CONTRACT BETWEEN
THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL EDUCATION BOARD/HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK AND
GADSDEN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Contract Effective Dates from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020

Gadsden Independent School District (GISD) and the Southern Regional Education Board’s (SREB) High Schools That Work (HSTW) will partner in a multi-year initiative to support school quality assignments at all GISD high schools and middle schools by working with school administrators, teachers and central office staff. The purpose of this partnership is to improve student achievement and readiness for high school and readiness for postsecondary success which will then prepare all students for further study and a high-wage, high-demand career. The following plan will help provide additional support to the already existing grade level/subject level curriculum design, programs and support systems that Gadsden Independent School District has in place. This document constitutes the contract for the services to be provided by SREB.

Historical Information

The Southern Regional Education Board: The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia is passionate about and committed to school reform and school leader preparation and development. The southern region of the United States has historically had higher poverty and lower educational achievement than the rest of the country. In 1948, Southern governors, recognizing the link between education and economic vitality, created SREB as an organization to improve public education at every level. High Schools That Work is the nation’s largest school improvement initiative for high school leaders and teachers.

Experience

For over 30 years, High Schools That Work was founded on the belief that most students can master essential college- and career-readiness standards in English/reading, mathematics, science, social studies and quality career/technical studies if school leaders and teachers create an environment that motivates students to make the effort to succeed. Many teachers and school leaders lack an understanding of the standards and strategies to bridge the gap from current practice to the requirements of new standards. SREB can develop and enhance the school administrators’ and teachers’ ability to successfully implement the New Mexico State Standards to enhance student achievement.

New economic realities — such as the need for 21st-century skills to secure employment — and new research on student engagement, clearly show that preparing students in elementary and the middle grades is an essential ingredient toward student’s graduating high school college and career ready. SREB helps districts and schools implement a roadmap for change; the road to improving K-12 calls for emphasizing the following:

- Common standards tied to college and career readiness.
- Student learning that is based on what works according to research and dropping programs and policies that do not improve student learning.
- Literacy as a strategy for learning in all courses.
- Improving teachers’ expertise in their subjects, especially in math and science.
- Teaching at-risk students, a grade-level curriculum and providing them with the help and support needed to succeed.
• Professional development as a continuing process for principals and teachers to improve instructional practices incrementally, according to students’ needs.
• Integrating science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to help students discover their interests and aptitudes in emerging careers.
• Finding and preparing school leaders specifically for the K-12 grades who can motivate teachers and students.
• Giving parents and students the information and experiences, they need to start career and college plans.
• Accountability and incentives for continuous improvement of students toward readiness for the ninth grade.

Expectations
GISD will implement key features for achieving performance outcomes and implementing new Science standards and instructional practices through leadership for continuous improvement and a school organizational and scheduling structure where teacher teams can work together to implement proven practices with fidelity through Teacher Teaming/Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). A continuous improvement structure includes:

a. Having school and teacher leaders sharing a common vision for transforming the school so each individual person takes ownership of the improvement efforts by planning to achieve the vision in year one and implementing the changes required in succeeding years.

b. Creating a culture of continuous improvement where all teachers collaborate to develop plans to address problems in the school and use ongoing professional development and study teams to improve their practices.

c. Having school leaders support teachers to improve their instruction through effective planning and follow-up to professional development, use of classroom observations with feedback and a continuous focus on instruction as key to the school’s success.

These goals provide a vision for improvement and will be the foundation for the support to be provided. SREB supports schools having a functional mission of preparing more students for rigorous middle and high school courses – and, ultimately, for most students to graduate prepared for college and careers. This mission will drive the improvement efforts of this project.

Support Services to be Provided by SREB

SREB has found through experience that for changes in school and classroom practice to take hold it must be supported by ongoing professional development with effective coaching. The goal of training is to change behaviors that will in turn change student achievement results. SREB will provide the following support services to assist district leadership in making changes at GISD. The proposed services for the upcoming school year will focus on the continuation of the “spread” of LDC, MDC and PBL key tools to all secondary teachers.

