

# Texas and The Southern Regional Education Board

*This report details Texas' participation in SREB programs and services from June 2014 through May 2015. Each member state receives a number of general services, plus access to targeted programs funded by grants, contracts and fees. Appropriations from member states support core operations and general services. SREB leverages the long-standing commitment of member states to attract external funding for an array of targeted projects for educational improvement efforts in member states.*

## Leadership

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### SREB Board

Greg Abbott, Governor  
Jimmie Don Aycock, State Representative  
Daniel H. Branch, Former State Representative  
Rob Eissler, Former State Representative  
Michael L. Williams, Commissioner of Education

### SREB Legislative Advisory Council

Jimmie Don Aycock, State Representative, Killeen  
Donna Campbell, State Senator, New Braunfels  
Marsha Farney, State Representative, Georgetown

# Policy

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## Goals for education | Monitoring state policies

*Monitoring, measuring and reporting through comparative and state-specific reports to assist education leaders and policymakers as they shape public policy in education. SREB tracks trends and analyzes the progress of all 16 SREB states in each area in the Challenge to Lead 2020 Goals for Education and provides Legislative Reports that detail legislative and budget actions in each state.*

Texas information is included in all reports, as applicable, and several are targeted specifically for Texas.  
2014-15 reports:

***Texas: Taking Stock and Moving Forward***

2014 State Progress Report on the Challenge to Lead 2020 Goals for Education

*High School to College and Careers, 2014*

*The ACT and SAT: No Longer Just College Admission Tests*

*SREB States Transform School Accountability with NCLB Waivers, 2014*

*Workforce Development in SREB States: The Role of Two-Year Colleges in Preparing Students for Middle-Skill Jobs*

*Focus on Compulsory Attendance Policies: About Age or Intervention?*

*Notes on School Finance: Selected Information on Funding for Low-Income Students in SREB States*

*Legislative Reports and Legislative Briefing*

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## College and career readiness

*Intensive work to help states implement essential components of SREB's recommendations for statewide college and career readiness.*

1. Adopt statewide readiness standards for literacy and mathematics skills.
2. Assess high school juniors to determine their progress toward the standards.
3. Offer transitional readiness courses. Require juniors assessed as underprepared to take the courses in 11th or 12th grade.
4. Apply the standards in deciding whether students need learning support after admission to college.
5. Hold schools accountable for increasing postsecondary readiness.

SREB leaders are working with the Charles A. Dana Center on **mathematics pathways** into postsecondary education, with a focus on alternatives to traditional advanced algebra.

SREB published *Get It in Writing: Making Adolescent Writing an Immediate Priority in Texas*, with recommendations for improving writing instruction to raise achievement in all areas of student achievement.

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## Benchmarking State Implementation of College- and Career-Readiness Standards

*Tracks and reports state progress on how states are implementing college- and career-readiness standards.*

**SREB launched a new phase of benchmarking in February 2015.** In this work, SREB tracks and will report on implementation of standards and related reforms in **all 16 SREB** states.

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## English Learners

*Conference on preparing English language learners for college and career, co-hosted in May 2014 by SREB, the National Council on La Raza and the Hunt Institute.*

Texas sent a team to the conference, and a **fact sheet for Texas** includes population trends; state and federal policies; and programs, standards and assessments for English learners.

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## Educator effectiveness

*Helps states create policies that support teacher effectiveness so students learn more in the classroom. SREB staff work with policymakers and state agencies in all member states to help them translate current research on what works into evaluation systems that create an environment where teaching improves.*

A representative from the SREB educator effectiveness team traveled to Austin to testify before the Texas House Public Education Committee in April 2015.

Staff traveled to Austin to meet with representatives from the Texas Education Agency in January and followed up in April 2015.

Representatives from the Texas Education Agency attended a presentation given by SREB staff during the Equitable Access to Excellent Teachers and Leaders meeting in San Diego in February 2015.

