March 13, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey
State Superintendent of Education

RE: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Literacy and Math Readiness Course Initiative: Ready for High School or Ready for College

I am pleased to inform you of the continuing partnership between the Alabama Community College System (ACCS), the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) to address the concern of Alabama students taking remedial courses at the postsecondary level. At the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, the SREB College Literacy and Math Readiness Course Pilot Initiative was implemented in 24 select schools. The purpose of the initiative is to reduce the large percentage of students entering community colleges requiring developmental courses. The courses offered through the initiative are designed for students scoring below college- and career-readiness benchmarks. Students who successfully complete the courses will be exempt from developmental or remedial classes at the community college level. We are excited to announce that the pilot has been extended for the upcoming school year and additional schools/school systems are being invited to apply.

In addition to the SREB College Literacy and Math Readiness Courses being offered, the initiative was expanded to include Ready for High School courses in literacy and math for eighth and/or ninth graders. Schools interested in participating in the SREB College Literacy and Math Readiness Courses and/or Ready for High School Courses will need to complete an application in order to be considered in the selection process. If selected, schools will be required to complete a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that outlines responsibilities and expectations for all participants. In addition, teachers selected to teach the SREB Readiness Courses will be required to attend and complete summer training before instructing the class, as well as participate in ongoing, online training opportunities throughout the year. Summer training will be held June 18-20, 2019, in Montgomery, Alabama at Carver High School. The SREB offers this training free to the participants; however, the local education agency must be responsible for its teachers’ lodging,
meals, and travel. There will be a lunch break scheduled daily for participants to purchase their lunches at local eateries or they may bring their own lunch. Upon approval of the application, a flyer with a link for registration will be sent to participating schools. Please register as soon as you receive the email containing the registration link. An application must be completed in order for schools/school systems to receive an MOA. **Applications are due by April 26, 2019.**

As you consider applying to participate in the SREB Ready for College Literacy and Math Readiness Course Initiative, please be aware that these new courses will not meet the requirements of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Clearinghouse or the requirements for four-year institutions. These courses are designed for students who plan to enter an Alabama two-year college upon completion of high school. The **Ready for High School** Literacy and Math courses are designed to help underprepared eighth- and/or ninth-grade students to succeed in high school and postsecondary studies.

Please find the application attached. Schools already participating in the initiative should complete the application as well for documentation purposes. Please be sure to select new participant or continuing participate. Existing sites that have new teachers selected to teach the courses must send those teachers to summer training. For any questions regarding this process, please contact Dr. Carolyn A. Jones via email at cajones@alsde.edu or by telephone at (334) 694-4768.

EGM:CAJ:SMR

Attachment

FY19-2060
Alabama State Department of Education
Southern Regional Education Board
Readiness Course Initiative
2019-2020 Application

Instructional Services Section
Office of Student Learning
3345 Gordon Persons Building
50 North Ripley Street
Montgomery, AL 36104
Telephone: (334) 694-4768
Fax: (334) 694-4970
Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Readiness Course Initiative
Ready for College Courses

In order to address the large percentage of students entering college requiring developmental courses, the Alabama Community College System (ACCS), the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) have partnered together to implement the SREB Readiness Course initiative. The SREB offers two senior-level, ready-for-college courses: **Literacy Ready** and **Math Ready**. These courses are designed for students scoring below college- and career-readiness benchmarks. Students who successfully complete these courses are exempt from developmental courses at the two-year college level only. In addition, these courses can replace the fourth year of English Language Arts (ELA) [English 12] and the fourth year of mathematics. Please be aware that four-year institutions require Algebra II for freshman college entrance and English 12. Please also be aware that the **Literacy Ready** and **Math Ready** courses will not meet the requirements of the National Collegiate Athletic Association Clearinghouse (NCAAC).

**Course Overview**

*The Essentials of College English:* This six-unit literacy and composition course utilizes a disciplinary literacy approach that teaches students strategies for reading and understanding complex texts in various subject areas. The emphasis is on collaborative learning strategies and interactive classroom activities to help students foster independent goal-setting and strong study habits. Reading texts at or above grade level helps students to discover the connection between comprehending text and expressing their knowledge through writing, ultimately producing authentic and rigorous communication products utilized in college and the workplace.