Quality Assignments
One day of professional development will be provided in August on the unit design processes (LDC, MDC and PBL) to develop Quality Assignments during the District Mini Conference. The professional development will be co-designed with the district’s instructional specialists. Following the professional development in August SREB will provide on-site coaching for teachers. This will allow participating teachers to be observed, get additional support from SREB staff and to receive feedback on designed assignments. On-site coaching days will engage both the instructional coaches and administrators in the use of SREB’s Powerful Practices Rubrics to support the design and implementation of LDC, PBL and MDC assignments.

Rigor in CTE

Professional development for CTE teachers will be provided in order to increase the rigor of CTE lesson design. CTE teachers will be provided training on quality assignments and best practices for engagement and instructions of students. These five sessions will take CTE teachers through instructional practices, supports for literacy and math, questioning strategies and creating engaging high-quality assignments.

Support for Science

Support for science teachers began in the 2018-2019 school year with curriculum mapping efforts in grades 7 - 12. Teachers have created pacing guides for each science course and then started the process to develop instructional strategies to develop quality assignments which are both rigorous and engaging for all students. Science instruction will be a focus for teachers throughout the school year in grades 6-8 with support of collaborative support from the district Science specialist and SREB.

Personalized Professional Development

Each school will be given one day to personalize the support that they need as individual sites. The SREB coach will work with administrators to determine the support needed that aligns with both district and school priorities (as outlined in their Principal’s Syllabus).

Administrator Coaching

These on-site coaching days will be utilized to support administrators in the implementation and follow up from professional development sessions throughout the year. SREB coaches will work with the Administrative team on observing classrooms with the tools provided and crafting feedback for teachers.
## Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Cost Per Item</th>
<th>Qty</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle/High School Mini Conference</td>
<td>$2400.00 per day includes indirect cost</td>
<td>1 day – 4 presenters</td>
<td>$9,600.00</td>
<td>4 presenters to provide math, science, CTE and general SREB practices PD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigor in CTE Professional Development Sessions</td>
<td>$2400.00 per day includes indirect cost</td>
<td>6 days</td>
<td>$14,400.00</td>
<td>6 days PD – Sept 20, October 21, October 22, Jan 3, Feb 10, Feb 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Professional Development for Elementary and Middle School</td>
<td>$2400.00 per day includes indirect cost</td>
<td>10 days</td>
<td>$24,000.00</td>
<td>2 days each of the 3 elementary feeder patterns each semester 1 day per semester grade 7 1 day per semester grade 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality Assignments Coaching</td>
<td>$2400.00 per day includes indirect cost</td>
<td>21 days</td>
<td>$50,400.00</td>
<td>1 day per school per quarter for the 1st 3 quarters 1st day after August 22 2nd day after October 27 3rd day after January 16</td>
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<td>Personalized Professional Development</td>
<td>$2400.00 per day includes indirect cost</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>$16,800.00</td>
<td>1 day per school for personalized Professional Development to support school needs based on their principal’s syllabus</td>
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<td>Administrative on-site coaching</td>
<td>$2400.00 per day includes indirect cost</td>
<td>8 days</td>
<td>$19,200.00</td>
<td>½ day per school per semester</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020 HSTW Summer Conference New Orleans</td>
<td>Team of 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recommended support outside of contract – teachers/admin will present at the conference</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Annual Total**: $134,400.00

**NOTE**: All daily services costs include planning, travel, on-site support and follow-up.
TOTAL AMOUNT: $134,400.00

Schools will be responsible for travel costs incurred if they cancel a workshop within 14 days of the planned event.

Invoices to be sent quarterly

The Board of Control for Southern Regional Education, d/b/a Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), as a not-for-profit educational compact, must comply with OMB Circular A-133. Please indicate with your remittance whether any of the funds are from Federal sources, including CFDA number. In the absence of any notification with remittance, SREB will assume that the funds are not subject to OMB Circular A-133, and that there is not “recipient” nor “sub recipient” relationship created hereunder.

