

20. Updated and Revised Memorandum of Understanding

Sample MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

Southern Regional Education Board

And

Any State/Site

For Participation in *High Schools That Work*

THE NEED FOR *HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK*

Despite a decade of reform and rising public expenditures for education, many high schools still lack a comprehensive approach to prepare students for the demands of work and further education. Many students graduate from high school thinking they are prepared for further study or have the skills employers want, only to discover that they are unprepared for further study and an increasingly high-performance work environment. High schools are raising graduation requirements and requiring high stakes exams, but they lack the instructional practices and support systems needed to keep students engaged and in school.

All students need education and training beyond high school. Today, less than one-fifth of ninth-graders graduate on time from college, reflecting the need for better preparation through rigorous coursework, high expectations and guidance for career development.

Local education leaders need a vision of the type of high school that enables students to achieve at higher levels. Studies show that when students are motivated and challenged, 85 percent or more can complete a rigorous program of academic and career/technical study without increasing the school dropout rate.

To change, high schools need information on student achievement and experiences after high school; opportunities for teachers to share and learn from each other; and external assistance, including review teams to evaluate progress and make recommendations.

High Schools That Work offers states and high school sites a cost-effective method to (1) share information on valid practices, (2) provide much-needed staff development, (3) address curriculum and instructional methods and (4) assess student progress. The sharing of information and pooling of resources allow individual states and local schools to obtain greater benefits than they could independently.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CONSORTIUM

The purpose of the SREB-State Career/Technical Education Consortium is to raise significantly the academic and technical competencies of all students, by creating a culture of high expectations and continuous improvement in high school and middle grades. The Goals of *HSTW* are to:

- Increase to 85 percent the percentages of high school students who meet the *HSTW* reading, mathematics and science performance goals on a National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)-referenced exam.
- Increase the percentages of *all* high school students who perform at the proficient level to at least 50 percent in reading,

mathematics and science, as measured by the NAEP-referenced *HSTW* Assessment.

- Increase to 85 percent the percentages of high school graduates who complete college-preparatory courses in mathematics, science, English/language arts and social studies and a concentration in an academic area, a career/technical area or a blend of the two.
- Increase to 90 percent the percentages of high school students who enter grade nine and complete high school four years later.
- Advance state and local policies and leadership initiatives that sustain a continuous school improvement effort.
- Have all students leave high school with postsecondary credit or having met standards for postsecondary studies to avoid remedial courses.
- Work in the middle grades to increase annually the percentages of students entering high school prepared to succeed in college-preparatory courses.

The Consortium proposes to accomplish these goals by assisting high schools in integrating the essential content from high-level college-preparatory studies mathematics, science and English with career/technical studies by creating conditions that support principals and faculties in carrying out certain key practices.

THE CONSORTIUM APPROACH

SREB, in partnership with state and local education leaders in 31 states, has a network of over 1,000 *High Schools That Work* sites. The network includes approximately 35 high schools per state, linked within the state and across member states. Each participating state and local school or school system agrees to accelerate student achievement by creating conditions that support teachers and local leaders in implementing key improvement practices.

KEY PRACTICES FOR ACCERLATING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

High Schools That Work sites are committed to finding ways to carry out the following Key Practices:

- **High expectations** – Motivate more students to meet high expectations by integrating high expectations into classroom practices and giving students frequent feedback.
- **Program of study** – Require each student to complete an upgraded academic core and a concentration.
- **Academic studies** –Teach more students the essential concepts of the college-preparatory curriculum by encouraging them to apply academic content and skills to real-world problems and projects. School leaders need to:

