



# Justify Your Attendance Guide

**SREB** | School Improvement  
**Making Schools Work Conference**  
New Orleans, July 7-10, 2020

Learn more: [sreb.org/SummerConference](https://sreb.org/SummerConference)

Join the conversation: #SREBsummer

Questions? Contact us: [summerstaffdev@sreb.org](mailto:summerstaffdev@sreb.org)

# Contents

Sample Request for Approval Letter .....	3
Sample Talking Points .....	4
Conference Objectives .....	5
Selected Conference Topics .....	5
Conference Benefits for Districts .....	6
Conference Attendees.....	6
Registration Fees .....	8
Hotel Rates.....	8



# Sample Request for Approval Letter

Dear [Colleague or Supervisor],

I am writing to request approval to attend SREB's 2020 Making Schools Work Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, July 7-10.

As you know, our improvement plans and professional learning goals at [name of your school or technology center] this year include [outline your school's plans and goals]. These plans and goals align with [note number] of SREB's conference objectives, including [note relevant objectives from page 5].

SREB's Making Schools Work Conference also features over 400 keynotes, promising practices, networking and deep-dive sessions addressing topics like [note topics from page 5]. Most sessions are led by practitioners and are designed to give attendees like me research-based, classroom-tested tools and strategies I can use right away to help students [describe specific benefits for students] at [your school or technology center].

Here are some other advantages to attending SREB's Making Schools Work Conference:

- Networking with 3,500 elementary through high school educators from over 30 states
- Exploring critical issues like ensuring equitable access to quality instruction and addressing the effects of poverty
- Learning about and sharing promising practices with peers and experts
- Exploring transformative literacy and mathematics practices that help students meet or exceed grade-level standards
- Identifying ways to motivate students and help them make the connection between success in the classroom and their career and college options
- Participating in optional industry tours that offer an insider's view of emerging career and college opportunities for students

When I return, I will share what I've learned with my team and other staff by sharing presentations, handouts and notes from the sessions I attend. I can also model tools and strategies I explored at the conference or host workshops for other educators at [your school or technology center].

The cost of attending SREB's Making Schools Work Conference is low compared to many conferences, and registration fees include hot lunches on main conference days. I can also save by booking travel early and sharing a room with [names of colleagues – see page 8 for hotel rates]. Here is a breakdown of the approximate cost for me to attend the Making Schools Work Conference:

- Airfare:
- Transportation:
- Hotel:
- Meals:
- Conference registration:
- Industry tours and special events:
- Total:

Please let me know if you have any questions about this request. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

# Sample Talking Points

Explain what you plan to learn by attending SREB's 2020 Making Schools Work Conference and how your attendance will benefit students and colleagues at your school or technology center.



Beyond your personal and professional learning goals, here are other good reasons to attend SREB's Making Schools Work Conference:

- Networking with other educators
- Learning promising practices from experts and thought leaders
- Sharing tools and strategies from your school or classroom by delivering a conference session
- Celebrating student and school success stories
- Engaging in hands-on, transformative learning
- Rejuvenating your instructional practice
- Developing classroom, school or district plans for school improvement
- Exploring how to use data to make informed decisions
- Building stronger school teams



Explain how you will share what you've learned when you return.

- Share session presentations, handouts and notes
- Create a presentation, video or poster
- Adopt educational technology solutions
- Model promising practices
- Plan a workshop
- Share findings with other grade levels, content areas or schools



Be proactive about saving travel costs.

- Book travel early
- Take advantage of reduced conference registration fees for network states (see page 8)
- Offer to share a room with one or more colleagues to reduce hotel expenses (see page 8)

# Conference Objectives

1. **Engaging Instruction** – Engage each student in every classroom through high-quality instruction that incorporates powerful literacy and mathematics practices and project-based assignments.
2. **Aligned Curriculum** – Ensure each student has equitable access to challenging academic and technical curricula that align instruction, assignments and assessments with grade-level readiness standards.
3. **Career Pathways** – Offer each student access to career pathways and programs of study that align with workforce needs and include opportunities to earn industry or postsecondary credentials and participate in work-based learning.
4. **Systems of Support** – Provide each student with the personalized career guidance, advisement, social and emotional supports, and extra help and accelerated learning opportunities needed to graduate ready for college and careers.
5. **Leadership for Continuous Improvement** – Engage the whole school community in promoting a culture of high expectations and continuously using data to identify problems of practice and develop action plans to solve those problems.