_____________________________     ______________________
Dale Winkler                         Date
SREB Vice President

____________________________      _______________________
Superintendent or Designee           Date
Gadsden Independent School District

Return Signed Documents to:
Southern Regional Education Board
Attn: Jenn Carter
592 10th St. NW
Atlanta, GA 30318
404-875-9211
jenn.carter@sreb.org
SREB.org
SREB Contract Appendix I

Key Elements of the Improvement Design

**Design Principle 1: All Students College and/or Career Ready**

All students need assignments and high-quality instruction aligned to grade-level college- and career-readiness standards in academic and career and technical education (CTE) courses. The Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC), Mathematics Design Collaborative (MDC), and project-based assignments are keys to improving the quality of assignments in academic and CTE courses. This is best accomplished when college-ready academic courses and career pathway courses are coherently aligned in a career pathway program of study. It is important that students are provided counseling for careers to develop a program of study that aligns with one’s career aspirations beginning no later than eighth grade.

**Design Principle 2: Redefining How Time Is Used to Connect Academic, Career Pathways and Workplace Learning**

Finding time for academic and career and technical teachers to plan connected learning experiences for cohorts of students is essential. Students learn best when academic and applied learning opportunities in school and in the workplace are connected. Project-based learning is key to making seamless connections between academic and CTE courses in career pathway programs of study and LDC and MDC are key to creating strong project-based assignments.

**Design Principle 3: Time and Support for Students to Achieve College and/or Career-Readiness Standards**

All students need opportunities for accelerated learning experiences in the middle grades and high school to master college- and career-readiness standards to eventually earn a credible credential or degree. To achieve these goals, students need extended time and often multiple tiers of instruction and support to acquire the foundational literacy, math, technical and behavioral skills and understandings needed to achieve employability and postsecondary success.

**Design Principle 4: Use Career Pathways to Remove the Lines Between Secondary, Postsecondary and Workplace Learning, Business and Industry Partners**

Students need to meet readiness indicators of literacy and math to access advanced-level sequences of career pathway courses and work-site experiences leading to early college and early advanced credentials in high-demand, high-wage fields. Students need opportunity to make serious progress towards earning a credible credential while in high school that advances college and career readiness. This can be achieved through providing students accessibility to dual credit, embedded credits, early college, apprenticeships and other work-based learning experiences. Business and industry should be lead partners in the development of rigorous career pathways programs of study Pathways should be designed to align with regional or state economic data and forecasts.
Design Principle 5: Students Have School- and Community-Based Experiences to Help Set Future Career and Educational Goals
Through counseling for careers, students are provided with a progressive set of school-based and community-based experiences in the middle and early high school grades to explore career and educational options that reflect their interests and aptitudes. Students, with parental involvement, need a chance to learn what a good fit is for them and to act on it. Students need opportunities to have experiences in broad career fields to learn first-hand what future possibilities align with their interests, aptitudes and abilities.

Design Principle 6: Make School and Instruction Work for Students
To serve students well, schools must rethink ways middle grades and high school teachers can work together in content areas and in interdisciplinary groups to plan grade-level assignments that engage and motivate students. This involves high schools finding ways to: a) organize around students’ interests with varying ability levels and to create assignments that engage and motivate them to succeed in meeting college- and career-readiness standards; b) make greater use of technology and other strategies to engage students in personalized assignments; and c) provide support to teachers using professional development to help them become facilitators of student learning.

