

**SREB** | School  
Improvement  
**Making Schools Work Conference**  
Nashville, July 6-9, 2021



# Justify Your Attendance Guide

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

Join the conversation: #SREBsummer

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

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# Sample Request for Approval Letter

Dear [Colleague or Supervisor],

I am writing to request approval to attend SREB's 2021 Making Schools Work Conference, July 6-9. The conference is being held as a hybrid event with two registration options. I would like to attend the [in-person event at the Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center in Nashville OR the virtual conference on SREB's eShow platform].

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 features hundreds of keynotes, promising practices, networking and deep-dive sessions addressing topics like [note topics from page 5]. **[For virtual conference attendees: Virtual attendees like me will have complete access to 100+ live and on-demand conference sessions during the conference and on-demand for 30 days after the conference.]** 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 thousands of 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.

**[For in-person conference attendees: My registration fee includes 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:                 | ● Industry tours and special events: |
| ● Transportation:          | ● Meals:                             |
| ● Hotel:                   | ● Total:                             |
| ● Conference registration: |                                      |

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 2021 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 fees for early bird registrants (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  
COVID-19 response and recovery  
Culturally responsive pedagogy  
Data-driven decision making  
Deeper learning  
Discipline and behavioral issues  
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 observations  
Formative assessments  
High schools  
Improving instruction  
Instructional leadership  
Leadership development  
Literacy  
Mathematics  
Middle grades schools  
Networked improvement communities  
Online, blended and hybrid instructional strategies  
Parent engagement  
Personalized learning  
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:

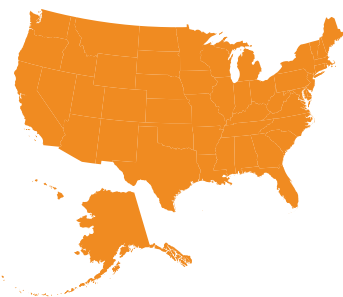
- Adopt and sustain a comprehensive, research-based school improvement process
- Turn around low-performing schools
- Design career pathways leading to credentials, degrees and good jobs
- Build strong postsecondary, community and employer partnerships
- Transform schools into personalized learning environments
- 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+ In-Person  
Sessions**