- o Align core academic courses to essential state and national standards that prepare youth for postsecondary studies and careers.
 - o Align student assignments, student work and classroom assessments to at least the proficient-level standards as measured by a NAEP-referenced exam and state assessments.
- **Career/technical studies** – Provide more students access to intellectually challenging career/technical studies in high-demand fields that emphasize the higher-level mathematics, science, literacy and problem-solving skills needed in the workplace and in further education. School leaders need to:
 - o Develop standards, conditions and agreements for awarding postsecondary credit in high-demand career/technical fields to high school students.
 - o Require senior projects with academic, technical and performance standards.
 - o Provide students opportunities to work toward a recognized employer certification.¹
- **Work-based learning** – Enable students and their parents to choose from programs that integrate challenging high school studies and work-based learning and are planned by educators, employers and students.
- **Teachers working together** – Provide teams of teachers from several disciplines the time and support to work together to help students succeed in challenging academic and career/technical studies. Integrate reading, writing and speaking as strategies for learning into all parts of the curriculum, and integrate mathematics into science and career/technical classrooms. School leaders need to support:
 - o academic and career/technical teachers in engaging students regularly in reading books and articles, writing, making presentations and using high-level reasoning and thinking skills.
 - o mathematics, science and career/technical teachers working together to better align and integrate mathematics concepts and skills into assignments in science and career/technical classrooms.
- **Students actively engaged** – Engage students in academic and career/technical classrooms in rigorous and challenging proficient-level assignments² using research-based instructional strategies and technology.
- **Guidance** – Involve students and their parents in a guidance and advisement system that develops positive relationships and ensures completion of an accelerated program of study with an academic or career/technical concentration. Provide each student

¹ Recognized employer certification is an associate degree in a career field, an associate or an applied science degree or a certificate in a career field, an apprenticeship or a state-issued license.

² The quality of assignments is measured at or above the proficient level on a NAEP-referenced exam.

with the same mentor throughout high school to assist with setting goals, selecting courses, reviewing the student's progress and suggesting appropriate interventions as necessary. School leaders need to:

- o Involve parents in annual meetings with students and their mentors to review progress and develop plans for the next year.
- o Develop efforts to educate middle-grades parents, school and teacher leaders, and students about the achievement level needed for rigorous high school studies and to educate high school parents, students and teachers about the achievement level needed for postsecondary study and high-demand, high-income jobs.
- **Extra help** – Provide a structured system of extra help to assist students in completing accelerated programs of study with high-level academic and technical content. School leaders need to:
 - o Support all students to become independent learners by building into their learning experiences opportunities to practice habits of successful learners such as study and literacy skills, time management and learning with others.
 - o Give students easy access to opportunities to meet course standards and graduate with their peers.
 - o Support teachers in forming nurturing academic relationships with students aimed at improving students' work and achievement.
 - o Plan catch-up learning experiences for entering ninth-graders who are not prepared to succeed in college-preparatory courses.
 - o Work with postsecondary institutions to identify 11th-graders not ready for postsecondary study.
 - o Develop special courses for the senior year to prepare these students.
- **Culture of continuous improvement** – Use student assessment and program evaluation data to continuously improve school culture, organization, management, curriculum and instruction to advance student learning.

THE *HSTW*-RECOMMENDED CURRICULUM

The centerpiece of *HSTW* is a challenging curriculum that focuses on raising academic and technical standards and expectations to prepare students for further education and the workplace. To complete the recommended curriculum, each student takes:

- at least four English courses with the content and performance standards of college-preparatory English.
- at least four credits in mathematics, including Algebra I, geometry, Algebra II and a higher-level mathematics course, such as trigonometry, statistics, pre-calculus, calculus or The College Board's Pacesetter Mathematics, with one higher-level

mathematics course taken during the senior year. (Students completing Algebra I in grade eight will be required to complete four additional years of mathematics.)

- at least three credits in science, including three college-preparatory courses, such as biology, chemistry, physics or applied physics, or anatomy/physiology.
- at least three college-preparatory social studies courses.
- at least one course or demonstrated proficiency in computer technology. (This course should be taken early in high school so that the student will be able to use technical skills in other classes.)
- at least four credits in a concentration. Each student will choose from among at least four career/technical concentrations and two academic concentrations, such as mathematics/science and humanities. Each academic concentration will include one or two Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) or dual-credit courses.
 - A **mathematics and science concentration** includes four or more college-prep/honors courses in mathematics and four college-prep/honors courses in science. At least one course in either mathematics or science should be at the AP level.
 - A **humanities concentration** is composed of four college-prep/honors courses in English language arts, four college-prep/honors courses in social studies and four courses in an area of the humanities such as foreign language, fine arts or additional English and social studies courses. At least one course in English or social studies should be at the AP level.
 - A **career/technical concentration** consisting of at least four credits in a planned sequence of quality career/technical courses in a broad field of study with students meeting standards on an external assessment.