## Selected Conference Topics

Achievement  
Business partnerships  
Career academies  
CTE and career pathways  
Classroom management  
Coaching  
College and career readiness  
Community partnerships  
Comprehensive school reform  
Continuous improvement  
Counseling and advisement  
Culturally responsive pedagogy  
Data-driven decision making  
Deeper learning  
Discipline and behavioral issues  
Distributed leadership  
Dual enrollment / dual credit  
Early college high schools  
Education policy  
Educational technology  
Educator effectiveness  
Elementary schools  
Engagement and motivation

English / language arts  
English Learners  
Equity – cultural, gender, racial  
Evaluation and research  
Feedback and classroom observations  
Formative assessments  
High schools  
Improving instruction  
Instructional leadership  
Leadership development  
Literacy  
Mathematics  
Middle grades schools  
Networked improvement communities  
Parent engagement  
Personalized learning  
Plan – do – study – act  
Postsecondary access and success  
Poverty  
Principal preparation and support  
Professional learning communities

Programs of study  
Project- and problem-based learning  
Rural educational issues  
School improvement  
School culture and climate  
Science  
Social, emotional and behavioral supports  
Social studies  
Special education  
STEM  
Student voice and choice  
Teacher induction and peer mentoring  
Teacher preparation  
Technology centers  
Title I  
Trauma  
Urban educational issues  
Work-based learning ... and many more

# Conference Benefits for Districts

SREB partners with districts to offer powerful professional learning that improves educator effectiveness, increases student engagement and achievement, and transforms schools.

Our Making Schools Work Conference is designed to help district leaders:

- Adopt and sustain a comprehensive, research-based school improvement process
- Turn around low-performing schools
- Design career pathways leading to credentials, degrees and good jobs
- Build strong postsecondary, community and employer partnerships
- Transform schools into personalized learning environments
- Create career counseling systems that help students identify their interests and options
- Deliver robust teacher preparation, professional development and coaching services
- Prepare principals to be highly effective instructional leaders
- Develop recruitment and retention strategies that reward effective educators
- Align their budgets and use time, tools and resources to meet achievement goals
- Define what it really means to be ready for college and careers