The educator effectiveness team refreshed the **educator effectiveness Bill Tracker** in January 2015, which allows Texas policymakers to track bills across eight topics including teacher preparation, evaluation and professional learning.

Staff presented on educator evaluation at SREB's Legislative Advisory Council meeting in December 2014.

Representatives from Texas attended the Meeting of Legislative and Governors' Staff in October 2014. Staff updated the 40 attendees on recent changes to **teacher evaluation systems** in SREB states.

SREB educator effectiveness staff provided expertise to state agency staff at an educator equity convening in October 2014.

The team released the **Elements of Evaluation interactive database** in October 2014, which allows Texas policymakers to explore policies across 16 states on classroom observations, student growth measures and professional learning systems.

More than 1,000 policymakers and practitioners across the 16 SREB states receive the bi-weekly educator effectiveness e-newsletter.

The SREB educator effectiveness team provided technical assistance, brokered expertise and provided policy and practice resources to Texas:

- SREB Board and LAC members
- State legislators and legislative staff
- Governor's staff
- State education agency staff
- District superintendents
- School principals
- Teachers

More information: [Andy.Baxter@SREB.org](mailto:Andy.Baxter@SREB.org) | (704) 247-7497 | [SREB.org/EE](http://SREB.org/EE)

## Early childhood education

### SREB Early Childhood Commission

*Convenes leaders to recommend policies that will give more young children a solid start when they enter school. The Commission's focus is on access to high-quality programs and the importance of highly skilled teachers to young children's learning experiences. The Commission will present draft recommendations for the SREB Board to consider in summer 2015 and will publish its report later in 2015.*

Texas members of the Commission:

Marsha Farney, State Representative

Sam Nancarrow, Legislative Director, State House of Representatives

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## Career and Technical Education

### State Leaders' Forum

*A forum for state education leaders and policymakers to consider policies and leadership to create and sustain quality career and technical education. Co-sponsored with the State Consortium for Improving High School Career and Technical Studies.*

Texas attendees at the November 2014 Forum: **1**

### SREB Commission on Career and Technical Education

*Explored how optional career pathway programs of study can help more students acquire the academic and technical knowledge and skills needed to earn industry and postsecondary credentials and degrees to secure high-skill, high-wage, high-demand jobs.*

The Commission's final report, *Credentials for All: An Imperative for SREB States*, offers states policies and practices to build high-quality career pathways that transform their educational systems, increase postsecondary credential and degree attainment, and ensure their future economic security.

Texas members of the Commission:

Joe May, Chancellor, Dallas County Community College District

Royce West, State Senator, Dallas

Michael Williams, Commissioner of Education, Texas Education Agency

More information: [Gene.Bottoms@SREB.org](mailto:Gene.Bottoms@SREB.org) | (404) 875-9211 | [SREB.org/CTECommission](http://SREB.org/CTECommission)

## Postsecondary education

Two commissions carried SREB's completion initiative into the states in 2014 and 2015 with strong emphasis on readiness and pathways for community colleges and affordability for all students. Building on the success of 2011-14 regional working groups of legislators to vet issues and craft recommendations, both commissions included Board and Legislative Advisory Council members and other key policymakers in the states.

### SREB Community College Commission

*Charged with recommending statewide strategies to strengthen the role of community and technical colleges in raising educational attainment in Southern states.*

Texas members of the Commission:

Daniel H. Branch, former State Representative, Dallas

Joe May, Chancellor, Dallas County Community College District

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## State Services

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*Connects policymakers with custom information, presentations and assistance on education issues as they arise.*

*Custom information by request of Texas policymakers and staff:*

Legislative staff: capital bonds

Legislator: early childhood education

Legislative staff: innovation zones in Tennessee

Legislative staff: State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements

SREB Senior Vice President Gene Bottoms visited state education leaders and policymakers in Texas to discuss school improvement, teacher professional development, and career and technical education.