KEY CONDITIONS FOR RAISING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

High Schools That Work believes everyone – school and policy leaders at local, state, and district levels – must work together to align policies, resources, initiatives and accountability efforts to support high schools and middle grades schools as they adopt and implement comprehensive school-improvement designs. The *HSTW* key conditions include the following:

- **A clear, functional mission statement:** Schools need a clear, functional mission statement to prepare middle-grades students for challenging secondary studies and high school students for success in postsecondary education and the workplace.
- **Strong leadership:** Each district and school needs strong and committed leaders to improve, align and benchmark curriculums to high standards, to improve the quality of instruction and to raise student achievement in grades six through 12. At each high school and middle-grades school, create a leadership team consisting of the principal, assistant principal and teacher leaders. School and district teams will participate annually in a series of leadership development workshops aimed at more fully implementing the *HSTW* design.
- **Plan for continuous improvement:** District and school leaders create an organizational structure and process that ensures continuous involvement with faculty on what to teach, how to teach it, what students are expected to learn, how to assess what they have learned, and how they relate to each other, to students and to the home and community.
- **Qualified teachers:** Middle-grades and high school teachers have in-depth knowledge of their subject areas and of teaching strategies appropriate to students' grade levels. Middle-grades teachers lacking majors in their subject areas are supported by the district to acquire them. The school and district employ teachers who have depth in their teaching fields and support them in learning how to teach well.
- **Commitment to goals:** School leaders and teachers are committed to achieving the *HSTW* Goals and implementing the Key Practices. School boards are committed to having all students complete a demanding academic core and either an academic or a career/technical concentration. Continuous review of local policies and practices ensures that a strong message of high expectations is sent to both the high schools and the middle grades.
- **Flexible scheduling:** School superintendents and school boards permit high schools to adopt flexible schedules enabling students to earn more credits.
- **Support for professional development:** District and school leaders provide teachers with instructional materials, planning time and professional development for implementing new curriculums and research-based instructional methods.

KEY STRATEGIES

SREB, working in cooperation with states, local school system leaders and participating business and industry leaders, will use key strategies to assist schools in raising the achievement of all students.

SREB and its partner states will:

- Help high school principals and teachers **recognize that they must do a better job** to improve the achievement of all students.
- Help high school leaders and teachers acquire a **new vision** of how their schools can improve.
- Help school leaders and teachers develop an **action plan** for combining high-level academic courses with modern career/technical studies to improve the achievement of all students. The action plan should become part of the school's overall improvement plan.
- Help school leaders prepare a **site-focused staff development plan** to assist teachers in carrying out the school improvement plan.
- **Provide long-term leadership**, support, technical assistance, information and staff development to assist states and high schools in implementing the Key Practices.
- Help participating schools in **assessing** their **progress** and **determining** what **changes** need to be made in the future.

Key Assessment Components

SREB will use National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)-referenced exams in mathematics, science and reading to measure the achievement of career/technical completers in even years (e.g. 2006, 2008) to determine the progress of high schools in the network in raising the achievement of all students. The data will be used to assist high schools in fine-tuning their action plans, as needed, to support high-level student achievement in the future.

Specific objectives of assessment are to:

- Determine how well SREB sites are doing in raising the achievement of all students in network schools by assessing students in mathematics, science and reading.
 - Determine progress in implementing the Key Practices in network schools.
 - Provide school leaders and teachers with a database and technical recommendations for planning new ways to improve the basic competencies of career/technical and academic completers.
- Identify and report on the Key Practices that appear to offer the greatest promise in improving the basic competencies of all students.

The Assessment will enable school leaders and teachers to:

- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of their efforts;
- Compare their progress to composite results from all sites and from high-achieving sites with a student population most like that of their school;
- Establish benchmark goals on a series of school and classroom practices to demonstrate progress toward fully implementing the *HSTW* improvement design and achieving *HSTW* mathematics, science and reading goals;
- Share what they have learned with staff in other schools.