High Schools That Work (HSTW) Key Practices
Graduates from HSTW sites are prepared for postsecondary studies and careers. They have acquired a credible industry-recognized credential, and/or they are ready for a range of postsecondary education and/or training options. The students are prepared to make informed decisions regarding postsecondary opportunities and careers. To graduate with the literacy, math and technical skills necessary to succeed in postsecondary studies and careers, students from HSTW sites will:

1. Complete an intellectually demanding career pathway program of study that includes:
   a. four or more CTE courses aligned to labor market opportunities, college-ready academic standards and to postsecondary education training opportunities;
   b. college-ready academic core (English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies;
   c. four years of math with Algebra I and geometry and two additional rigorous mathematics courses such as statistics and other mathematics courses related to their career pathway;
   d. students pursuing advanced career pathway programs of study leading to advanced credentials and postsecondary degrees in STEM fields should take Algebra II and higher math courses;
e. students experiencing assignments and high-quality instruction aligned to grade-level, college- and career-readiness standards in all courses within the career pathway program of study;

f. in lieu of four CTE courses, a pathway may include a focus on Advanced Career (AC) courses, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) courses as College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams that result in college credit toward a certification or degree; and

g. a weighted grade-point average for selecting CTE courses.

2. Develop strong literacy (reading, verbal and written communication), numeracy and math skills that are necessary to succeed in postsecondary education and training settings and in the workforce.

3. Experience the extended learning time and support services needed to graduate with the foundational literacy, mathematic, technical and work-place knowledge and skills needed to achieve postsecondary and workplace success.

4. Have access to high school literacy and math courses at either grade eight or grade nine when deemed not ready for high school studies, and senior ready literacy and math courses in grade 12 when not meeting math and literacy standards of readiness for postsecondary and advanced training.

5. Participate in authentic work-related project-based learning experiences in their career pathway courses that require: a) the application of grade-level college-readiness standards in literacy, mathematics, and science knowledge and skills; b) the utilization of technologies (coding and learning new software); and c) students to work both independently and as part of a team to use technical, academic and technology knowledge and skills to solve real-world projects/problems.

6. Participate in a progressive sequence of work-based experiences related to students’ career pathway — tours, shadowing, internships (paid and unpaid) — and as a capstone experience, participate in structured work-based learning that includes application of academic and technical knowledge and skills in real-world employment settings. Work based learning is linked to students’ career pathway coursework and is governed by an explicit learning plan developed with the employer.

7. Make informed choices based on deeper understanding of their interests, aptitudes, academic strength, career opportunities and the education required for different career and educational options. Students participate in career pathways programs of study that are aligned with post-secondary education and career opportunity options. Students have access to high quality academic and career counseling with the full participation of teachers and parent(s) or individuals with parental responsibilities. Counselors support teachers’ efforts to assist students to choose a pathway program of study that prepares students for a double purpose — postsecondary studies and a career.
8. Have a senior year that allows students who have the foundational literacy and math skills needed for college and careers to pursue an early advanced credential program, an early college program or both.

9. Support school and teacher leaders to champion a culture of continuous improvement by tracking progress on a number of indicators toward the goal of having 80 percent of students leaving high school college- and career-ready with 25 percent earning an advanced certificate or degree by age 25.

**Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW) Key Practices**

SREB is prepared to work with middle grades schools to design and implement a school improvement plan based on a framework of proven practices. This framework may be modified as SREB works with district, school and teacher-leaders. The proven Key Practices include:

1. Teach all students to grade-level standards.
2. All teachers use literacy strategies to advance students’ literacy and subject area achievement.
3. Place a balanced emphasis on teaching procedural skills, conceptual understanding, reasoning skills and application of math to real-world problems.
4. Require and support lab-based science.
5. Engage students in STEM-based projects — assignments that blend science, technology, engineering, math and literacy.
6. Get at-risk students on the graduation track through a more engaging and accelerated curriculum coupled with extended learning time.
   a. Identify students who are not on a graduation path.
   b. Keep at-risk students enrolled in a rich and challenging curriculum.
   c. Create advocacy teachers and classes.
   d. Extend time to meet grade-level standards.
7. Provide experiences for students to explore their interests, aptitudes, careers and educational goals through in-school learning activities and experiences outside the school.
8. The principal should engage the faculty in continuous school improvement; have in-depth knowledge of curricula, instructional strategies, effective teaching; and use resources, time and money to support teachers to become great teachers.