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# Professional Development for Teachers, Principals and Counselors

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## Literacy Design Collaborative

*A teaching framework to help students learn the literacy skills of college- and career-readiness standards. Teachers learn to design assignments that engage students to learn subject content while advancing reading and writing skills. SREB's innovative training starts with exemplary teachers, who then work with other teachers to help them adopt the strategies.*

## Mathematics Design Collaborative

*A teaching framework to help students understand basic mathematics concepts, become fluent with mathematics procedures, and develop the reasoning to apply them to solve problems. MDC teachers use formative assessment lessons — a hybrid of assessment and instruction — to help students master college- and career-readiness standards. SREB's innovative training builds the capacity of lead teachers to become trainers of other teachers.*

SREB worked with Texas to align the LDC and MDC tools to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards. SREB is working with the Texas Association of School Administrators to identify Educational Service Centers to participate in an effort to share LDC and MDC widely across the state. SREB plans to identify more than 100 schools to participate in the first cohort of professional development, which will begin with training local trainers and teachers in August 2015.

More information: [Dan.Mollette@SREB.org](mailto:Dan.Mollette@SREB.org) | (404) 962-9623 | [SREB.org/LDCMDC](http://SREB.org/LDCMDC)

## High Schools That Work Staff Development Conference

*Annual conference for thousands of school leaders, teachers and counselors from middle grades, high schools and technology centers across the country. The July 2015 conference will be held in Atlanta.*

Texas attendees at the July 2014 conference: **105**

More information: [Anna.Johnston@SREB.org](mailto:Anna.Johnston@SREB.org) | (404) 962-9629 | [SREB.org/SummerConference](http://SREB.org/SummerConference)

## College- and Career-Readiness Standards Networking Conference

*Conference on the proven strategies of the Literacy and Mathematics Design Collaborative frameworks. More than 1,200 teachers and leaders attended the first conference in July 2014 to collaborate and share effective instructional strategies. This year's conference will be held in Atlanta July 13-15.*

Texas attendees at the July 2014 networking conference: **31**

More information: [Anna.Johnston@SREB.org](mailto:Anna.Johnston@SREB.org) | (404) 962-9629 | [SREB.org/NetworkingConference](http://SREB.org/NetworkingConference)

## National Professional Development Workshops

*Intensive two- to three-day workshops that address current priorities for school improvement. Attendees leave with a plan of action for their schools. During the 2014-15 school year, SREB offered the Aligning High Schools and Middle Grades With Emerging Priorities for College and Career Readiness workshop and the National Technology Centers That Work Leaders' Forum.*

Texas teachers, counselors and leaders who participated: **2**

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## Principals

### Learning-Centered Leadership Program

*Works with district, state and university partners to prepare aspiring principals and school leadership teams to lead school reform to ensure that students are ready for college and careers. This program offers training, guidance and technical assistance.*

Texas attendees at 2015 Annual SREB Leadership Forum: **2**

More information: [Jon.Schmidt-Davis@SREB.org](mailto:Jon.Schmidt-Davis@SREB.org) | (404) 879-5591 | [SREB.org/Leadership](http://SREB.org/Leadership)

### National Research Center for Career and Technical Education

*Provides policy and practice solutions to challenges facing career and technical education today, including better engaging students in school; improving academic and technical achievement; and better transitioning high school students to college and careers.*

Professional development provided in 2014-15: Schools in **Fort Worth** received **five days** of professional development in the Center's Science In CTE model.

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## High School and Middle Grades Improvement

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### SREB Readiness Courses

#### Math Ready and Literacy Ready

*Ready for postsecondary study*

*SREB courses that teach the reading, writing and mathematics skills young adults must have to succeed in college study and the workplace after high school — how to think independently, read for information and solve problems. Developed by teams of educators and faculty from partner states around the nation, they are being field tested in several states and are available at no cost.*

**Texas versions of the Literacy Ready and Math Ready courses** are available on the SREB and TASA websites as well as on iTunes U. Representatives from the Texas Association of School Administrators

worked with SREB staff to create versions of the courses aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and College and Career Readiness Standards.

