

Southern Regional Education Board

States (16): Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

Introduction

In March 2019, Education Commission of the States released a comprehensive summary of the postsecondary governance landscapes in each state and the District of Columbia. The [interactive data visualization](#), individual state profiles and 50-State Comparison capture state governance ecosystems that consist of coordinating boards/agencies and governing boards, administrative/service agencies, advisory groups and membership organizations. These resources are intended to assist policy and education leaders in understanding postsecondary governance systems in their states and others.

In partnership with the regional higher education compacts, Education Commission of the States is providing an analysis of their states' higher education governance systems and individual profiles.

State Postsecondary Governance Models

Higher education governance systems across the states and District of Columbia are varied and complex. The structures are a mix of coordinating and governing boards at the state, system and institutional levels; and other agencies and organizations may play important roles in the postsecondary landscape.

While no two states have the same postsecondary governance system, the structures fall within general models — even though the categorization is not a straightforward process.¹ Beyond the basic approaches, numerous boards also govern other postsecondary systems, multi-campus institutions and individual institutions.

Single, Statewide Coordinating Board/Agency: Twenty states have a single coordinating board and/or agency that is responsible for key aspects of the state's role with public postsecondary institutions and, in some cases, independent colleges.

SREB states: Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

Single, Statewide Governing Board: Eight states have a statewide governing board that manages and oversees most functions of the public higher education system and typically has broad authority over institutions.

SREB states: No states are included in this category.

One or More Systemwide Coordinating or Governing Board: Nineteen states have one or more coordinating or governing boards that oversee institutions within a postsecondary system. These states do not have statewide coordinating or governing boards.

SREB states: Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina and West Virginia.

Administrative/Service Agency: At least 11 states and the District of Columbia have higher education administrative agencies that may oversee financial aid and specific academic programs, institutional licensure approval and information/data services. The agencies' authority varies across the states and with respect to different types of institutions. These states also have system-level coordinating or governing boards and/or governing boards for individual institutions.

SREB states: Delaware and Florida.

Coordinating Boards/Agencies, Governing Boards and Administrative/Service Agencies

The following chart summarizes the number of statewide and major, systemwide coordinating boards/agencies and governing boards, as well as administrative/service agencies for SREB states. See Notes 1 for further explanation of the boards and agencies. The numbers in parentheses indicate states with more than one board.

Type of Board	Number of States	Number of Boards or Agencies	States
Single Statewide Coordinating Board/Agency	10	10	Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.
Single Statewide Governing Board	0	0	N/A
One or More Major, Systemwide Governing Board	3	6	Florida (2), Georgia (2) and North Carolina (2)
One or More Major, Systemwide Coordinating Board	0	0	N/A

Major, Systemwide Coordinating and Governing Board	2	4	Mississippi (2) and West Virginia (2)
Administrative/Service Agencies	2	2	Delaware and Florida

Appointing Authority of Higher Education Executive Officers

The following table summarizes the authority or entity that appoints, approves or hires the higher education executive officers for statewide and major, systemwide coordinating boards/agencies and governing boards, as well as administrative/service agencies for SREB states. See Notes 2 for further explanation of the appointing authority of boards and agencies.

Appointing Authority	Number of States	Number of Boards or Agencies	States
Agency Board or Agency Committee	1	1	Delaware
Coordinating Board	10	11	Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia (2)
Coordinating Board, With Approval of Governor	1	1	Arkansas
Governing Board	4	6	Florida (1), Georgia (2), Mississippi (1) and North Carolina (2)
Governing Board, With Approval of Governor and Senate	0	0	N/A
Governor	0	0	N/A
Governor, With Approval of Senate or Legislature	1	1	Maryland
Governor, on Recommendation of Coordinating Board	0	0	N/A
State Board of Education or Commission/Secretary of Education	1	1	Florida (1)

Notes 1

Florida has a governing board for the four-year system and the state board of education governs two-year colleges. In addition, the state has a community college division within the K-12 department of education. Georgia and North Carolina have governing boards for the four- and two-year systems. Mississippi has one governing board for the four-year system and one coordinating board for the two-year system. West Virginia has separate coordinating boards for the four-year and two-year systems.

Notes 2

Florida's governing board for the four-year system appoints its executive director, and the K-12 commissioner of education appoints the Division of Florida Colleges' director within the department of education. In Mississippi, governing boards for the four- and two-year systems appoint their executive directors. West Virginia's coordinating boards for the four- and two-year systems appoint the executive directors.

Regional Compact Analyses and State Profiles

The analyses and state profiles for each regional higher education compact can be accessed from this [link](#).

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¹ Aims C. McGuinness, *State Policy Leadership for the Future: History of state coordination and governance and alternatives for the future* (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 2016), <https://www.ecs.org/state-policy-leadership-for-the-future-history-of-state-coordination-and-governance-and-alternatives-for-the-future/>, 46-47.