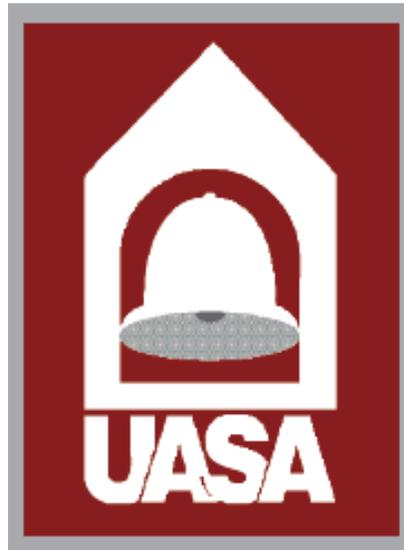


ALABAMA INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK

Revised 2024



Meeting the Requirements of
Alabama Code Sections 16-1-38 and 16-13A-3



The University of Alabama
Superintendents' Academy is a
collaborative effort of the Alabama State
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The Instruction Manual is currently being revised. Updated manuals will be available on The University of Alabama Superintendent's Academy website usa.ua.edu.

1. INTRODUCTION AND ESSENTIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This document is intended to serve as a desktop reference for superintendents charged with promoting student learning. The resource is needed because the increased diversity of the student body, the information and knowledge explosion, and the press for high standards and accountability have altered the expectations for the 13,500+ superintendents in the nation's public-school systems (Glass et al., 2000).

As educators debate, apply, and interpret the implications of the ESEA reauthorization, the language (educational leadership, instructional leadership) used to discuss the superintendent's role changes. For example, the "School Boards and Superintendents: Roles and Responsibilities," a collaborative project by the Alabama Association of School Administrators and the Alabama Association of School Boards (complete list in Chapter 7), calls for superintendents to serve as educational leaders. Yet, in identifying the work of today's superintendents, Peterson and Barnett (2003) maintain that superintendents must function as instructional leaders while performing a variety of roles:

- 1) Superintendent as educational statesman, politician, and democratic leader;
- 2) Superintendent as executive manager;
- 3) Superintendent as instructional leader;
- 4) Superintendent as social scientist and social activist; and
- 5) Superintendent as communicator in the information age.

Educational leadership and instructional leadership as applied to the superintendency are poorly defined constructs (Kowalski, 1999, 2003), and it is not yet clear whether superintendents will function as educational leaders (broader term) or instructional leaders (more specific term). Some superintendents become directly involved in curricular and instructional issues, while others delegate these responsibilities to teachers, principals, and directors of instruction (Bredeson, 1995).

As the ESEA reauthorizations (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015) heighten the superintendent's instructional role, those accustomed to delegating issues related to curriculum and instructional leadership may need to acquire a greater understanding of instructional strategies and the use of data to drive decision making. It is less likely that superintendents will be called upon to immerse themselves in the details of instructional planning and curriculum development. In any case, because system-level personnel are responsible for developing curriculum guides, monitoring assessment results, and developing strategies for improving student performance, at the very least, superintendents need a working knowledge of the current language and ideas associated with instructional leadership and curriculum to exercise oversight in the performance of these roles and account to others for the decisions made.

1.1. Historical Considerations

Americans have never agreed about the purpose of public education. Since its inception, educators have vacillated between attempts to achieve educational excellence and educational equity. Compounding the problem is the field of curriculum itself, which “spirals out like the seemingly endless suburbs of a modern megalopolis” (Flinders & Thornton, 1997). The following are selected highlights of what many refer to as the battle over the curriculum.

Early Twentieth Century:

The challenges of the early twentieth century were remarkably similar to those of today. The population of schools was burgeoning, industry was on the rise, and the nation was becoming more pluralistic with an increasing number of immigrant children entering public schools. So, it is unsurprising that many features of today’s curriculum (tracking, standardized testing, civic education) originated during this time. Franklin Bobbitt’s emphasis on scientific management in schools, standards of efficiency, diagnostic testing, dividing teaching and learning into its smallest parts, and tracking students based on testing all have their roots in the early 20th-century model of administering schools based on an efficiency-oriented approach. Not all early 20th-century educators accepted the scientific method of administering schools. Progressive educators, such as John Dewey, George Counts, Ella Flagg Young, and Jane Addams, worked diligently to administer schools based on a model of democracy rather than efficiency. Child-centered Progressive educators believed that the primary purpose of schools should be to unleash all children’s individual potential and prepare them to be democratic citizens. Other progressive educators, such as George Counts, who wrote *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* believed that schools should be sites of social reconstruction and that teachers should be agents of social change.

Mid-Twentieth Century:

The Tylerian Rationale drove curriculum development in U. S. schools for the last half of the 20th century. Ralph W. Tyler first articulated this rationale in his 1949 classic *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*. This approach to curriculum development provides a process or procedure for identifying curriculum objectives. In other words, the model is responsive to the question, “What steps does one follow in planning a curriculum?”

Tyler recommended that curriculum planners identify general objectives by gathering data from three sources: the learners, contemporary life outside the schools, and the subject matter. After identifying numerous general objectives, the planners refine them by filtering them through two screens: the educational and social philosophy of the school and the psychology of learning. The general objectives that successfully pass through the two screens become what are now popularly known as instructional objectives. In describing educational objectives Tyler referred to them as “goals,” “educational ends,” “educational purposes,” and “behavioral objectives.” The following four questions posed by Tyler directed curriculum development for much of the past century:

- What educational purpose should the school seek to attain?
- What educational experiences are likely to attain these purposes?

- How can these experiences be effectively organized?
- How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

The “Tylerian Rationale” has come under fire in recent years. Critics maintain that the approach does not consider the interdependence of the four functions of curriculum development (identifying objectives, selecting the means for attaining those objectives, organizing these means, and evaluating the outcomes). Failing to consider such interaction can result in curriculum development that becomes a mechanical or procedural process. Critics also maintain that, from a political perspective, failing to consider the interaction can result in one group of individuals determining the ends and another merely deciding how to attain the ends.

The 1950s and 1960s:

Against the backdrop of the Cold War and the Soviet Union’s launching of Sputnik in 1957, the late 1950s and 1960s saw enormous reform efforts. Public schools were blamed for not producing scientists on the level of the Soviet Union. The media was filled with stories comparing what Johnny was taught in school to what Ivan was taught in school. The key word was rigor, and consistent with those who saw education as essential for national defense purposes, the math, science, and foreign language curricula came under attack. This was the era of the “new math,” “new physics,” and “new biology.”

Also, during this time, segregation of schooling came under attack, and in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the Supreme Court ruled that segregated schools were inherently unequal. Efforts to desegregate public schools were met with resistance in many areas of the United States, especially in southern states. School systems entered into consent decrees with supervision by officers of federal courts to re-design school systems, re-organize schools, and consolidate previously racially segregated school systems to ensure equal access to curriculum offerings, more equitable distribution of instructional resources, and acceptable staffing ratios to meet court orders. During the War on Poverty in the 1960s, several educational initiatives were begun that targeted low-income children. One of the most well-known was Head Start, which served children who, because of their parents’ poverty, were at significant risk for failing school.

1.2 The Roots of Accountability

The Coleman Report (1966)

The Coleman Report was the second-largest study ever conducted in the United States. Coleman and his staff canvassed schools across the country in rural, urban, and suburban settings. He considered the contributions to school quality of a wide range of characteristics—teacher academic credentials, system per-pupil expenditures, instructional materials, socioeconomic background of students, the racial mix of students, structure and age of the physical plant, and size of the school. Some of the major findings of this study include:

- Most school variables had little or no relationship to student achievement.
- Performance on standardized tests was not affected by teacher credentials, per pupil cost, materials, or curriculum.
- The variable that had the greatest relationship with student achievement was the composition of the student population.
- Students from low-income populations performed significantly better when they attended schools with a majority of students from middle—or upper-income populations. Students did not perform well when the school composition was primarily low-income.

The strongest variable accounting for student achievement was parents' socioeconomic status (SES). Children of middle- or upper-income families entered school substantially ahead of students of low-income families; as they continued in school, the achievement gap between socioeconomic levels grew larger. Wealthy students stayed ahead, and poor students fell further behind, regardless of the school's physical plant, teachers, materials, or finances.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983)

The National Commission on Excellence in Education was created in 1981 under the Reagan administration. In 1983, this commission released a report (*A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*) that had a strong and pervasive national influence on the curriculum. The report began with the following statement:

Our nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world.

Concerns over equity issues and the perceived inability to compete in global markets were the driving forces behind the report. More specifically, the report linked the vitality of the military and national economy to the performance of the educational system (Kowalski, 1999). After this report, educational administrators were called upon to increase graduation rates, raise standardized test scores, and improve computer literacy. This report is often cited as the birth of the standards and accountability movement, greatly shaping the school curriculum today. What followed in the 1990s was the development of Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994, which initiated the setting of national and state standards on every aspect of public schooling, including curriculum content, teacher licensure/certification, and standardized testing. Also, part of the 1990s educational agenda were issues of school choice, school vouchers, and more control at the local level by principals, parents, and teachers.

1.3 A Summary of Approaches to Instructional Leadership

The Practice of Instructional Leadership (Glatthorn, 1990)

To be an effective instructional leader, one must engage in the following:

- The development of a long-term curriculum evaluation and renewal
- calendar
- Shared decision-making and clear role expectations

- Development and alignment of curricular goals
- Written curriculum guides and scope and sequence charts
- The development of quality courses
- Integrating fields of study
- An alignment process ensuring congruence between what is intended and what actually occurs
- Staff development

Perennial Choices (Gardner, 1999)

Making curriculum decisions has oscillated between the following polarities:

- Between breadth and depth
- Between accumulation and construction of knowledge
- Between utilitarian outcomes and intellectual growth for its own sake
- Between uniform and individualized education
- Between education by private parties and as a public responsibility
- Between an education that fuses disciplines and or stresses disciplines
- Between an education that either minimizes or emphasizes assessment
- Between relative, nuanced standards and high universal standards
- Between an education that showcases either technology or the human dimension

Axioms Related to Curriculum Change (Oliva, 2001)

The following guidelines provide a framework for understanding the context of curriculum change:

- Curriculum change is inevitable and desirable.
- The curriculum is a product of its time.
- Curriculum changes of earlier periods often coexist and overlap curriculum with changes of later periods.
- Curriculum change results only as people are changed.
- Curriculum development is basically a process of making choices from among alternatives.
- Curriculum development never ends.
- Curriculum development is more effective if it is a comprehensive, not piecemeal, process.
- Curriculum development starts from where the curriculum is.

Emerging Trends (Glatthorn, 2000)

Glatthorn argued that the following developments were likely to characterize the curriculum during the first decade of the 21st century:

- Increasing importance of national and state standards
- A movement toward school-based curriculum development
- Greater influence of professional organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of English
- Continuing interest in constructivist curriculum
- Development of new approaches in vocational education
- In addition to job-specific skills, an increased emphasis on generic skills that can be transferred to almost any career
- Integrating academic and career education
- Development of integrated curricula
- Institutionalization of technology

Criteria for Curriculum Change (Glatthorn, 2000)

Educators should make curricular decisions using the following criteria:

- Structure the curriculum to achieve greater depth and less superficial coverage.
- Structure the curriculum so that it focuses on problem-solving.
- Structure and deliver the curriculum to facilitate the mastery of essential skills and knowledge of the subjects.
- Structure the curriculum so that it is closely coordinated.
- Organize the curriculum for multiyear sequential study, not “stand-alone” courses.
- Emphasize both the academic and the practical.
- Develop effective integrated curricula.
- Focus on mastering a limited number of essential curriculum objectives rather than trying to cover too many.

Collaboration: Hallmarks of Productive Groups (Oliva, 2001)

Curriculum decisions should be made in collaboration with a group of knowledgeable constituents. To create effective curriculum decision-making groups, the following guidelines should be considered:

- Leaders and members support each other.
- Trust is apparent among members.
- Goals are understood, mutually agreed upon, and accepted.
- Opportunity exists for members to express feelings and perceptions.
- Roles played by group members are essentially positive.
- Hidden agendas of members do not disrupt the group.
- Leadership is competent and appropriate to the group.
- Members possess the necessary expertise.
- Members have the necessary resources.

- Members share in all decision-making.
- Communication is at a high level.
- Leadership is encouraged from within the group.
- Progress in accomplishing the task is noticeable and significant.
- The group activity satisfies members' personal needs.
- Leaders seek to release the potential of the members.
- The group manages its time wisely.

School System Leadership that Works™: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement (Waters & Marzano, 2006)

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) principal researchers conducted a meta-analysis of research on the effect of superintendent leadership on student achievement. For this study, McREL researchers identified 27 research reports conducted since 1970 that examined the influence of school system leaders on student performance using quantitative, rigorous methods. These studies involved 2,714 systems and the achievement scores of 3.4 million students. The study produced the following major findings.

Finding 1: System-level leadership matters. The McREL research team found a statistically significant relationship (positive correlation of .24) between system leadership and student achievement.

Finding 2: Effective superintendents focus their efforts on creating goal-oriented systems. McREL researchers also identified five system-level leadership responsibilities that correlate statistically significantly with average student academic achievement. These responsibilities relate to setting and keeping systems focused on teaching and learning goals.

Finding 3: Superintendent tenure is positively correlated with student achievement. McREL found two studies that looked specifically at the correlations between superintendent tenure and student achievement. The weighted average correlation in these two studies was statistically significant at .19, which suggests that length of superintendent tenure in a system positively correlates to student achievement. These positive effects appear to manifest themselves as early as two years into a superintendent's tenure.

Changing Pedagogical Models (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003)

Curriculum decisions should be based on research about best practices in teaching and learning. This chart provides a summary of best practices:

From	To
Teacher/Curriculum-centered	Learner-centered
Acquisition of knowledge and skills	Intelligent thinking and knowledge application
Passive learning (listener)	Active learning (collaborator)
Printed media	Technological tools
Grade focus	Achievement focus
National perspective	Global perspective
Independent efforts	Combined efforts
Abstract learning (facts)	Authentic learning (relationships, inquiry, invention, understanding)
Rote learning (drill and practice)	Problem solving
Paper-and-pencil tests (norm referenced)	Demonstrations and performances (criterion referenced)
Discipline based	Integrative/interdisciplinary/trans- disciplinary approaches

Cunningham, W. G., & Cordeiro, P. A. (2003). *Educational leadership: A problem-based approach*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

1.4 Definitions of Curriculum

The literature contains more than 120 definitions of curriculum. These definitions tend to vary in scope, assumptions about whether the curriculum is politically charged or politically neutral, and assumptions about knowledge and learning. Nevertheless, all are useful in understanding some aspect of the superintendent's role in the curriculum. The following is a representative sample.

- Content subjects such as reading, math and so forth.
- Those subjects most useful for living in a contemporary society.
- All planned learning for which the school is responsible.
- All of the experiences learners have under the guidance of the school.
- All of the experiences that learners have in the course of living. (See Marsh & Willis, 1999 for the above definitions.)
- All curricula are composed of certain elements. A curriculum usually contains a statement of aims and specific objectives, some selection and organization of content, implied or stated patterns of learning and teaching, and a program for evaluating the outcomes (Taba, 1962).
- The American curriculum is an assemblage of competing doctrines and practices (Kliebard, 1998).

Over time, the phrase "curriculum development" evolved into the shortened term "curriculum." From this perspective, curriculum became synonymous with school materials.

1.5 Curriculum in Alabama Public Schools

The various Courses of Study developed and distributed by the Alabama State Department of Education form the curriculum in Alabama public schools. These guides identify the content to be introduced, taught, and mastered by subject and grade level. Revised by committees in six-year intervals, the Courses of Study represent the minimum content standards for kindergarten through grade 12 public schools. Current and proposed Courses of Study for Alabama schools may be viewed or downloaded at <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/acad-stand/>

School systems may develop content strands or course offerings, and schools within the system may develop studies, programs, or curriculum efforts with a specific focus. Local initiatives may arise as a result of input from the community through strategic planning efforts, community involvement projects, analysis of student achievement data and academic performance, input from local business and industry, and teacher or student interest surveys. Where the Alabama Courses of Study form the minimum content for Alabama public schools, local courses may go beyond these minimum standards.

1.6 Essential Considerations

The remainder of this manual builds on the essential ideas above to address the following:

- How larger economic, political, and societal forces, federal legislation, state legislation, State Board of Education mandates, and local community priorities impact the local school system curriculum;
- The curriculum content, knowledge, skills, and processes taught within Alabama school systems;
- The skills needed to collaborate with others in the continuous evaluation, alignment, revision, and editing of the curriculum in ways that will serve an increasingly diverse body of students well;
- The need to communicate curriculum change to teachers, parents, community agencies, and students in ways that foster successful curriculum implementation; and,
- The superintendent's leadership role and responsibilities in improving student achievement.

Particular attention is devoted to the need to address the achievement gap between and among groups of students.

The manual's primary purpose is to serve as a summary of research, resources, and standards related to leading instruction in Alabama's public-school systems.

Contemporary Challenges to Public Schools

1.7 Continuing Efforts to Achieve Educational Excellence and Equity

In January 2002, President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act into law. The Act's purpose was to increase the quality of education for all students (educational excellence) and close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students (educational equity). Analyzing performance results by subgroups of students (disaggregating performance data) assists in monitoring differences in student performance across groups.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)

President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) into law on February 17th, 2009. It was an unprecedented effort to jumpstart our economy, create or save millions of jobs, and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so our country could thrive in the 21st century. The Act was an extraordinary response to a crisis unlike any since the Great Depression. It included measures to modernize our nation's infrastructure, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, preserve and improve affordable health care, provide tax relief, and protect those in greatest need. Several features of the Recovery Act provided incentives, grants, and programs that impacted public education.

On July 24, 2009, President Obama and Secretary Duncan announced the draft application for the \$4.35 billion Race to the Top Fund. They also announced the following information programs to provide funds, awards, incentives, and assistance for public schools and state education agencies:

Race to the Top: Through Race to the Top, the U. S. Department of Education asked states to advance reforms around four specific areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

Awards in Race to the Top went to states leading the way with ambitious yet achievable plans for implementing coherent, compelling, and comprehensive education reform. Race to the Top winners helped trail-blaze effective reforms and provided examples for states and local school systems throughout the country.

Race to the Top Assessment Program: Competitive grants were available to consortia of states in these two areas:

- (1) **Comprehensive Assessment System Grant.** The Comprehensive Assessment Systems grant category supported the development of assessment systems by consortia of states that met the dual needs for accountability and instructional improvement based on standards designed to prepare students for college and the workplace. The assessments

were expected to serve as valid measures of students' knowledge and skills that better reflected good instructional practices and that supported a culture of continuous improvement in education.

(2) High School Course Assessment Grant. To promote consistently high levels of rigor in high school courses across a well-rounded curriculum, the High School Course Assessment grant category supported the development of high school course assessment programs by consortia of states.

Other grants, awards, incentives and programs that are education components of the ARRA of 2009 include Investing in Innovation, Teacher Incentive Fund, Teacher Quality Partnership Program, State Longitudinal Data Systems, Title I School Improvement Grants, State Educational Technology Grants, State Fiscal Stabilization Fund—Phase 2, State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, Title I, Part A Recovery Funds for Grants to Local Educational Agencies, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance, Impact Aid, and School Modernization.

1.8 Road To Recovery

Overview

The federal government provided three rounds of education recovery funding through multiple funding streams in the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act (March 2020), the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (December 2020), and the American Rescue Plan (March 2021). The major funding streams are ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund), HEER (Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund), and GEER (Governor's Education Emergency Relief Fund). The latter two measures also provided funding for non-public schools through Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) dollars.

The federal measures also contained education-related funding for childcare; Head Start; IDEA programs; broadband access; COVID-19 detection, diagnosis, tracking, and monitoring; some specific postsecondary institutions; and for states and localities through the Coronavirus Relief Fund. The summary below focuses on the ESSER, HEER, GEER, and EANS funding, including timelines for obligating and awarding the funds and the major differences between various iterations of each education fund.

Recovery Task Force & Playbook

The K-12 Education Recovery Task Force convened weekly with education leaders from SREB's 16 member states to discuss issues related to resuming instruction, addressing learning loss, reopening school buildings, and safely resuming in-person instruction.

The task force's highest priority was addressing how to meet students' academic, emotional, and nutritional needs. The group sought solutions to prepare for a possible COVID-19 resurgence and future emergencies and tackled other key issues, including:

- Students' academic growth and any possible learning loss
- Equity and opportunity for students during and after the crisis
- Using federal stimulus funds effectively and managing state budget priorities

- Access to broadband and the use of technology

The task force developed a playbook for states, districts, and schools, which includes the following areas:

- Governance and Funding – addressing funding, scheduling, and technology
- Health & Safety – protecting students and personnel
- Instruction – supporting educators and students

Source : <https://www.sreb.org/k-12-education-recovery-task-force>

Alabama’s Road to Recovery Plan

Each LEA developed a Recovery Plan focused on the following components:

- Assessing learning loss and recovery factors
- Identifying the extent of unfinished learning and equity and learning gaps
- Understanding design strategies, resource alignment, and mindset shifts
- Designing the LEA recovery plan and budget application

After the needs assessment worksheet was completed, LEAs began the “Designing” phase that aligned with the following:

- Three Pillars of Recovery: High-Quality Instructional Materials, High-Quality Professional Development, and Unfinished Learning Supports
- LEA gaps identified in the needs assessment
- State and federal budget allocations

LEAs received the Application, a Recovery Resource Guide, and a companion document containing rubrics and the most current research on resources and practices for the three pillars of recovery.

Each LEA received award letters indicating funds available through ESSER 1 and ESSER 2. Additionally, the ALSDE made available a portion of its ESSER State Reserve Funds to every LEA for two purposes: (1) formative student assessment in Grades 4-8 for mathematics and reading at a rate of \$12 per student and (2) course of study professional development in Mathematics and English Language Arts.

Alabama ARP/ESSER State Plan – <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Final-Alabama-ARP-ESSER-State-Plan.pdf>

1.9 ESSER Funds and American Rescue Funds

ESSER Funds

Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Funds were allocated based on a state’s proportion of Title I, Part A funding; states allot funds to local education agencies on that basis. At least 90% of the funding must go to LEAs. A state education agency could reserve up to 10% of funds to address emergency needs through subgrants and contracts. Funding was applied to a wide variety of uses, including activities permitted by federal education programs, activities to meet needs related to the coronavirus, maintaining continuity of education services, educational technology,

responding to the unique needs of groups of students, and sanitizing and cleaning education facilities.

ESSER 1 (CARES Act) \$13,229,265,000

Funding Timeline

- Available for obligation by SEA and subrecipients through September 30, 2022.
- SEA was required to award funds within one year of receiving them (April-June 2021).
- The 90% of funds for LEAs was considered awarded when the SEA subgranted the funds to an LEA.
- Funds retained by the SEA were awarded when the SEA awarded a contract or subgrant or when it retained funds to provide direct services.

Maintenance of Effort*

A state that received ESSER funds was required to maintain state support for K-12 and higher education in each fiscal year 2020 and 2021, at least at the average level of state support for K-12 and higher education provided in fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019.

ESSER 2 (CRRSAA) \$54,311,004,000

Funding Timeline

- Available for obligation by SEA and subrecipients through September 30, 2023.
- SEA was required to award funds within one year of receiving them (January 2022).
- The 90% of funds for LEAs were considered awarded when the SEA subgranted the funds to an LEA.
- Funds retained by the SEA were awarded when the SEA awarded a contract or subgrant or when it retained funds to provide direct services.

Uses of Funds

- CARES Act funds could be spent on preventing, preparing for, and responding to COVID-19. Department guidance emphasized the additional uses for CRRSAA funds already permitted under the CARES Act: addressing learning loss, preparing schools for reopening, coronavirus testing, and projects to improve air quality in school buildings. According to guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, funds could be used for costs incurred as far back as March 13, 2020.

Maintenance of Effort

A state was required to provide support for K-12 and higher education for fiscal year 2022 at a level of spending that, proportional to overall state spending, was at least the average proportional amount directed to education in fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019. The U.S. Secretary of Education could waive this requirement.