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## Advanced Career

*A new approach to career and technical education that combines college readiness academic content with a sequence of four courses designed around hands-on, project-based assignments. The aim is to prepare more students for as many options as possible in high-demand, high-wage emerging career fields such as health informatics, innovations in science and technology, and energy and power.*

Texas, the newest member of the Advanced Career (AC) consortium, is one of nine states working with SREB and local higher education and economic development leaders to develop Advanced Career pathway programs. The **Texas Education Agency** and the **Texas Comprehensive Center at the Southeastern Development Laboratory** participated in the summer 2014 stakeholder convening panel that selected **oil and gas** for AC pathway development.

An expert panel with 32 representatives from business, postsecondary and secondary education and state agencies met in fall 2014 and winter 2015. The group identified the knowledge and skills essential to this pathway and generated ideas for projects for the curriculum. Teams of curriculum writers will complete development of six projects each for the first two courses by fall 2015.

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## Enhanced Project-Based Learning in CTE

*Training model for existing career and technical education programs in high-demand, high-skill, high-wage fields. Teachers improve assignments and assessments by working with business and industry partners to develop projects that require students to apply technical, academic college- and career-readiness and technology skills.*

Texas participation in 2014-15:

Texas teachers participated in SREB training and follow-up coaching: **48**

Texas administration participated in SREB training: **5**

Texas schools participated in SREB training: **3**

Texas participation in 2015-16:

SREB training and follow-up coaching will be provided to **eight schools** in four districts.

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## High Schools That Work

*Helps states transform public high schools into places where all students learn at high levels and complete at higher rates. Reforms create career pathway roadmaps for college and career readiness to meet regional and state workforce needs. HSTW serves more than 1,350 schools in 30 states. Schools receive services through membership in the HSTW state network or through contracts for intensive, customized support.*

SREB is working with **Grand Prairie Independent School District** and **Galveston Ball High School** to focus on developing career pathway programs of study.

### *HSTW State Network*

*Member states select schools to receive services. The fee for state membership in the consortium covers several services and visits.*

Texas is a member of the High Schools That Work state network, in which **57 schools** were active in 2014-15.

SREB provided two trainers in 2014 to support the state's Career and Technical Education Teachers and Leaders Conference, and one trainer for the Career Technology Association of Texas conference.

Diane Salazar, State Director of Career Technical Education, represents Texas on the HSTW Board.

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### *Contracts for Direct Support*

*Schools, districts and states contract with SREB for targeted school improvement services, such as on-site coaching, technical assistance and professional development.*

In Texas in 2014-15, **six high schools** contracted with HSTW for direct services. SREB provided **72 days** of on-site coaching and **40 days** of on-site staff development.

In Texas in 2015-16, **nine high schools** will contract with HSTW for direct services. SREB will provide over **50 days** on-site coaching and **24 days** of on-site staff development.

More information: [Cindy.VanBuren@SREB.org](mailto:Cindy.VanBuren@SREB.org) | (803) 984-5986 | [SREB.org/HSTW](http://SREB.org/HSTW)

### *HSTW Assessment*

*Subject tests, along with student and teacher surveys to establish baseline data, track progress and identify areas for improvement.*

**Four Texas schools** participated in the 2014 HSTW Assessment.

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### *Special Board Meeting*

SREB's High Schools That Work initiative held a special board meeting in March devoted to strengthening the HSTW instructional design to build college and career pathways that link high schools, workplace learning, and community and technical colleges. The goal is to increase the percentage of young people who earn a credible credential by age 25.

Texas participant in the March 2015 HSTW Board meeting:

Todd Webster – Texas Education Agency

### **Making Middle Grades Work**

*Engages state, district and school leaders in partnerships with teachers, students, parents and the community to raise student achievement in the middle grades. The network includes 663 schools in 20 states.*

**Thirty Texas schools** were active in the network during 2014-15.

Also during 2014-15, **10 schools** in Texas contracted with MMGW for direct services. SREB delivered **90 days** of on-site coaching and **24 days** of on-site staff development.

