

## Mississippi Wins SREB's 2020 State Leadership Award

*State honored for accelerating students' readiness in literacy and math*

June 30, 2020 — The Mississippi Department of Education is the winner of the Southern Regional Education Board's 2020 State Leadership Award for its efforts to increase literacy and math achievement and build networked communities focused on school improvement in the middle grades. The state will be presented with the award on July 6, 2021, at SREB's Making Schools Work Conference in Nashville, Tennessee, due to the cancellation of the 2020 conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.

SREB's State Leadership Award recognizes states that have established continuous improvement structures and processes that help schools transform their school and classroom practices, establish and sustain change, and increase student achievement.

Mississippi's commitment to increasing achievement led the state to rise to the top of the Nation's Report Card in 2019 for gains in fourth- and eighth-grade literacy and math scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The state also sets the standard for supporting schools in implementing SREB's [Ready for High School and Ready for College courses](#) in literacy and math, which help struggling students transition from the middle grades to high school and from high school to college by increasing their critical thinking, problem-solving and communication skills.

The Mississippi Department of Education and the Mississippi State Board of Education partnered with SREB to ensure that all high schools received training to implement the Readiness courses. MDE also worked with the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning to allow Literacy Ready and Math Ready to take the place of college-level remediation for students who need support in either area. College-bound students who successfully complete the courses in high school can enroll right away in credit-bearing college courses in their first semester.

MDE and SREB also established the Mississippi Middle Schools Pilot Initiative 2020, a three-year partnership with the College Board and the Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) to build the capacity of networked communities of middle school leaders and teachers to identify and solve problems of practice using SREB's research-based continuous improvement process. The process engages educators in using data to identify problems of practice that impact student achievement, developing plans to solve them and sharing their knowledge to sustain change in networked improvement communities. The middle schools pilot initiative supports students' academic and social-emotional growth and career awareness and aligns with four of the State Board's strategic goals:

- All Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas
- Every Student Graduates from High School and Is Ready for College and Career
- Every School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders
- Every School and District Is Rated "C" or Higher

*The Southern Regional Education Board works with states and educators to improve public education at every level, from early childhood through postsecondary education. Learn more about SREB at [sreb.org](http://sreb.org).*

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