ESSER 3 (ARP Act) \$122,774,800,000

Funding Timeline

- Available for obligation by SEA and subrecipients through September 30, 2023
- SEA was required to award funds to LEAs, to the extent practicable, within 60 days of receiving funds

- LEA was required to develop and provide the public with a plan for a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services within 30 days of receiving funds from SEA.
- Two-thirds of the \$81.3 billion in ESSER 3 funding (released to states on March 24, 2021) were released after states submitted plans to use the funds to support the safe reopening of schools and address students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. ARP did not include uses of Funds Provisions requiring LEAs to provide equitable services funding to nonpublic schools from ESSER or GEER funds. Instead, funding was provided for nonpublic schools through the EANS fund (see below).

From the funds reserved by the SEA, an amount equivalent to at least 5% of the total funds the state received were required to be used to carry out activities that addressed learning loss through evidence-based intervention. In addition, the SEA was required to use at least 1% of the total funds received by the state to implement evidence-based summer enrichment programs and at least 1% for evidence-based comprehensive after-school programs. Each LEA that received a grant had to use at least 20% of the funds to address learning loss by implementing evidence-based interventions.

American Rescue Plan Act

Included among provisions to extend increased unemployment benefits and provide aid to state and local governments (the latter of which was not included in the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of December 2020), the \$1.9 trillion legislation provided funds to assist in the safe reopening of K-12 schools, to address the learning recovery needs of students affected by disruptions to education, to support institutions of higher education and to help their students cope with the financial strains caused by the pandemic, and to ensure the availability of affordable, high-quality child care for parents. The bill was approved by Congress on March 10, 2021, and signed into law the following day. Funding provided by the American Rescue Plan was available for expenditure through September 30, 2023.

Educational Stabilization Funds

ARP appropriated funding for two of the education stabilization funds created in the initial COVID relief measure, the CARES Act of March 2020, and for the Emergency Assistance to Nonpublic Schools Fund established in CRRSAA.

ESSER: Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund

The legislation provides \$122 billion in ESSER grants to states. At least 90% of each state's grant was to be awarded as subgrants to local education agencies, with at least 5% of the state's grant used to carry out activities that address learning loss through evidence-based interventions (summer learning, extended day, and extended school year programs). Interventions were to respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged student populations. Each state education agency was required to use at least 1% of their state's funds to implement evidence-based summer enrichment programs and at least 1% for evidence-based comprehensive afterschool programs.

Each LEA that received a subgrant was to use at least 20% of the funds to address learning loss by implementing evidence-based interventions (summer learning, extended day, or extended school year programs). The interventions, again, had to respond to students' academic, social, and

emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged students.

ARF/ESSER Alabama Allocations

- CARES \$216,947,540
- CRRSAA \$899,464,932
- ARP \$2,020,070,466

As a condition of receiving ESSER funds, states, SEAs, and LEAs had to meet the following requirements:

State Maintenance of Effort — A state’s proportion of support for K-12 and higher education, relative to the state’s overall spending, in fiscal years 2022 and 2023 had to be the same or greater than the average proportional level of support that the state provided over fiscal years 2017, 2018 and 2019. The U.S. Secretary of Education could waive any maintenance of effort requirements associated with the Education Stabilization Fund.

State Maintenance of Equity — The SEA could not reduce state funding in fiscal years 2022 or 2023 on a per-pupil basis for any high-need LEA by an amount that exceeded any per-pupil reduction in state funds across all LEAs. In addition, the SEA was not to reduce per-pupil funding in the fiscal year 2022 or 2023 for any highest-poverty LEA below the level provided in 2019.

Local Maintenance of Equity — An LEA could not, in fiscal years 2022 or 2023, reduce per-pupil funding for any high-poverty school in its jurisdiction by an amount that exceeded the average per-pupil funding reduction across the LEA. The LEA could not reduce the per-pupil full-time equivalent staff ratio in any high-poverty school by an amount that exceeded the reduction of that ratio across the LEA. The legislation provided exceptions for low-enrollment LEAs and LEAs with unpredictable changes in school enrollment, or that sustained a considerable loss of financial resources.

EANS: Emergency Assistance to Nonpublic Schools Fund

ARP provides \$2.75 billion in emergency assistance for non-public schools that enrolled a significant percentage of low-income students and most impacted by the pandemic. Funds were not to be used to reimburse these schools for previous expenditures. The EANS program funding was based on the number of children ages 5 to 17 at 185% or less of the federal poverty level enrolled in non-public schools in the state in relation to the number of all such children in all states.

Allowable uses of EANS funds included personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, ventilation improvements, physical barriers to facilitate social distancing, expanded capacity to administer coronavirus testing and perform contact tracing, educational technology to assist students, educators, and staff with remote or hybrid learning, and education and support services for remote or hybrid learning or addressing learning loss.

HEER: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund

ARP provided \$39.5 billion of additional emergency relief to institutions of higher education. Public and private institutions of higher learning received 91% of that amount (\$20.6 billion); each of these

institutions were required to use at least half of the HEER funds they received for emergency financial assistance grants to students.

Screening Testing for School Reopening

ARP included \$47.8 billion for the federal Department of Health and Human Services to support detection, diagnosis, tracing, and monitoring of COVID-19. From that amount, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provided \$10 billion to states for teacher, staff, and student COVID-19 screening testing to help safely reopen schools for in-person instruction.

Link to documents:

https://www.sreb.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/2021_american_rescue_plan.pdf?1616419357

https://www.sreb.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/2021_stimulus_timeline.pdf?1618918575

1.10 The Funding Cliff – What’s Next? Funding Formula

Proposed Funding Formula

To explore the alternatives to address the funding cliff, the Alabama legislature has developed a legislative committee to explore funding structures for K-12 Educational Funding. The video of the joint meeting is at the following link:

[Alabama Joint Legislative Study on Modernizing K-12 Education Funding](#) A one page summary of the Alabama foundation program is available at:

<https://alison.legislature.state.al.us/files/pdf/lisa/Fiscal/Infographics/foundation-primer.pdf>

Three funding formulas are being considered with the hybrid model favored by some.

Option 1: No changes – keeping the Foundation Program as it stands.

Option 2: Implement a modified version of a previously discussed model, with a set base amount for every district and additional funding through percentages for special populations.

Option 3: A hybrid model – retain the current Foundation Program with some modifications to allow for greater flexibility for districts, while also adding funding through percentages for special populations.

2. THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Roles: Federal Government

There is no reference to education in the U.S. Constitution. Rather, the right to an education arises from state constitutions. Nevertheless, since the late 1700s, with the passage of the Northwest Ordinances of 1785 and 1787, the federal government has passed legislation that has implications for the curriculum. In the Morrill Act of 1862, federally owned land was set aside in each state to establish colleges and universities for the study of agriculture and mechanical arts. In 1917, the Smith-Hughes Act was passed, providing money grants for vocational education, home economics, and agricultural subjects. However, until the mid-20th century, the federal government's role in education was minimal. This began to change in the 1950s with the passage of the National Defense Act in 1958 and the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The U. S. Department of Education, established in 1979, funds educational activities, coordinates educational functions, provides technical assistance, and provides regulatory oversight regarding these laws. Selected major federal legislative acts with direct implications for the curriculum follow:

2.1 Summary of Federal Education Legislation and Programs

1957 National Defense Education Act (NDEA)

The National Defense Education Act passed in the aftermath of the launching of Sputnik emphasized the importance of education in the national defense and targeted the need for improved instruction in science, mathematics, foreign language, and other critical subjects. The Act promoted curriculum reform in these areas.

1969 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), or "the Nation's Report Card," is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, assessments have been conducted periodically in [reading](#), [mathematics](#), [science](#), [writing](#), [U.S. history](#), [civics](#), [geography](#), and [the arts](#). In 1987, a highly visible national study panel issued The Nation's Report Card, which recommended massive changes in governance and procedures for the NAEP. The panel proposed, for example, that state-by-state test score comparisons be undertaken. NAEP does not provide scores for individual students or schools; instead, it offers results regarding subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for populations of students (e.g., fourth graders) and subgroups of those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students). NAEP results are based on a [sample](#) of student populations of interest. National NAEP reports information for the nation and specific geographic regions of the country. It includes students drawn from both public and nonpublic schools and reports results for student achievement at grades 4, 8, and 12.

Since 1990, NAEP assessments have also been conducted to give results for participating states. Those who choose to participate receive assessment results that report on the performance of students in that state. Detailed information about the NAEP assessments and reports of NAEP data may be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.

Head Start

Head Start is a comprehensive program designed to foster the healthy development of young children from low-income families. The program has grown from a brief, eight-week summer program for preschoolers in 1965 to a year-round program today, serving children from birth to age five and pregnant women. Head Start provides children from low-income families with daily nutritious meals and many opportunities for social, emotional, and intellectual growth that can prepare them for success in school and life. The program also connects children to a healthcare source and provides vital support services to their families. Each year, over 800,000 children from low-income families attend Head Start classrooms or receive Head Start services in their homes. They include infants and toddlers, children of migrant farm workers, and American Indian families, as well as children with disabilities.

1972 Title IX of the Education Amendments

In June 1972, the President Richard M. Nixon signed Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., into law. Title IX is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity. The principle objective of Title IX is to avoid the use of federal money to support sexually discriminatory practices in education programs, such as sexual harassment and employment discrimination, and to provide individual citizens effective protection against those practices. Title IX applies, with a few specific exceptions, to all aspects of federally funded education programs or activities. In addition to traditional educational institutions, such as colleges, universities, and elementary and secondary schools, Title IX also applies to any education or training program operated by a recipient of federal financial assistance. Many of these education program providers/recipients became subject to Title IX regulations when the Title IX final common rule was published on August 30, 2000.

1974 The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to

disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interests;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law; or
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

1984 Equal Access Act (EAA)

The Equal Access Act (EAA) was signed into law in 1984. In 1990, the Supreme Court upheld the Act in *Board of Education of the Westdale Community Schools v. Mergens*. Essentially, the Equal Access Act requires that secondary school facilities be accessible to religious and political clubs in the same way that they are to other noncurricular clubs such as chess. Two key terms related to the Equal Access Act are important:

Limited open forum: A public secondary school has a limited open forum whenever such a school allows one or more non-curriculum-related student groups to meet on school premises during non-instructional time.

Non-curriculum-related student group: The subject matter of the group will not be taught in the regular curriculum, participation in the group is not required for a particular course, or participation does not result in academic credits. In the *Mergens* case, a chess club that existed at the school and was considered non-curricular had access to school facilities. Therefore, the school was forced to comply with the Equal Access Act and permit a Bible club to meet on school property.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), was first enacted in 1975. This landmark legislation ensured that students with disabilities received free appropriate public education (FAPE) and the related services and support they needed to achieve. IDEA was created to help states and school systems meet their legal obligations to educate children with disabilities and to pay part of the extra expenses associated with doing so.

IDEA has several parts: Part B provides grants to states for services to preschool and school-aged children. Part C funds early intervention services for infants, toddlers, and their families, and Part D supports research and professional development programs. Currently, in the U.S., approximately 6 million children receive special education services.

When children are identified as eligible for special education services, an individualized education program (IEP) is developed by a team that includes the child's parents, teachers, and other school staff. The IEP outlines the specific services and supports the child's needs within the least restrictive environment (LRE). While the law has been reauthorized and improved over the years, the IEP and LRE provisions have been protected as basic rights of children with disabilities. Parent involvement is also a fundamental principle of IDEA. Parents must be fully informed of their child's rights, and they can participate in all decisions affecting their child. IDEA also outlines due process provisions, which allow parents to challenge school system decisions.

When IDEA was originally enacted, Congress recognized that school systems would incur higher costs in educating children with disabilities and promised to pay 40 percent of the average per pupil expenditure to help cover the added expense. Unfortunately, the funding has never come close to meeting the need. In FY 2002, federal funds only contributed 17 percent of this cost. As reported by [Crain](#) (2024), in 2022-2023, Federal funding covered \$179 million or 20% of the total cost of special education in Alabama.

In 2001, several bills in Congress would have provided mandatory full funding for IDEA to guarantee that the federal contribution would be fulfilled, but those efforts failed. Full funding supporters argue that increases in the federal contribution for IDEA would free up money school systems have been paying that would otherwise be available for other purposes. The full funding proposals would allow systems to offset 55 percent of their IDEA increases, more if they fully comply with IDEA, and use it for other local purposes. Current law allows school systems to use 20 percent of their IDEA funding increases for other purposes.

During the consideration of IDEA full funding, there were also attempts to amend the IDEA discipline provisions in current law, which require schools to provide alternative education services to children with disabilities if there is a need for suspension or expulsion from their regular education placement.

1994 School-to-Work Opportunities Act

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act was signed into law in 1994. There are three components to the Act: the school-based learning component, the work-based learning component, and the connecting activities component.

The **school-based learning component** of a School-to-Work Opportunities program shall include:

- Career awareness, exploration, and counseling (beginning at the earliest possible age, but no later than the 7th grade) are provided to help students who may be interested identify and select or reconsider their interests, goals, and career majors, including those options that may not be traditional for their gender, race, or ethnicity.
- Initial selection by interested students of a career major no later than the beginning of the 11th grade.
- A program of study designed to meet the same academic content standards the State has established for all students, including, where applicable, standards established under the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, and to meet the requirements necessary to prepare a student for postsecondary education and the requirements necessary for a student to earn a skill certificate.
- A program of instruction and curriculum that integrates academic and vocational learning (including applied methodologies and team-teaching strategies), and incorporates instruction, to the extent practicable, in all aspects of an industry, appropriately tied to the career major of a participant.
- Regularly scheduled evaluations involving ongoing consultation and problem-solving with students and school dropouts to identify their academic strengths and weaknesses, academic progress, workplace knowledge, goals, and the need for additional learning opportunities to master core academic and vocational skills.
- Procedures to facilitate the entry of students participating in a School-to-Work Opportunities program into additional training or postsecondary education programs, as well as to facilitate the transfer of the students between education and training programs.

The **work-based learning component** of a School-to-Work Opportunities program shall include:

- Work experience.
- A planned program of job training and work experiences (including training related to pre-employment and employment skills to be mastered at progressively higher levels) that are coordinated with learning in the school-based learning component described in section 102 and are relevant to the career majors of students and lead to the award of skill certificates.
- Workplace mentoring.
- Instruction in general workplace competencies, including instruction and activities related to developing positive work attitudes and employability, and participative skills.
- Broad instruction, to the extent practicable, in all aspects of the industry. These may include such activities as paid work experience, job shadowing, school-sponsored enterprises, or on-the-job training.

The connecting component of a School-to-Work Opportunities program shall include:

- Matching students with the work-based learning opportunities of employers.
- Providing, with respect to each student, a school site mentor to act as a liaison between the student and the employer, school, teacher, school administrator, and parent of the student, and, if appropriate, other community partners.
- Providing technical assistance and services to employers, including small- and medium-sized businesses, and other parties in designing school-based learning components described in section 102, work-based learning components described in section 103, and counseling and case management services and training teachers, workplace mentors, school site mentors, and counselors.
- Providing assistance to schools and employers to integrate school-based and work-based learning and academic and occupational learning into the program.
- Encouraging the active participation of employers, in cooperation with local education officials, in the implementation of local activities described in section 102, section 103, or this section.
- Providing assistance to participants who have completed the program in finding an appropriate job, continuing their education, or entering into an additional training program.
- Linking the participants with other community services that may be necessary to assure a successful transition from school to work.
- Collecting and analyzing information regarding post-program outcomes of participants in the School-to-Work Opportunities program, to the extent practicable, on the basis of socioeconomic status, race, gender, ethnicity, culture, and disability, and on the basis of whether the participants are students with limited-English proficiency, school dropouts, disadvantaged students, or academically talented students.
- Linking youth development activities under this Act with employer and industry strategies for upgrading the skills of their workers.

2018 Carl D. Perkins Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V)

Federal funding for vocational education was first authorized through the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. Since then, it has gone through several reauthorizations and name changes including the Vocational Act of 1973, Carl D. Perkins Act of 1984, Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act of 1990 (Perkins II), Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 1998 (Perkins III), and Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV). The most current reauthorization, Perkins V, was reauthorized in 2018 and was supported with \$1.3 billion annually for Career and Technical Education (CTE). The change from vocational education in Perkins II to career and technical education in Perkins III reflects a change in focus for the program.

The focus of Perkins V is on providing technical education and career pathways leading to credentialing. Department of Education Goals for Perkins V include:

- Aligning CTE programs to labor market demand
- Fostering collaboration among key stakeholders
- Strengthening the CTE teacher and faculty pipeline
- Expanding the reach and scope of guidance and counseling
- Promoting innovative practices
- Supporting state and locally-driven continuous improvement

The [Perkins Collaborative Resource Network](#) provides an overview of Perkins legislation and regulations, resources, and other information about Carl Perkins V. Information about current occupational employment statistics is available from "[Occupational Employment Statistics \(OES\)](#)." For more information regarding Alabama's interpretation of Perkins V, click the following: <https://www.alabamactso.org/perkinsv/>

2001 Bilingual Education Act

Bilingual/Immigrant State Grants are authorized under Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110, the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act). These grants ensure that limited-English-proficient (LEP) children attain adequate English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment, and meet the same challenging state academic standards as all children are expected to meet. Bilingual/Immigrant State Grants support states, school systems, and higher education institutions in developing their capacity to teach LEP students effectively. The funds can be used to upgrade instruction, revise curricula, or expand teacher training opportunities.

2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)

Information about NCLB is provided to show the progression from ESEA, to NCLB, and now ESSA. Our nation's largest and most comprehensive federal education law is the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), enacted in 1965. Congress reauthorized ESEA in December 2001, renaming it the No Child Left Behind Act. The stated goal of the reauthorized ESEA was to "close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers" through "stronger accountability for results, increased flexibility and local control, expanded options for parents, and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work."

ESEA provided supplemental assistance to help low-achieving children reach academic standards, funds teacher and principal training and recruitment efforts, assists limited-English-proficient (LEP) students in acquiring the language skills needed for academic achievement, and supports programs such as safe and drug-free schools and before- and after-school community learning centers.

NCLB Accountability for Student Learning: The reforms set forth in the reauthorized ESEA required new testing and accountability measures. For example, beginning in the 2005-2006 school years, states annually test students in third through eighth grade to track student progress in reading and math. Starting in the year 2007-2008, states administer similar yearly assessments in science. Test results are measured and reported to parents and the public. The test data must be broken down by race, gender, and other criteria to identify how groups are progressing in meeting state standards.

States set their own performance standards, but they must participate in the National Assessment of Education Progress tests, which offer a sampling of student performance nationwide. Schools must show within 12 years that every student meets state standards or is receiving supplemental educational services. ESEA contains a program designed to ensure children are reading before grade three and boosts bilingual education services to children not proficient in English.

Teachers under NCLB: All schools must have a qualified teacher in every classroom. Federal funds are available for teacher training. Class size reduction is eliminated as a separate program in ESEA, but teacher quality funds can be used to recruit and hire teachers.

NCLB Parent Involvement: Parent involvement provisions are stronger in the reauthorized ESEA. Incorporated in the law are many of the requirements included in the National PTA-initiated Parent Act, a bill designed to strengthen parents' participation in their children's education by broadening ESEA's existing Title I parent involvement policies and extending parent involvement requirements to other programs in the law. States and schools must report their parent involvement practices regarding safe and drug-free schools, education technology, and professional development activities. For the first time, ESEA defines the term "parent involvement." Based on PTA's National Standards for Parent and Family Involvement, the term "parent involvement" means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's education at schools; and that parents are full partners in their children's education and are included, as appropriate, in the decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child.

Other Features of NCLB: The features of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001(NCLB) range from block grants to states for innovative education programs to the sweeping requirement that all students must be academically "proficient" within 12 years. To demonstrate progress toward that goal, systems were required to publicize school report cards beginning in 2002-03 and begin testing third through eighth graders in reading and math against state standards in 2005-06. Further, within four years of the law's enactment, all teachers in core academic subjects were required to be "highly qualified." Additional features of the legislation specified sanctions for low-performing schools and rewards for high-performing schools. Parents may request information from schools about teacher credentials and certification under the

“Parents Right to Know” provisions of the law. Schools falling below performance standards for multiple years must offer parents school choice options and supplemental education services, at no cost, provided by agencies outside the school system.

2015 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII, Part B

Originally passed in 1987, the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act had little impact on public schools until its reauthorization in January 2002 as a part of NCLB. Subtitle B of the act deals exclusively with education for homeless children and youths. It mandates that each state educational agency ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. Regulatory guidance in the act defines homelessness and obligates public school systems to review and revise any compulsory residency requirements or school enrollment or attendance regulations that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless students. The McKinney- Vento Act states that “homeless children and youths should have access to the education and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

The Act was reauthorized in December 2015 by Title IX, Part A of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). For more information, visit the [National Center for Homeless Education](#) website.

2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, 2009

On Feb. 13, 2009, Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 at the urging of President Obama. President Obama signed the act on February 19, 2009. ARRA, the stimulus program, was the most significant one-time infusion of federal education dollars to states and systems in the nation’s history. As the program took shape, Education Secretary Arne Duncan and other officials repeatedly warned states and systems to avoid spending the money in ways that could lead to dislocations when the gush of federal money came to an end (Recovery Act).

But from the start, those warnings seemed at odds with the stimulus law’s goal of jump-starting the economy, and the administration announced in the fall of 2010 that school systems had used stimulus money to save or create some 250,000 education jobs. A direct response to the economic crisis, ARRA had three immediate goals:

- Create new jobs and save existing ones
- Spur economic activity and invest in long-term growth
- Foster unprecedented levels of accountability and transparency in government spending.

ARRA funds were an additional appropriation to the funds currently authorized through NCLB. Four assurances were embedded in ARRA:

- Stronger standards and assessments
- Effective teachers and leaders
- Using data systems to improve instruction, and
- Turning around the lowest-performing schools

ARRA provided additional funding for Title I, Parts A and D, IDEA, and McKinney Vento Homeless Education and required that the funds be used as authorized in the current NCLB Act. The Alabama Governor’s Office also received additional funds to support state needs, including public education, through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF), also part of the stimulus package.

2010 NCLB/ESEA: Reauthorization

The Obama administration made its priorities for reauthorization somewhat clear, particularly through a document released on March 13, 2010, called the Blueprint for Education Reform. The blueprint emphasized four major areas:

- Improving teacher and principal effectiveness;
- Providing information to families to help them evaluate and improve their children's schools;
- Implementing college- and career-ready standards; and
- Improving student learning and achievement in America's lowest-performing schools by providing intensive support and effective interventions.

The blueprint challenged the nation to embrace education standards that would put America on a path to global leadership. It provided incentives for states to adopt academic standards that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and create accountability systems that measure student growth toward meeting the goal that all children graduate and succeed in college (ESEA Reauthorization: A Blueprint for Reform).

The Blueprint for Reform was organized around seven major themes:

- College Career Ready Students
- Great Teachers and Great Learners
- Meeting the Needs of English Learners and Diverse Learners
- A Complete Education
- Successful, Safe, and Healthy Students
- Fostering Innovation and Excellence
- Additional Cross-Cutting Priorities

Instead of labeling failures, as NCLB was noted for doing, the Blueprint for Education Reform proposed to reward successes. Many new funds released by the Obama Administration were competitive - Race to the Top and 1003(g) School Improvement Grants (SIG) are two examples.

2015 Every Student Succeeds Act ESSA (replaced NCLB)

The main purpose of ESSA is to make sure public schools provide a quality education for all children. ESSA [gives states more of a say](#) in how schools account for student achievement. This includes the achievement of disadvantaged students. These students fall into four key groups:

- Students in poverty
- Minorities
- Students who receive [special education](#)
- Those with limited English language skills

Under ESSA, states get to decide the education plans for their schools within a framework provided by the federal government. The law also offers parents a chance to weigh in on these plans. See <https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/laws-preschool-grade-12-education/every-student-succeeds-act> for more information about ESSA.

Each state plan must include a description of the following:

- Academic standards (must be “challenging” academic standards in reading, math, and science. This means a state’s curriculum must prepare students to succeed in college and in a career. Also, states must apply these standards to *all* students, including those with learning and attention issues.)
- Annual testing (States must test students in reading and math once a year, in grades 3 through 8, as well as once in high school. They must also test kids in science once in grade school, middle school, and high school. Also, states must provide *accommodations* on these tests and list them in students’ IEPs or 504 plans. Only 1 percent of students can be given “[alternate tests](#).”)
- School accountability (This means each state is responsible for having a plan in place to identify schools that are underperforming. States must identify at least five ways to measure school performance. Four required indicators include academic achievement, academic progress, English language proficiency, and high school graduation rates.)
- Goals for academic achievement (States must set ambitious goals to help struggling students and to close achievement gaps.)
- Plans for supporting and improving struggling schools (States must have Comprehensive Support and Improvement Plans for the lowest performing school and Targeted Support and Improvement Plans for schools where certain student groups are consistently underperforming.)
- State and local report cards (State report cards must include results of standardized testing, high school graduation rates, school funding information, and teacher qualifications. Report cards must give details for student subgroups.)