### *MMGW Student Survey*

**Three schools** participated in the 2014 MMGW Student and Teacher Surveys.

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### *2014 Award-Winning Schools*

*HSTW Platinum High Achievement Schools participated in the 2014 HSTW Assessment, and at least 85 percent of students met at least one readiness goal, one or more parts of the recommended curriculum, and at least one recommended concentration. Winning schools are classified as high implementation sites and met state AYP or had a graduation rate of at least 85 percent. The following school earned the award in 2012 and 2014:*

**Los Fresnos High School**, Los Fresnos

More information: [Fran.Cowart@SREB.org](mailto:Fran.Cowart@SREB.org) | (404) 879-5611

## Counseling for Careers

*Helps students align career pathway programs of study to career goals, postsecondary studies and employment. SREB works with districts and schools so that teachers, counselors, administrators, parents and community partners can advise students on career opportunities in the state and region, career pathway programs of study, work-based learning experiences, postsecondary education and training opportunities.*

Counseling for Careers has provided planning, coaching and professional development to **six high schools** in **San Antonio** since January 2015, with continued coaching and consulting planned for summer 2015.

**Dubiski Career High School** in **Grand Prairie** is receiving professional development and coaching in all seven essential Counseling for Careers strategies, with plans to implement this professional development school wide in 2015-16.

## Higher Education Programs and Services

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### Tuition savings, access to uncommon degrees

#### Academic Common Market

*Provides in-state tuition access to degree programs not available in a student's home state. Approximately 2,500 new students participate each year in 1,900 programs at 150 institutions.*

Texas participates at the graduate level only.

Participating Texas students, calendar year 2014: **37**

Texas ACM Representative:

Allen Michie, Program Director, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

A Texas representative attended the 2015 Academic Common Market annual meeting webinar.

## Electronic Campus

*Partners with colleges and universities to give students access to almost 37,000 online courses and more than 3,400 online degree programs.*

Programs provided by Texas institutions as of April 2015: **631**

Texas EC Representative:

Jessica Acton, Program Director, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Texas representatives attended the 2014 Electronic Campus Annual Meeting.

## Regional Contract Program

*Gives students the opportunity to earn a professional health degree from participating institutions in other states through in-state tuition rates at public institutions or reduced tuition at private institutions. SREB is fiscal agent and handles administrative duties without additional fees to the state, institutions or students. More than 700 students participate each year.*

Through this program, other states may contract for student spaces with the **University of Houston College of Optometry** and **Texas A&M's Baylor College of Dentistry**. These institutions receive more than **\$200,000** for these contracted services.

## SREB Electronic Campus Regional Reciprocity Agreement

*Allows institutions to be authorized by their home state to eliminate the need for individual approvals in SREB states where they serve students online. SREB states opt in to SECRRA. A new, nationwide system of reciprocity — **SARA, or the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement** — will open more high-quality online offerings for students and ease regulatory burdens on institutions.*

**Texas** participates in SECRRA. SARA legislation is pending in Texas.

Texas SARA Representative:

Rex Peebles, Assistant Commissioner, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

More information: [Mary.Larson@SREB.org](mailto:Mary.Larson@SREB.org) | (404) 875-9211 | [SREB.org/1083](http://SREB.org/1083)

## Comparative data

### SREB-State Data Exchange

*Collects, compiles and publishes data and descriptive statistics on postsecondary education. Data are updated annually on a wide range of policy topics: degree and certificate completion, student persistence and progression, time- and credits-to-degree, student credit hours (including those taken in high school), tuition and fee levels and policies, and faculty salaries. Postsecondary agencies in each SREB state participate and appoint coordinators.*

Participating agency and 2015-16 Data Exchange Coordinator:

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: David Gardner, Deputy Commissioner

## SREB Fact Book on Higher Education

*One of the nation's most comprehensive collections of comparative data. The Fact Book keeps policymakers informed with trend data for all 50 states on the population and the economy, college enrollment, degrees awarded, tuition and fees, student financial aid and cost of attendance, faculty and administrators, as well as revenue and expenditures including state appropriations. Fact Book tables are updated regularly at [SREB.org/Data](http://SREB.org/Data).*

Texas leaders receive the annual ***SREB-State Data Exchange Indicators Report***, the ***SREB Fact Book on Higher Education***, as well as ***Texas: Featured Facts from the SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, Fact Book Bulletins*** and special reports.

