



SREB

Southern Regional Education Board

President
Atlanta, Georgia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Founded in 1948 as America's first interstate compact for education, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) was created as a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization by Southern governors and legislators who recognized that by working together the states could more effectively improve public education and increase the social and economic vitality of the region. Over its 70-year history, SREB has collaborated with 16 member states to improve public education at every level, from early childhood through post-doctoral education, and has set and met ambitious goals that have resulted in greater quality of life and economic strength across the region. SREB's independent, accurate data and recommendations help policymakers make informed decisions that advance excellence and opportunity. As a nonpartisan convening platform, SREB helps policymakers, institutions, and educators share resources to accomplish more together than they could alone.

The quality of education in the South has a tremendous effect on the economic future of the country, and SREB provides practical, independent information and evidence-based tools to inform education policy decision-making that can have a positive impact across the region. The next President will work with members of the Board and the Legislative Advisory Council to ensure that the mission and goals of SREB are advanced effectively. This may include the opportunity to cooperatively identify ways in which service to SREB states can be refined, strengthened, and broadened. SREB seeks a leader with a bold vision to carry its proud legacy forward to meet new challenges, a strong record of managing people and resources effectively to drive mission, and the relationship savvy to broaden the organization's base of support and amplify its crucial voice.

The ideal candidate will be a seasoned executive-level leader with experience working alongside policy makers and leaders in education to collaboratively set the vision and agenda for the future. S/he will bring a depth of understanding of and engagement with the continuum of education from pre-kindergarten to graduate education and will have the managerial skill to operationally lead an organization of similar size and complexity. S/he will also be a natural ambassador and connector and will bring an exceptional and nuanced understanding of the challenges policymakers, institutions, and other stakeholders face and of how to build trusting, mutually productive relationships with them. S/he will bring a coherent, tested set of management principles and practices and a demonstrated record of building team cultures that reflect values of transparency, inclusion, and trust as well as excellence and efficiency.



This search is being conducted by Katherine Jacobs, Allison Kupfer Poteet, Callie Carroll and Erica Nicole Richardson of Nonprofit Professionals Advisory Group. Please find more information and application instructions at the end of this document.

SREB HISTORY & OVERVIEW

Originally focused on higher education alone, Southern Regional Education Board developed a way to enable member states to share specialized graduate-level and professional education programs to combat shortages of trained professionals in those areas in the region. SREB also initiated a major research program to become a leading information resource, with decades of national, regional, and state data on finance, participation, student progress and completion, affordability, faculty salaries, and key demographic and economic factors affecting higher education.

In the 1980s, SREB added Kindergarten-12th grade (K-12) education to its scope of work — becoming the nation's only educational compact to address both pre-K-12 and higher education issues. With this wider focus, SREB's work and the leadership of key governors, legislators, and others in the region moved member states to the cutting edge of national education reform and improvement. Priorities included setting statewide academic standards and tests, and later, holding schools accountable for improvement. Through continual goal-setting with state leaders, SREB has helped the region move beyond its early emphasis on accommodating vast numbers of new students. SREB now works with states not only to increase access to education but to create policies and implement programs that increase student achievement and improve education quality in the region at every level, in the classroom and online.

SREB has continued to expand its innovative services over the decades. Today, SREB partners with 16 member states (Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia) to improve public education at every level, from pre-K through Ph.D., by conducting research, developing policy recommendations and providing school improvement programs that raise student achievement across the region — and beyond. The region's track record shows that setting goals and maintaining the commitment to work toward them can make a difference. Additionally, several key SREB efforts have influenced national reform, and SREB states now lead the nation in many measures of educational progress.