In March 2016, Governor Bentley appointed the Alabama ESSA Implementation Committee to guide the development of proposed components of Alabama’s ESSA plan. The work of this committee, with representatives from public schools, business and industry, State government, parents, and other stakeholder groups, continued throughout the fall semester of 2016. A presentation of their recommendations, pending receipt of final guidance and regulations from the U. S. Department of Education, was presented to the Alabama State Board of Education for consideration on November 10, 2016. On October 12, 2017, Governor Ivey submitted the final plan for ESSA implementation. The final plan and supporting documentation may be viewed at https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/ACC_2022920_AlabamaApprovedESSAPlan_V1.0.pdf

2.2 Current Law that Governs K-12 Public Education Policy

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

In December 2015, Congress passed Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), returning power to the states for the creation of their education accountability systems. States now have a tremendous opportunity to involve a diverse group of business and community leaders in developing ambitious goals and metrics for their unique student population and economic environment. This new law replaces the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which has been in place since 2002. The biggest shift in ESSA is that the law gives much greater flexibility for the design of statewide accountability systems. The law does preserve the requirement for states to have a system that addresses data by race, income, and learning needs; to test in at least math and reading in grades 3-8 and once in high school, as well as science in grade spans, and to identify low-performing schools requiring intervention.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, its many state and local chambers across the country, and the nation's public schools have a long and successful history of advocating on behalf of rigorous academic expectations for all students to prepare them for college and careers. In the next two years, the business community has an important role to play in ensuring that every state sets high goals and puts a plan in place to measure and meet those goals. Despite giving states more control, ESSA does require the following:

- Each state must implement a state-designed accountability system that includes long-term goals, such as the percentage of growth in third grade reading for African American students, measured by annual indicators, such as the end-of-year statewide reading exam;
- States must include academic indicators, such as student growth and proficiency, and school quality or student success indicators such as student or educator engagement, school climate and post-secondary readiness;
- States must report annually on the progress made in each of their schools;
- States must identify at least 5 percent of their lowest-performing Title I schools, high schools that fail to graduate one-third or more of their students, and schools for which a subgroup of students is consistently underperforming over a period of time, determined by the state, as needing comprehensive support;
- States must annually identify any school with a portion of its students that are consistently underperforming, based on all of the indicators in the state accountability system, as needing targeted intervention and support; and
- States and districts must work with the identified low-performing schools to determine the appropriate interventions to support student outcomes.

Prior to the passage of ESSA, NCLB required states to make adequate yearly progress toward 100 percent student proficiency in English/language arts and math on state tests by the 2013-2014 school year; otherwise, schools were deemed "in need of improvement" and subject to consequences. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Education implemented a waiver program offering states the opportunity to apply for flexibility from key provisions of the law. In exchange for additional prescriptive federal requirements, states that received a waiver had more flexibility in setting goals for schools, determining how to measure school performance, and identifying which schools needed additional support.

The U.S. Department of Education has already begun the rulemaking process to develop ESSA regulations and guidance. It is important that the business community is engaged in this process leading up to the 2017-2018 timeline for when states must implement a new accountability system. The business community can and should be a vocal advocate for the necessary elements of an accountability system that ensures all students are receiving a high-quality education that will prepare them for college and the demands of today's workforce.

Accountability is a process for determining how well districts and schools are serving students and taking action when a district or school is not achieving the desired outcomes. There is no silver bullet to creating an effective accountability system. There are, however, core principles of a strong state accountability system, which include:

- **HIGH EXPECTATIONS:** College and career-ready state standards, annual assessments aligned to those standards, and a rigorous benchmark for proficiency on the state assessments;
- **CLEAR AND AMBITIOUS STATEWIDE GOALS FOCUSED ON BOOSTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND CLOSING ACHIEVEMENT GAPS:** These goals need to be established at a minimum in reading and math assessment results as well as graduation rates;
- **ACCESSIBLE AND DISAGGREGATED DATA:** School and district performance results, disaggregated by race, income, and learning needs, that are publicly reported in a clear and transparent way;
- **STRAIGHTFORWARD SCHOOL RATINGS:** Easily explained school ratings or labels are based on a core set of accountability measures focused on student performance as well as progress for all groups of students; and
- **EVIDENCE-BASED INTERVENTION PLAN:** States require proven and effective interventions and appropriate consequences for schools that are not meeting their goals.

ESSA Accountability Reporting

See Section 8.1

ESSA – defining CSI and ATSI schools

See Section 8.2

Alabama Accountability Act (AAA)/Failing Schools

See Section 8.5

Alabama's Report Card

See Section 8.4

Career Technical Education/Perkins V

See Section 2.1

Alabama Literacy Act

See Section 7.2

Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide

See Section 7.3

Alabama EL/Multi-Lingual Framework

See Section 7.10

Alabama Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (AL-MTSS)

See Section 7.15

School Problem Solving Team – Section 7.16

Rtl – Section 7.17

Source : Alabama Consolidated State Plan – ESSA: <https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/laws-preschool-grade-12-education/esea/esea-consolidated-state-plans>

2.3 Other Federal Funding for Public Education

Each year, Congress budgets and appropriates funds for education. Currently, the federal school funding investment hovers around 8%, but most of that education funding is appropriated to elementary schools and post-secondary institutions. Federal education program "requirements" are not unfunded mandates because the conditions in federal law apply only when a state, LEA, or grantee voluntarily chooses to accept federal funds. Any state that does not want to abide by a federal program's requirements can simply choose not to accept the federal funds associated with that program. While most states choose to accept and use federal program funds, a few have forgone funds in the past for various reasons (Department of Education Budget Tables).

Formula Grants versus Competitive Grants

The following table lists the major NCLB/ESSA programs and identifies the programs awarded to LEAs based on a formula grant and those awarded to LEAs based on a competitive process. LEAs must meet specific criteria to be eligible to receive the formula grants and to apply for the competitive grants. In addition, some programs funded initially through NCLB are no longer active. Those programs are noted in the table by an asterisk (*).

Formula Grants versus Competitive Grants

Title	Common Name	Formula Grant	Competitive Grant
Title I, Part A	Improving Basic Programs Operated by LEAs	X	
*Title I, Part B, Subpart 1	Reading First	—	—
*Title I, Part B, Subpart 2	Early Reading First	—	—
Title I, Part B, Subpart 3	Even Start Family Literacy		X
Title I, Part C	Education of Migratory Children	X	
Title I, Part D	Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk	X	
*Title I, Part F	Comprehensive School Reform	—	—
Title II, Part A	Teacher and Principal Training and Recruitment	X	
Title II, Part B	Mathematics and Science Partnerships	X	
Title II, Part C	Innovation for Teacher Quality		X
Title II, Part D	Enhancing Education through Technology	X	X
Title III, Part A	English Language Acquisition	X	
*Title IV, Part A	Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities	—	—
Title IV, Part B	21 st Century Community Learning Centers		X
*Title V, Part A	Innovative Programs	—	—
Title VI, Part B	Rural Education Initiative	X	
Title VII, Part A	Indian Education	X	
Title VIII	Impact Aid		X
Title X, Part C	Homeless Education		X

2.4 Purpose and Use of Federal Funds

Each Title is developed for a specific purpose, and allocated funds must be used to support the specified purpose. The use of funds must be reasonable and necessary for the implementation of the program and must be allocable by federal regulations. If the use is not allowable by state laws, then federal funds may not be used. For example, it is an allowable use of federal funds for the purchase of food; however, because the State of Alabama prohibits the purchase of food with state funds, it is, therefore, an unallowable use of federal funds.

The Office of Management and Budgets (OMB) provides guidance on the allowable use of funds. Circular A-87 establishes principles and standards for determining costs for Federal awards carried out through grants, cost reimbursement contracts, and other agreements with State and local governments and federally recognized Indian tribal governments. Circular A-133 provides guidance for LEAs on the components of the required single audit.

It is vitally important for the LEA Superintendent to work closely with LEA Program Coordinators to ensure all funds are used in accordance with established laws and principles. There are times when system superintendents and program coordinators may have differing views on the administration of funds, and one or the other may seek additional guidance from the SDE. When this occurs, all parties responsible for the administration of funds should participate in the discussion to avoid conflict or confusion regarding the administration of funds. While the SDE provides guidance on the use of funds, the guidance does not always provide a “black and white” picture; the law is often “grey” regarding the use of funds. This allows LEAs the flexibility to make determinations regarding the use of funds based on the system's unique needs, as well as to base the use of federal funds on the determination of how other state and local funds are used.

2.5 US Department of Education Resources

The U. S. Department of Education (USDOE) provides information and links to valuable resources through its website, <http://www.ed.gov/>. The site's various sections or pages describe the latest available information on funding, policy, research, and education news. Blog posts, press releases, and major speeches on federal education policies and programs also contain helpful information for administrators.

More useful to LEAs, superintendents, and local school system curriculum personnel is the information found at the USDOE subsidiary, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), created in 2002. IES is composed of four centers: the National Center for Education Research (NCER), the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), and the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER). Extensive information about the NAEP assessment and data comparing student achievement across states is provided by IES in their section on [The Nation's Report Card](#). Local school system personnel involved in grant writing will find useful information from the IES publication of the Condition of Education (COE), a congressionally mandated annual report that summarizes important developments and trends in education using the latest available statistics. The report may be downloaded at <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/>

Roles: State Government

The Alabama legislature has constructed a state-level system with three state actors: the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Education, and the State Department of Education (ALSDE).

2.6 State Board of Education

The State Board of Education is an executive branch entity within the state government. Consequently, the rules passed by the State Board of Education are “regulations” or “regulatory law” (as opposed to the policies passed by local boards of education). State law gives the State Board the authority to take over local schools or school systems for academic reasons. The mission statement of the Alabama State Board of Education is as follows:

To provide a state system of education which is committed to academic excellence, and which provides education of the highest quality to all Alabama students, preparing them for the 21st century.

The following goals and initiatives of the Alabama State Board of Education demonstrate that curriculum and instruction are a high priority for the Board members:

- all children enter public education ready to learn
- increased public confidence in public education
- accountability and decision-making at appropriate levels
- high academic standards for all students
- a safe and disciplined learning environment
- adequate resources for a quality education
- well-qualified teachers and other school personnel

2.7 State Superintendent of Education

The State Superintendent of Education is the Alabama Board of Education's executive officer for the State Department of Education. The state superintendent is the state's top-appointed official over Alabama's K-12 public schools. In this capacity, the superintendent performs a major role in issues related to curriculum and instructional leadership. For example, the current superintendent oversees the implementation of the Education Accountability Law passed in the 1995 Legislative Session.

2.8 Code of Alabama (2001 Replacement)

The following tables provide an overview of the Code of Alabama sections that address the curriculum and instruction requirements. Note that a specified Section may apply to superintendents of city school systems, county school systems, or both. The content of these tables was extracted from the Law Training Guide compiled by Dr. Dave Dagley of the University of Alabama.

Table 1
Curriculum Requirements

Section	Requirement
16-6B-2	Specifies a core curriculum for all students. Require city and county superintendents to prescribe written courses of study and submit them for approval to their respective boards of education.
16-12-20	Require city and county boards of education to adopt a course of study and make copies of the course of study available to teachers and citizens.
16-35-4	Requires the State Board of Education, based upon the recommendation of the State Superintendent, to prescribe the minimum contents of courses of study for all grade levels.
16-35-1	Requires that a Courses of Study committee advise the State Superintendent on the course of study contents.
16-31-61	Requires local boards of education to adopt textbooks that have been approved by the State Board of Education.
16-36-62	Requires local boards of education to appoint local textbook committees to select textbooks from the State Board-approved list.
16-1-36	Requires tutoring for students who score below average scores on the SAT.
16-40-01	Requires instruction in physical education (excepting church schools).
16-40-1.1	Requires instruction in parenting skills and responsibility.
16-40-9	Requires instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
16-40	Describes the minimum contents to be included in sex education curricula.
16-40-3	Describes the minimum contents to be included in drug education curricula.
16-40A-4	Prohibits proposing or encouraging illegal conduct.
16-41	Requires that schools teach about the dangers of drugs.
16-41-5	Prohibits the exclusion of nonpublic schoolteachers or administrators from participating in in-service teacher education institutes or curriculum development programs established by Chapter 24.

Table 2
Instructional Requirements

Section	Superintendent	Requirement
16-8-3	County	Requires county boards of education to divide the county into compulsory school attendance zones.
16-11-20	City	Requires city boards of education to grade and standardize schools under their jurisdiction.
16-8-29	County	Requires county boards of education to grade and standardize schools under their jurisdiction.
16-8-36	Both	Stipulates the following grade levels unless otherwise authorized by the State Board of Education: Elementary Schools (1-6) Junior High (7-9) High Schools (10-12)
16-8-11	County	Requires superintendents to maintain a uniform and effective system of public schools throughout their counties.
16-8-30	County	Requires superintendents to establish a uniform opening date for schools throughout the county.
16-8-41 16-11-16	Both	Permit students (ages 5-8) to attend kindergarten.
16-8-28	County	Requires county boards of education to prescribe on the written recommendation of the county superintendent of education, courses of study and to supply printed copy of these courses of study to every teacher and to every interested citizen of the county.
16-11-20	City	Requires city board of education to adopt a course of study and provide printed copies to teachers and interested citizens.
16-11-23	City	Gives city boards of education the authority to establish libraries and special schools.
16-8-35	County	Charges county boards of education with prescribing the conditions for promotion from elementary school to junior high school and from junior high school to high school.

16-9-26	Both	Requires both county and city superintendents to visit
16-12-11		schools, observe management and instruction, and make recommendations for improvement.

2.9 Alabama Legislative Action Impacting Curriculum and Instruction (Code of Alabama)

Often, the Alabama Legislature's actions and the Governor's orders impact curriculum and instruction, as well as other areas, in Alabama public schools. Announcements of such actions usually come to the attention of local Superintendents and the Board of Education through newsletters, memoranda, or press releases.

In some cases, the legislation mandates curricula, policy statements, or the adoption of certain training or in-service programs for staff. In other cases, it specifies the exact content and/or topics of instruction to be included in courses or at certain grade levels. Chapter 19 of this document contains all currently required educator training and Alabama laws from 2010 to 2022.

AASB Legislative and Policy Agenda - <https://www.alabamaschoolboards.org/advocacy/legislative-policy-agenda>

Policy Tracker - <https://alison.legislature.state.al.us/bill-search>

2.10 Alabama Administrative Code (Alabama State Board of Education Chapter 290)

The Alabama Administrative Code is published by the Legislative Reference Service pursuant to subsection (e) of Section 41-2-7 of the Code of Alabama 1975. The Alabama Administrative Code is a compilation of the rules of all state agencies covered by the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act. The Code is compiled by agency generally in alphabetical order by agency name and includes a table of contents for each agency's rules. Example:

Career Education (290-080-020-.01) The Alabama Career Education State Plan, 1978-1983, adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to P.L. 95-207, is hereby incorporated by this rule and made a part of the Rules of the State Board of Education.

**Table 3
Curriculum and Instructional Requirements**

Chapter	Requirement
290-050-010	Kindergarten Programs: Specifies minimum standards for organizing kindergarten programs in Alabama schools, including teacher certification, teacher-pupil ratio, student age, daily schedule, transportation, classroom space, and program evaluation.

- 290-080-010 Special Programs 1 - Adult Education: Requires the State Board of Education to provide to individuals who are unable to successfully complete the requirements necessary to earn a high school diploma the opportunity to be administered the Tests of General Educational Development (GED) Test
- 290-080-020 Special Programs 1 - Career Education: The Alabama Career Education State Plan, 1978-1983, adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to P.L. 95-207, is hereby incorporated by this rule and made a part of the Rules of the State Board of Education. A copy of the state plan titled "Alabama Career Education State Plan" may be obtained from the State Superintendent of Education, State Department of Education.
- 290-080-030 Special Programs 1 - Child Nutrition Programs: Stipulates the conditions, standards, and procedures for operating child nutrition programs.
- 290-080-050 Special Programs 1 - Community Education: The State plan for community education, adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to Title VIII, P.L. 95-561, is hereby incorporated by this rule and made a part of the Rules of the State Board of Education. A copy of the state plan titled "Alabama Community Education State Plan" may be obtained from the State Superintendent of Education, Montgomery, Alabama 36103.
- 290-080-060 Special Programs 1—Approved Basic Skills Education Programs: This section stipulates the minimum standards approved basic skills education programs must meet regarding, for example, instructional objectives, participation limits, and certification issuance.
- 290-080-090 Special Programs 1—Child Identification: This section stipulates that education agencies serving children with disabilities must develop and implement procedures to ensure that all children within their jurisdiction, from birth to twenty-one, regardless of the severity of their disability, who need special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated.
- 290-2-2 School Facilities: Stipulates approval of construction and renovation of school facilities, construction requirements, requirements for a school to be classified as an approved center, and school site requirements.
- 290-2-3 Alabama Textbook Program: Stipulates procedures for the purchase of textbooks and other instructional materials, procedures for textbook adoption, and inventory systems and storage.
- 290-4-1 Education Accountability: Stipulates the authority that the State Superintendent of Education has in carrying out the review, examination, and supervisory responsibilities, to require reasonable and appropriate reports, and to conduct hearings for the purpose of ensuring that due process requirements are met. For example, the State Superintendent of Education shall have authority to

investigate the progress of schools and/or school systems that do not make consistent academic gains from year to year.

290-4-2 Instructional Services: Stipulates the policies regarding a unified, coordinated state testing program and the assessment required of students of special populations and for an Alabama High School Diploma

Additional information about the entire Alabama Administrative Code, including acquiring the code in hardcopy form, may be obtained by contacting the Legislative Reference Service, Administrative Procedure Division, 435 Alabama State House, Montgomery, Alabama 36130. Telephone: (334) 242-7570. Their website may be accessed at <http://www.alabamaadministrativecode.state.al.us/>

Amendment to AAC - <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/communication/legal/amendment-center/>

2.11 ALSDE Flexibility Waiver Process

In its Flexibility Request Waiver Application to the US Department of Education, the Alabama State Department of Education put forth Alabama Achieves, Alabama’s strategic plan for education, focused on closing achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates, and moving students to proficiency—but its primary emphasis is placed on college-/career- ready goals. Such an approach addresses the needs of students more globally with an eye on their futures, not just their present, resulting in a more balanced approach to assessment and offering annual growth expectations at the student, classroom, grade, school, system, and state levels.

Alabama Achieves Strategic Plan addresses all three principles of the waiver request:

Principle 1: College-and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students

Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support

Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

Alabama’s proposed statewide accountability system has been designed to make annual determinations based on the following four different categories of components:

- college-and career-ready students;
- school-and system-level metrics shown to be leading indicators of students’ success;
- teacher and leader effectiveness based on multiple measures of student learning and
- a local indicator taken from the school’s/system’s improvement plan.

The new state accountability system also incorporates core components found in Act 2012-402, recently passed by the Alabama Legislature, which requires the State Superintendent of Education to develop a school grading system reflective of school and system performance. The proposed accountability model maintains the focus on proficiency, increasing the quality of instruction and improved outcomes for diverse populations that were the hallmark of No Child Left Behind, but it increases the acceptable standard of achievement to college- and career-readiness while at the same time allowing schools and systems to address an issue that is specific to their own situations. The Alabama Plan 2020 approach to accountability moves the focus of accountability off of a single

test and towards a more comprehensive set of measures. This move will ensure that all schools are provided an opportunity to adequately and accurately showcase their strengths and identify areas for improvement.

2.12 Physical Facilities: Office of the State Architect

The office of the State Architect provides assistance and advice to local school systems for the design and construction of new school facilities and for the renovation of existing facilities. Local school systems review and submit a Capital Plan Report annually that identifies facility needs and long-range planning information. The Capital Plan and a current facilities assessment are due to the ALSDE each year by September 15. Public School Funds (PSF) may not be released to a school system until its Capital Plan has been approved.

The duties of the State Architect's office include:

- Reviews and approves schematic, preliminary, and final plans and specifications for projects involving alterations, additions, and new construction of schools.
- Reviews and approves architectural agreements, construction contracts, and change orders.
- Advises local boards of education with design, cost estimates, and construction methods for school buildings.
- Advises project architects and engineers with respect to design, bidding, and construction of schools.
- Administers K-12 State Bond issues for the Alabama Public School and College Authority.
- Prepares deeds and leases for property sold or exchanged by county systems.
- Inspects and approves all new sites for school construction.
- Generates and maintains a complete inventory of all school facilities.
- Responsible for yearly Capital Planning and Assessment of facilities as required by the Foundation Program.

Plans for new buildings, additions, and major renovations, regardless of the source of funding for these projects, must be approved by the State Department of Education and the Alabama Building Commission. The current edition of the Alabama Building Commission (ABC) uniform documents used to guide school construction may be accessed at <https://adeca.alabama.gov/wp-content/uploads/A-School-Districts-Guide-to-Building-Commissioning.pdf#:~:text=This%20guide%20addresses%20K%20-%2012%20schools%2C,process%20of%20assuring%20that%20those%20standards%20are>

LEA Capital Plans and Resources can be accessed at <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/school-architect/#Files>

2.13 Physical Facilities: School Site Requirements

The school grounds must be large enough to provide outdoor areas for physical education and recreation. The minimum requirements for school sites (as described in the Alabama Administrative Code Chapter 290-2-2-.04) are as follows:

An elementary school is a school with any combination of grades K-8, and it must not contain a grade above 8.

- Both existing and proposed elementary schools must have a base of five acres of land plus one acre for every 100 students.

A middle school is a school with a combination of grades 4-9, but not including both grades 4 and 9.

- Both existing and proposed middle schools must have a base of ten acres of land plus one acre for every 100 students.

A secondary school is a school with any combination of grades 5-12 but must contain a grade above eight.

- Existing secondary schools must have a base of 15 acres of land plus one acre for every 100 students.
- A proposed secondary school must have a minimum base of 30 acres of land plus one acre for every 100 students.

A unit school is a school that includes grades below five and above eight with a principal on a single campus.

- An existing unit school must have a minimum of 25 acres of land.
- A proposed unit school must have a minimum base of 30 acres of land plus one acre for every 100 students.

Area Vocational Schools (Career Technical Centers).

- Both existing and proposed area vocational schools (Career Technical Centers) must have a minimum of 10 acres of land.

2.14 Physical Facilities: New Thinking About School Facilities

With the proliferation of technology and emphasis on 21st-century learning outcomes, many education writers and researchers are examining the future designs of school facilities. Superintendents contemplating growing student populations and decreasing budgets must consider innovative uses of school facilities and must lead efforts to reexamine school buildings in light of 21st-century needs. An excellent resource is the 2009 edition of *Teaching the Digital Generation: No More Cookie-Cutter High Schools* by Kelly, McCain, and Jukes (Corwin Press, CA: 2009). In the introduction, the authors point out the impetus for the book:

The 21st century is a fundamentally different environment that is demanding completely new ideas for how things get done. These sweeping changes are occurring so rapidly and are of such magnitude that education must quickly adapt or face the very real prospect of becoming irrelevant. It is absolutely critical that everyone involved in education realize that change is not optional for schools today.

Kelly, McCain, and Jukes provide a very dramatic and memorable discussion of their concept of TTWWADI (The Way We've Always Done It). They embrace the belief that TTWWADI is a major cause of the lack of innovation and positive educational change. Creative and interesting new ideas about what schools could look like, how technology can enhance education and reduce costs, and designs for futuristic spaces for schooling are presented in the book.

Additional interesting considerations for future school facilities and school renovation projects can be found at <http://thegreenmarket.blogspot.com/2010/09/future-of-green-school-buildings.html>

2.15 Alabama Courses of Study

The Courses of Study developed by the Alabama State Department of Education and adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education contain the minimum content standards for the curriculum in public schools in Alabama. Committees of educators from local school systems, post-secondary institutions, and ALSDE staff work to revise courses of study for the various subjects and content areas. Drafts of the proposed course of study are available for public comment, input, and review on the ALSDE website after the committee work is complete.