More information: [Susan.Lounsbury@SREB.org](mailto:Susan.Lounsbury@SREB.org) | (404) 879-5546 | [SREB.org/Data](http://SREB.org/Data)

## Nursing education

### Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing

*Helps expand and strengthen schools of nursing to reduce the critical shortage of nurse educators needed to educate the nation's registered nurses. The Council surveys institutions for nursing education trends and shares online graduate nursing courses.*

In Texas, **nine institutions** participate in the Council.

Representatives from each institution, with leadership positions on the Council:

Baylor University: Shelley Conroy, Dean

Lamar University at Beaumont: Eileen Deges Curl; SREB Nursing Council: Bylaws Committee

Prairie View A&M University: Betty N. Adams, Dean; SREB Nursing Council: Chair, Membership Committee

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi: Mary Hamilton, Dean; Member, Elizabeth Carnegie Awards Committee

Texas Christian University: Susan Weeks, Acting Dean

Texas Woman's University: Anita Hufft, Dean

University of Texas at Arlington: Ann Bavier, Dean

University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston: Lorraine Frazier, Dean; SREB Nursing Council: Board Member

University of Texas Medical Branch: Pamela G. Watson, Dean

More information: [Eula.Aiken@SREB.org](mailto:Eula.Aiken@SREB.org) | (404) 879-5567 | [SREB.org/Nursing](http://SREB.org/Nursing)

## Minority Ph.D. scholars

### SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program

*Supports minority students to help them earn their Ph.D.s and seek employment that helps colleges and universities diversify their faculties. The Doctoral Scholars Program hosts the annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, the nation's largest gathering of minority doctoral scholars — with more than 1,200 attendees.*

Scholars funded by Texas in 2014-15: **0**

2014 Institute attendees from Texas: **79**

Scholars Texas has supported since joining in 1996: **10**

Graduates since 1996: **6**

Graduates currently employed: **5**

Percent employed in education: **100**

Texas-supported students have attended these institutions since 1996:

Baylor Tech University

University of Texas at Austin

Texas A&M University

University of Texas at San Antonio

Texas Tech University

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## Interstate Cooperatives

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### Educational Technology Cooperative

*Membership group of state K-12 and higher education coordinating and governing boards representing more than 800 colleges and universities and 3,100 school districts in SREB states. The ETC focuses member agencies and state policymakers on using technology wisely, reports on educational technology topics and connects members.*

Texas member agencies and representatives for the membership year 2014-15:

Texas Virtual School Network, Texas Education Agency: Kate Loughrey, Statewide Coordinator, and Barbara Smith, Project Director

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: Jessica Acton, Program Director

**Texas** sent attendees to the 2014 annual meeting, and Texas ETC representatives helped determine SREB's **10 Critical Issues in Educational Technology**.

More information: [Wanda.Barker@SREB.org](mailto:Wanda.Barker@SREB.org) | (404) 875-9211 | [SREB.org/EdTech](http://SREB.org/EdTech)

### Technology Purchasing Savings

*Schools, universities and agencies in SREB states saved 3 percent to 18 percent on \$17 million in technology purchases during fiscal year 2014 through SREB's participation in MHECtech discount agreements. Organizations in each of the 16 SREB states participated.*

Texas technology purchases, FY 2014: **\$3,040,600**

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*The Southern Regional Education Board was created in 1948 by Southern governors and legislators who recognized the link between education and economic vitality. To this day, the organization maintains its focus on critical issues that hold the promise of improving quality of life by advancing public education. The region's track record shows that setting goals and maintaining the commitment to work toward them make a difference.*