SREB works in three primary ways:

- *SREB helps states focus on what works in both policy and practice.* SREB works side-by-side with policymakers such as state legislators and education agency officials as they implement policies to help students achieve more, prepare students for college and careers, and boost college completion. SREB conducts research, collects and analyzes data, publishes reports, and recommends actions on current and emerging issues to advise state leaders and provide information for sound policies and effective action.
- *SREB brings together member states to forge consensus and work together on initiatives that would not be possible alone, helping them to share scarce resources and best practices.* For example, in 1981, SREB advanced the nation's first proposals for education reform through statewide academic standards and closer ties between schools and colleges. SREB and the National Assessment of Educational Progress developed the nation's first program to test student achievement so that results could be compared nationally, regionally, and state-to-state. This pilot program became the model for the nationwide student assessment program known today as NAEP, the Nation's Report Card.
- *SREB works with universities and public schools to improve capacity, teaching, learning, counseling, and school leadership.* SREB programs work to increase the number of minority faculty, for example, or reduce out-of-state tuition for uncommon degree programs.



While SREB has an [extensive portfolio of programs](#), a few key initiatives include:

- *Academic Common Market:* SREB established the Academic Common Market to expand interstate and inter-institutional sharing of specialized academic degree programs, reducing tuition costs for students and saving each state the cost of creating all of these programs. The Academic Common Market enables students to enroll in specialized graduate and undergraduate programs in out-of-state institutions while paying in-state tuition rates. More than 2,500 students are certified to participate each year, at more than 140 colleges and universities.
- *Regional Contract Program:* Originating in 1949, the RCP facilitates interstate sharing of high-cost advanced health professional programs, which enable students to cross state lines and still pay in-state tuition.
- *School Improvement Services:* SREB has developed the nation's largest improvement initiative for school leaders and teachers. At the center is High Schools That Work (HSTW), involving more than 1,200 HSTW sites in 30 states and the District of Columbia. Currently these sites use the HSTW Goals and Key Practices to raise student achievement and graduation rates. HSTW's annual Staff Development Conference attracts thousands of educators each year for professional development. HSTW publications, case studies, site development guides and other materials help improve high school curriculum and instruction across the nation. HSTW is nationally recognized for its effectiveness and has led to other SREB school improvement initiatives, including Making Middle Grades Work, which helps students make stronger academic transitions into high school, and Technology Centers That Work, which helps career and technical education centers improve student readiness for college and careers.
- *School Contract Programs:* SREB manages an extensive contract for services program in which SREB works with states, school districts and schools to deliver specified technical assistance.
- *Doctoral Scholars Program:* In 1993, SREB created the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program to increase the number of minority faculty members at colleges and universities. Its mission is to encourage more minority doctoral scholars to complete their studies and join the professoriate. The program has helped more than 650 minority scholars earn their Ph.D.s. Participants have a graduation rate of nearly 90 percent — nearly double the national average for minority graduate students. Eighty percent of program graduates are employed in education — 92 percent of them on campuses as faculty, administrators or postdoctoral researchers.
- *Data Analysis and Benchmarking:* SREB supports comprehensive data collection and analysis that benchmarks the progress of its 16 states in educational improvement in K-12. In postsecondary education, SREB founded the SREB-State Data Exchange to share key higher education data among member states. The Data Exchange is widely used by state leaders and is one of the nation's oldest, most comprehensive sources of comparative data on public higher education. It is the backbone of the SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, one of the nation's most comprehensive collections of comparative data on the population and economy, enrollment, degrees, student tuition and financial aid, faculty and administrators, and revenue and expenditures of states.

Headquartered in Atlanta, SREB is funded by member appropriations, as well as by contracts and grants from foundations and from local, state, and federal agencies.

For more information about the Southern Regional Education Board, please visit: www.sreb.org.



OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES FACING THE NEXT PRESIDENT

Succeeding a long-standing and well-respected leader, the next President joins SREB at a time of great opportunity. In the first 12-18 months, the President will provide vision, strategic direction, and management in the following areas:

Vision and Strategic Planning: Working collaboratively with Board Members, the Legislative Advisory Council, staff, and other stakeholders, the new President will lead the process of sustaining and refining a shared vision and assuring that strategies are in place that articulate the ongoing role of a quasi-public compact of states in driving educational change from pre-kindergarten to post-secondary levels. The next President will strengthen and build relationships to collaboratively set priorities for SREB's work in the next decade to ensure an effective balance of proactive and reactive programming, convening, research, and communication on pressing educational issues across the South.