The six-year cycle for revising content standards and courses of study corresponds to and precedes the textbook adoption cycle by one year. After adoption at the state level, local school systems have a semester or academic year to prepare for and implement the new course content.

The table below reflects the schedule for revising the Alabama courses of study and adopting textbooks from 2012 to 2022.

Alabama Cycles for Curriculum Revision, Textbook Adoption, and Curriculum Implementation – 2010-2022

Alabama Courses of Study Standards and State Textbook Adoption Cycle⁴
 UPDATED November 2021

State Standards Development and Adoption	AL Textbook Adoption	Subject Area	LEA Textbook Adoption	State Contract Begins	LEA COS Implementation Begins	Expected DRAFT NAEP Framework Released	NAEP Framework Implementation
2022 (January) - 2023 (March)	2023 (December)	CTE--Cosmetology; Education and Training; Hospitality and Tourism Library Media	2023-2024 (May)	2024	SY 2024-2025	N/A	N/A
2023 (January) - 2024 (March)	2024 (December)	Science CTE--Arts, AV Technology & Communications; Human Services; Health Science Counseling & Guidance	2024-2025 (May)	2025	SY 2025-2026	2022-2024	2028
2024 (January) - 2025 (March)	2025 (December)	Arts Education	2025-2026 (May)	2026	SY 2026-2027	N/A	N/A
2025 (January) - 2026 (March)	2026 (December)	Digital Literacy and Computer Science	2026-2027 (May)	2027	SY 2027-2028	N/A	N/A
2026 (January) - 2027 (March)	2027 (December)	Social Studies World Languages CTE--Agriculture Food & Natural Resources; Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Safety; STEM; Manufacturing	2027-2028 (May)	2028	SY 2028-2029	N/A	2012/2014*
2027 (January) - 2028 (March)	2028 (December)	Health Physical Education CTE--Architecture & Construction; Cosmetology; Hospitality & Tourism; Education & Training; Transportation, Distribution and Logistics	2028-2029 (May)	2029	SY 2029-2030	N/A	N/A
2028 (January) - 2029 (March)	2029 (December)	Mathematics CTE--Business Management & Administration; Finance; Marketing; Information Technology; Work-Based Learning	2029-2030 (May)	2030	SY 2030-2031	2019	2025
2029 (January) - 2030 (March)	2030 (December)	Digital Literacy and Computer Science	2030-2031 (May)	2031	SY 2031-2032	N/A	N/A
2030 (January) - 2031 (March)	2031 (December)	English Language Arts CTE--Arts, AV Technology & Communications; Human Services; Health Science	2031-2032 (May)	2032	SY 2032-2033	2020	2026

⁴Indicates most recent publications of NAEP Frameworks for U.S. History, Civics, and Geography (2014) and Economics (2012). As of November 2021, NAEP has not published a schedule for updating these frameworks.
⁵The adoption schedule for each subject area shall be determined by the State Superintendent of Education based on the courses of study development schedule, knowledge-based changes, financial considerations, the need for staggered adoption schedules, needs expressed by the local superintendents, contract expiration dates, and other factors deemed appropriate by the State Superintendent of Education. Ala. Code 1975 § 16-30-41

11/01/2021

2.16 Alabama Governor’s Education Initiative – Strong Start, Strong Finish

Alabama Governor Kay Ivey launched the Strong Start, Strong Finish (SSSF) education initiative. SSSF integrates Alabama’s early childhood education, K-12 education, and workforce development efforts into a seamless educational journey for all Alabamans. The website can be accessed at <https://governor.alabama.gov/priorities/>.

The three major components of SSSF are: 1) Pre-Kindergarten through Third Grade (Pre through Three), 2) Computer Science for Alabama (CS4AL), and 3) Advanced Training leads to Better Jobs (Advanced Training, Better Jobs). The measurable goals include the following:

- Securing Alabama First-Class Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) program state-wide.
- Ensuring all of Alabama’s third graders are proficient readers by 2022.

- Offering a rigorous computer science course at all middle and high schools by 2022.
- Prepare 500,000 more Alabamians to enter the workforce with high-quality postsecondary degrees, certificates, and/or credentials.

Pre-Kindergarten through Third Grade (Pre through Three):

The [W.K. Kellogg Foundation](#) has awarded Alabama a significant grant to support the launch of the Pre-K through Third Grade Integrated Approach to Early Learning pilot program (“P-3”). The P-3 pilot focuses on leadership, instruction, and assessment to promote student achievement from birth to age eight. The P-3 pilot includes the Governor’s literacy focus, The **“Alabama Campaign for Grade-Level Reading,”** which focuses on five primary areas:

1. School Readiness – Promote home-visiting programs which encourage parents to read to their children
2. Chronic Absenteeism – Help schools develop best practices to prevent students from missing 15 or more days of school in one academic year
3. The Summer Learning Slide – Expand the offering of summertime educational enrichment programs to low-income families
4. Parents as First Teachers – Provide access to educational tools to help parents nurture and teach their children at a young age outside of the classroom
5. Childhood Poverty – Address health issues and obstacles for low-income children

Computer Science for Alabama (CS4AL):

The [Governor’s Advisory Council for Computer Science Education](#) is made up of educators, business and industry representatives, and government leaders. The council has made the following recommendations: (1) Create high-quality academic K-12 computer science standards to guide the implementation of courses; (2) Allocate funding to enable all schools to offer CS through the professional development of teachers.

Governor Ivey also established the Governor’s Advisory Council for Excellence in STEM (Governor’s ACES) to focus on five priorities: (1) STEM Exploration and Discovery, (2) Numeracy and STEM Fluency, (3) Enhancing the STEM Educator Pipeline (4) Developing an Education-to-Workforce Pipeline for In-Demand STEM Careers (5) Fostering Diversity in STEM Education and Careers. The Governor’s ACES will develop and deliver to Governor Ivey a report no later than June 30, 2018, detailing a comprehensive plan to implement the Governor’s ACES’s five absolute priorities and the strategies and goals accompanying each of the absolute priorities.

Advanced Training Leads to Better Jobs (Advanced Training, Better Jobs):

The Governor’s [Alabama Attainment Committee](#), a subcommittee of the [Alabama Workforce Council \(AWC\)](#), was created to develop a statewide goal for postsecondary attainment so that Alabamians are prepared to meet current and future workforce demands. Post-secondary attainment is focused on education programs beyond high school that provide students with an earned degree, certification, and/or credential. The Alabama Attainment Committee has mapped out Alabama’s future workforce needs and has established a goal of adding 500,000 high-skilled employees to Alabama’s workforce by 2025. The five-priority areas of focus include the following:

1. Awareness of the need for skilled workers
2. Improving access to educational resources and support for students as they pursue new skills
3. Creating paths from education and training to high-demand jobs

4. Building collaboration among partners at the state, regional, and local levels to support post-secondary educational achievement
5. Tracking results and fine-tuning programs based on the data

These focus areas will promote work-based learning opportunities, such as internships and apprenticeships. It will also connect students between the ages of 16 and 29 with classroom learning, providing skills normally learned in an occupational setting while providing career opportunities to these same individuals. The newly formed Alabama Office of Apprenticeship will play a role in developing partnerships for internships and apprenticeships for high school students, as well as coordinate the organization and transparency of credentials in Alabama.

2.17 Governor's STEM Council

The Alabama STEM Council advises on ways to improve STEM-related education, career awareness, and workforce development in the state.

The Alabama STEM Council was formed on September 21, 2020, by Governor Kay Ivey's Executive Order No. 721. The purpose of the Council is "to advise the Legislature, the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the State Department of Education on ways to improve STEM-related education, career awareness, and workforce development" across Alabama.

The Council members represent Alabama businesses, education, and state government leaders. It builds on the work of [Alabama's Roadmap for STEM Success and](#) strategic plan for STEM Education and is situated administratively within AIDT in the Department of Commerce.

2.18 Alabama State Department of Education

The State Department of Education (ALSDE) operates under the direction of the State Superintendent of Education with the advice and counsel of the State Board of Education. The duties of the Department of Education are to assist in executing the policies and procedures authorized by law and by regulations by the State Board of Education.

The Alabama State Department of Education is organized through offices performing related functions. A brief description of the responsibilities of each office is described below. The directors, specialists, staff, and publications of each office may be accessed through links on the ALSDE website. <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/>

Office of Communications: The Communications Office uses a plan of aggressive communications to increase awareness and understanding of the State Board of Education's high academic standards, goals and initiatives, and policies. The section also publishes Alabama Education News, directs news media relations, coordinates various teacher and school recognition programs, and conducts public information efforts.

Office of Education Information and Accountability: The Education Information and Accountability team works with the SDE section internally and with LEAs across the state, seeking quality data for the decision-making process. The goal is to assist each section at the Alabama Department of Education to meet the objectives within Plan 2020 as set by the State Superintendent and the State

Board of Education. The accountability team is responsible for managing and developing the state accountability program as it pertains to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations and reporting. This section supports the implementation of the accountability law as defined by the Alabama Legislature and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Federal Legislation. Additional LEA support for E-Rate, Alabama K-12 Joint Purchasing (ALJP), and STIPD programs is also provided through this office.

Office of General Counsel: The Office of General Counsel (OGC) provides legal counsel to the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Education, and the State Department of Education. The OGC reviews and provides suggestions on the interpretation of statutory and case precedents. In addition to legal compliance review, the OGC handles all litigation involving the department, the State Board, and the State Superintendent. The attorneys within the office advise local Alabama school systems as needed when issues of potential statewide impact arise.

Office of Information Systems: The Information Systems section is responsible for all programming, technical, production control, and application development operations within the State Department of Education. Primary responsibilities include database management, software development, technical support, data management and analysis, functional analysis, and project management. Additional responsibilities involve the development and maintenance of the State Department of Education's website, coordination of data systems services to school systems throughout the State, and report preparation and distribution in response to internal and external requests for information. Activities of this section include technical assistance, employee training, inventory and disposition of equipment, and equipment repair and maintenance. The Data Collection office within Information Systems serves as the primary supplier of teacher and student information for K-12 education. The data collected serves as the basis for the distribution of state funds to the LEAs and for accountability reporting. To carry out its mission, the Data Collection office:

- develops computer-based data collection forms,
- prepares reporting specifications and coordinates with vendors of student and financial systems to facilitate reporting directly from their systems,
- provides technical assistance to LEA personnel using state-provided programs, and
- develops computer programs to process the reported data for use within the department.

Office of Financial Management: This office is responsible for all accounting activities for the SDE, including budgeting and budgetary control; compliance with state and federal laws, regulations, and policies; all fiscal transactions; departmental payrolls; financial and technical assistance to LEAs; and coordination with auditors from the State Examiners of Public Accounts and Federal Agencies regarding audits of state and federal programs. Units within this office include:

- SDE Accounting
- Payroll
- LEA Accounting
- LEA Funding and State Audits
- Operations

Office of Human Resources: This office coordinates all personnel actions for each division of the Department, including the Office of Disability Determination. This includes all matters related to

employee pay, hiring, promotions, terminations, separations, transfers, and retirements. In addition, this office is also responsible for the administration of all staff performance appraisals and any disciplinary actions, if applicable. All services are provided in accordance with the Rules of the State Personnel Board and departmental policies and procedures.

Office of Learning Support: The Office of Learning Support collaborates with other offices to ensure that all students are engaged in relevant and rigorous learning experiences in an orderly, safe, and caring environment. The Office of Learning Support sections provide services, training, and resources for schools and districts to improve instruction and student achievement. Within this office, specific areas of responsibility and assistance are provided through these sections:

Federal Programs: The major responsibilities of the Federal Programs Section are to administer all federally funded education programs and to provide technical assistance to local education agencies and schools by:

- providing technical assistance related to federal programs in local education agencies and schools as part of Alabama's support process;
- promoting, supervising, and coordinating statewide educational programs with federal programs;
- assisting schools in developing, revising, and implementing their school-wide, targeted-assistance, and continuous improvement plans;
- providing technical assistance related to federal programs in local education agencies and schools as part of Alabama's support process;
- approving consolidated applications and amendments submitted by local education agencies.

Prevention and Support Services: This office provides technical assistance to school and school system personnel in the areas of school safety, discipline, dropout prevention, attendance, the Alabama Student Assistance Plan, Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities plans and programs, the comprehensive guidance and counseling program, the Alabama School Health Services (ASHS), behavior support plans (BSP), and School Incident Reporting (SIR).

Special Education Services: Special Education Services (SES) provides technical assistance to all education agencies serving Alabama's gifted children as well as children with disabilities. SES is also responsible for ensuring that education agencies providing services comply with all federal and state laws and regulations and for processing all complaints and requests for due process hearings and mediation regarding special education issues. Through the SES office, schools and systems may access information regarding federal regulations, special education process charts, due process for special education students, discipline of special education students, mediation, special education complaints, manifestation determinations, and surrogate parents. Personnel are available to provide technical assistance, resources, and training for LEAs on the identification of gifted and preschool special needs students, programs for students with specific disabilities, assistive technology, instructional modifications and accommodations, alternative assessment, special education budgets, special education program applications, and focused monitoring.

Technology Initiatives: The Office of Technology Initiatives serves as a single point of contact in school system technology planning. This office implements the Alabama Technology Plan for K-12

Education, leads the ACCESS distance learning program, and supports LEAs in technology planning. It is responsible for responding to requests from organizations and agencies needing technology data and maintaining a database of technology compiled from yearly survey reports. The Technology Initiatives office coordinates and implements all aspects of the Alabama Educational Technology Conference. LEAs may receive assistance and information from this office about the Alabama Learning Exchange (ALEX), the Alabama Virtual Library, the federal Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) Title II Part D grant program, eLearning Alabama, E-Rate, the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the Technology in Motion professional development program, and technology standards. School systems may request specific technology training for administrators and teachers through this SDE office.

Office of Student Learning: The Office of Student Learning (OSL) exists to support school systems and schools in improving the learning for all students. The following SDE sections comprise the OSL and are committed to working together to provide a seamless system of service to school systems:

- **Assessment:** This office manages each facet of the state testing program, overseeing the development, administration, scoring, and reporting of all required tests for K-12 students in Alabama.
- **AMSTI:** The mission of the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) is to improve math and science teaching in Alabama so that all students develop the knowledge and skills necessary for success in postsecondary studies and in the workforce. To accomplish this, AMSTI provides teachers with ongoing, grade, and subject-level professional development and the equipment and materials needed to teach math and science using hands-on, activity-based instruction.
- **ARI:** The Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) is a statewide K-12 initiative managed by the Department of Education. The goal of the ARI is to significantly improve reading instruction and ultimately achieve 100% literacy among public school students. The Alabama Reading Initiative provides differentiated levels of support, including professional development, onsite support, and school coaches, to over 1,000 schools. The initiative focuses intensely on three aspects of the teaching of reading: preventing reading difficulties, identifying struggling readers and intervening to help them become proficient readers, and expanding the reading power of all students.
- **Career Technical Education:** The Career and Technical Education Section facilitates career and technical education programming at the state and federal levels in all local education agencies and selected institutionalized environments. The staff assists in delivering state-of-the-art, articulated career technical and academic education.
- **Curriculum:** This office is responsible for developing, implementing, and assessing the minimum curriculum content (standards) and course design for K-12 students in public schools. It also provides instructional support, including courses of study, instructional materials and research, curriculum alignment materials, and the textbook adoption program.

- **Instructional Services:** The Instructional Services office is responsible for assisting schools with the frameworks/systems/supports needed to provide effective instruction. Primary responsibilities include School Improvement, Response to Instruction (RtI), and Making Middle Grades Work. Additional responsibilities include Awards, Grants, Scholarships, Advanced Placement programs, International Baccalaureate, Instructional Partners, and Instructional Strategies Project. Instructional Services also shares responsibility for social sciences projects, the new College- and Career-Ready Standards for Mathematics and English/Language Arts, and High Schools that Work.

Office of Supporting Programs: The Office of Supporting Programs is responsible for implementing the Child Nutrition Program, Transportation Program, School Architect, Local School System Fiscal Accountability, and Compliance Monitoring. The staff consists of well-trained individuals who specialize in these areas. The mission is to assist schools in providing the best overall educational experiences possible through the effective implementation of each individual program and to assist in making every child graduate and every graduate prepared. Offices within the Supporting Programs Office assist school systems with facets of school operation that contribute to an effective, well-rounded system of support for the instructional program:

- **Child Nutrition Programs:** This office is responsible for managing and supervising all aspects of the state Child Nutrition Program in both school nutrition and preschool nutrition settings. Activities include interpretation of federal laws and state laws, policies, program assessments, audits, and reviews; the processing and allocation of United States Department of Agriculture commodities; operation of the statewide procurement system to ensure high quality, cost-efficient products for all school systems that participate, and the provision of training and technical assistance.
- **LEA Accounting:** Responsible for the determination of state appropriations to Alabama school systems and ensures accountability requirements for school systems as mandated. Activities include K-12 and State Department of Education funding, budget planning, local education agency audits, warrants, and technical assistance to local school systems.

School Architect: The Office of the State School Architect oversees the required Capital Plans submitted by LEAS. In addition, this office performs the following functions:

- Reviews and approves schematic, preliminary, and final plans and specifications for projects involving alterations, additions, and new construction of schools.
- Reviews and approves architectural agreements, construction contracts, and change orders.
- Advises local boards of education with design, cost estimates, and construction methods for school buildings.
- Advises project architects and engineers with respect to design, bidding, and construction of schools.
- Administers K-12 State Bond issues for the Alabama Public School and College Authority.
- Prepares deeds and leases for property sold or exchanged by county systems.
- Inspects and approves all new sites for school construction.
- Generates and maintains a complete inventory of all school facilities.

- Responsible for yearly Capital Planning and Assessment of facilities as required by the Foundation Program.

Pupil Transportation: Responsible for the management of a statewide comprehensive student transportation program. Activities include:

- School bus inspection
- Fleet renewal assistance
- Driver Education Programs
- Training and certification of school bus drivers, transportation supervisors, and other transportation personnel
- Technical assistance with transportation issues for local school systems
- Monitoring and evaluation of state and local operations

Compliance Monitoring: The objective of the LEA Compliance Monitoring program is to adequately monitor all K-12 school systems in Alabama for compliance with state and federal regulations and State Board of Education mandates. The goal of this office continues to be one that will protect each school system as well as the state from any financial charge back that could possibly be imposed as a result of non-compliance of legal requirements that may be identified through the annual audit process performed by the Alabama Department of the Examiners of Public Accounts or by a local system's private audit firm. The SDE monitoring efforts have been designed to protect each local system's financial interest as specified in the cooperative agreement each system maintains with the US Department of Education. [The steps and procedures of LEA Compliance Monitoring related to the instructional programs of the school systems will be discussed with greater detail elsewhere in this manual.]

Office of Teaching and Leading: The Office of Teaching and Leading provides services related to teacher/educator recruitment, preparation programs, testing, placement, formative evaluation of educators, professional development, verification of educators' higher degrees for pay purposes, and identification of highly qualified teachers based on federal guidelines. This office is responsible for ensuring that Alabama colleges and universities meet the continuously updated teacher education program approval and certification standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE). Individuals who satisfy background clearance requirements, complete approved programs in Alabama, or present valid professional educator certificates earned from other states and meet SBE test requirements may apply for Alabama certification. Individuals who meet alternative approach criteria adopted by the SBE may also apply for an alternative approach and professional educator certificates. Through EDUCATE Alabama/LEAD Alabama, this office is responsible for educator and leader formative assessment and mentoring, providing quality professional development opportunities, and identifying Torchbearer schools.

Office of Research and Development: The Research and Development Section is responsible for utilizing data to examine how current initiatives and educational practices advocated by the Alabama Department of Education and/or Local Education Agencies impact students' academic and social development. Research and Development is also responsible for the delivery of data and analytics necessary to ensure informed decision-making regarding future efforts.

2.19 ALSDE Differentiated Support for School Systems

https://www.alabamaachievers.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/SBOE_20221114_OSI-Update-November-2022_V1.0.pdf

The goal of the ALSDE is to build capacity at the system and school level to engage in continual improvement practices that impact student achievement, close achievement gaps, promote student growth, and increase the number of graduates who are prepared for college and careers. All ALSDE efforts to support this goal will be customized for each of the systems based on their current data and capacity. There are common expectations for all systems and schools to plan for continuous improvement. However, when it comes to interventions and supports, one size does not fit all. An accurate and comprehensive on-site assessment of the lowest-performing systems will determine precise strategies for improvement and support. This assessment will be based on the eight turnaround principles:

1. **School Leadership:** The principal has the ability to lead the turnaround effort.
2. **School Climate and Culture:** A climate conducive to learning and a culture of high expectations are evident.
3. **Effective Instruction:** Teachers utilize research-based effective instruction to meet the needs of all students.
4. **Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System:** Teachers have the foundational documents and instructional materials needed to teach according to the rigorous college—and career-ready standards that have been adopted.
5. **Effective Staffing Practices:** The system and school have skills to better recruit, retain, and develop effective teachers and school leaders.
6. **Enabling the Effective Use of Data:** There is schoolwide use of data focused on improving teaching and learning, as well as climate and culture.
7. **Effective Use of Time:** Time is designed to better meet student needs and increase teacher collaboration focused on improving teaching and learning.
8. **Effective Family and Community Engagement:** There is a system for increasing academically focused family and community engagement.

2.20 ALSDE State-Mandated Plans

The Code of Alabama §16-13-231 and §16-13-234 and the Alabama Administrative Code 290-1-4.01 require local education agencies (LEAs) to submit annual plans in the following areas:

- **Capital Improvement Plan:** A proposed building program that sets out in detail the location of all present and proposed buildings, which indicates proposed educational centers and grades to be taught at these centers and provides schools for all children of the local board of education.
- **Transportation Plan:** Except for city boards of education that do not maintain a transportation system, a proposed transportation program showing the proposed routing of buses and the condition of all roads to be used for transportation.
- **Professional Development Plan:** A proposed professional development program that details the professional development needs of employees of the local board of education.

- **Technology Plan:** A proposed technology program that details the proposed expenditures of technology funds.
- **Special Education Plan:** A proposed program for providing services to students with disabilities and gifted students in compliance with applicable state and federal laws.
- **Plan for At-Risk Students:** A proposed program for providing educational services to at-risk students in compliance with applicable state and federal laws. The proposed program for at-risk students shall include the provision that all funds allocated shall be spent for at-risk students.
- **Career Technical Education Program Improvement Plan:** A proposed program for providing vocational educational services in compliance with applicable state and federal laws.

Federal Programs Plan: In addition to the state-mandated plans related to the Foundation Program described above, school systems receiving federal funds (Title I, Title II, Title III, Title VI-B, etc.) are required to submit Federal Programs Consolidated Applications that describe the school system plan for using federal funds to improve student achievement in accordance with federal guidelines and regulations.

Continuous Improvement Plan: Alabama’s Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) should be used by all schools in improvement and Title I schools not in improvement to facilitate the planning process. Three templates are available based on the specific school scenario: Title I Schoolwide, Title I Targeted Assistance, or Non-Title. The final plan must be approved by the local education agency’s (LEA’s) board members and signed by the superintendent, federal programs coordinator, principal, and committee members. A CIP is effective for a two-year period and should be reviewed and revised monthly. Changes to the ACIP process will be implemented as ESSA standards and rules are adopted and disseminated to LEAs.

- **CIP Requirements:** The CIP should be collaboratively developed by a school team that is representative of the challenges being addressed with support from the LEA. Team members that must be present include the principal, guidance counselor, system school improvement specialist (or other designee), appropriate content-area teachers, parent representatives, and student representatives (as appropriate). Depending on the data, additional members may include special population representatives (Technology Coordinator, Special Education, ELL, etc.), system federal programs coordinator, system chief school financial officer, community stakeholders, or any other member as appropriate.
- **CIP Purpose:** The CIP is a document designed to serve as a guide or roadmap to the school improvement effort of each school within a school system. A CIP should be a living document that should be reviewed regularly and revised in response to the school’s progress on the identified goals and strategies. Each plan must follow an approval process, with the final approval being given by the Board of Education. Once the plan is Board-approved and signed, it is not necessary to obtain additional Board approval when revisions are made to the plan.

Beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year, the ALSDE, in partnership with AdvancED (now Cognia), launched a new method for developing and submitting continuous improvement plans. The eProve platform is a 21st-century web-based management system specifically designed to support institutions as they engage in all aspects of their improvement journey. The eProve

streamlines AdvancEd-certified content and ALSDE content to empower institutions to create and administer custom surveys, tailor report outputs, conduct observations of student engagement, create continuous improvement plans, and more. Additional information about the Cogna/AdvancED/eProve platform is available from Andre Harrison at aharrison@advanc-ed.org or Jean Scott at jscott@alsde.edu.

2.21 ALSDE Compliance Monitoring

The objective of the LEA Compliance Monitoring program is to adequately monitor all K-12 school systems in Alabama for compliance with state and federal regulations and State Board of Education mandates. The goal of the Office of Compliance Monitoring continues to be one that will protect your school system as well as the state from any financial charge back that could possibly be imposed as a result of non-compliance of legal requirements that may be identified through the annual audit process performed by the Alabama Department of the Examiners of Public Accounts or by a local school system's private audit firm. The monitoring efforts have been designed to protect the local school system's financial interest as specified in the cooperative agreement each system maintains with the United States Department of Education. For information about Compliance Monitoring, visit the Alabama Achieves website <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/compliance-monitoring/>

3. ALABAMA CODE 290-3-1 AND OTHER REGULATORY PROCEDURES

To be added – A description of the legislative process from legislation to law for ALSDE guidelines.

3.1 The Alabama Literacy Act

The Alabama Literacy Act will require third graders not reading on grade level by the 2021-22 school year to be retained in the third grade. This law also calls for a renewed focus on early learning, in grades K-3 and requires schools to provide more support for struggling readers. The core tenets of the law are:

- Renewed focus on pre-k to third grade reading
- Targeted funding and resources to improve reading instruction
- Stronger teacher preparation in college to ensure new teachers are prepared for science-based reading instruction
- Early identification and additional support for students with dyslexia and other specific needs

Link to The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide:

https://www.aamu.edu/academics/colleges/education-humanities-behavioral-sciences/research-outreach-centers/regional-inservice-center/_documents/alabama-literacy-act-implementation-guide.pdf

Link to ALSDE <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/>

Quick links ARI Information

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pxY0NHPuAJyaDVF3nFNkr52LIWGXSVZI7RXWyKHyzUo/edit?tab=t.0>

3.2 The Alabama Numeracy Act

The Alabama Numeracy Act builds the capacity of elementary educators and ensures that they have the support and tools needed to be successful in the classroom and improve student achievement. It is a comprehensive statewide plan to address Alabama’s math crisis. The legislation includes intensive support for schools such as:

- K-5 math coaches in every elementary school
- high-quality instructional materials and curricula that are aligned to our Alabama-teacher written and vetted standards
- training for teachers and principals on using intensive interventions for struggling students
- accountability to ensure schools are making progress

Alabama Numeracy Act Overview: <https://policy.aplusala.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Numeracy-Act-1-Page-1.pdf>

Link to ALSDE Memo - Numeracy Act Requirements: https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/StateSuperIn_Memos_2023112_FY23-2019-The-Alabama-Numeracy-Act_V1.0.pdf

3.3 Teacher Bill of Rights

The Teachers' Bill of Rights was a piece of legislation championed by the Alabama Education Association in response to increasing student discipline and classroom disruption problems. It is designed to give teachers more authority to remove students who disrupt class and places more responsibility on the administration to address student discipline issues before returning those students to the teacher. Under this law, a teacher can exclude a student from the classroom if the student:

- Engages in disorderly conduct (“any conduct that intentionally disrupts, disturbs, or interferes with the teaching of students or disturbs the peace, order, or discipline at any school”);
- Behaves in a manner that obstructs the teaching or learning process of others in the classroom;
- Threatens, abuses, intimidates, or attempts to intimidate an education employee or another student;
- Willfully disobeys an education employee; or
- Uses abusive or profane language directed at an education employee.

The law also requires that the teacher follow their approved classroom management plan before excluding the student. Interestingly, the law does not delve into the details of what a classroom management plan must contain. Rather, it only requires that principals review and act on classroom management plans promptly and approve them before the tenth day of school each academic year. AASB has developed a comprehensive set of FAQs regarding implementation of the law, and they have addressed the policy implications in The Policy Pipeline. The Act requires each local board to adopt a policy establishing an appeal process that lets a teacher appeal to the board if:

- 1) A principal refuses to allow a student to be excluded from the classroom; or
- 2) A teacher believes the principal has prematurely allowed the student to return to the classroom.

It also calls upon the State Board of Education to adopt a model policy that reflects the requirements of the Act. Local boards have the option to adopt either the AASB or ALSDE model policy or another policy that meets the minimum requirements of the Act.

AASB provided input to the State Department on a model policy and a draft was presented to the State Board at the work session in early July. Final approval by the State Board is expected in August 2024. AASB's proposed policy has slight modifications to the ALSDE's model policy. AASB provides an [FAQ Document](#) and their model policy through AASB Policy Pipeline.

3.4 School Principalship Leadership & Mentoring Act

Ala. Code §§16-6I-1, et seq.

The School Principal Leadership and Mentoring Act, which the Legislature passed in 2023, required:

- The creation of the Alabama Principal Leadership Development System -- a mentoring program for new principals; and
- A continuing professional learning program for principals and assistant principals.

- The goal of the program is to increase the effectiveness of school administrators to improve outcomes for all students. A design team made up of representatives from major educational groups throughout the state is tasked with developing the program, and its work will be phased in over many years.

Properly certified principals and assistant principals who work full-time in public schools and complete the program, will receive annual stipends of up to \$10,000 and \$5,000, respectively, if they meet the program requirements. Additional stipends are available for principals who meet or exceed student growth goals in low-performing schools and high-poverty schools or those in low-performing or high-poverty schools.

AASB does not believe that a policy is necessary to participate in or implement this program. Specific information about implementation of the Act can be found on the [Alabama Principal Development System website](#).

3.5 Student Due Process

Act No. 2024-262 (effective October 1, 2024)

Since 2020, AASB and others in the education family have worked with legislators and groups to ensure students have a fair discipline process that respects local control without overly burdensome requirements. This year, after several years of failed efforts, a law governing the due process rights of students finally passed the Legislature. AASB’s FAQs on this law can be found [here](#).

The requirements of the Act are only triggered if the discipline falls into one of the following categories:

- Alternative school for more than 15 school days;
- Suspension from the regular school environment for 11-89 school days; or
- Expulsion from the regular school environment for 91-179 school days.

The “regular school environment” is defined as the learning environment provided by the local board, which includes in-school suspension and virtual school.

At a minimum, each system must provide at least the following in its discipline procedure if it is recommended that a student received covered discipline. The student is given reasonable written notice of the hearing delivered personally or by mail that includes:

- The date, time, place, and nature of the hearing;
- A short and plain statement detailing the alleged conduct the student is accused of;
- The provision of the Code of Student Conduct or state law violated;
- The proposed discipline;
- The student’s rights at the hearing (e.g. to testify, present evidence, have counsel, etc.); and
- The student’s right to waive the hearing and accept the discipline.

At least five days before the hearing, the student, parent or guardian, and legal counsel or advocate may review any evidence that may be used against them at the hearing (e.g. documents, video, written statements, etc.). If requested, the hearing is held within 10 school days of the

student's initial suspension. The hearing is held before the board or designee to decide if the student violated the Code of Student Conduct or the law;

An electronic or written record of the hearing is provided to the student, upon request; and

A written decision is issued within five school days of the hearing; that contains:

- The provision of the Code of Student Conduct or state law that the student is accused of violating;
- A statement detailing the information that will be included in the student's official record; and
- A statement detailing how the student can appeal the decision pursuant to the Code of Student Conduct and Ala. Code §12-15-115 which is an appeal to the juvenile court.

Note: This appeal to the local juvenile court is the same process that has been in place for decades.

The only new part is that we are now required to notify students of the procedure to appeal.

Students wishing to appeal must file a notice with the local juvenile court within 14 days of the board's decision.

While the Act does provide a student with the right to cross examine witnesses, cross examination is limited to witnesses who are present at the hearing and over the age of 14. Therefore, if your system has traditionally used school administrators to testify in student hearings rather than students, there will be no students present to cross examine and the identity of those students can remain confidential. The Act makes clear that no student can be subpoenaed or forced to testify at a discipline hearing. However, if a student voluntarily comes to the hearing to testify on behalf of a classmate, they will be subject to cross examination if they are over 14. Additionally, students facing discipline will be subject to cross examination if they are over 14. Of course, any adult who testifies will be subject to cross examination.

Nothing in this state law trumps the federal requirements for students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, or the Americans with Disabilities Act. Therefore, school systems need to also make sure they continue to provide students with disabilities with any protections they are entitled to under the law as it relates to discipline.

As a reminder, the Code of Student Conduct has traditionally been viewed as a matter of school board policy—even though it is not typically housed in the policy manual. Additionally, revisions to the Code of Student Conduct require board approval and should comply with the “meet and confer” procedural requirements for policy adoption and revision outlined later in this Edition.

As far as a policy regarding student conduct housed in the board's policy manual, AASB recommends a general policy that states that the board recognizes that it has the responsibility to create a code of student conduct and lays out the general parameters of its creation and adoption.

3.6 Parents Right To Know Act

Act No. 2024-35 (effective June 1, 2024)

The “Parents’ Right to Know” Act requires schools provide parents (references to “parents” include guardians) of enrolled students with information regarding the curricula. Supporters of the law say it encourages parental involvement and provides greater transparency to what schools are teaching. Critics argue this law further burdens teachers and creates an adverse relationship between parents and teachers.

At the start of every school year, the local superintendent must make sure each school has posted the current adopted curricula for each class on the school’s website. If the school does not have an accessible website, the curricula must be posted on the system’s website or the State Department’s website. If a new or revised curriculum is adopted, it must be posted within 30 calendar days.

Parents of students enrolled in a teacher’s class may make requests for detailed summaries of the following information directly to the teacher:

- instructional materials adopted by the local board;
- supplementary materials used in the classroom that were not adopted by the local board;
- and
- books available in the classroom for students to read.

For classes that require reading books, the parent may request the syllabus which must include the title of those books. The teacher can respond by email, phone, or other electronic means. No timetable is set out in the law, but the response time should be reasonable given the teacher’s workload and the amount of information requested.

If parents want more information about how the materials relate to the state-adopted content standards or wants to physically examine any materials used in the classroom, they may request that the local board allow the examination at its next work session. By law, the board must notify the parent and the teacher of the matter and the date and time of the next work session. Of course, this responsibility will fall to the superintendent since the board does not have administrative responsibilities within the school system. Additionally, not all boards conduct work sessions. If a parent wants to use this provision and your board does not normally hold work sessions, our guidance is to schedule a work session specifically for this purpose or schedule the examination at the end of a regular or special called meeting.

If a teacher fails to comply with the law, parents can file a complaint with the local superintendent. Superintendents should provide a form for this purpose. If the complaint is not resolved within 10 school days, the parent can file a complaint with the State Superintendent. Complaints are considered a confidential educational record and cannot be released except as allowed by this Act, the federal student records privacy regulation commonly known as “FERPA” (the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974), or other state laws.

There are also reporting requirements. By September 1 each year, each local superintendent is required to report the number of complaints filed during the previous school year to the State

Superintendent. If a local superintendent has no complaints, our guidance would be to report that fact so it is clear that the local superintendent has complied with this section. By October 1, the State Superintendent must report the total number of complaints filed statewide and by county to the Chairs of the Senate Education Policy Committee and the House of Representatives Education Policy Committee.

AASB has expressed their belief that it is not required that a school system should adopt a specific policy outlining these requirements since they are already stated in the law. Finally, some have raised concerns about whether copyrighted instructional materials can be shared under this Act. There is litigation currently pending in several states on similar laws that have raised questions related to licensing agreements, infringement concerns, fair-use exemptions, and other complex legal issues. Local boards should seek legal advice from their own attorneys in the event these issues arise.

3.7 The Alabama Textbook Law, Selection Procedures, Adoption Regulations

Chapter 36, Code of Alabama 1975 and subsequent amendments regulate the textbook adoption process for public schools in Alabama. In this legislation the State Textbook Committee is created for the purpose of considering the merit of the textbooks offered for use in the public elementary and high schools of the state and making recommendations for approval or rejection, or both, to the State Board of Education.

The State Textbook Committee is composed of 23 members. Four of the members are to be secondary school classroom teachers and four are to be elementary school classroom teachers. One of these eight members is appointed from each of the seven US congressional systems, and one shall be appointed statewide. Four members are appointed from the state at large, and these four members may be either classroom teachers or persons actively engaged in a supervisory or administrative capacity in the field of education. Two members of the committee must be employees of state institutions of high learning. These 14 members of the State Textbook Committee are appointed by the State Board of Education, upon nominations made by the State Superintendent of Education. Nine members are appointed by the Governor, subject to the confirmation of the Senate by April 1 of each year, one from each of the seven congressional systems and two appointed statewide. The two statewide appointees of the governor must be members of local boards of education at the time of their appointment. The nine members appointed by the governor are to have general knowledge of the subject area to be considered for textbook adoption and are to have a demonstrated ability to read and write at a post high school level. These nine members, other than the two local board of education members, are not to be employed in education. Rules regarding committee member confidentiality, integrity, voting, reporting, and potential conflicts of interest are described in the law.

Based upon the recommendations of the State Textbook Committee, the State Board of Education shall adopt textbooks from which members of local boards of education may adopt for use in their systems. Members of local boards of education may not adopt textbooks nor expend public funds for textbooks that have been rejected by the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education divides the subjects of study in the public schools so that all textbooks on a given subject for grades kindergarten through 12 shall be considered for adoption in one year. New adoptions made during any year are not to be used in the public schools until the next ensuing scholastic year.

The adoption schedule for each subject area is determined by the State Superintendent of Education based on the Courses of Study development schedule, knowledge-based changes, financial considerations, the need for staggered adoption schedules, needs expressed by the local superintendents, contract expiration dates, and other factors deemed appropriate by the State Superintendent of Education. Prior to adoptions by the State Board of Education, members of the public are allowed a reasonable amount of time to be heard concerning any book recommended for adoption or rejection. Adoption or rejection, or both, of any textbooks are made only at a public meeting of the State Board of Education. Notice of the time and place of the meeting to consider textbook adoptions and rejections must be given for at least 30 days by notice to news media and by posting a notice on a bulletin board or in some other conspicuous place in the offices of the State Department of Education.

Local textbook committees are appointed by each separate local board of education. The number, size, and composition (to include parents) of the committees are to be determined by each local board of education. A copy of local school board policies regarding local textbook committees is to be kept on file by each local superintendent. Names of each person serving on a local textbook committee are also to be kept on file in the local superintendent's office. Rules regarding committee member confidentiality, integrity, voting, reporting, and potential conflicts of interest are described in the law.

No textbook is to be used in any public school of this state unless recommended by a local textbook committee and, upon the recommendation of a local superintendent, adopted by the local board of education. The adoption of a textbook by a local board of education is to be by majority vote of the local board of education and to be for a period determined by the State Superintendent of Education. Not later than 30 days after the date of the local adoption, the local superintendent of education is to file a report with the State Superintendent of Education listing the title, the name of the author, the publisher, and the date of adoption of the textbook with verification to the State Superintendent that all procedures described in the textbook law have been followed.

Publishers are to furnish samples of all state-adopted textbook to each local board of education for evaluation by the local textbook committee. One copy of each textbook adopted by the local textbook committee shall be retained by the local board of education as an official sample. All samples not adopted by the local boards are to be returned to the publishers at the expense of the publishers. Samples of those books adopted become the property of the local boards of education. If the publisher fails to reclaim samples of the non-adopted books within 90 days, the sample books become the property of the local board of education.

All textbooks furnished free of charge to pupils are the property of the local board of education, as long as textbook funds are expended as prescribed by law. When distributed to pupils the textbooks are to be retained for normal use only during the period they are engaged in a course of study for which the textbooks are selected. At the completion of each course of study or otherwise at the instructions of the principal or teacher in charge, the textbooks are to be returned as directed. A receipt is required from each pupil, parent, or guardian upon issuance of any textbook. The parent, guardian, or other person having custody of a child to whom textbooks are issued are held liable for

any loss, abuse, or damage in excess of that which would result from the normal use of the textbooks. In computing the loss or damage of a textbook that has been in use for a year or more, the basis of computation is a variable of 50 to 75 percent of the original cost of the book to the local board of education. If the parent, guardian, or person having custody of the child to whom the textbook was issued fails to pay the assessed damages within 30 days after notification, the student is not entitled to further use of the textbooks until remittance of the amount of loss or damage has been made.

Pupils enrolled in the public schools, or any parent or guardian of the pupil may buy textbooks at the price paid for them by the local board of education. Sale of these textbooks may be made by the local board of education in the school system where the student is enrolled. The local board of education may make such sales through a designated employee or agent thereof. All books issued by the separate schools and school systems may be used by pupils to whom issued in the same manner and to the same extent as though the books were owned by the pupils, their parents, or guardians as the case may be, except that such pupils, parents, guardians are liable for such loss or damage to books as prescribed by law and for the return of the textbook.

The Legislature finds that textbooks and other instructional materials are among the basic tools of learning that must exist if Alabama students are to succeed. All students in the public schools are to be provided with adequate and current textbooks and other necessary instructional supplies for use in their education. Textbooks and other supporting materials are to be appropriate for their course work and are to be in suitable condition. Where textbooks are to be issued in accordance with the state textbook law, every student is to have his or her own copy of the issued textbook of the correct edition, which he or she is to be permitted to take home each day for home study for the entire school year or for the portion of the year when the book is issued.

3.8 Administrative Code Requirements Regarding Textbook Provision

The Alabama Administrative Code (290-2-3-.02) establishes the definition of a textbook and describes methods and procedures for textbook adoption, purchase, distribution and use. Textbooks are defined as systematically organized materials, such as hardbound books, softcover books, or technology-based programs that are comprehensive enough to cover the primary objectives in the standard course of study for a grade or course. Local boards of education may purchase readiness materials and softcover worktexts that have been recommended by the State Textbook Committee and approved by the State Board of Education.

Local boards of education, which have certified to the State Superintendent that all students are provided with adequate and current textbooks as prescribed in Chapter 36, Code of Alabama 1975, may purchase teacher's editions, workbooks and other materials which accompany adopted textbooks and have been recommended by the State Textbook Committee and approved by the State Board of Education. All materials submitted for substitution must be reviewed and approved by specialists from the Alabama State Department of Education.

No textbook shall be adopted for use in any public school of this state unless the textbook is adopted by the local textbook committee and, upon the recommendation of the local

superintendent, adopted by the local board of education. An inventory system that provides an accurate system of accounting for all textbooks must be maintained at the local board level. The local board must account for all materials which have been distributed to local schools; stored; given or exchanged with other local school systems; and/or worn out or disposed of in accordance with Chapter 36, Code of Alabama 1975. Each local board shall provide safe and dry storage facilities for textbooks.

3.9 Alabama Ahead Act of 2012

Alabama Legislative Act 2012-560, also known as the Alabama Ahead Act of 2012, became law in May 2012. This act allows the Alabama Public School and College Authority (PSCA) to sell and issue 20-year tax exempt bonds up to \$100,000,000 to provide Alabama's high schools with digital textbooks. Specifically, when funded, the law calls for the provision to all student and teachers, where available, approved textbooks and instructional materials in electronic format and, where feasible, to provide computer equipment and software for reading and interacting with digital textbooks and other instructional materials.

The Alabama Ahead Act defines "computer equipment and software" as pen-enabled tablets, mobile computers, or similar wireless electronic devices for storing, reading, access, exploring, and interacting with digital textbooks and other instructional material as well as software necessary for such equipment, learning management systems and equipment necessary to support wireless local area networks. Digital textbooks are defined as interactive, multimedia electronic books or digital resources that can be used creatively by learners.

When funded and implemented, one component of the implementation of the Alabama Ahead Act is provision for teacher professional development so that lesson planning and classroom instruction can take full advantage of the digital resources.

3.10 Instructional Supplies

The Alabama Legislature amended Section 16 of the Code of Alabama 1975 in April of 1998 in House Bill 230 to address instructional supplies. Section 11, subsection (e) of this act states that instructional supplies, including library books and media resources, science equipment, classroom furniture, audiovisual equipment, maps and globes, marker boards, art and music supplies, and other educational materials, are to be provided in all schools in adequate form and quantity. The intent of this act is to make it unnecessary for teachers to make personal expenditures to provide the materials described in the law.

3.11 Policies for Selection of Materials and Resources

It is important that LEAs and Boards of Education support the principles of academic and intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. In so doing, conflicts may arise when the teacher's choice of instructional material or the library/media specialist's choice of materials differs with the values or beliefs of students, parents, and/or community members. A system procedure should be established to allow for the fair and orderly review of print and non-print materials so that all involved parties would know that

opinions will be considered and that appropriate educational materials will be used by the school system.

Typical policies and procedures to review print and non-print materials include the following components:

- The identification of personnel to receive complaints about materials
- The steps to be followed when materials are challenged
- The personnel to be involved in the review of the challenged material
- Criteria to be used in review of the challenged material
- How the decisions about the materials will be reported
- Procedures for appeal of a decision regarding challenged material

Consultation with board attorneys and/or other legal agencies is recommended when developing procedures for reviewing instructional materials and for handling challenges. Professional development for teachers and school staff members should be provided on materials selection, appropriate instructional materials development, and how challenges to materials are to be handled in the school system.

3.12 Foundation Program Allocations

Alabama Legislative Acts 95-313 and 98-320 amended section 16-6B-10 of the Code of Alabama 1975 regarding Foundation Program allocations for instructional support. According to the revisions in this act, it is the intent of the Legislature to see that funds allocated for classroom instructional support actually reach the classroom. To that end, the State Department of Education is to monitor the flow of funds appropriated for various instructional purposes.

Classroom instructional support is defined as those funds appropriated for instructional supplies, library enhancement, textbooks, technology and professional development. School budgets are to be developed within each school with teachers' direct input into the development of the budgets for classroom instructional support. Local boards of education are to ensure that principals and classroom teachers are given the opportunity to participate in decisions concerning the appropriate use and expenditure of classroom instructional support funds.

Classroom instructional materials and supplies must be budgeted for all teachers at the rate appropriated per teacher unit by the Legislature in the Foundation Program. Textbook funds must be budgeted for all students based on the rate appropriated per student by the Legislature in the Foundation Program. Technology funds, professional development funds, and library enhancement funds must be budgeted for all teachers based on the rate per teacher unit appropriated by the Legislature in the Foundation Program.

3.13 Procurement Policies, Fixed Assets, Accounting/Inventory Responsibilities

Procurement of instructional materials, instructional equipment, and supplies for the implementation of the curriculum is governed by local school accounting regulations. Teachers must requisition materials, supplies, and equipment using approved purchase orders or system requisition

forms. Accounting codes on such requisitions describe the purpose of the items as well as the funds with which the purchase is to be made.

Equipment valued at \$5,000.00 and above is determined to be a fixed asset of the school system and, as such, must be inventoried in the system's fixed asset listing. The serial number, fund, date of purchase, and location of the item is to be recorded in the system's inventory of fixed assets. Auditing of these assets is conducted periodically and procedures to be followed to delete inventory are described in local school accounting manuals.

It is the responsibility of the principal and other designated school officials to approve purchases of instructional materials, equipment, and supplies to determine their suitability for the instructional program. Budgetary procedures dictate that teachers be involved in the decision-making process when considering purchases for the instructional program.

System fiscal officers and purchasing office personnel provide guidance to local school personnel when purchases must be made through competitive bidding, through the awarding of contracts, and/or with certain types of grant funds which may be restrictive.

3.14 Regulatory Issues Affecting Instructional Programs

Supplementing Expensive Courses

Schools and school systems often supplement expensive elective courses, such as band, choral music, art, drama, driver education, career technical courses requiring laboratories or equipment, or technology courses. The costs of instruments, performance venues, equipment, technology, extracurricular rehearsals, and materials often exceed the system and/or state allocations combined with student-paid tuition or fees. A variety of methods for supplementing these programs exist throughout school systems. Booster clubs are sometimes formed by parents of students in these courses with the purpose of conducting fund-raising events and sponsoring student activities. School systems may make allocations of local revenues to the various programs based on need, student enrollment, or other objective criteria.

