

REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY

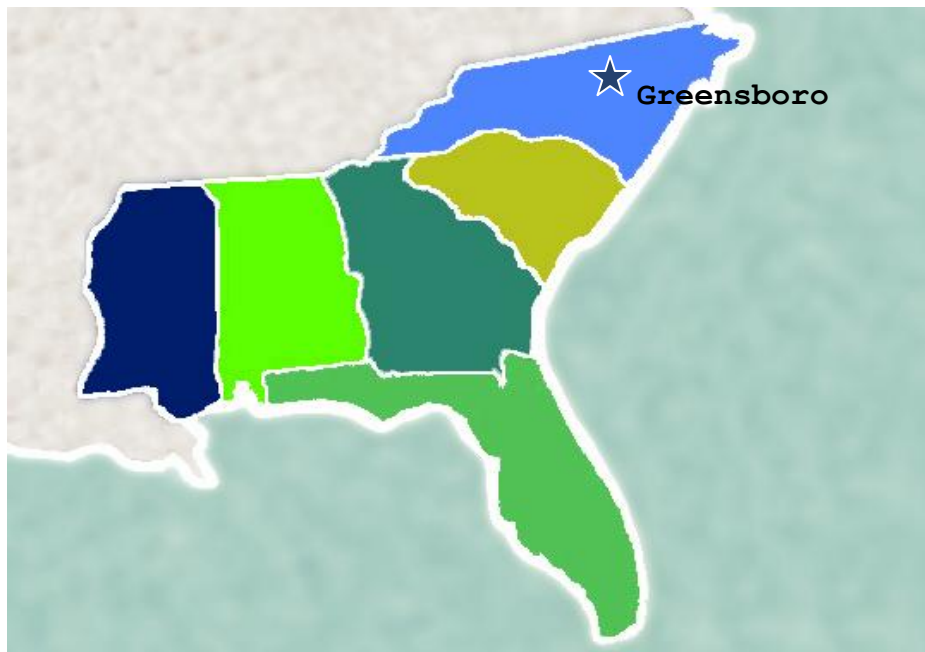
SOUTHEAST ~ SERVECenter

January 2010, EBE # 583

EVIDENCE BASED EDUCATION REQUEST DESK

OUR GOAL

To assist educators and policymakers in their efforts to apply the evidence base to decisions about policies, programs, and practices they encounter.



REQUEST:

- "What state-level initiatives are aimed at closing the achievement gaps between white, African American, and Hispanic students?" [in the REL-SE region]

RESPONSE

State-level initiatives on closing the achievement gap between white, African American, and Hispanic students are still in the early stages of development and implementation in several states. From these initiatives have come several new programs aimed at addressing all aspects that have been identified as causes for the achievement gap, from equal funding of students despite their community population size and tax base to improved teaching requirements and curriculum. This response will focus mainly on those states within the Southeast and some county-wide and local achievement gap initiatives if they do exist.

Georgia- [Georgia Closing the Achievement Gap Commission](#)

The Commission was created through House Bill 656 and is responsible for developing successful strategies, reports and recommendations that will assist in the closing of the student achievement gap. It is supported by the following agencies:

- Office of Education Accountability
- Department of Education

If you have any questions regarding this document, please contact the REL-SE, 1-800-755-3277 or RELSoutheast@serve.org

- Office of School Readiness
- Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education
- The University System of Georgia

North Carolina- [North Carolina Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps](#)

The mission of the Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps Section is to provide leadership, to foster continued improvement of academic achievement and to address school-related variables that adversely affect educational outcomes for all students in North Carolina. This section, in collaboration with all stakeholders, assists schools and school systems in identifying and developing programs and strategies to raise achievement and close gaps. This is accomplished through creating awareness, providing technical assistance, and disseminating research findings on best practices for improving achievement among minority and at-risk students. [NC Initiatives](#) , [State Perspective](#)

North Carolina Counties

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools- [Freedom & Flexibility with Accountability Program](#)

Since the mid 1990s, CMS has used a top-down approach to managing instruction that spells out in great detail what and how to teach reading and other core subjects. Though this approach was very successful in increasing student achievement across the district and among all groups of children, growth has stagnated in recent years. Like other diverse school districts, CMS is also struggling to close the achievement gap between students who live in poverty and their more affluent peers. As a result, the Board of Education worked for more than two years to develop a district-wide approach to school reform and improvement. This approach, called a Theory of Action, shifts the decision-making power from central administration to those who work most closely with our students, teachers, parents and local community members: our principals.

South Carolina- Educational Accountability Act

Within the EAA there are components built to address the closing of the achievement gap between white students and minorities. The Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards program is meant to recognize and reward schools for academic achievement and for closing the achievement gap. Awards will be established for schools attaining high levels of absolute performance, for schools attaining high rates of growth, and for schools making substantial progress in closing the achievement gap between disaggregated groups.

Methodology

In answering this request the websites for the state departments of education of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina were looked at, as well as the American Youth Policy Forum, Education Commission of the States, and the Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University. Search engine GOOGLE was used to look for information.



We provide research based information on educational initiatives happening nationally and regionally. The EBE Request Desk is currently taking requests for:

- Research on a particular topic
- Information on the evidence base for curriculum interventions or professional development programs
- Information on large, sponsored research projects
- Information on southeastern state policies and programs

For more information or to make a request, contact:

Karla Lewis
1.800.755.3277
klewis@serve.org

The Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) – Southeast’s Evidence Based Education (EBE) Request Desk is a service provided by a collaborative of the REL program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES). This response was prepared under a contract with IES, Contract ED-06-CO-0028, by REL-Southeast administered by the SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The content of the response does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.