## Conference Attendees



**3,500+ Attendees**



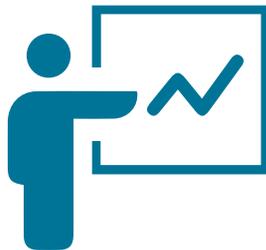
**35 States**



**740+ Schools**



**400+ Sessions**

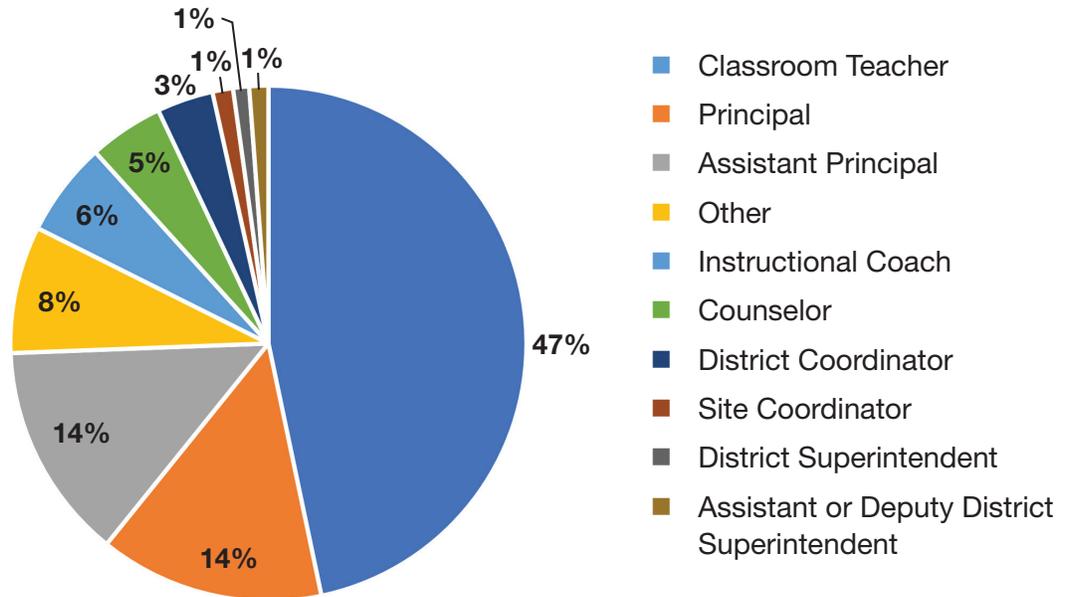


**700+ Presenters**

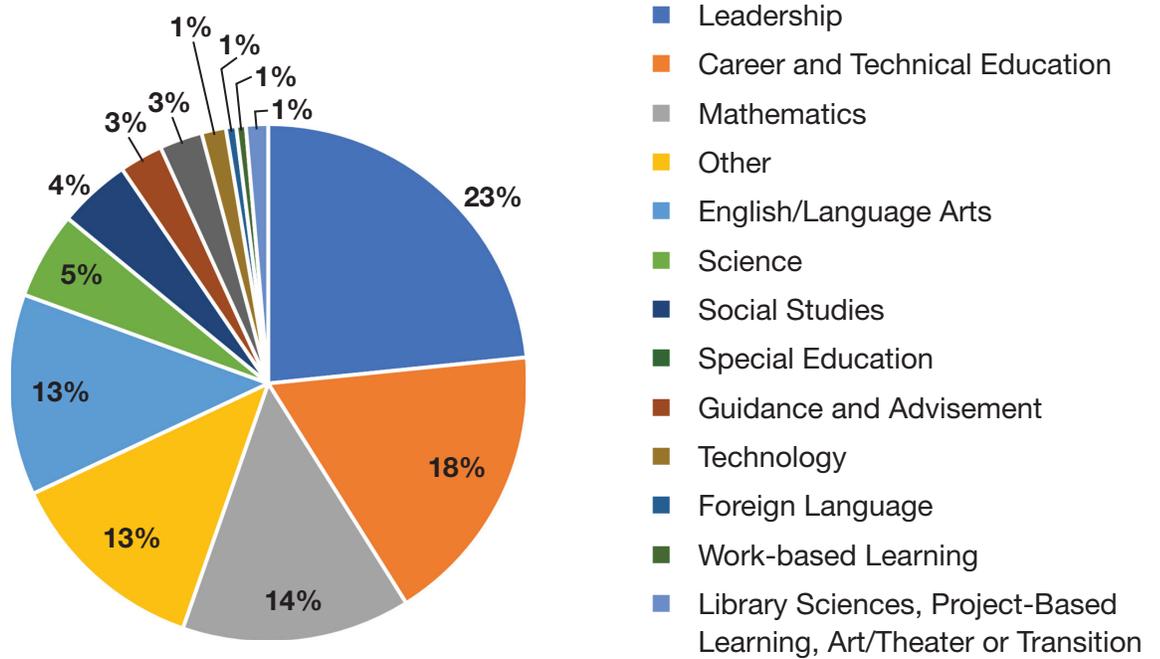
**65%**

**Sessions led  
by practitioners**

## Who attends?



## What are their interests?



# Registration Fees

Registration Options	Dates	Network States	Non-Network States
Early Bird Pricing – Full Conference	April 1	\$395	\$445
Regular Pricing – Full Conference	July 6	\$425	\$475
Onsite Registration Pricing – Full Conference	July 7-10	\$450	\$500
One-Day Conference Registration		\$200	\$225
Spouse/Guest (includes exhibit hall, coffee or refreshment breaks, and lunch ONLY)		\$100	\$100
Industry Tours		\$25+	\$25+
Tuesday State Networking Lunch		\$25	\$25
Thursday Reception and Celebration at Mardi Gras World		\$30	\$30

\* Network states currently include Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia. [Note. This list is subject to change. Please visit [sreb.org/register](http://sreb.org/register) for the most current version.]

# Hotel Rates

Conference Hotel	Distance to Convention Center	Daily Rate
Hilton New Orleans Riverside, Two Poydras Street	0.5 miles	\$174
Hampton Inn & Suites New Orleans, 1201 Convention Center Boulevard	0.2 miles	\$169
Courtyard New Orleans Downtown, 300 Julia Street	0.2 miles	\$165
Embassy Suites New Orleans, 315 Julia Street	0.2 miles	\$173
Hilton Garden Inn New Orleans, 1001 South Peters Street	0.2 miles	\$169
Hyatt Place New Orleans Convention Center, 881 Convention Center Boulevard	0.1 miles	\$174
New Orleans Downtown Marriott, 859 Convention Center Boulevard	0.1 miles	\$174
Omni Riverfront Hotel, 701 Convention Center Boulevard	0.2 miles	\$174
Renaissance New Orleans Arts Hotel, 700 Tchoupitoulas Street	0.4 miles	\$173
Residence Inn New Orleans Downtown, 345 St. Joseph Street	0.3 miles	\$165
Springhill Suites New Orleans Downtown, 301 St. Joseph Street	0.2 miles	\$165



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Improvement  
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For more information on attending or presenting  
at the Making Schools Work Conference, contact  
[summerstaffdev@sreb.org](mailto:summerstaffdev@sreb.org).

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