A long-range plan for the purchase of major instruments, uniforms, machinery, computer networks, laboratories, and specialized classrooms is beneficial to efforts to establish viable electives. Budgeting for equipment maintenance, repair and/or replacement, instrument tuning and reconditioning, travel to competitions, and other expensive components of the instructional program will ensure continued opportunities for students to participate.

Course Fees and Fee Waivers

Section 16-10-6 of the Code of Alabama (1975) prohibits the collection of any fees from students in the first six grades of school. Voluntary contributions may be solicited and accepted. Section 16-13-13 of the Code of Alabama (1975) states that fees are not to be charged in courses required for graduation.

Schools and systems may charge reasonable fees for elective courses or courses not required for graduation. These fees may not exceed \$40 per course according to the Alabama Administrative

Code. It is advisable to publish the course fee schedule well in advance of course selection dates and to inform parents of payment plans or alternative course selections. Local system policies may allow school administrators to waive course fees for students presenting extenuating circumstances. Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches may request and should be granted fee waivers. Many schools assess fees for advanced levels of required academic courses as well as for elective courses.

Alabama Credit Recovery Program

Credit Recovery in Alabama is a course-specific, skill-based extended learning opportunity for students who have been unsuccessful in mastering content or skills required to receive course credit or earn promotion. Credit Recovery study is based on deficiencies rather than a repeat of the entire course. Students who have not achieved a baseline score (established by the LEA) in a course must repeat the entire course either in summer school or the following school year.

LEAs offering Credit Recovery must develop program rules, regulations, and processes and provide them in writing to students, parents, guardians, and the State Department of Education. LEAs must address the following guidelines for admission and removal, instruction, content and curriculum, grades, and credits:

- LEA rules, regulations, or procedures for admissions to and removal from Credit Recovery program may include but not be limited to attendance, discipline, availability of coursework, availability of space, appropriate progress, and grades.
- Students must complete an application process established by the LEA.
- Parent consent is required for a study to apply for Credit Recovery.
- Students must earn a baseline score (established by the LEA) for admission to the program.
- Facilitators of computer-based Credit Recovery programs that are software based, have no online teacher, and are purchased from vendors shall be certified teachers and shall receive training pertaining to course organization, online/computer-based instruction management, and related technology.
- Facilitators of online courses that are provided by the SDE and which have certified, highly qualified teachers shall be adults approved by the local school and receive professional development in online technology and technical aspects of Web-based instruction.
- Teachers of teacher-based programs shall be Highly Qualified in core academic areas.
- Students in Credit Recovery shall either complete a course skill-specific diagnostic tool provided by the vendor of the software or online course to determine skill-specific goals; or the teacher who assigned the failing grade to the student will be required to determine skill-specific goals by designating the exact course of study content standards that were not met by the student.
- Credit Recovery content may be delivered through instructional technology or by a Highly Qualified teacher.
- Credit Recovery curriculum shall be aligned with Alabama academic content standards approved by the State Board of Education.
- LEAs are responsible for establishing specific uniform procedures for evaluation of student progress and awarding of final grades in Credit Recovery programs. The grading formula may or may not include the original failing grade in the calculation of the final credit

recovery grade. LEAs may choose the option of forgiveness, in which an original grade of *F* may be replaced with a *C* after successful completion of the Credit Recovery course when computing students' GPAs.

- Credit Recovery courses in which students participate are to be included in calculating students' total credits for a school year.
- Students may accumulate only 10 credits during a year, including summer school.

Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit Code 3.1.33-3.1.34

Local school systems may establish dual enrollment programs allowing certain students to enroll in post-secondary institutions in order to dually earn credits for a high school diploma and/or post-secondary degree at both the high school and participating post-secondary levels.

To be eligible for participation in a dual enrollment program a student must have a 3.0 (B) average in completed school courses. The student must have written approval of the student's principal and the superintendent or superintendent's designee. The student must be in grade 10, 11, or 12 or have an exception granted by the participating post-secondary institution upon the recommendation of the student's principal and superintendent and in accordance with Alabama Administrative Code 290-8-9-.17 regarding gifted and talented students.

In order to dually enroll in an occupational/technical course, a student must have a 3.0 (B) grade point average in high school courses directly related to the occupational/technical studies (if applicable) which the student intends to pursue at the post-secondary level and an overall 2.5 (C+) grade point average in high school course work.

When a school system decides to participate with post-secondary institutions in a dual enrollment agreement, the following features of Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-.02(10)(a)3 apply:

- Only post-secondary/college level courses are eligible. Remedial level courses shall not meet the requirements of the dual enrollment program.
- Students enrolled in courses offered during the normal high school day, on or off the high school campus, shall have prior permission of the student's principal, superintendent or superintendent's designee, and the participating post-secondary institution president.
- Local boards of education shall adopt policies addressing parental permission and travel for courses offered off the high school campus during the normal school day.
- Five quarter/three semester credit hours at the post-secondary level shall equal one credit at the high school level in the same or related subject. Partial credit agreements shall be developed between the local board of education and participating post-secondary institutions.

A formal agreement of partnership between the local school system and each post-secondary institution in which dual enrollment credit is permitted should describe the features of the dual enrollment program. When local schools are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/AdvancED, post-secondary institutions must also be accredited by SACS, and SACS guidelines should be followed for the granting of dual credit.

Students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) should be informed of their responsibilities related to dual enrollment course participation in each of the following areas:

- Written parent permission is required for participation in dual enrollment/dual credit courses.
- Transportation related to dual enrollment/dual credit course participation is usually the responsibility of the student and/or parent.
- Students are responsible for knowing policies relative to dual enrollment/dual credit of colleges/universities to which they plan to transfer credit.
- Students participating in the dual enrollment/dual credit program shall pay tuition and other required costs as established by the post-secondary institution.

Curriculum Required for Post-Secondary Institutions

In addition to the basic mandated state curriculum for high school graduation, local systems must consider requirements of a variety of post-secondary institutions and programs when planning course offerings. Colleges, universities, and post-secondary training schools have varying entrance requirements. Students and parents must be encouraged to consult school administrators, guidance counselors, teachers, and specific post-secondary programs to determine the best course selections or programs of study.

Local curriculum planning activities should include examination of entrance requirements of the post-secondary programs most frequently attended by system graduates. National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) requirements are important to students within the system who may be planning post-secondary athletic participation. Publications of the NCAA are available to assist systems in determining the acceptability of courses to fulfill these requirements.

(<http://www.ncaa.org>) and (<http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net>). Local guidance and counseling personnel and post-secondary admissions officers are valuable resources when planning curriculum offerings to facilitate post-secondary enrollment, scholarship awards, and/or apprenticeship placements. Articulation agreements between local school systems and technical schools or community colleges may dictate the sequence and course content of various technical or academic courses. Dual enrollment or early college admission policies of the system may specify particular courses for inclusion in these programs.

Early College Enrollment Program (ECEP): Through the Early College Enrollment Program (ECEP), qualifying high school juniors and seniors earn college credits while completing high school. ECEP participants earn credits applicable toward high school graduation and college degree requirements at no cost to the student. Features of this program include:

- Participation in the ECEP program does not affect a student's eligibility to participate in high school extracurricular activities provided the student meets minimum requirements of "Academics First" (No pass-No play).
- Any public community and/or technical college and public high school in Alabama may provide the ECEP option for secondary students.
- Participation in the ECEP and in any particular career/technical postsecondary program is at the discretion of the local education agency (LEA).

- Students are not restricted to attending the two-year college(s) which service area(s) includes their high school.
- The maximum length of the ECEP is four semesters for students who enter as high school juniors and two semesters for those who enter as seniors.
- ECEP students may remain enrolled one additional semester past the maximum number of semesters to complete remaining course requirements. The cost of attending the additional semester is the responsibility of the student.
- By taking the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), students may receive college credit in mathematics, English, science, and history/behavioral sciences through the credit-by-examination process. The cost of the CLEP is the responsibility of the student.
- Enrollment slots shall be reserved each year in each postsecondary major (technical and allied health) for ECEP students as determined by the college.
- There shall be one representative from each participating LEA and one representative from each college to coordinate activities associated with the ECEP.
- ECEP graduates shall have the opportunity to earn an industry credential or certification when available. Colleges will provide to ECEP graduates documentation of technical, technological, academic, and employability skills attained.
- Students who enter the ECEP as high school juniors may enroll in a maximum of three developmental courses the semester immediately preceding the semester of ECEP enrollment. Students who enter as high school seniors may enroll in a maximum of three developmental courses the fall, spring, and/or summer semester prior to ECEP enrollment. Colleges shall provide institutional scholarships to students that cover costs of tuition and fees for these developmental courses. Only those students whose acceptance in the ECEP is conditional because of insufficient COMPASS placement test scores may receive these scholarships. A scholarship will cover the cost of taking a course once and will not be available for repeating a course.
- The LEA and the college will ensure compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

The intended benefits of the ECEP program include these features:

- Promotes articulation between secondary and postsecondary education for career/technical education courses.
- Allows student to earn college credits before high school graduation at no cost to the student.
- Provides diploma options that meet academic requirements for applied associate degree and occupational/technical certificate.
- Provides diploma options that accommodate students wishing to transfer credit to baccalaureate degree programs.
- Prepares students to enter high-skill, high-wage employment earlier in their career.
- Expands program and delivery options for secondary students.
- Encourages high-achieving students to enroll in career/technical education.
- Creates structure for delivering high-cost programs at greater efficiency in small/rural school systems.
- Motivates students.

State and Local Graduation Requirements

Minimum course requirements for high school graduation are described in the Alabama Administrative Code. Local school systems may adopt additional requirements beyond the minimum prescribed by the state and may offer additional types of diploma endorsements. Factors to consider when adding requirements include the number of class periods in the school day, the availability of facilities and qualified personnel, the access to courses by students, and the rate at which students are passing the minimum requirements. Graduation pathways and diploma options for special education students are determined by the student's IEP team.

Local school systems must establish and clearly communicate all graduation requirements to students and parents. Requirements for participation in graduation ceremonies, requirements for passing any required tests, course credits, criteria for honor graduates, and all other features related to the status of graduates must be clearly communicated to students throughout their enrollment in the school system. It is recommended that documentation be maintained of students' and parents' receipt of all information related to graduation requirements and criteria for participation in graduation ceremonies.

Alabama High School Graduation Requirements Graduating Class of 2028 and Beyond

Beginning with the ninth-grade class of 2013-14, the Alabama High School Diploma serves as the default diploma for all students and requires the successful completion of 24 credits (units).

English	4 credits
Mathematics	4 credits
Science	4 credits
Social Studies	4 credits
Physical Education/LIFE	1 credit
Health Education	0.5 credits
Career Preparedness Course	1 credit (Career and Academic Planning, Computer Applications, or Financial Literacy)
CTE and/or Foreign Language and/or Arts Education	3 credits
Electives	2.5 credits
Total	24 credits

Additional information about diploma requirements, specific courses that may be substituted for required academic core courses, and answers to frequently asked questions about the Alabama diploma and graduation standards may be found at <https://www.alabamaachievers.org/graduation-requirements/>

Graduation Certificate

Boards of education may allow special education students, with the exception of the gifted and the speech-impaired, to earn a graduation certificate instead of a State-approved diploma. Such students are to follow the objectives established for them at the annual IEP meeting by the IEP

team. When the goals of the IEP have been met, the student may be awarded a graduation certificate and may participate in all activities associated with graduation from high school. Students who are awarded the graduation certificate are NOT counted as “graduates” when determining adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the accountability system. A student who receives a Graduation Certificate may continue to work toward the Alabama High School Diploma or the Alabama Occupational Diploma to age 21 with IDEA services.

Career Technical Education Certification

<https://careertech.org/career-clusters/>

Career/technical education provides opportunities for secondary students to acquire specific and useful occupational training, in addition to required academic course content.

Career/technical education prepares students to be well rounded and to succeed and profit from new skills, knowledge, and understanding in a chosen career path. CTE in Alabama is organized according to the following 16 National Career Clusters:

- Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources
- Architecture & Construction
- Arts, Audio/Video Technology and Communications
- Business Management & Administration
- Education & Training
- Finance
- Government & Public Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality & Tourism Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

The career/technical educational programs and standards in Alabama were revised in 1997 when the Business Industry Certification program was initiated and then again January 2006 when the program format was updated. The BIC standards address teacher preparation and certification issues, course content, facilities standards, financial support, student academic and skill achievement standards, and equipment needs for programs to be successful.

The purpose of the Business Industry Certification (BIC) program is to raise the standards for all career/technical programs to those needed for effective workforce development. Teachers and administrators of career/technical programs receive copies of the standards to be met, are trained in strategies for improved teaching and lesson presentation, receive lists of current technology and equipment needed for the programs, and establish committees of practitioners to review each program on a rotating schedule. When visiting teams of educators, business/industry representatives and SDE staff members complete the scheduled review of a school’s program, a report is filed with the SDE Career/Technical Education Department. When all standards are met, the program is deemed “Business Industry Certified.”

The standards for BIC were developed by educators and business/industry representatives to describe best practices and current equipment/materials needed for programs to be relevant in today's workforce development climate. Teachers have opportunities to participate in professional development training to prepare lesson plans, policies, and procedures for meeting the BIC standards. Copies of the BIC standards, equipment lists for each program, and schedules of BIC reviews are available from the office of Career/Technical Education, Alabama State Department of Education, Room 5239, Gordon Persons Building, Montgomery, Alabama, 36130 or from the Career/Technical Education section publications list on the Alabama State Department of Education website.

Summer School

The Alabama Administrative Code (290-3-1-.02(6)(a) establishes the method for operating public summer school programs. All public schools conducting a summer school must file a registration report with the State Department of Education. The Registration report forms, available from the State Department of Education, must be filed no later than the end of the first week of summer school.

A certified administrator must administer the summer school, and each teacher in a registered summer school must hold a valid Alabama certificate in each subject taught as required in regular school sessions. The public summer school must be authorized by the local board of education, and the superintendent and principal of the school are responsible for organizing the summer school program and registering it with the SDE.

A student desiring to do summer schoolwork in a school other than that in which he/she is regularly enrolled must obtain written permission from his/her principal and parent(s)/guardian(s). If prior permission of the school principal is not obtained, the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for errors in course selection in summer school.

Distance Education

The Alabama Distance Learning Plan, introduced in 2004, was developed utilizing qualitative and quantitative information from existing distance learning initiatives in Alabama and is supported with research of successful distance learning programs throughout the nation. The plan, Alabama Connecting Classroom, Educators, and Students Statewide (ACCESS), provides access to high quality instruction and coursework by:

- Providing a technical infrastructure to deliver pedagogically sound courses via the Internet and a catalogue of approved Internet-based courses using the latest interactive instructional models.
- Blending online/Internet-based coursework with Alabama certified teachers as E- teachers from delivery school sites to receiver school sites that otherwise would not have an Alabama certified teacher to instruct the course.

The objectives for the ACCESS distance education program for Alabama include:

- Provide access to advanced diploma courses
- Provide access to additional course offerings
- Provide access to advanced placement or dual enrollment courses

- Provide access to remediation and supplemental resources
- Leverage existing resources and distance learning offerings
- Provide teachers with additional multimedia and technology tools to enhance instruction.

Strategies included in the ACCESS plan include efforts to increase connectivity to all high schools, to all existing IVC labs, to develop blended course models for distance education delivery, and to create two professional development centers to support distance learning throughout the state. The plan is designed to support distance education as a means of reaching underserved high school students across the state and to support teachers and school leaders by offering additional technology resources directly to school systems and classrooms. Using asynchronous Internet delivery and synchronous interactive videoconferencing (IVC), the ACCESS initiative offers more than fifty courses and remediation activities. More information may be downloaded at <http://alex.state.al.us/access>. Beginning with the 2016 school year, according to Alabama Legislative Act 2015-89, all Alabama high schools are to have a virtual option that allows students to complete courses required for graduation through virtual learning programs.

Transfer Credit from Non-Accredited Schools/School Setting(s)

Any school/school setting not accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of Education is considered a non-accredited school for the purpose of transfer of class/grade credit. When students transfer into a system from a non-accredited school or school setting, determinations about acceptance of credits and grades must be made according to the Alabama Administrative Code.

Credit for elective courses is to be transferred without validation. Non-contested credit for core courses (English, mathematics, science, and social studies) shall be transferred using all official records and nationally standardized tests by the principal. The principal should notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of placement decisions and credit transfers. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) disagrees with the placement and/or credit transfer decisions of the principal, core course credits must be validated by the administration of the most recent final examination for each prerequisite core course in which enrollment is requested. For each test the student passes, as determined by the school grading scale, the student shall be placed in the next level core course and credit shall be transferred for prerequisite courses. For any test failed, no credit shall be transferred for the prerequisite course(s) in that subject.

All transfer students must pass required assessments and meet local board of education graduation requirements.

Transfer Credit from Accredited Schools

A student transferring to an Alabama public school from a public or non-public school accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of Education will have all credits and current class/grade placement accepted without validation upon the receipt of an official transcript(s). (Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1-.02(7)(j)2(k)) All transfer students must pass the Alabama High School Graduation Examination (AHSGE) and meet local board of education graduation requirements.

“No pass-No play”/Academics First

In 1999 the Alabama Board of Education, as a part of its efforts to raise academic standards, first suggested, then mandated that local school systems enact policies to implement an initiative called “Academics First.” The rules and policies resulting from this initiative are commonly referred to as “No pass-No play” since their impact was most immediately evident in secondary school athletic programs. The model policies issued by the SDE described academic requirements to be met before students would be allowed to participate in competitive athletics. Many local school systems expanded these requirements for all students by requiring the same academic standards for participation in all extra-curricular activities. The aspects of “Academics First” adopted by most local school systems include the following:

- Students entering grade 10-12 must, for the last two (2) terms of attendance and summer school, if applicable, have a passing grade and earn the appropriate number of credits in each of six (6) units of credit, including four (4) credits from the four (4) core subjects composed of English, science, social studies, and mathematics with a numerical composite average of 70.
- Students entering grades 8 and 9 must, for the last two terms of attendance and summer school, if applicable, have a passing grade in five (5) subjects with a composite numerical average of 70.
- Students promoted to the seventh grade for the first time are eligible.
- Physical education may count as only one (1) unit per year.
- No more than two (2) units may be earned during summer school. If a unit(s) or subject(s) is (are) repeated in summer school, the higher numerical grade for the unit(s) or subject(s) may be used to compute the composite grade average for eligibility determination purposes.
- Students deemed ineligible at the beginning of the school year by virtue of having failed to meet the requirements outlined in these requirements may regain their eligibility at the end of the first term by meeting the requirements for eligibility in the two most recently completed terms, including summer school. Eligibility restoration must be determined no later than five (5) days after the beginning of the succeeding term.
- An ineligible student may not become eligible after the fifth day of each term. Bona fide transfer students may be handled according to rules of the Alabama High School Athletic Association for sports.

NCAA Requirements

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) was founded in 1906. It is made up of 1,073 member schools classified in three divisions. Schools in Division I compete at the so-called major-college level. Students should register with the [eligibility center](#) as early as their 9th grade year in high school.

Parents, athletic directors, coaches, teachers, administrators, and counselors must be aware of the NCAA academic eligibility requirements when planning course selections to enable high school students to meet the standards required for participation in college-level sports programs.

Division 1 Academy Requirements

16 NCAA approved core course credits in the following areas:

- 4 English, 3 Math (Algebra 1 or higher), 2 Science (including one year of lab, if offered), 1 Extra English, math, or science, 2 Social Science, 4 additional from those listed or world language, comparative religion or philosophy).
- Complete 6 NCAA-approved core-course credits in eight academic semesters or four consecutive academic years from the start of ninth grade. If you graduate from high school early, you still must meet core-course requirements.
- Complete 10 of 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits, including seven in English, math or science, before the start of the seventh semester. Once beginning the seventh semester, any course needed to meet the 10/7 requirement cannot be replaced or repeated.
- Earn a minimum 2.3 [core-course GPA](#).
- School counselor should upload the [final official transcript](#) with proof of graduation to the athlete's Eligibility Center account.

Division II

16 NCAA approved core course credits in the following areas:

- 4 English, 2 Math (Algebra I or higher), 2 Science (including one year of lab, if offered), 3 Extra (English, math, or science), 2 Social Science, 4 additional from those listed or world language, comparative religion or philosophy).
- Earn a minimum 2.2 [core-course GPA](#).
- School counselor should upload the [final official transcript](#) with proof of graduation to the athlete's Eligibility Center account.

Division III schools have their own academic requirements. A student interested in a Division III school should contact the individual school for information.

Each year high schools must go online to the NCAA Clearinghouse to make sure that courses the student athletes are taking meet the definitions of core curriculum as described by the NCAA. When advising students on course selections, athletic directors, school counselors, administrators and teachers will need to look at their high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses on the Eligibility Center's web site to make certain that courses being taken qualify as core courses. Counselors can get more information from http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/eligibility_center/HS/HS_Counselor_Guide.pdf.

Students with education-impacted disabilities (EIDs) may receive accommodations in order to meet NCAA initial-eligibility standards. To receive accommodations, the student's disability must be documented. There is no need to document a student's disability with the NCAA if the student takes courses for students with disabilities that are designated on the high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses.

Additional information for students with education-impacting disabilities may be found under <https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2014/11/25/education-impacting-disabilities.aspx>

3.15 Copyright Issues

Copyright Definition

Because copyright is complex and the laws can be vague, schools/systems should provide users with clear acceptable use policies and guidelines. There are three main areas of copyright that directly affect education. They include (1) the illegal use and copying of copyrighted software, fair use of copyrighted materials, and (3) use of copyrighted materials in employee and student web pages and presentations.

Copyright is the ownership and control of intellectual property in original works of authorship. The laws of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) provide protection to the owner of copyright, which is available to both published and unpublished works. In addition to the Copyright Act, Alabama provides for offenses against intellectual property and computer equipment and supplies. Title 13A of the Alabama Criminal Code (1975) is titled the Alabama Computer Crime Act. This Act provides definitions for data, intellectual property, computer programs, computers, computer software, computer systems, computer networks, computer system services, property, financial instruments, and access.

“Copyright is a form of protection provided by the laws of the United States (title 17, U. S. Code) to the authors of “original works of authorship,” including literary, dramatic, musical, artistic, and certain other intellectual works. This protection is available to both published and unpublished works.”

Educators should assume all works created after 1978 are protected by copyright. For resources helpful for explaining copyright issues to teachers, parents, and students see the following guide from the US Copyright Office: <http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ21.pdf>

Copyright Infringement and Potential Fines

Classroom teachers, librarians, technicians, principals, curriculum coordinators, superintendents and Boards of Education are liable for infringements under the law. All educators should be aware of the types of infringement defined by copyright rules and the types of consequences that may be associated with copyright infringement. Some examples of infringement described by Carol Simpson (2010) in *Copyright for School Libraries: A Practical Guide*. 5th ed. follow:

- **Innocent infringement:** Teacher reads in a journal that an item has fallen into public domain and makes copies. In truth, the journal confused two items of similar title so the teacher’s infringement in copying the item is innocent. **Standard Infringement:** The librarian makes copies of an article for class many months in advance without making any attempt to contact the copyright holder and obtain permission.
- **Willful infringement:** A principal asks permission to reproduce copies of a journal article for the faculty and is denied. He makes the copies anyway without a reasonable basis to believe he didn’t need permission.

Fines for Copyright Infringement

As punishment for copyright violations, courts have imposed fines ranging from \$750 to \$30,000 per infringement. There may be additional damages awarded, based on the circumstances involved, with intentional/statutory infringement fines of \$150,000 per instance. In 1992, software copyright infringement was raised to felony status with fines up to \$250,000 per instance.

Fair Use and Copyright Exceptions

The law—Title 17, United State Code, Public Law 94-553, 90 Stat. 2541, as amended—gives citizens special exceptions. Fair Use has certain aspects that apply to everyone and others that apply only to certain classes of use, such as use in nonprofit schools.

When determining Fair Use, factors considered shall include:

- The purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of commercial nature, or for nonprofit educational purposes.
- The nature of the copyrighted work;
- The amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- The effects of the use upon the potential market for a value of the copyrighted work (Simpson, 2010.)

Educators should be knowledgeable about Fair Use standards and copyright laws when obtaining, copying, and distributing instructional materials. Fair use is one of the most misunderstood aspects of copyright law. Copyright for Administrators (Simpson, 2008, p. 24) highlights the following common misconceptions:

Misconception #1—Schools can use any copyright protected materials they wish because they are schools.

