?” Participants discussed critical issues in nursing as they examined this theme, looked back historically and explored potential solutions within the region.

In addition, the work of the Council’s ad hoc committees and workshops continued to address special concerns of nurse educators in SREB states, including work force diversity, doctorate of nursing practice (DNP) programs and genetics.

Publications:

2005 SREB Survey Highlights and State-by-State Results

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Mitchell Zais, <i>President</i> , Newberry College	2008

Tennessee

Phil Bredesen, <i>Governor</i>	2007
Stephen A. Cobb, Nashville	2007
Lois M. DeBerry, <i>Speaker Pro Tempore</i> <i>of the House</i>	2006
† * Paul E. Stanton Jr., <i>President</i> , East Tennessee State University	2009
† Andy Womack, Murfreesboro	2008

Texas

Rick Perry, <i>Governor</i>	2007
Dianne White Delisi, <i>State Representative</i>	2007
† Kent Grusendorf, <i>State Representative</i>	2008
† Shirley J. Neeley, <i>Commissioner of Education</i>	2006
Florence Shapiro, <i>State Senator</i>	2009

Virginia

Timothy M. Kaine, <i>Governor</i>	2010
† John H. Chichester, <i>President Pro Tempore</i> <i>of the Senate</i>	2006
Mark E. Emblidge, <i>Affiliate Professor and</i> <i>Director</i> , The Literacy Institute, Virginia Commonwealth University	2008
Steve F. Kime, Clifton	2009
Kirk T. Schroder, Schroder-Fidlow, PLC	2007

West Virginia

Joe Manchin III, <i>Governor</i>	2009
Thomas W. Campbell, <i>State Delegate</i>	2005
Jay Cole, <i>Director of Education Policy</i> , Office of the Governor	2008
† Robert H. Plymale, <i>State Senator</i>	2006
Roman W. Prezioso Jr., <i>State Senator</i>	2007

† *Executive Committee member* — The Executive Committee has full power to act between Board meetings. It is composed of one Board member from each state and several from the region at large.

* *Finance Committee member* — The Finance Committee, a subcommittee of the Executive Committee, prepares an annual budget and presents it and other financial policy matters to the Executive Committee.

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