

Excelsior Springs Area Career Center Wins 2020 Pacesetter Award

Center wins award for engaging students through quality instruction and real-world learning

June 30, 2020 — Excelsior Springs Area Career Center in Excelsior Springs, Missouri, is the winner of a 2020 Gene Bottoms Pacesetter School Award from the Southern Regional Educational Board. The center will be honored on July 6, 2021, at SREB's Making Schools Work Conference in Nashville, Tennessee, due to the cancellation of the 2020 conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Pacesetter School Awards recognize schools that are implementing one of SREB's Making Schools Work school improvement frameworks and are achieving success in meeting bold goals related to increases in student graduation rates, readiness for college and careers, and credential attainment.

Excelsior Springs Area Career Center implements [Technology Centers That Work](#), SREB's school improvement design for technology centers. Through SREB's [curriculum and instruction review process](#), ESACC identified its strengths and challenges and developed a plan to create a learning environment focused on preparing its students for college and careers. The center set a goal of ensuring each student leaves ready to enter a career field within 180 days after graduation.

The center put a laser focus on providing students with real-world experiences paired with rigorous, relevant, engaging instruction. ESACC implemented a simulated workplace environment to accompany its employability grading standards. Simulated workplace classrooms mirror real workplaces because they adhere to business and industry standards. Students work in teams, solve problems, think critically, wear proper business attire to school, and clock in and out, just like a real workplace. Students gain the work-ready skills employers demand as a result of participating.

Seventy-six percent of 2017 and 2018 graduates found placement in their career field 180 days after graduation compared to 63% in each of the previous two school years.

SREB's [Making Schools Work Conference](#) is held annually and provides educators with opportunities to participate in professional development, network with colleagues from across the country and build school and district leadership capacity.

The Southern Regional Education Board works with states and educators to improve education at every level, from early childhood through postsecondary education. Learn more about SREB at sreb.org.

SREB media contact: Alan.Richard@SREB.org, (404) 879-5528.