*The Essentials of College Mathematics (Algebra, Functions, and Statistics):* This Algebra, Functions, and Statistics course emphasizes understanding of math concepts rather than procedural memorization. Students’ conceptual understanding of mathematics is strengthened by engaging them in solving real-world applications. The course is built with rigor, innovative instructional strategies, and a concentration on contextual learning that develops critical-thinking skills that students will utilize throughout their high school studies and beyond. The course consists of eight units, culminating in a capstone project.

**Student Eligibility**

Rising high school seniors who score within the established American College Test (ACT) score ranges are eligible for enrollment in the SREB Readiness Courses. See ACT score ranges below:

*Math ACT Score Range: 16-19*

*English ACT Score Range: 14-19*

*Reading ACT Score Range: 15-19*
Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)
Ready for High School Courses

To address the high failure and dropout rates that occur during the ninth grade, SREB has developed two courses, Ready for High School Literacy and Ready for High School Math. These courses strengthen underprepared students as they enter high school, setting them on the path to success and increasing their prospects for graduation. Research shows that between 70 percent and 80 percent of students who fail in the first year of high school will not graduate. By implementing courses in literacy and mathematics for underprepared students, schools can increase their ninth-grade retention rates and ultimately their high school graduation rates.

Course Overview

**Ready for High School Literacy:** This course utilizes a disciplinary literacy approach that teaches students strategies for reading and understanding complex texts in various subject areas. Students learn to develop and defend ideas and write about them in several disciplines, such as English, history and science, on a high school level. The unit structure conforms to the LDC framework while preparing students for the rigors of high school studies.

**Ready for High School Math:** This course emphasizes understanding of math concepts rather than just memorizing procedures. In Ready for High School Math, students learn the whys of using certain formulas or methods to solve a problem. By engaging students in real-world applications, Ready for High School Math develops critical-thinking skills that students will use throughout their high school studies. The course consists of eight units, culminating in a capstone project.

Student Eligibility
Students entering the eighth or ninth grade who need to increase their critical thinking and communication skills would best benefit from these early intervention courses. These students may not meet state proficiency standards but would typically need a boost to do so. These courses are not designed for low level students with severe academic deficiencies.

**Ready for High School Literacy Outline**
- English Unit 1: How the Brain Functions: What it Means to be Human
- History Unit 1: World War II: What Makes Nations Take Extreme Measures?
- Science Unit 1: What Will the Earth Look Like in a Million Years?
- English Unit 2: Fictional Text on the Study of the Human Brain
- History Unit 2: World History: Studying Texts as Historians
- Science Unit 2: Environmental Science: Constructing Arguments

**Ready for High School Math Outline**
- Unit 1: The Number System
- Unit 2: Ratios & Proportional Relationships
- Unit 3: Univariate Statistics and Probability
- Unit 4: Expressions and Equations
- Unit 5: Geometry
- Unit 6: Functions & Linear Relationships
- Unit 7: Systems of Linear Equations & Inequalities
- Unit 8: Capstone Project
Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Readiness Course Initiative  
2019-2020 APPLICATION

Note: Application must be signed by the Principal, SREB Readiness Course School  
Coordinator/Liaison, SREB Readiness Course LEA Coordinator/Liaison, and the  
Superintendent. Applications are due April 26, 2019.

Please check: New Application____  Continuing Participant____

School:_________________________ Principal:___________________________

Address:________________________________________________________________

Telephone:_____________________ Email:_________________________________

School System:___________________ Superintendent:_____________________

Address:________________________________________________________________

Telephone:_____________________ Email:_________________________________

Please identify one person to serve as the SREB Readiness Course School Coordinator/Liaison  
and the SREB Readiness Course LEA Coordinator/Liaison. This person must be in the school/LEA  
and will serve as the primary contact person.