**Contract Appendix II**

**Description of Key SREB Supports for Schools and Districts**
High Schools That Work/Making Middle Grades Work (HSTW/MMGW) Job-embedded Leadership Coaching: The objective of this job-embedded support is to assist school leaders in effectively implementing key aspects of the HSTW/MMGW framework in schools.

HSTW/MMGW Leadership Consultants will work with leadership to develop a plan for coaching with clear objectives. Initial coaching visits may include conducting an informal needs assessment to determine potential actions for support. Each HSTW/MMGW Coaching day is planned by the coach working in collaboration with school leadership and includes a follow-up report that is written to the principal and copied to SREB and district leadership. Coaching visits may include adapting SREB’s Learning Centered Leadership Program modules for use in a job-embedded format and will include working with leaders to implement the continuous improvement framework of teacher focus teams.

An integral part of HSTW/MMGW Coaching is to SREB help a school/district develop a master plan for career pathways in the district. The HSTW/MMGW Coach will use the results of the needs assessment process to (1) develop a number of exemplary career academies and career pathway programs of study that blend high school and postsecondary education and (2) make related recommendations that help the school/district offer high-quality instruction and educational experiences in those pathways.

Ongoing Content Specific Professional Development: SREB provides content specialists (Instructional Coaches) to deliver ongoing professional development in specific areas. Professional development may be provided to a specific group of teachers or to entire faculty. SREB asks that a school leader participate fully in any professional development. Content Areas of Support Include, but are not limited to:

- Powerful Literacy Practices
- Powerful Math Practices
- Authentic Project-based Learning
- Counseling for Careers
- Developing a STEM Initiative in Middle Grades
- Aligning Assignments and Assessments to Standards
- Redesigning the Senior Year
- Redesigning the Use of Time for Student Support and Teacher Collaboration
- Effective Teacher Collaboration to Integrate Instruction

Job-embedded Content Coaching: SREB provides job-embedded follow-up content coaching in conjunction with ongoing content specific professional development. Conducted between professional development sessions, the SREB trainer works with teachers in their
classrooms to ensure implementation of new lessons learned. Coaching may include modelling of lessons, co-teaching, peer observations or working with teachers during planning times.

**Technical Assistance Needs Assessment:** SREB uses multiple tools, based upon the school situation, to conduct a needs assessment. Each tool includes a follow-up report of findings that include recommendations for continued improvement. A Desktop Audit is an electronic review of school data, including an analysis of graduate success and review of local and regional workforce needs. A Site Review may include the Desktop Audit and includes conducting a series of classroom observations, analyzing assignments and assessments and conducting interviews with students, teachers, leaders and community members. A Curriculum and Instruction Review is a two-day site review conducted by an external team of SREB coaches and possible state partners. The visits strive to identify the degree to which school and classroom practices prepare graduates for college and/or career success. A Career Pathways Review is a two-day site review by SREB Career Pathway Specialists to analyze the alignment of the school/districts pathways to workplace needs and to assess the success of each pathway in preparing students for postsecondary success.

**Orientation and Implementation Workshops** – These workshops engages school leaders and teachers learning about and using the HSTW Improvement Process. The Orientation Workshop provides faculty with an overview of the design including a review of the HSTW/MMGW Key Practices. The one-two hour workshop occurs at the end of a day-long visit where the HSTW Leadership Consultant meets with school leaders, teachers and students to learn about the school. The Implementation Workshop occurs after the school receives their needs assessment follow-up report and engages all faculty in analyzing their current school and classroom practices, achievement data and other data to take ownership of the problems at the school and develop a set of actions to take to address the problems. The workshop uses the HSTW Improvement Process to guide faculty in initial steps to develop plans of action to address problems.