BELIEFS ON WHICH CONSORTIUM ACTIVITIES ARE FOUNDED

The *HSTW* school-improvement design is based on the simple belief that most students become "smarter" through effort and hard work. School leaders and teachers can motivate students to achieve at high levels

when they expand students' opportunities to learn through rigorous work, create supportive relationships between students and adults, and focus on supporting what is being taught and how students are taught. *HSTW* research has shown that sustained school improvement and student achievement occur when state, district, school and teacher leaders work together to take ownership to adopt the *HSTW* design for the specific needs of high schools and middle-grades schools. We believe:

- All students can complete a challenging, planned four-year program of study that blends high-level academic and modern career/technical courses.
- High schools can design curricula that teach high-level academic content taught in non-traditional ways.
- The high school program of study can be organized to prepare students for both work and further education.
- Student motivation and mastery of challenging academic content are increased when teachers use contextual learning strategies related to real-world situations.
- Students are better prepared for additional education and work when secondary and postsecondary educators work together.
- Academic and career/technical teachers can create ways to teach high-level academic content to more students if school administrators will support the faculty with staff development, materials and time to plan and work together.
- Motivation and achievement are improved when academic and career/technical teachers work in teams to create new learning opportunities that relate to what students will do in life and on the job.
- Student achievement is greater when parents are involved with their children in planning a four-year program of study that includes high-level academic courses and modern career/technical courses.

BENEFITS OF THE CONSORTIUM

- Students gain increased academic and technical knowledge and skills. They become more confident in their ability to meet life's challenges and see themselves as worthy and contributing individuals.
 - Teachers feel better about themselves and their ability to assist all students. They become part of a team that re-designs the curriculum and plans staff development activities to increase student achievement.
 - Principals strengthen their leadership skills through new techniques of scheduling, staffing and curriculum design to offer maximum learning opportunities to all students, not just those entering a four-year college or university.
 - Schools receive data to identify what is needed to improve the performance of students in mathematics, science and reading. The information becomes the basis of an action plan to focus faculty and administration on making needed changes. *High Schools That Work* results in improved communication between the high school and employers, and between the high school and postsecondary education.
 - States acquire new strategies for working with local school systems on a long-term basis to bring about "whole school" change. School leaders and teachers gain confidence that they can increase the achievement of students who do not choose a traditional college-preparatory program of study.
- The community, state and nation benefit from improved mathematics, science and technical literacy achievement of America's future front-line employees. More students remain in school and pursue education and training after high school.

COMMITMENT OF *HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK* SITE PARTNERS

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)

In support of *High Schools That Work*, SREB agrees to:

- Support the state agency that manages and coordinates *High Schools That Work* sites.
- Provide consultation to the state and to network schools.
- Collaborate with the state to develop a statewide *HSTW* Council that will provide overall guidance to *HSTW* efforts.
- Provide a range of information and dissemination services to support state and site efforts, using print, video and Internet capabilities. SREB will:
 - Develop guides and other publications to help the state and the sites advance student learning;
 - Provide a directory of *HSTW* sites to the state and to schools;
 - Prepare and disseminate newsletters and publications on successful practices and research findings, using print and other media;
 - Prepare and disseminate an annual state status report;
 - Provide information to state leaders and other interested persons about progress the schools are making.
- Evaluate the progress of sites in raising the achievement of students in reading, mathematics and science. SREB will:
 - Coordinate a biennial assessment;
 - Analyze and disseminate results;
 - Provide state and site assessment reports.
- Facilitate annually one statewide Site Development Workshop (SDW) to introduce teams from new sites to the *HSTW* model, while providing an opportunity to assess current progress. If no SDW is needed, SREB would like to work with the state to customize a workshop to support current *HSTW* sites in further implementing the improvement model. *HSTW* is open to working with states to support their high school reform efforts, but states may need to cover facilitator travel expenses and other workshop expenses, to be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Manage and help states lead on-site Technical Assistance Visits using SREB guidelines and formats to help sites:
 - Review progress in raising student achievement;
 - Identify major challenges the sites need to address in achieving the *HSTW* Goals and Key Practices;
 - Suggest action steps to address major challenges, including identification of outstanding practices and resources at other sites.

SREB will lead one of the following combinations of Technical Assistance Visits or Technical Review Visits to each state* annually:

