

2025 Meeting of the Southern Regional Education Board and the 74th Annual Legislative Work Conference

Education Expands Futures and Grows Economies

June 20-22, 2025 • Loews Atlanta Hotel • Atlanta

Overview

This year we will explore how education expands futures and grows economies through SREB's five priority areas — career pathways, artificial intelligence, educator workforce, student success and longitudinal literacy. We will examine how all five priorities intersect to impact student achievement, workforce readiness and economic resilience.

Attendees will outline the profile of a successful graduate by defining the skills, experiences and policies recommended for long-term economic prosperity across the South. We will share promising practices and identify opportunities for regional collaboration to strengthen education and workforce outcomes across SREB states.

Agenda

Friday, June 20

3 p.m. **Orientation Sessions**

Orientation for new members of the SREB Board and Legislative Advisory Council (Salon A)

Orientation for first-time Annual Meeting attendees (Salon B)

5 p.m. **Cocktail Hour**

6 p.m. **Dinner** (Salon DEF)

GENERAL SESSION

Presiding: Felicia Cumings Smith, President and CEO, National Center
for Families Learning, Kentucky, and Vice Chair, SREB

Presiding: Senator Beth Mizell, Louisiana, Chair, SREB Legislative Advisory Council

Stronger Together: Education Expands Futures and Grows Economies

Through the years, SREB states have learned from one another, sharing ideas and solutions to improve education and workforce outcomes. This State of the States address will highlight the power of collaboration across states to tackle shared challenges and drive economic growth.

Stephen Pruitt, President, SREB

8 p.m. **Adjourn**

Saturday June 21

7:30 a.m. **General Breakfast** (Salon ABC)

7:30 a.m. **Executive Committee Breakfast Meeting** (Inman)

9 a.m. **Welcome and Overview of Table Assignments** (Salon DEF)

9:15 a.m. **Aligning Education and Workforce —
Defining the Graduate and the Economy We Need**

Participants will explore how clearly defining the profile of a successful graduate can lay the foundation for a thriving economy. This session will highlight the key elements and indicators of successful graduates.

Moderator: Dale Winkler, Senior Vice President, School Improvement, SREB

Melissa Bell, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education

Kim Christ, Director of Workforce Innovation, South Carolina Council on Competitiveness

Kim Hunter Reed, Commissioner of Higher Education, Louisiana

Barbara Wall, Deputy State Superintendent for Career, Technical and Agricultural
Education, Georgia

10:30 a.m. **Break**

10.45 a.m. **The Role of AI and Literacy in Driving Workforce Readiness**

How do artificial intelligence competencies and strong literacy skills combine to form a critical foundation for workforce readiness and economic mobility? This session will identify key AI and literacy skills graduates need to enter and adapt within the workforce.

Moderators: Ivy Coburn, Division Director, Education and Workforce, SREB and
Lee Posey, Vice President, State Strategy and Policy, SREB

Adam Garry, President, StrategicED Consulting, North Carolina

David Steiner, Executive Director, Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy, Maryland

12 p.m. **Lunch, Recognition and Awards Ceremony** (Salon ABC)

1:30 p.m. **Strengthening Pathways to Postsecondary Success —
Ensuring Access, Persistence, Retention, and Attainment**

Participants will explore how SREB's Student Success Framework is put into practice through successful career pathways. This session will highlight the collective engagement of leaders in K-12, postsecondary, business and industry, and state policy. Attendees will work together to define effective career pathways that help students enter and complete credential and degree programs and strengthen regional economic vitality.

Moderator: Harriette Scott, Vice President, Postsecondary Education, SREB

Greg Dozier, Commissioner, Technical College System of Georgia

Sonya Okoli, Director, Higher Education Leadership Program, Clark Atlanta University, Georgia

2.45 p.m. **Break**

3 p.m. **Strengthening Educator Talent and Workforce Resilience**

A powerful strategy for ensuring a strong educator workforce is to fully prepare and support the new teachers who sign up for the job. Discover new insights from SREB and Vanderbilt University, alongside firsthand stories from early-career teachers, that reveal the impact of investing in new educators. Learn evidence-based strategies to prepare and retain effective teachers that strengthen student success and create sustainable pathways to economic resilience for individuals and the region alike.

Moderators: Megan Boren, Project Manager, SREB and Amanda Merritt, Division Director, Innovation and Development, SREB

Curtis Martin, Teacher, Houston County Schools, Georgia

Scott Wynn, Principal, Thomson Middle School, Georgia

4:15 p.m. **SREB Crisis Recovery Network**

All schools and institutions have a crisis response plan, but crisis recovery is a much more arduous task. This session will highlight the work that has been done in North Carolina through the newly established SREB Crisis Recovery Network and how expansion into other states is creating a truly unique network of support.

Linda Tyree, Program Director, Crisis Recovery Network, SREB

5 p.m. **Closing Announcements**

6 p.m. **Dinner** (Salon ABC)

Agenda

Sunday, June 22

7:30 a.m. **General Breakfast** (Salon ABC)

7:30 a.m. **Legislative Advisory Council Breakfast Meeting** (Inman)

9 a.m. **Investing in Education to Secure Economic and Workforce Prosperity** (Salon DEF)

Reinforcing SREB's longstanding commitment to regional collaboration, participants will synthesize insights from previous discussions to finalize their profiles of a successful regional graduate and a thriving regional economy. We will work together to identify three to five priority actions our region should take collectively.

Moderators: Ivy Coburn, Division Director, Education and Workforce, SREB and Dale Winkler, Senior Vice President, School Improvement, SREB

10:15 a.m. **Break**

10:30 a.m. **Business Meeting**

Your participation is important — all meeting participants are invited and encouraged to attend.

The business meeting includes the Report of the Executive Committee, the Report of the Nominating Committee and election of Board officers.

11:30 a.m. **Adjourn for Grab and Go Lunch** (Pre-function)

SREB

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