**Surveys of Students and Teachers:** Annually, SREB conducts surveys of eighth grade, ninth grade and senior students. The surveys are to determine what school and classroom practices they experienced while in middle school and or high school. The surveys are given to a scientific random sample or all students in the appropriate grade level. In addition, faculty at the school participate in a faculty survey that also looks at school and classroom practices and includes a section on leadership practices. All surveys result in a report that is provided to the school to be used in improvement planning and to document changes in practice.

**Curriculum Products:** Contracted sites will have access to all SREB curriculum products and the training for implementation. Products include:
Ready for High School Literacy uses the LDC approach for assignments and offers fully-developed modules and teacher and student materials. The course utilizes a disciplinary literacy approach that teaches students strategies for reading and understanding complex texts in different subject areas. Students learn to develop and defend ideas and write about them at a high school level in several disciplines (e.g., English, science, social studies, and technical studies).

Ready for High School Math is a special math course developed using the MDC approach to target the FALS that are most necessary for success in high school math. The course emphasizes understanding math concepts rather than memorizing procedures. Students learn the “whys” of math, including how to use certain formulas or methods to solve real problems. Students also learn how to apply critical thinking skills to complete assignments and a capstone project.

Literacy Ready and Math Ready teach skills that can close readiness gaps in reading, writing and math, including how to learn and think independently, read for information and solve problems — skills young adults need to succeed, whether they go on to postsecondary studies or the workplace. If taught as designed, evidence suggests that these courses reduce the percentage of students who need developmental or remedial classes in college. The courses have also been designed around the LDC and MDC framework to address fundamental literacy and math skills students most need to succeed in high school and in advanced education and training.

Advanced Career (AC) Curricula – Advanced Career is an initiative of SREB and a consortium of states to create career pathway programs of study curricula that prepare high school students for college and careers. The AC pathways curricula consist of four intellectually demanding career courses organized around authentic, hands-on projects that require application of the college- and career-readiness standards, technical standards and 21st-century skills. Each curricula joins with a college-ready academic core and are designed to bridge high school and postsecondary studies in ways that can lead to a recognized industry certificate, a community/technical college certificate, or an associate’s or bachelor’s degree. AC pathway curricula are available in the following areas (partner states are in parenthesis).

- Aerospace Engineering (Alabama)
- Clean Energy Technology (South Carolina)
- Energy and Power (West Virginia)
- Global Logistics & Supply Chain Management (New Jersey)
- Health Informatics (Ohio)
Skills for a Lifetime: Teaching Students the Habits of Success – SREB has found that too many students do not take charge of their own learning. This happens because they have not been taught the habits of success for challenging courses and their personal lives. This guide provides structures for schools to intentionally teach these skills to students in multiple formats. SREB will work with schools to create a course using this guide as an integral aspect of the curriculum.

National Workshops: All schools/districts may participate in various national workshops offered by SREB. Each contract will specify if registration, air travel or hotel costs for a specific number of attendees are included in the contract. Schools may pay for participation under separate invoice, as well.

- Content Specific National Workshops: SREB annually hosts a series of national workshops, each based on a specific topic or area of need for schools in the region. Most will be two-day workshops located near a transportation hub for a specific region of the country.
- SREB’s Annual Staff Development Conference is a nationally recognized exemplar for professional development with nearly 5,000 teachers and leaders participating each summer. This conference allows participants to reflect on current plans for improvement and connect with other schools that are addressing similar needs. With over 600 concurrent sessions, participants learn best practices to address the needs of their school. The College- and Career-Readiness Standards Networking Conference, offered in conjunction with the staff development conference, draws over 1000 participants to share lessons learned and best practices using the Powerful Literacy and Powerful Math Practices tools and strategies.
- College and Career Readiness Standards Networking Conference: Beginning in 2013, SREB began hosting a national convening of teachers and leaders who were taking actions to move college and career readiness standards into classrooms using the Literacy Design Collaborative and Mathematics Design Collaborative tools.