- Two Technical Assistance Visits
 - One Technical Assistance Visit and one Technical Review Visit
 - Two Technical Review Visits
 - If Technical Assistance Visits are not needed, *SREB* is prepared to lead three coaching visits to high schools that have had a previous Technical Assistance Visit.
- * The state should make every attempt to schedule visits concurrently to minimize travel costs.
- Train state staff and additional technical assistance providers in the art of providing research-based technical assistance to schools through training for technical team leaders held each year as a pre-conference workshop in conjunction with the annual statewide staff development conference.
- Provide staff development support for the state and sites:
 - Survey academic and career/technical teachers to identify staff development needs.
 - Develop a menu of staff development offerings, which can be sponsored by the state or implemented on a contractual basis, on such topics as project-based learning, aligning the career/technical curriculum with the college-preparatory curriculum, and integrating academic and career/technical instruction.
 - Identify resources for sites to use in achieving their plans.
 - Work with the state to plan and organize staff development workshops using Internet, GSAMS and other forms of telecommunications aimed at helping sites implement the Key Practices.
 - Provide a four-day national staff development conference annually for all sites;
 - Provide sites with access to SREB's national network of staff development "coaches."
 - Work with states to plan and offer site development conferences and site action plan development conferences.
- Train additional staff development providers within the state to supplement SREB and state personnel.
- Create networking opportunities for sites to share strategies and resources:
 - Work with states to select demonstration-training sites (pacesetting sites) to serve as mentors for other sites.
 - Link the state and schools with teachers and administrators who are qualified to assist in carrying out the Key Practices.
 - Convene sites with common interests and needs.

- Convene groups of sites with common staff development needs and help them create and carry out site-focused staff development programs to meet the needs.
 - Provides sites access to SREB's national network of pacesetting schools.
- Support the creation of site-focused staff development plans:
 - Provide a site-focused staff development guide.
 - Conduct training sessions for members of site staff development committees on how to assess staff development needs and how to design quality staff development programs.
 - Serve as a broker to identify personnel and materials for sites to use in implementing their plans.
 - Help sites make full use of staff development services provided by SREB and the state.
- Conduct an annual State Leadership Forum at a central location for teams from all states with *HSTW* sites. The forum will focus on building state leadership and policy capacity to advance the intellectual achievement of all students.
- Seek support from the private sector and foundations for the delivery of services to help the state and local sites reach their goal of improved academic, intellectual and technical achievement.
- Coordinate with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to offer students the opportunity to take part in testing for the SREB Award of Educational Achievement.
- Disseminate information about *HSTW* best practices to state educational organizations.
- Document the progress of SREB, the state and the sites on institutionalizing *HSTW*, providing higher quality services and improving student learning. Issue biennial progress reports and quarterly reports that sustain state leaders' focus on priorities for school improvement efforts.

States

In support of *High Schools That Work*, the State of _____ agrees to:

- Designate a representative to serve on the SREB-State Vocational Education Consortium Board.
- Designate a State *HSTW* Coordinator and dedicate the equivalent of a full-time staff person for every 20 *HSTW* sites.
- Create a forum through which *HSTW* sites within the state can work collaboratively on sharing resources and solving common problems. The forum will convene at least twice annually and will perform several important functions:
 - A way for site representatives to share their progress and problems with each other;
 - An opportunity to share data with sites and help them use the information to change practices;
 - A structure for identifying common staff development needs and ways sites can work together to share common resources to meet those needs.
- Ensure that the following conditions are met in approving new *HSTW* sites:
 - A majority of faculty are committed to supporting the *HSTW* framework of Goals and Key Practices rather than responding to a top-down decision from the system.
 - The school board and system and school leaders have agreed to conduct at least a five-year school improvement effort and to support academic and career/technical teachers with staff development, materials and time to work together to implement the Key Practices.
 - The school will participate in the *HSTW* Assessment program.
- Work with new approved *HSTW* sites to provide the following technical assistance in developing a site action plan during year one.
 - Co-host with SREB a site development workshop for school design teams.
 - Conduct at least two follow-up visits to all new *HSTW* sites to assist them in building consensus for their site action plans.
 - Assist site teams in starting both curriculum and instructional improvement initiatives during year one.
- Support *HSTW* sites each year with a range of staff development support that includes an annual statewide *HSTW* staff development

conference. This staff development conference will perform several important functions:

- o A way for site representatives to share their progress and any problems;
 - o An opportunity to share data with sites and help them use it to change practices;
 - o A structure for identifying common staff development needs and ways sites can work together to share common resources to meet those needs.
-
- Plan and conduct specialty workshops aimed at supporting the particular staff development needs of *HSTW* sites. These staff development workshops could address specific curriculum and instructional practices that sites need to implement in order to more effectively teach higher level academic and technical materials. This could include integration strategies, applied academics, project-based learning, new forms of classroom assessment, cooperative learning, and team curriculum alignment to national and state standards.