Misconception #2—Using materials is OK if you don't make a profit.

Misconception #3—Promoting someone's work by distributing copies is justification for free use.

Misconception #4—Materials used "for the good of the kids" absolves one of copyright liability.

A teacher may not

- copy "to create or to replace or to substitute for anthologies, compilations, or collective works" from consumable products;
- copy to substitute for purchasing resources;
- copy at direction of superior, i.e., principal; or,
- copy same item each semester.

Use of Commercial Videos/DVDs/Movies

Fair Use does not allow use of commercial videos for re-enforcement, entertainment, or reward without paying public performance rights fees in advance.

Commercial videos/DVDs (movies)

- cannot be used for reward or entertainment in cases of “Free Fridays”, during testing, “rainy-day recess, Field Day, or “free movie” night.
- must be used as part of face-to-face instruction
- must be documented in lesson plans, showing how the video supports goals and objectives of lesson plan and what learning activities are associated with the viewing of the video; and,
- must be a true and legal copy (Simpson, 2010).

Commercial videos/DVDs (movies) can be rented from video rental store or public library, borrowed from a student, owned by the classroom teacher; or purchased by the school.

Consider any program on regular networks, e.g., ABC, CBS, NBC to be restricted clearance; and encourage use of Cable-in-the-Classroom programming as a means of obtaining television programs for classroom use (Simpson, 2010).

Computer Software Copyright and Licensing

Purchasing computer software involves licenses. A software license agreement is a contract between the "licensor" and purchaser of the right to use software. The license may define ways under which the copy can be used, in addition to the automatic rights of the buyer (17U.S.C § 117). The most common types of licenses are: Single User; Lab packs; Network license; and Site license. Responsibility for software inventory, distribution, and maintenance of software license agreements should be assigned to someone by the superintendent.

Copyright and Internet Materials

Fair use guidelines apply to copyrighted materials on the Internet in the same manner as written materials. If school employees and/or students use copyrighted materials from the Internet, these materials should be treated in the same manner as printed materials, following Copyright Law, Fair Use guidelines and school/system policies.

When using Internet materials, unless specifically stated, assume that everything is copyright protected; that Fair Use guidelines apply; and that a person may not take print, images, etc., from Internet sites and re-post on an Internet site. However, a person may post such material on a protected school/system intranet. (Simpson, 2010.)

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is not new; with the availability of digital materials on the Internet, it has just become easier to do and often easier to discover than it used to be. Rather than having to write down what they find in a written source, students now have the ability to go online and simply copy and paste information written by others into their own papers. There are also many online sources for buying or accessing term papers.

According to Simpson (2005) an instance of plagiarism is more than likely a copyright violation because in the absence attribution, the student is not covered by fair use exemption. With ethical issues it is important that adherence to copyright law, and rules against plagiarism should be fully explained in the student codes of conduct stressing the penalties for violations.

There are many Internet sites that provide information on plagiarism. Some of the websites offer ways to detect plagiarism, while others offer ways to prevent or discourage it. Preventing plagiarism occurs mainly through educating students as to what plagiarism is, providing them with information on how to appropriately use and cite sources, and providing alternative assignments that don't lend themselves to plagiarism. Some of the many Internet web sites that cover these topics available are presented below.

- Plagiarism.org - <http://www.plagiarism.org>,
 - Provides information for educators and students concerning Internet plagiarism
 - Handouts for teachers and students
 - Definition of plagiarism
 - Guidelines for citing sources
 - Directions for students on writing papers
 - Online service for checking papers against a database

Information on two popular programs used to determine whether or not plagiarism has occurred

- Turnitin (<http://www.turnitin.com>)
- iThenticate (<http://www.ithenticate.com>)
- Several free plagiarism-detecting sites are available:
 - Plagiarism.net (<http://plagiarisma.net>)
 - Paper Rater (https://www.paperrater.com/plagiarism_checker)
 - The Plagiarism Checker (<http://www.dustball.com/cs/plagiarism.checker/>)
- The Plagiarism Resource Site – <http://plagiarism.bloomfieldmedia.com/z-wordpress/>
 - Goal is to help reduce impact of plagiarism on education and educational institutions
 - Distributes free software to detect plagiarism
 - Provides links to other resources
 - Site's sole author is Lou Bloomfield
 - Professor of Physics
 - University of Virginia
 - Box 400714
 - Charlottesville, VA 22904-4714
 - lab3e@Virginia.EDU
- Anti-Plagiarism Strategies for Research Papers
 - <http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm>
 - Possible reasons students plagiarize
 - Forms of plagiarism
 - Prevention strategies
 - Detecting plagiarism
- The New Plagiarism: Seven Antidotes to Prevent Highway Robbery in an Electronic Age

- Site's author is Jamie McKenzie <http://www.fno.org/may98/cov98may.html>
- Plagiarism and the Web
 - Site's author is Bruce H. Leland
 - <http://www.wiu.edu/users/mfbhl/wiu/plagiarism.htm>
 - This web site provides good suggestions for teachers on ways to discourage plagiarism.

Many educators also use search engines such as Google (<http://www.Google.com>) to search for suspect phrases.

Teachers need to be cautioned that the web sites and programs available for detecting plagiarism will not find all instances. These programs and sites compare submitted papers to databases of existing digital sources, and not all students will use digital resources. Therefore, teachers should not solely depend on these web sites to identify all instances of plagiarism, but these programs and sites can be helpful.

4. ROLES: THE SCHOOL BOARD

A local board of education is the legally constituted body that governs a local school system, promotes student learning, and prepares student to be college and career ready. A local school board, and not individual board members, is entrusted with this responsibility.

The primary role of the school board is to establish policies. Policies are assertions of the goals of the school system. As such, they are concerned with aims rather than procedures. A well-crafted policy statement is “complete, has provisions for review and amendments, is clear to those asked to implement the policy and to those affected by the policy, is limited to the essential information, and is not subject to change due to a personnel turnover” (Kowalski, 1999).

Policies serve as guidelines for discretionary decision making. Specific policy decisions by school boards, called “policy statements,” usually arise in response to a problem. The problem may surface formally by means of a needs assessment or informally due to an emergency or crisis. For example, many educational organizations have recently developed policy statements regarding anti-bullying, use of social media, concussions in athletics, and physical restraint of students.

In addition to establishing policies, the Board must ensure that local curriculum and instruction policies comply with federal and state laws. In all cases where State laws do not provide or prohibit, the Board shall consider itself the agent responsible for establishing and appraising the educational activities under its jurisdiction.

School boards should work with the superintendent, system employees, parents, and the community to establish a vision and a mission statement for the school system. It is important that the system’s commitment to high academic standards be communicated to all stakeholders in the system on a regular basis and be included in an active strategic plan for the school system. Further, the board should take a leadership role in providing the necessary resources for students to successfully meet their educational goals.

4.1 School Board Governance Improvement Act of 2012

An excellent source of information regarding School Boards and Superintendents of Education is a collaborative project by the Alabama Association of School Administrators (AASA) and The Alabama Association of School Boards (AASB). The publication, “School Boards and Superintendents: Roles and Responsibilities” lists the functions of each. 6.1 School Board Governance Improvement Act of 2012.

Alabama Legislative Act 2012-221, also known as the School Board Governance Improvement Act of 2012 was passed in April of 2012. The stated purpose of the act is to enhance the effectiveness of public education governance in Alabama through the establishment of training requirements, boardmanship standards, and accountability measures that are designed to promote informed deliberations and decisions, to revise the qualifications for serving as a member of a local board of education, to provide a code of conduct for each member of a local board of education in order to

better ensure that any decision or action of a local board of education is based on the interests of students or the system, and to foster the development and implementation of organizational practices that are designed to promote broad support of the public schools. The purposes of this act are:

- To require prospective board members to publicly affirm certain principles of educational governance;
- To specify the responsibilities of board members;
- To provide for the implementation of training and continuing education in boardsmanship for all board members;
- To provide for certain sanctions to be imposed upon board members upon a finding that the action or inaction of a board member constitutes neglect of duty or willful misconduct;
- To require the State Board of Education and local board of education to adopt a model code of conduct for board members; and
- To amend state laws relating to the qualifications of members of city and county boards of education.

4.2 Board Member Qualifications

With the passage of the School Board Governance Improvement Act of 2012, the minimum requirements for an individual to serve as an elected or appointed school board member were amended. Eligibility for election or appointment to a school board now requires that the individual:

- be of good moral character;
- have at least a high school diploma or equivalent;
- is not employed by the school board on which he/she seeks to serve;
- is not a registered sex offender;
- is not a convicted felon; and,
- is not serving on the board of a private school or college.

An elected or appointed board member must vacate office when he/she moves from the school system the board member represents.

4.3 Board Member Affirmation and Duties

The duties and responsibilities of local board of education members are described in the School Board Governance Improvement Act of 2012. The Act requires an official affirmation by the board member upon taking office that:

- The actions and decisions made as a school board member will be based on the needs and interests of the students and the school system.
- No decision or action will be made to serve or promote the personal, political, or financial interests of the school board member.
- Each decision or action will be based on the interests of the school system as a whole.
- The views of all school board members and the local superintendent will be considered before making a decision or taking action on any matter before the board.
- Formal actions will be taken after recommendation and consultation with the local superintendent and that board members may not individually or jointly attempt to direct or corrupt school operations or obstruct the local superintendent's duties.

- The board member will promote public support for the school system and endorse programs to improve the quality of public education for all students.
- The board member will attend scheduled meetings and participate in training programs and school functions.

The duties and responsibilities of school board members described in the Act specify that board members are to:

- Work with the local superintendent to establish a vision for the school system by adopting goals that address student needs, advance student performance, and review data to monitor implementation of policies and programs.
- Adopt policies and programs to meet the adopted goals and respond to system needs recommended by the local superintendent.
- Address personnel recommendations submitted by the local school superintendent in a timely manner and take personnel actions based on student needs and system finances without regard to personal preferences or political interests.
- Approve operating budgets aligned with the adopted goals as recommended by the local superintendent.
- Advocate for the needs, resources, and interests of students and allow the local superintendent to address constituent issues.

The Act directs the state superintendent to develop continuing education and training programs for school board members to provide each school board member with an understanding of the role of the school board member in assuring the effective provision of educational services. The state superintendent is also directed to develop and issue regulations needed to impose sanctions against a school board member for failure to meet training and attendance requirements, neglect of duty, or willful misconduct. Upon the determination that misconduct, neglect of duty, or failure to meet stated requirements, a local board member may receive formal censure or reprimand by the local board of education. In addition, after investigation of serious and substantial allegations of misconduct by a local board member or board members, the state superintendent may recommend the State Board of Education approve sanctions including formal censure or reprimand by the State Board of Education and disqualification from future school board service by the school board member.

4.4 Board Member Code of Conduct

A sample code of conduct for local board of education members has been provided to serve as a guide for local school systems. According to provisions of the School Board Governance Improvement Act of 2012, local boards are required to adopt a code of conduct for members by April of 2013. The sample code of conduct contains these features:

Conduct of Individuals

1. Attends and participates in regularly scheduled and called board meetings.
2. Reads and prepares in advance to discuss issues to be considered on the board agenda.
3. Recognizes that the authority of the board rests only with the board as a whole and not with individual board members.

4. Upholds and enforces applicable laws, rules and regulations of the local board, and the Alabama State Board of Education, and court orders pertaining specifically to the school system.
5. Renders all decisions based on available facts by exercising independent judgment instead of the opinion of individuals or special interest groups.
6. Works with other board members and the Superintendent to establish effective policies to further the educational goals of the school system.
7. Makes decisions on policy matters only after full consideration at public board meetings.
8. Complies with the requirements of the *School Board Governance Improvement Act*.
9. Communicates in a respectful, professional manner with and about fellow board members and the Superintendent.
10. Takes no action that will compromise the board or school system administration.
11. Refrains from using the position of school board member for personal or partisan gain or to benefit any person or entity over the interests of the school system.
12. Informs the Superintendent and fellow board members of business relationships or family members or close associates or private interests.
13. Abstains from voting on or seeking to influence personnel or other actions involving family members or close associates or private interests.
14. Communicates to the board and the Superintendent public reaction to board policies and school programs.
15. Advocates for the needs, resources, and interests of the public-school students and the school system. Safeguards the confidentiality of nonpublic information.
16. Shows respect and courtesy to staff members.

Conduct of Individuals at Board Meetings

1. Work with other board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during the discussion and resolution of issues at board meetings.
2. Take actions that reflect that the first and foremost concern is for the educational welfare of all students attending system schools.
3. Make decisions in accordance with the interests of the school system as a whole based on system finances available to accomplish education goals and comply with the School Fiscal Accountability Act.
4. Abide by and support all majority decisions of the board.
5. Act on personnel recommendations of the Superintendent in a timely manner, particularly when there are financial implications of such decisions.
6. Approve operating budgets and budget amendments that are aligned with system goals and objectives and are fiscally responsible.
7. Honor and protect the confidentiality of all discussions during executive session of the board.

Conduct of the Board as a Whole

1. Recognize that the Superintendent serves as the chief executive officer and secretary to the board and should be present at all meetings of the board except when his or her contract, salary or performance is under consideration.
2. Honor the Superintendent's authority for the day-to-day administration of the school system.

3. In concert with the Superintendent, regularly and systematically communicate board actions and decisions to students, staff, and the community.
4. Review and evaluate the effectiveness of policies and programs to improve system performance.
5. Develop, in concert with the Superintendent, the vision and goals for the school system to address student needs, advance student performance, and monitor the implementation of policies and programs.
6. Provide opportunities for all members to express opinions prior to board action.

4.5 Board of Education Research Studies

The National School Board Association (NSBA) reports that recent research on school board governance has demonstrated that school boards in systems with higher student achievement are significantly different in knowledge, beliefs, and actions from the boards in lower achieving systems. Current research projects sponsored by or in conjunction with NSBA are looking at the key behaviors that are correlated with higher student achievement as well as the implications for board development programs. Their website (<http://www.nsba.org>) lists current or recent research projects of interest to school boards.

4.6 Board of Education Strategic Planning

Local boards of education engage in strategic planning to determine the goals, objectives, and tasks needed to accomplish the school system's mission. Such planning is most effective when it involves stakeholders in determining the priorities to be addressed and when employees and staff members are engaged in the development of the plan's tasks, timelines, and strategies. A strategic plan allows the board and the superintendent to schedule regular reviews of accomplishments and help to demonstrate the accountability of the board as stewards of public resources. Although most strategic plans are for a 5-year period, they may be of any duration and may change as system circumstances or needs demand. Once approved, the strategic plan should be clearly communicated to all stakeholders and should be monitored and reported upon at regular intervals, usually at least annually.

Boards of education and school systems participating in the AdvancEd accreditation process must commit to systematic and strategic planning for continuous improvement. The accreditation quality standards for system leadership include provisions that the system:

1. operates under governance and leadership that promote and support student performance and school effectiveness;
2. maintains and communicates at all levels of the organization a purpose and direction for continuous improvement that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning; and
3. implements a comprehensive assessment system that generates a range of data about student learning and system effectiveness and uses the results to guide continuous improvement.

4.7 Board Orientation, Training, and Evaluation

In its 2009 session, the Alabama Legislature passed Legislative Act 2009-297 requiring boards of education to establish policies and procedures for the orientation and on-going training and development of board members. The legislation recommends that local boards of education engage in periodic review and evaluation to determine training needs. Features of the School Board Governance Improvement Act of 2012 further develop the role of the state superintendent and the State Board of Education in providing on-going training for local board of education members. The Alabama Association of School Boards (AASB) plays an important role in board member development training through its regular meetings, conferences, conventions, webinars, and special training events. AASB publishes many resources to assist local boards of education in leading school systems. Specific AASB resources for school systems about Act 2012-221 is available from the [AASB website](#).

School board members who take office on or after January 1, 2013, must complete (within one year from the date of taking office) an orientation that includes the following topics:

- Board member's roles and responsibilities
- Finance
- Ethics
- Board meetings
- Student and school performance
- The Governance Act
- Legal and personnel issues
- Working with the board attorney
- Working with the superintendent
- Advocacy
- Public/media relations

In addition, school board members must participate in six (6) hours of training annually after July 1, 2013. Two (2) of the required six hours of training must be earned as a whole board interactive training. These sessions are to be attended by at least a majority of the board and are to be led by a facilitator who leads the board through an analysis and discussion of a specific issue currently facing the board. The goal of this whole board training is intended to involve the board and superintendent actively in learning, reviewing research, and discussing options related to local issues, goals, or plans. As a member of the team, the superintendent is involved in identifying topics of greatest need for review, setting up and briefing the facilitator on the issue and need, and providing the leadership for any follow up required as a result of the training. ALSDE Training for Continuous Improvement: [AASB Training for Accountability](#)

5. LEADERSHIP ROLES

THE SUPERINTENDENT

[ALSDE Update for New Superintendents, August 2024](#)

5.1 Fluctuating Expectations for the Superintendent

It is important to situate any discussion of the current role of the superintendent in the broader historical context because expectations for superintendents tend to fluctuate with social, political, and economic trends. For example, over time (1820 to 1990) Peterson and Barnett (2003) identified the primary roles of the superintendent as follows:

1820-1850	Clerks for the school board
1850-1890	Scholarly educational leaders
1900-1930	Business managers
1930-1950	Educational statesmen
1950-1970	Educational professionals
1970-1980	Accountable public servants
1980-1990	Political strategists

5.2 The Current Roles and Responsibilities of Superintendents in Alabama

In Alabama the superintendent of the school system is a Constitutional officer. The roles, requirements, and duties of city and county superintendents of education are listed in the Code of Alabama 16-9 and 16-12. The local school superintendent's duties include the assurance that the quality of the school system's educational program is consonant with legislative intent, consistent with the needs of students and employees, and commensurate with the changing needs of the community. As the chief executive officer of the school system, the superintendent is responsible for recommending to the Board such policies as necessary to ensure that the instructional program offered to the students at the school system is high quality, appropriate and in compliance with federal and state laws. The publication "School Boards and Superintendents: Roles and Responsibilities," a collaborative project by the Alabama Association of School Administrators (AASA) and the Alabama Association of School Boards (AASB) lists the functions of the superintendent.

- To serve as the board's adviser and the school system's chief executive officer.
- To serve as the school system's educational leader.
- To keep the board informed about school operations and programs.
- To interpret the needs of the school system to the board.
- To present and recommend policy options along with specific recommendations to the board when circumstances require the board to adopt new policies or revise existing policies.
- To develop and inform the board of administrative procedures needed to implement board policy.

- To manage the school system’s day to day operations.
- To evaluate personnel and keep the board informed about evaluations.
- To develop an adequate program of school community relations which keeps the community informed about board policies, programs, and procedures.
- To propose and institute a process for long-range and strategic planning.
- To develop and carry out a plan to keep the total staff informed about the mission, goals, and strategies of the school system.
- To ensure that professional development opportunities are available to all school system employees.
- To develop and implement a continuing plan for working with the news media.
- To provide board members with information on any recommendations for school board action in advance of each board meeting, if possible.
- To oversee the school system’s finances and provide the board with regular reports on the school system’s financial operations.

5.3 Superintendent Priorities - What Factors Influence Them?

Superintendents spend their energies in very different ways. Although some superintendents become directly involved in curricular and instructional issues, many, if not most, delegate this responsibility to others. A survey of 326 superintendents (Bredeson, 1995) indicated superintendents often rank instructional leadership as their top priority but do not spend their time accordingly. As one superintendent noted, superintendents are hired for their ideas in curriculum and fired for issues related to finance. When asked to identify the most important things they DO regarding instructional leadership, the top-ranked responses were as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Instructional Support | Financial, personnel, and material resources.
Logistical and psychological support. |
| 2. Instructional Collaboration | Plan, design, and implement curriculum and instructional work. |
| 3. Instructional Delegation | Enable teachers, principal, and directors of instruction to carry out their work. |
| 4. Instructional Vision and Purpose | Keep the focus on students and learning. |

Whether superintendents either take a hands-on approach or delegate the responsibility for curriculum and instruction to others often hinges on personal variables such as (a) interest, training, background, and expertise, (b) system size, and (c) board expectations (Glass et al., 2000; Norton, Webb, Dlugosh, & Sybouts, 1996).

Personal Variables

Superintendents tend to take a more active role in their areas of personal interest and expertise. Consequently, beyond the minimum requirements, the role of superintendents regarding curriculum and instruction varies widely from system to system.

System Size

System size also influences the superintendent's role in curriculum and instructional issues. Obviously, superintendents in large systems have access to more specialists, and therefore delegate more responsibility than do superintendents in smaller systems. When superintendents have access to specialists such as assistant or associate superintendents or directors of curriculum, these individuals perform the instructional duties necessary to provide learning opportunities for students and engage in curriculum development. In this case, superintendents provide support for these individuals by managing and allocating the needed resources. In smaller systems, principals may be responsible for curriculum development.

Board Expectations

Finally, board expectations may influence the exercise of the superintendent's role. As noted earlier in this document, superintendents functioned as system managers for most of the 20th century. Evidence exists that the desire for superintendents to function as instructional leaders has yet to influence the expectations of the majority of board members. Nationwide, less than half of superintendents report that their board members expect them to function as instructional leaders (Glass, et al., 2000). Furthermore, board expectations for superintendents vary by gender with a higher percentage of women (women = 36.5%; men = 24.0%) reporting that they were hired as superintendents because of their expertise in instructional leadership.

5.4 The ABCs of the Superintendent's Work

Regardless of whether superintendents take an active role in curriculum and instructional leadership or delegate it to others, it is essential that they establish an organizational framework that facilitates curriculum development. This involves, at a minimum, specifying the role of the superintendent in curricular matters, providing staff with clear job descriptions, and organizing the central office in a way that maximizes the expertise of each staff member. Furthermore, all superintendents must ground their work within the framework of strategic planning and comprehensive policies.

"Teaching Teachers" and Planning for Improvement

As educational leaders, superintendents teach others about the budget process, lead the system in a strategic planning process, and regularly visit schools and classrooms (Johnson, 1996). In terms of strategic planning, effective superintendents are able to respond positively to the following questions: Do staff, board members, and community members know where the superintendent stands on key curricular issues?

- Are curricular decisions based on a clear philosophy of education coupled with a clear vision and mission for the school system?
- Is a comprehensive set of policies in place stating what directions will be taken to accomplish the desired educational outcome?
- Are sufficient regulations in place to prescribe how the intended directions will be reached?

Initiating Policy

Superintendents often initiate policy. In 1992, 70% of superintendents indicated they originate most new policies (Glass, et al., 2000). By 2000, this number had dropped to 43%. Superintendents in smaller systems (fewer than 3,000 students) initiate policy much more frequently than superintendents in large systems. For major policy initiatives, superintendents often

form a task force to conduct the research, seek the input of relevant stakeholders such as parents, teachers, and administrators, and write the policy. Superintendents also devise regulations or administrative directives developed in conjunction with policy statements. As opposed to policies which are approved by board members at a public meeting, regulations are only approved by the superintendent.

Superintendent's Role in Test Security

The ALSDE, Office of Student Learning, Student Assessment, provides explicit roles and responsibilities for superintendents as it pertains to testing and accountability.

Superintendents, working through their System Test Coordinators, have the responsibility of ensuring that the administration of statewide assessments conforms to proper procedures and standardized conditions. Ultimate responsibility for test security in the LEA rests with the local Superintendent. It is imperative the Superintendent and/or his designee attend the required System Coordinator training events held throughout the year to obtain necessary training for uncompromised testing/assessment protocols. Assessment information can be found on the state department website [Office of Student Assessment](#).

5.5 The Superintendent as Communicator – Strategic Communication

Performing the above curriculum-related responsibilities involves extensive formal and informal communication with board members, principals, and others who have a stake in public education. To be successful, the superintendent must be competent and skilled in communicating the system's curriculum strengths and identifying its weaknesses. Schools today use a variety of media, such as written publications, the local newspaper and web pages to keep parents, students, and the community informed about curriculum content, academic requirements, student achievement data, and instructional opportunities. It is very beneficial to obtain documentation from parents and students about their receipt of curriculum standards, grading practices, promotion and retention standards, and graduation requirements. Specific examples of areas of communication follow.

