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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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January 24, 2017

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Michael Sentance
State Superintendent of Education

RE: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Readiness Course Pilot Initiative

I am pleased to inform you of an exciting partnership between the Alabama Community College System (ACCS), the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). At the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year, the SREB Readiness Course Pilot Initiative was implemented in selected 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 pilot 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.

For the 2017-2018 school year, the pilot project is being expanded to include a maximum of 25 schools. Schools interested in participating in the SREB Readiness Course Pilot Initiative 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 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.

As you consider applying to participate in the SREB Readiness Course Pilot Initiative, please be aware that these new courses will not meet the requirements of the National Collegiate Athletic Association 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. Please find additional information in the form of a one-pager as well as the application in the attachments.

For any questions regarding this process, please contact Dr. Carolyn E. Townsend via e-mail at ctownsend@alsde.edu or by telephone at (334) 353-1191.

MS:CET:SMR

Attachments

FY17-2034

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)

Readiness Course Pilot 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. 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 SREB have partnered together to pilot the SREB Readiness Course Initiative. Students who successfully complete these courses are exempt from developmental courses at the **two-year college level**. 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. However, if a students has 30-plus hours in a community college, then most of our four-year institutions do not require the Algebra II for admission.

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 Score Range: 16-19 *English Score Range: 14-19* *Reading Score Range: 15-19*

Math Content (The Essentials of College Mathematics) Code # 210037

- Unit 1: Algebraic Expressions
- Unit 2: Equations
- Unit 3: Measurement and Proportional Reasoning
- Unit 4: Linear Functions
- Unit 5: Systems of Linear Equations
- Unit 6: Quadratic Functions
- Unit 7: Exponential Functions
- Unit 8: Statistics

Literacy Content (The Essentials of College English) Code # 200055

- English Unit 1: *The Shallows* by Nicholas Carr
- English Unit 2: *Ubik* by Philip K. Dick
- History Unit 1: The Civil Rights Movement
- History Unit 2: U.S. Foreign Affairs
- Science Unit 1: Nutrition
- Science Unit 2: DNA and Biotechnology

School Requirements To Be Considered For Participation

- **Application**
- **Memorandum of Agreement**
- **Teachers trained to teach courses/participation in ongoing online training**

Alabama State Department of Education
Southern Regional Education Board
Readiness Course Initiative
2017-2018 Application

Instructional Services Section
Office of Student Learning
3345 Gordon Persons Building
50 North Ripley Street
Montgomery, AL 36104
Telephone: (334) 353-1191
Fax: (334) 242-0482

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Readiness Course Initiative

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 (SERB) have partnered together to pilot 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**. 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. However, if a student has 30-plus hours in a community college, then most of Alabama four-year institutions do not require the Algebra II for admission.

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 strengthen 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) Readiness Course Initiative
2017-2018 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 March 1, 2017.

School:_____ Principal:_____

Address:_____

Telephone:_____ E-mail:_____

School System:_____ Superintendent:_____

Address:_____

Telephone:_____ E-mail:_____

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: _____ E-mail:_____

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

Address:_____

Telephone:_____ Fax: _____ E-mail:_____

Complete the following table:

	Projected No. of Readiness Course Teachers	Projected No. of Readiness Course Sections (Ex. Fall-1, Spring-2)	Projected No. of Readiness Course Students (Ex. Fall-20, Spring-15)
Mathematics			
ELA			

RATIONALE: 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.

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.
- 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. Consideration will be given to schools identified and defined by the *Alabama Accountability Act of 2015* (AAA) as well as schools reflecting a high number of students meeting eligibility requirements for course placement.

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 five 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 course 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.*

Southern Regional Board Readiness Course Initiative

2017-2018 Application

CERTIFICATION PAGE

Required Signatures

I have read the requirements of the 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: March 1, 2017, by 4 p.m.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Please submit the application packet to:

Dr. Carolyn E. Townsend
Alabama State Department of Education
Instructional Services Section
3345 Gordon Persons Building
50 North Ripley Street
Montgomery, AL 36104
Telephone: (334) 353-1191
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E-mail: ctownsend@alsde.edu