 - Broker customized training services to the unique needs of individual *HSTW* sites through videoconferences, on-line networking and arranging for special consultants to work with staff on site-selected improvement initiatives.

 - Conduct state institutes or other state-level staff development activities, both face-to-face and using telecommunications.

 - Organize intensive technical assistance services to *HSTW* sites to increase the percentage of schools that become winners in advancing student learning.
 - o Work with SREB to train persons qualified to lead quality technical assistance visit teams to *HSTW* sites.
 - o Collaborate with SREB to identify *HSTW* sites needing the most help, and prioritize technical assistance visits to these sites.
 - o Organize and lead a technical assistance visit every three years for each *HSTW* site in the state, giving priority and more intensive services to low-performing schools.
 - o Provide follow-up coaching after technical assistance visits to assist the sites in translating recommendations into improved school and classroom practices.
 - o Assist schools in using *HSTW* and other state data to determine what is working and what is not and to update their site action plans.
 - o Identify a cadre of individuals who are approved as having the expertise necessary to assist *HSTW* sites in achieving comprehensive school improvement.
 - o Help schools work through state and local policy barriers.

- o Work with SREB to set up pacesetting sites as demonstration and training sites.
- Designate a representative to serve on the annual *HSTW* national Staff Development Conference planning committee.
- Send representatives to the annual *HSTW* national Staff Development Conference and the national State and Local Leadership Forums.
- Participate in all multi-state assessment programs.
- Identify outstanding practices in the state.
- Link with other school improvement initiatives within the state. Identify and promote opportunities for cooperative planning, joint staff development activities and collaborative funding.
- Prepare an annual report to SREB each July. The report will maintain a focus on the state role and will summarize major accomplishments during the previous year major challenges in increasing the number of students meeting *HSTW* performance and curriculum goals, and ways the state will address upcoming challenges.

School Sites

High Schools That Work sites agree to participate in the following activities to determine the extent to which the Key Practices are assisting high schools in raising achievement:

- A **survey of students**, administered during the NAEP-referenced exams, on students' perceptions of their high school experiences. Students give their impressions of what they were taught, how they were taught, what was expected of them, and the level of effort they made in high school.
- An **analysis of the transcripts** of students that participated in the NAEP-referenced exams to determine the content and level of course work the students took in high school. Analyses will be conducted as part of the NAEP-based assessment in even years (2006, 2008 and 2010). The information on course-taking patterns will be presented in the assessment report and will help schools know which courses work in improving student achievement.
- A **survey of teachers** at each site to determine their attitudes and views on the importance of integrating academic

and career/technical education; the amount of time they devote to advancing basic skills in mathematics, science and communication; and the areas in which they need staff development. The surveys will be conducted in 2006, 2008 and 2010.

- **An annual site progress report** completed each spring, to document accomplishments and challenges in the effort to implement the *HSTW* Key Practices. The annual report is intended for use as part of a reflection and planning process through which schools note the accomplishments from the previous school year and outline improvement efforts for the upcoming school year. Responses should be based upon discussion by faculty and staff.
- A **follow-up survey of students** to determine their status and their perceptions of high school one year after graduation. The follow-up survey will be conducted in odd years (2005, 2007 and 2009).
- An annual **on-site Technical Assistance Visit (TAV)** of one-third of the participating school sites in each state. Each visit will be done by an external team of representatives from the private sector, postsecondary education and other network schools. The purpose of the three-day visit is to document progress in implementing the Key Practices and to identify major concerns and recommendations for improving the achievement of all students. An SREB representative will lead visits to two sites in each state each year. A leader from another state or from your state will lead visits to the remainder of the sites with scheduled visits in your state. Some states may opt to conduct one-day follow-up visits or a Technical Review Visit (TRV). Technical Review Visits are conducted 18 to 24 months after a TAV to assess the school's progress in implementing suggested improvements.

In support of *High Schools That Work*, local school sites agree to:

- Promote a vision of high achievement for all students among faculty and staff, parents, students and community members.
- Get at least 60 percent of the faculty (including administrators) to vote to implement *High Schools That Work* as the school improvement model.
- Develop a five-year action plan to support *High Schools That Work* Goals and Key Practices and to eliminate or drastically reduce the number of students who complete the general education track.