SREB Readiness Course School Coordinator/Liaison (Primary Contact): ______________________

Address:________________________________________________________________

Telephone:____________ Fax:_________ Email:___________________________

SREB Readiness Course LEA Coordinator/Liaison (Primary Contact): ______________________

Address:________________________________________________________________

Telephone:____________ Fax:_________ Email:___________________________
Complete the following table:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Projected No. of Readiness Course Teachers</th>
<th>Projected No. of Readiness Course Sections (Ex. Fall-1, Spring-2)</th>
<th>Projected No. of Readiness Course Students (Ex. Fall-20, Spring-15)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics (12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;)</td>
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<td>ELA (12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;)</td>
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<td>ELA (8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; or 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;)</td>
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**Rationale:**

**Ready for College:** The primary goal of this initiative is to prepare selected students in high schools to enter a two-year community college with the skills and knowledge necessary to be successful in completing coursework, specifically aligned with the Alabama Community College System’s (ACCS) expectations in an effort to avoid the need for developmental coursework at the community level. These courses are senior-level courses designed for students scoring below the ACT placement score benchmarks established by the ACCS. Students who successfully complete these courses with a grade of B or higher are exempt from developmental courses at the college level.

**Rationale:**

**Ready for High School Courses:** The primary goal of this initiative is to decrease the high failure and dropout rates that occur during the ninth grade. These courses are designed for eight and/or ninth graders who need to increase their critical thinking and communication skills prior to entering high school.

**Objectives:**

The following objectives will be obtained through the Readiness Course Initiative:

- Improve students’ academic knowledge and skills.
- Increase the number of students graduating college and career ready.
- Increase the number of college graduates meeting industry credentials.
- Decrease the number of students enrolled in remedial or developmental college courses.
- Decrease the high failure and dropout rate that occurs during ninth grade.
- Ensure that students continue to prepare for rigorous college courses.
- Assist teachers in gaining confidence in their abilities to help all students complete a challenging high school curriculum.
- Promote collaboration among teachers to implement a more rigorous curricula.
- Strengthen administrators’ understanding of curriculum and instruction as they lead the staff in continuous school improvement.
Please address the following questions/statements.

1.  How will the school identify the students to participate in the Readiness Course(s)?
2.  How will teachers be identified and selected to implement the Readiness Course(s)?
3.  Describe the formal and/or informal structures at the school level that will provide opportunities for collaboration, feedback, and support among leadership and the participating teacher(s).

**Readiness Course Initiative Requirements**

**ACTIVITIES:** Schools participating in the Readiness Course Initiative agree to the following activities:

- Submit four original, signed, and dated Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs).
- Designate personnel to serve as a liaison with partnering community college and ALSDE personnel.
- Communicate to all staff the school’s commitment to implement the Readiness Course Initiative.
- Identify the LEA coordinator serving as liaison to partnering community college and ALSDE personnel.
- Participate in the SREB summer readiness training sessions, follow-up trainings, and year-round online trainings.
- Participate in any ALSDE-sponsored activities to support implementation of the initiative.
- Partner with ACCS Institutions to provide college and career counseling activities.
- Only utilize the SREB Readiness Course-trained teachers to teach the courses.
- If a school has more than one participating teacher, provide formal opportunities for Readiness Course teachers to collaborate and plan with other Readiness Course teachers.
- Only admit students in the **Ready for College** courses who meet the entrance criteria based on ACT scores.
- Enroll selected students in either or both the ELA course using course code 200056: *The Essentials of College English* and the Mathematics course using course code and name 210039: *The Essentials of College Mathematics*. Intervention or elective course codes may be used for the **Ready for High School** courses.
Southern Regional Board Readiness Course Initiative
2019-2020 Application
CERTIFICATION PAGE

Required Signatures
I have read the requirements of the SREB Readiness Course Initiative and agree to support this initiative if the application is accepted.

Signature of Principal: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Signature of Readiness Course School Coordinator/Liaison: ______________ Date: ____________

Signature of Readiness Course LEA Coordinator/Liaison: __________________ Date: ____________

Signature of Superintendent: _______________________ Date: _________________________

Due Date: April 26, 2019, by 4 p.m.
Late applications will not be accepted.

Please submit the application packet to:

    Dr. Carolyn A. Jones
    Alabama State Department of Education
    Instructional Services Section
    3345 Gordon Persons Building
    50 North Ripley Street
    Montgomery, AL 36104
    Telephone: (334) 334-694-4768
    Fax: (334) 694-4970
    Email: cajones@alsde.edu