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SREB states make progress in education

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Alabama Shows Gains in Education Outcomes, Policy

High School Graduation Rate Exceeded Nation

Atlanta, Georgia — July 12, 2016 — Alabama continues to improve public education by several key measures, according to a new report from the Southern Regional Education Board.

[**Gauging Progress, Accelerating Pace**](#) reports on recent growth on outcomes and policy activity in the SREB region. The reports show the 16-state SREB region leading the nation on early childhood education access and quality, narrowing some achievement gaps between racial and ethnic groups, and surpassing the national average for high school graduation rates. Yet the report's demographic and student achievement data foreshadow the difficult job states face: getting more students college- and career-ready so they can become successful adults and states can meet future workforce needs.

This report focuses on the region's progress — and on determining what it will take to help each state accelerate pace.

Notable outcomes for Alabama students

- The state-funded pre-K program met all 10 of the National Institute for Early Education Research standards of quality — one of only six in the nation to do so.
- The number of ninth-graders who were promoted to 10th grade on time increased, indicating more ninth-graders were prepared for success in high school.
- The percentage of ninth-graders advancing through 12th grade in four years increased.
- Alabama's high school graduation rate exceeded rates for the nation and for the region.
- The increase in the percentage of graduating seniors who took an AP exam in high school outpaced the national rate.

Strong policy in Alabama

- The state's learning standards are aligned from birth through grade 12.
- The state is one of 10 in the nation — all in the SREB region — that require school districts to offer full-day kindergarten programs.
- The state requires students to pass industry exams for specific career and technical education courses to earn postsecondary credit.

"Higher graduation rates are great news for Alabama and other states," said SREB President Dave Spence. "Far too many of these high school graduates are still unprepared for college-level work, though. States need

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[Alabama: Gauging Progress, Accelerating Pace](#) details:

- state demographic and income trends
- student achievement from pre-K through postsecondary
- priorities for teacher evaluation and educational technology

SREB monitors progress of its 16 states on the SREB Challenge to Lead Goals for Education adopted by state leaders to help the region lead the nation in educational progress at all levels.

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The Southern Regional Education Board works with 16 member states to improve public education: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. Based in Atlanta, SREB was created in 1948 by Southern governors and legislatures to help leaders in education and government advance education and improve the social and economic life of the region.

Media contacts

[Matia Edwards](#), SREB Communications

404.879.5532

[Beth Day](#), SREB Communications

404.879.5544

770.315.2041



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SREBComm 592 10th St., NW Atlanta, GA 30318 USA