- In the first year of operation, conduct an orientation for faculty and staff that uses student achievement data to establish a need for change, presents the *HSTW* framework of Goals and Key Practices and invites broad participation in the planning and implementation process.
- Participate in a Site Development Workshop with a school team to begin the planning process and to assess current improvement efforts using *HSTW* benchmarks and indicators.
- Submit an action plan (including staff development) to the state within 120 days after the Site Development Workshop and make the plan part of the school's overall improvement plan.
- Organize a committee or team structure to develop and carry out an action plan that includes the following structure and/or functions:
 - An overall leadership team (school improvement council) to encourage, identify and organize resources; to provide assistance in achieving *HSTW* Goals, Key Practices and Key Conditions; and to coordinate the site action plan and the activities of the individual leadership teams.
 - Sub-committees for curriculum, professional development, guidance, public information, transition and evaluation.
 - A team structure that reflects essential conditions, membership, mission and charges for effective teams as stated in SREB Site Development Guide #2, *Developing Effective Leadership Teams Implementing the HSTW School Improvement Design*.
- Appoint a site coordinator to:
 - Monitor progress in meeting action plan objectives;
 - Regularly inform the superintendent and the school board of progress toward action plan objectives;
 - Work closely with the principal to help schools carry out the Key Practices;
 - Work with system and school-level staff development coordinators to create a site-focused staff development plan that provides quality training through use of local, state and national meetings and resources;
 - Coordinate frequent meetings of teams and committees;
 - Coordinate the *HSTW* data collection process;
 - Integrate *HSTW* Goals and Key Practices with other school improvement efforts and system wide improvement plans;
 - Produce an annual report and other information as requested by SREB.

- Support academic and career/technical teachers with staff development, materials and time to work together to implement the Key Practices.
 - Provide at least five days annually of teacher staff development aligned to the school's *HSTW* improvement plan.
 - Support a team of teachers, administrators, counselors, and other stakeholders to attend the *HSTW* National Staff Development Conference each year. Rotate team membership each year to increase understanding among more staff and leaders.
 - Support a team to participate in at least one SREB national professional development workshop each year.
 - Support a school leadership team to participate in an SREB *Leadership Series for School Improvement* professional development series over the first three years in the network.
 - Participate in district leadership activities and state staff development activities.

- Give school leaders and teachers the encouragement and flexibility to define problems and to change what and how they teach.

- Organize teams of academic and career/technical teachers to work together to find ways to raise student achievement.

- Give students access to modern career/technical courses, either at the high school, a career/technical center, a postsecondary institution or at work sites organized for learning. Site leaders must be willing to work closely with employers and two-year postsecondary institutions.

- Promote student participation in a system of school-based and work-based learning that integrates academics with applied learning.

- Participate in the assessment program and use assessment data as a major source of information to identify problems and to develop action plans for solving them. Sites will participate in the assessment program in even years and will:
 - Follow the guidelines for carrying out the assessment. (See SREB's assessment page at <http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/assessment/assessindex.asp>.)
 - Using the *Establishing Benchmarks for New and Maturing HSTW Sites* document to determine progress in fully implementing the *HSTW* improvement design.

- Set a goal of at least 85 percent of career/technical students meeting the *HSTW* performance goals in reading, mathematics and science.
- Promote students' participation in the Award of Educational Achievement as a way to strengthen students' transition into meaningful employment.
- Participate in site development conferences as needed. Take part in an *HSTW* technical assistance review every three years, and frequently participate in technical assistance follow-up activities.
- Create and implement a site-focused staff development plan that provides quality training through use of local, state and national meetings, resources and telecommunications technologies.
- Have active administrative (principal) involvement in staff development, committee assignments and other activities.
- Be an active member of a state and multi-state *HSTW* network for information and idea sharing.

AGREEMENT

The undersigned have reviewed this Memorandum of Understanding and accept it as the basis for working together toward a common purpose through *High Schools That Work*. The statement is renewed annually with payment of Consortium membership dues to the Southern Regional Education Board. SREB or a state can dissolve its participation annually by notifying the other party in writing.

 David Spence
 President, SREB

 Date

 Gene Bottoms
 Senior Vice President, SREB

 Date

State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Date

Director, Career and Technology Education
Date
State Department of Education

Name of school: _____

Address of school: _____

City/town: _____

State: _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Local Superintendent

Date

Principal/Career-Technical Director
Date