Relationship Building and Service to States: The next President will lead the team in maintaining and strengthening existing relationships and reaching out to new state leaders across member states, articulating SREB's value as a collaborative, nonpartisan platform that is of service to legislators, policymakers, and practitioners while creating a shared vision for excellence in education systems across the South. The next President will engage policymakers and state leaders through new communications tools and information-sharing methods, building trusting and dynamic relationships that continue to emphasize SREB's reputation as a trusted and objective source of information on education related issues.

Fundraising and Communication: Cooperatively with the Board and staff, the next President will set a vision and strategy for successfully diversifying SREB's revenue beyond its current member appropriations, local, state, and federal contracts, and foundation support to ensure sustainability. S/he will engage new foundations in SREB's work and effectively steward the existing relationship through ongoing renewals. The President will envision new ways of communicating SREB's programs and information to existing and new stakeholders, ensuring its ongoing relevance and impact on policy and practice across the southern states and nationally.

Organizational Infrastructure, Policies and Fiscal Management: The next President will work with staff to ensure that the organization's procedures, finances, and data and tech infrastructure are professionally and efficiently organized and managed. The President will be ultimately responsible for the organization's budget, currently at \$47 million, and will manage a large board, executive committee, and legislative advisory council.

Team Development and Staff Management: The next President will join a highly talented and knowledgeable team and will be expected to ensure a high level of communication, collaboration, and management across the organization. The President will be responsible for any new hires or other staff changes.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

While no one candidate will possess all of the qualifications listed below, we expect that the selected candidate will embody many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes, and experiences:

- At least ten years of demonstrated success in an executive leadership role, setting direction for and managing strategy and implementation for an education-focused organization;
- A deep knowledge of the entire education continuum, from pre-kindergarten to post-secondary with expertise in at least one area within that continuum;



- An understanding of the unique education and workforce challenges and opportunities facing southern states; significant existing networks and relationships across SREB's member states;
- A track record of leading successful efforts to collaboratively build and implement a strategic plan as well as accountability and measurement practices to advance an organizational mission and its effectiveness in achieving its goals; proven success in translating vision into action and creating and implementing programs; experience creating partnerships and collaborations;
- Exceptional management skills with a significant track record of managing large, highly-talented teams of the scope and scale of SREB; a listening approach and collaborative leadership style is critical;
- Demonstrated strategic organizational, financial, and operational management expertise of an organization the size and scale of SREB;
- Understanding of the legislative process and experience working with elected representatives in a cooperative way; a proven personal and professional commitment to nonpartisanship and collaboration across political and ideological lines; strong convening skills and an authentic interest in listening to and learning from others; ability to establish trust with a diverse set of stakeholders;
- A history of communicating effectively in writing and verbally, including excellent public speaking skills for both formal and extemporaneous presentations; ability to represent SREB to a broad public with a natural orientation towards humility, listening, and servant leadership; the ability to communicate complex policy, legal and technical information succinctly and clearly;
- A record of success reporting to and managing a board and working effectively with staff and volunteers of diverse personalities and talents;
- Doctoral degree in education, public administration, or a related field or an equivalent combination of education, training, and experience is required.

TO APPLY

This search is being conducted with assistance from Katherine Jacobs, Allison Kupfer Poteet, Callie Carroll and Erica Nicole Richardson of the national search firm NPAG. Candidates are encouraged to apply as soon as possible, and applications will be reviewed as they are received. Please send nominations and/or applications including cover letter describing your interest and qualifications, your resume (in Word format), and where you learned of the position to: SREB-PRES@nonprofitprofessionals.com. **The Southern Regional Education Board is an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate based on any individual's race, socioeconomic status, national origin, color, disability, religion, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation or gender identity and encourage all candidates to apply.**

NPAG is a national executive search and consulting firm dedicated to serving the mission-driven community. We partner with global mission-driven clients to deliver highly-tailored, innovative, and strategic senior- and executive-level search services.