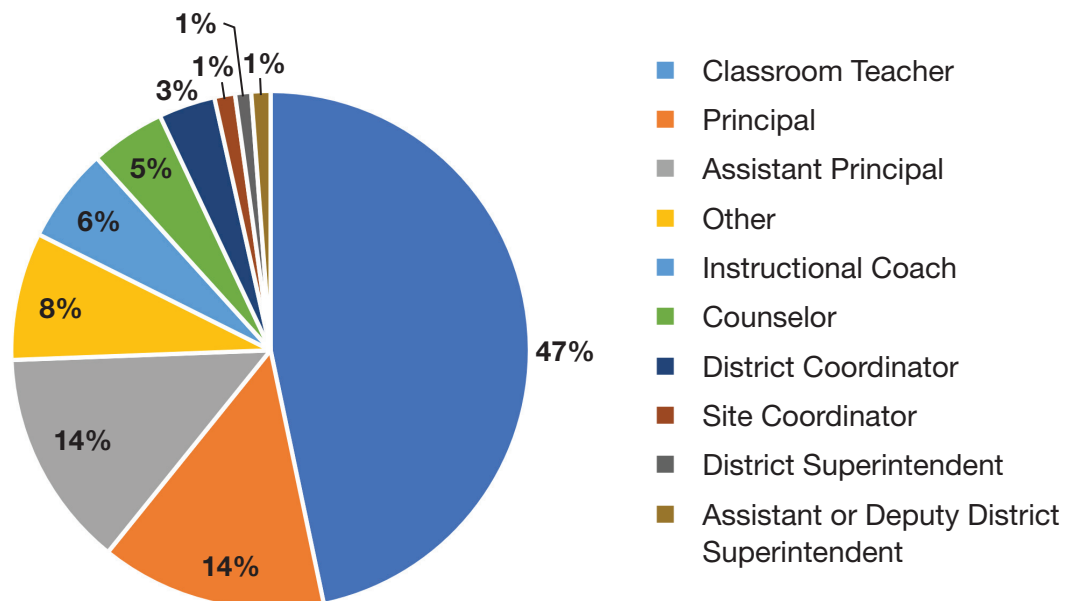


**700+ Presenters**

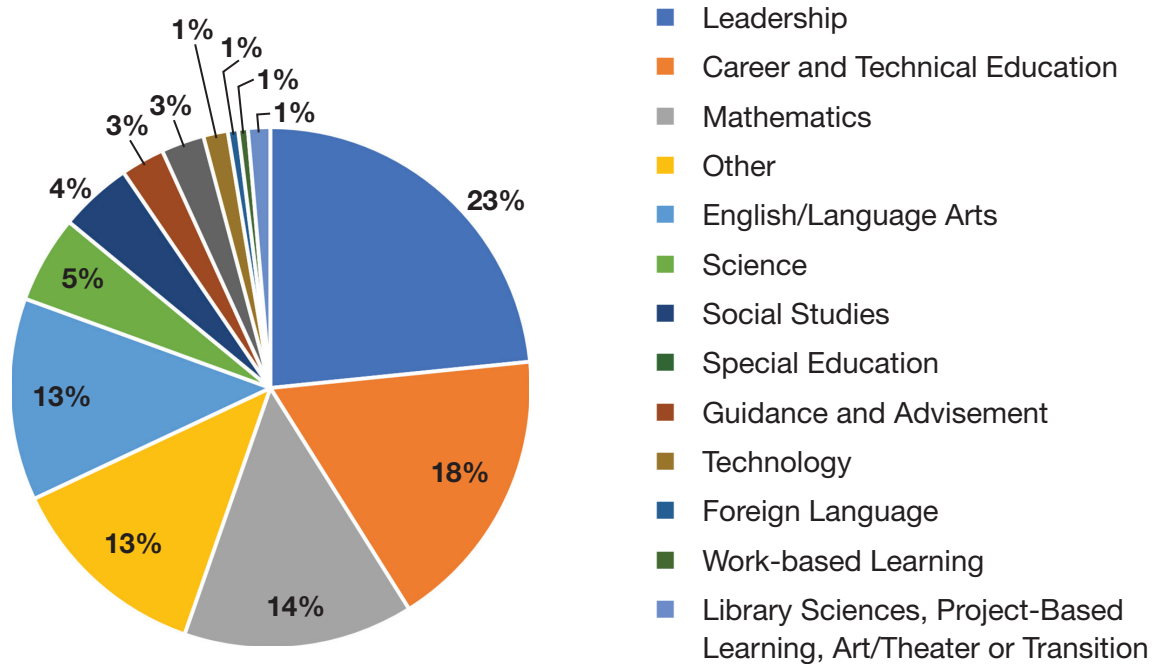
**65%**

**Sessions led  
by practitioners**

## Who attends?



## What are their interests?



# Registration Fees

Your **in-person registration fee** includes admission to all conference sessions and the Education Marketplace, coffee or refreshment breaks and hot lunches on Wednesday and Thursday. All in-person attendees are invited to attend our Pacesetter Awards reception, poster session and prize giveaway on Tuesday, July 6, and to participate in conference games. Spouse/guest registrations only include admission to the Education Marketplace, lunches and coffee or refreshment breaks. Optional industry tours and other special events also carry a separate fee (TBD).

Your **virtual registration fee** includes access to 100+ conference sessions during the conference and for 30 days after the event, in addition to access to our virtual reception and prize giveaway, games, lounge, chats, eBag for conference documents, and other online services during the event (July 6-9).

Registration Options	Register By Date	In-Person Price	Virtual Price
Early Bird Pricing	May 3	\$445	
Regular Pricing	July 5	\$475	\$300
Onsite Registration Pricing	July 6-9	\$500	
One-Day Conference Registration		\$225	
Spouse/guest (includes exhibit hall, coffee and refreshment breaks, and lunch ONLY)		\$100	
Friday Industry Tours*		TBD	

# Hotel Rates

All rates for the Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center quoted below are per night and exclusive of taxes and fees.

Location	Rate
Standard Room	\$179
Garden Terrace Room	\$179 + \$50 additional fee
Visit <a href="https://sreb.org/making-schools-work-conference-hotel">sreb.org/making-schools-work-conference-hotel</a> to learn more.	





# SREB | School Improvement

## Making Schools Work Conference

### Nashville, July 6-9, 2021

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