Communicating about Curriculum Changes

The management of change is particularly critical as budgets shrink and demands for academic excellence increase. An example of managing change is planning for the phasing in and phasing out of particular courses or bodies of content to minimize negative consequences for students. Careful monitoring of student transcripts, grades, and standardized test data can often prevent the unexpected or traumatic outcome of student retention or failure to graduate. Frequent meaningful communication between home and school ensures that students and their families understand the consequences of poor course selection or poor academic performance. Keeping students and parents informed of tutoring opportunities, help sessions, special services, and academic assistance opportunities is important for productive relationships and student success.

Communicating about Graduation Requirements

Local school systems must establish and clearly communicate all graduation requirements to students and parents. Requirements for participation in graduation ceremonies, requirements for passing required assessments and course credits, criteria for honor graduates, and all other features related to the status of graduates must be clearly communicated to students throughout their enrollment in the school system. It is recommended that documentation be maintained of students'

and parents' receipt of all information related to graduation requirements and criteria for participation in graduation ceremonies.

Issuing Accountability Reports

Whatever formal accountability reporting systems are mandated by the State Board of Education, the US Department of Education, or local boards, superintendents who are effective communicators share regularly with employees, parents, and the public the status of the school system. To be accountable for public resources and the academic achievement of students is a primary responsibility of the local school superintendent. Maintaining accurate and timely information on the school system's finances, academic progress, enrollment, discipline, and employee performance is critical to the superintendent's ability to keep all school system stakeholders engaged and informed about the work of the schools.

Telling the Good News

Support for public schools can no longer be taken for granted. Reasons superintendents need to actively seek community support include: (a) the erosion of confidence in public schools, (b) most taxpayers (80%) do not have children in K-12 public schools, (c) educational needs and priorities are shifting, and (d) the need for voter approval of tax increases (Kowalski, 1999).

Gaining such support involves devising a variety of communication vehicles to present the "good news" about educational accomplishments. Newsletters, public speaking opportunities, the school system website, as well as the skillful and strategic use of social media, advertising, and technological communication systems can all enhance the public's knowledge of and support for the school system. It is a responsibility of the superintendent to see that the system's accomplishments, progress, and efforts are presented clearly and effectively and that community engagement with and support for the school system is nurtured.

Disseminating Curriculum Policies

Regarding policy dissemination and interpretation, there are two audiences: those charged with implementing the policy and those affected by the policy implementation. For example, a board policy on student discipline provides direction for educational personnel in making decisions about discipline and information to students and parents regarding the disciplinary decision likely to be made.

Policies should be communicated to every employee in the system as well as parents, students, and the general public. All of these stakeholders should have reasonable access to the policy manual. Policy manuals for employees are often found in administrative offices and, sometimes, in the faculty workspace. Most school systems now include access to the system policies, procedures, forms and publications on the system and local school websites.

5.6 Leading with Character

[A Framework for Character Education in Alabama Schools](#)

Overview

Character education is widely recognized as an essential and unavoidable aspect of schooling. Schools shape character, whether they intend to or not, and so the cultivation of character in

schools is not limited to specific character education programs. Instead, character education involves intentional efforts in all aspects of schooling towards equipping children with capacity for flourishing lives, as well as academic attainment. This may also include specific character education programs.

This framework has been developed as an intellectual and practical resource for educational leaders wanting to cultivate character in school(s). The framework is intended to provide leaders with a comprehensive understanding of virtue and character, and how character may be developed in youth. The framework reflects current understanding of best practice in character education and is tailored to the Alabama Regulatory Context.

The framework is divided into four sections:

- **The Alabama Regulatory Context.**
This section provides an overview of the regulatory context for comprehensive character education in the State of Alabama. It organizes and explains the implications for character education of the 1975 Code of Alabama, the 1995 Accountability Law, and the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics.
- **A Virtue Framework for Alabama Schools.**
This section defines and groups the virtues identified in the Alabama regulatory context. It also explains some important ways in which they are related to one another, to other virtues, to character, and to personal and societal well-being. It explains why different kinds of virtues matter and explains relationships between virtues, devotion to excellence, and fulfillment of personal potential.
- **Nurturing Character Development.**
This section describes a coordinated whole-school approach and identifies key elements in comprehensive character education. Key elements covered in this section include virtue motivation and identity, virtue knowledge and reasoning, virtue emotion, and virtue efficacy or executive functioning. Developmental foundations discussed are a favorable school ethos, expectations and modeling, direct instruction, and opportunities for practice in judgment, decision-making, and virtues.
- **Leadership in Character Education.**
This section addresses the role of leadership in comprehensive character education. The heart of such leadership is modeling judicious and conscientious commitment to the flourishing of a just school community in which adult members of the school community can help students fulfill their potential and lead good lives. The focus of such commitment is creating and sustaining a school culture of professional collaboration in which growing virtue literacy empowers a coordinated whole-school approach to character education.

The Alabama Regulatory Context

Key Mandates

The 1975 Code of Alabama and 1995 Accountability Law mandate character education in Alabama schools. The latter states specifically that:

The State Board of Education and all local boards shall develop and implement a comprehensive character education program for all grades to consist of not less than ten minutes instruction per day focusing upon the students' development of the following

character traits: Courage, patriotism, citizenship, honesty, fairness, respect for others, kindness, cooperation, self-respect, self-control, courtesy, compassion, tolerance, diligence, generosity, punctuality, cleanliness, cheerfulness, school pride, respect for the environment, patience, creativity, sportsmanship, loyalty, and perseverance. Each plan of instruction shall include the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag (1995 Accountability Law).

There are four substantive elements to this mandate. Character education shall:

- Be comprehensive
- Be taught at least 10 minutes/day
- Be focused on students' development of the
- 25 listed character traits
- Include the Pledge to the American flag

A Comprehensive Character Education Approach

A comprehensive character education approach will need to: (1) include whatever is reasonable and necessary to students' developing good character; (2) include students at all grade levels (3) recognize that teaching about virtues for 10 minutes per day is a minimum standard that is overshadowed by the whole-school approach of this framework.

Good character, comprised of virtues, involves a harmonious interplay of motivational, perceptual, emotional, cognitive, and executive attributes:

- Virtue motivation – respect for or valuing of others, self, and everything else of value.
- Virtue perception – noticing what is ethically significant in different situations.
- Virtue emotion – feeling the emotions corresponding to appropriate valuing and awareness of what is ethically significant in different situations.
- Virtue knowledge – understanding the nature of virtues and their roles in flourishing lives and societies.
- Virtue efficacy – reliably acting in appropriate ways.

The development of good character involves the formation of a *virtuous self* or *identity* in which these attributes are more or less consciously shaped and integrated. A comprehensive character education approach would need to target all of these elements of good character—motivational, perceptual, emotional, cognitive, and executive elements. It would also need to facilitate the integrative processes through which individuals form virtuous selves or virtue identities. In other words, its *content* would be comprehensive in the sense that it would address all of the functional components and developmental processes through which good character is formed.

While it is valuable to focus on the development of specific virtues (e.g. honesty, courage etc.), any list of specific virtues is bound to be incomplete or to assume the assistance of further virtues that are not on the list. When we identify a character trait as a virtue or aspect of good character, we imagine it functioning in a reasonable and balanced way in the context of good character as a whole.

The regulatory context outlined supports a comprehensive character education approach for Alabama schools. This comprehensive approach would devote attention to the cultivation of categories of virtue as necessary components of good character.

5.7 Leading System Improvement through Building Coherence

Managing Change

Rapid social change, technological advances, escalating targets for accountability reporting, and fluctuating financial support are only a few of the major forces that require effective superintendents to be skilled at managing change. The factors identified by Douglas Reeves in his 2009 book, *Leading Change in Your School* (ASCD, Alexandria, VA) identifies aspects of leading change in a school. His comprehensive discussion and practical examples of leading change to improve student achievement is an extension of his articles on this topic written for *Educational Leadership*. These same areas of expertise he identified and described for school principals are valuable for superintendents as well. Reeves offers recommendations in four critical areas for education leaders who want to successfully manage change:

- Creating conditions for change, including assessments to determine persona and organizational readiness for change;
- Planning change, including cautionary notes about strategic planning;
- *Implementing change*, including the importance of moving from rhetoric to day-to-day reality; and
- *Sustaining change*, including the need to reorient priorities and values so that individual convenience gives way to a shared sense of the greater good.

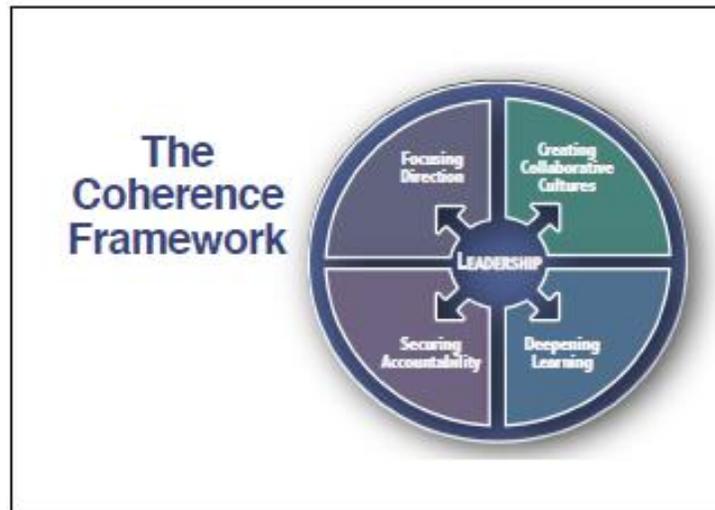
One of the most persuasive and prolific authors in recent decades on managing change in education is Michael Fullan, professor emeritus at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. His latest books on the topic of leading change in education are *The Six Secrets of Change, Realization* (with Lyn Sharratt), *Motion Leadership: The Skinny on Becoming Change Savvy*, and *All Systems Go: The Change Imperative for Whole System Reform* (Corwin Press, 2010). In *All Systems Go*, Fullan stresses the importance of leadership in sustainable school system change. “Changing whole education systems for the better, as measured by student achievement, requires coordinated leadership at the school, community, system, and government levels.” He stresses the need for educational leaders to build collective capacity for change and improvement. He identifies eight characteristics of an effective school system (p. 36) that result from leadership’s successful management of change to build collective capacity.

Characteristics of an Effective School System	
1. Focus	A clear direction and relentless focus on student achievement through instructional improvement in the classroom; a central and singular focus from which all other pieces can flow. A system must continuously strengthen its core by increasing teachers’ skills and knowledge, engaging students in learning, and ensuring the curriculum challenges students.

2. Data	Access to and use of data on student learning as a strategy for classroom and school improvement and to monitor progress; the development and use of ongoing means of diagnosing student needs and addressing them through specific instructional responses.
3. Leadership	Development of teacher, principal, and system leadership to share effective practices from each other and from the larger research base. Leadership roles are defined so that leaders participate as learners in working with teachers to address instructional needs.
4. Resources	Allocating resources in accordance with this focus without a reliance on one-time, special funding. Resources should be clearly aligned to support the teaching and learning core of the system's work.
5. Reduced Distractors	A concerted effort to reduce the distractors that undermine teachers' and principals' capacity to carry out their primary mission. Effective systems do not take on too many initiatives at once; excessive bureaucracy, inconsistent messages, multiple non-classroom initiatives, and time-and-energy-consuming conflict all distract from the focus of student achievement.
6. Community	Links to parents and the community and related agencies to provide support for students and educators and to intervene early in case of difficulties experienced by students and by schools.
7. Communication	A constant and consistent communication that focuses on the core message up and down and across the system. Clear communication so that everyone knows the central focus of teaching and learning priorities and how to achieve them. Staying on message is crucial.
8. Esprit de Corps	A sense of identity and sense of community among teachers and principals and between schools and the system. People take pride in their work and that of their colleagues and feel a strong sense of affinity with the system as a whole. Allegiances are strong, and collaborative competition leverages the schools to stronger and stronger performance.

Fullan (2016) expands his framework for successful school and system improvement in his book, *Coherence: The Right Drivers in Action for Schools, Districts, and Systems*. Through the development of coherence, or a collective deep understanding of the purpose and focus of the school/system work, Fullan describes the key to success as the Coherence Framework, a customizable road map that drives action toward collective leadership and sustainable change. Four essential components are:

- Focused direction to build collective purpose
- Cultivating collaborative cultures while clarifying individual and team roles
- Deepening learning to accelerate improvement and foster innovation
- Securing accountability from the inside out



The same themes identified by Fullan for successful educational change are listed in a 66-page report (2009) by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) entitled [The System Leadership Challenge: Empowering Principals to Improve Teaching and Learning](#). In an excerpt from this report, Gene Bottoms and Betty Fry describe the characteristics of system support for school improvement for Educational Research Service. The Bottoms/Fry report summary is included in the 2011 Superintendents' Briefing Book: Vital Information for School System Leaders published by Educational Research Service. The authors stress the role of the superintendent in organizing and sustaining system support for schools and principals as they work to effect positive change in student achievement.

SREB Key Strategies for System Support for School Improvement (Bottoms and Fry Summary, 2010)

Strategy	Strategy Definition	Recommended System Actions
1	Establish a clear focus and a strategic plan for improving student achievement	<p>Strengthen and clearly articulate system improvement goals and strategies to improve student graduation rates and college/career readiness by specifying what is to be improved, the level of improvement expected and the timeline for improvement.</p> <p>Monitor each school’s progress on system improvement goals and the extent to which proven school and classroom practices have been implemented.</p>
2	Organize and engage the system office in support of each school	<p>Align the work of the system office staff with goals and improvement framework by redefining their roles and responsibility to work with principals and teachers collaboratively in achieving system goals and achievement targets.</p> <p>Review where decision-making authority lies in the system and give principals authority commensurate with their responsibilities.</p> <p>Provide specialized training and coaching to build system staff capacity to support schools.</p> <p>Hold system staff accountable for work that helps schools achieve specific goals for improvement. Provide incentives for performance that supports schools and student achievement. Recognize system office staff whose service to schools is valued by principals and teachers and has resulted in improved school and classroom practices and student outcomes.</p>

Strategy	Strategy Definition	Recommended System Actions
3	Provide instruction coherence and support.	<p>Redefine the job of school principals to emphasize responsibilities for providing instructional leadership that improves teaching and learning.</p> <p>Engage school leaders and teachers in identifying core elements of effective instructional practices that will motivate more students to meet rigorous standards; provided training for leaders and teachers to use standards-based instructional planning and research-based instructional strategies.</p> <p>Create an accountability system that rewards school leaders and teachers for making changes in school curriculum, classroom practices, and student support system that raise achievement and improve graduation rates.</p> <p>Establish a repository of exemplary, engaging, standards-based units, projects and lessons that teachers can use in planning their own instruction.</p> <p>Establish policies and practices that enable teams of teachers to develop multidisciplinary courses that teach essential college- and career- readiness skills.</p>

Strategy	Strategy Definition	Recommended System Actions
4	Invest heavily in instruction-related professional learning for principals, teachers, and school system leaders	<p>Establish and support collaborative partnerships (with universities, professional organizations, and other entities) to prepare leaders for improving curriculum and instructional practices.</p> <p>Encourage and support school-based professional learning strategies aligned with the school’s assessed needs and improvement plans.</p> <p>Provide professional learning for teachers on how to make greater use of project- and problem-based authentic assignments to engage and motivate students in more intellectually demanding course work.</p> <p>Create a system to support peer-to-peer learning opportunities among principals, especially for those serving low-performing schools.</p>
5	Provide high-quality data that link student achievement to school and classroom practices and assist school to use data	<p>Develop a robust set of indicators to track progress on system goals and the impact on student performance of specific programs, instructional improvements and interventions.</p> <p>Drive the routine use of data for decisions about continuous improvement of instruction and student achievement to the school and classroom level, rather than concentrating such decisions at the system level.</p>
6	Optimize the use of resources to support learning improvement.	<p>Review school budgeting policies and practices to streamline the process and give schools more flexibility in using resources. Secure adequate resources and budget to provide an adequate supply of up- to-date instructional tools and materials.</p> <p>Review ways of using school time and organizing staff so teachers can work together on instructional issues.</p> <p>Provide financial support to schools for targeted interventions that improve student achievement (e.g., grade- and credit-recovery programs, extended instructional time, extra-help or tutorial programs).</p> <p>Conduct systematic program reviews to assess outcomes, identify best investments, and discontinue allocations when warranted. Focus spending on research-based instruction proven to increase student achievement.</p>

Strategy	Strategy Definition	Recommended System Actions
7	Use open, credible processes to involve progressive school and community leaders in school improvement.	<p>Establish policies and structures for parents and community leaders to assist schools in planning, implementing and soliciting support for changes in school and classroom practices that foster greater student motivation and success.</p> <p>Create focus campaigns led by the school board, superintendent and system staff to engage and inform parents and community leaders about the type of school reform that will be necessary, and the level of effort students must make to graduate prepared for postsecondary study and careers.</p>

5.8 Educator Evaluation

Teacher Evaluation

The Alabama Teacher Observation Tool (ATOT), is one component of The Alabama Teacher Growth Program (ATGP) which promotes continuous monitoring of the teachers' ability to support the implementation of Alabama Core Teaching Standards (ACTS), improve instructional practices, seek professional supports, and increase student performance.

Through the ATGP, educators and school administrators work collaboratively to determine areas of strength and areas of growth. Goal setting, observations and feedback, and reflective discussions are utilized to improve teacher performance. In addition to ATOT, the ATGP includes a Self-Assessment, a Professional Learning Plan (PLP), and a Professional Practice Diagnostic (optional).

The Teacher Observational Tool reflects five dimensions:

- Culture/Climate
- Learning
- Essentials
- Agency
- Relationship

The Culture/Climate section is shown as an example in the following chart.

Dimensions and Observable Expectations	Very Evident	Evident	Somewhat Evident	Not Evident	Descriptive Actions
Culture/Climate Dimension					
The teacher:					
1. Fosters an environment that embraces all learners	4	3	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows connectedness to learners, interpersonal bonding Expresses concern for learners' well-being Demonstrates personal interest in learners
2. Treats each learner equitably	4	3	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates openness and approachability Makes culturally responsive eye contact with learners Uses words that resonate with or do not exclude learners
3. Encourages learners to share their opinions without fear of negative comments from their peers	4	3	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepts and supports learners to take risks voicing their opinions and asking questions Promotes interactions that are highly supportive, friendly, and learner-centered Asks questions that encourage learners to voice their opinions
4. Creates enthusiasm for the learning at hand	4	3	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a positive attitude toward the content/activity/task Shows genuine interest in the content/activity/task Exhibits energy that appeals to learners

The Alabama Teacher Self-Assessment is based on the Alabama Core Teaching Standards:

- **Standard 1—Learner Development:** The educator understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
- **Standard 2—Learning Differences:** The educator uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
- **Standard 3—Learning Environments:** The educator works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- **Standard 4—Content Knowledge:** The educator understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
- **Standard 5 – Application of Content:** The educator understands how to connect concepts and use different perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving to authentic local and global issues.
- **Standard 6 – Assessment:** The educator understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the educator's and learner's decision making.
- **Standard 7 – Planning and Instruction:** Based on the appropriate Alabama Course(s) of Study, the educator plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
- **Standard 8 – Instructional Strategies:** The educator understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.
- **Standard 9 – Professional Learning and Ethical Practice:** The educator engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly

the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community) and adapts practices to meet the needs of each learner.

- **Standard 10 – Leadership and Collaboration:** The educator seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

Using the self-assessment form, teachers select Initiating, Progressing, Accomplishing, or Excelling to rate their performance on each standard.

School Leader Evaluation

[Ala. Code §§16-6I-1, et seq.](#)

The School Principal Leadership and Mentoring Act, which the Legislature passed in 2023, required:

- The creation of the Alabama Principal Leadership Development System (APLDS) -- a mentoring
- program for new principals; and
- A continuing professional learning program for principals and assistant principals.
- The goal of the program is to increase the effectiveness of school administrators to improve outcomes for all students. A design team made up of representatives from major educational groups throughout the state is tasked with developing the program, and its work will be phased in over many years (See [School Principal Leadership and Mentoring Act Overview](#)).

The establishment of new school leader standards, the [Alabama Standards for School Leadership](#), are effective under this evaluation system.

A required component of the APLDS is the development of the Professional Learning Plan (PLP). The PLP must include at least one goal for student academic growth and/or achievement, and at least one goal for school climate. A plan for participating in high-quality professional learning targeting school leadership from the state-approved list is also required. Weekly reflections on progress toward meeting established goals is recommended.

Properly certified principals and assistant principals who work full-time in public schools and complete the program, will receive annual stipends of up to \$10,000 and \$5,000, respectively, if they meet the program requirements. Additional stipends are available for principals who meet or exceed student growth goals in low-performing schools and high-poverty schools or those in low-performing or high-poverty schools.

ALSDE provides resources to assist school leaders with the many roles and responsibilities of their position. ALSDE has created a [Principal Calendar](#) with monthly guides and checklists of Local, ALSDE, and Federal tasks to be completed.

AASB does not believe that a policy is necessary to participate in or implement this program. Specific information about implementation of the Act can be found on the [Alabama Principal Development System website](#).

District Leader Evaluation

LEADAlabama

LEADAlabama is the formative and online instrument used in the evaluation for all central office leaders. For the purpose of LEADAlabama, a school leader is one who holds administrative certification and is serving in an instructional leader position. This includes central office administrators and other building level administrators other than the school principal and assistant principal. The Lead Alabama instrument is based on the Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders and the Alabama Continuum for Instructional Leader Development. The Alabama Continuum for Instructional Leader Development has 23 indicators on which the educational leader will assess him/herself as either *Pre-Service*, *Developing*, *Collaborative*, *Accomplished*, or *Distinguished*.

The standards are as follows:

- **Standard 1: Planning for Continuous Improvement.** Engages the school community in developing and maintaining a shared vision; plans effectively; uses critical thinking and problem-solving techniques; collects, analyzes, and interprets data; allocates resources; and evaluates results for the purpose of continuous school improvement.
- **Standard 2: Teaching and Learning.** The instructional leader promotes and monitors the success of all students in the learning environment by collaboratively aligning the curriculum; by aligning the instruction and the assessment process to ensure effective student achievement; and by using a variety of benchmarks, learning expectations, and feedback measures to ensure accountability.
- **Standard 3: Human Resources Development.** Recruits, selects, organizes, evaluates, and mentors faculty and staff to accomplish school and system goals. Works collaboratively with the school faculty and staff to plan and implement effective professional development that is based upon student needs and that promotes both individual and organizational growth and leads to improved teaching and learning. Initiates and nurtures interpersonal relationships to facilitate teamwork and enhance student achievement.
- **Standard 4: Diversity.** Responds to and influences the larger personal, political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context in the classroom, school, and the local community while addressing diverse student needs to ensure the success of all students.
- **Standard 5: Community and Stakeholder Relationships.** Identifies the unique characteristics of the community to create and sustain mutually supportive family-school-community relations.
- **Standard 6: Technology.** Plans, implements, and evaluates the effective integration of current technologies and electronic tools in teaching, management, research, and communication.
- **Standard 7: Management of the Learning Organization.** Manages the organization, facilities, and financial resources; implements operational plans; and promotes collaboration to create a safe and effective learning environment.
- **Standard 8: Ethics.** Demonstrates honesty, integrity, and fairness to guide school policies and practices consistent with current legal and ethical standards for professional educators.

Link to [Central Office Curriculum Leader Calendar](#)

5.9 Hiring Quality School Leaders

Choosing an effective school principal is one of the most significant decisions that a superintendent or school board can make, as new leadership can propel a system forward in meeting its goals (Elmore and Burney, 2000). Principals are responsible for setting school improvement agendas and teacher workplace conditions and ensuring that the school performs in accordance with state/national policies and community expectations (Clifford, 2011). School leadership, after instructional quality, is the most significant school-related contributor to what and how much students learn at school (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004).

Workforce projections indicate that more school boards and superintendents will need to hire new principals for their schools (Educational Research Service, 2000). According to some estimates, 40 percent of the current principal workforce will retire by 2014 (Baltzell & Dentler, 1983; Educational Research Service, 2000; Hammond, Muffs, & Sciascia, 2001). Other researchers contend that increased job stress and complexity will further accelerate retirement and attrition of the current principal workforce (Gates, Ringel, Santibafiez, Ross, & Chung, 2006). The new generation of school principals is older, more diverse, more professionally experienced, and more mobile than principals of 10 or 20 years ago.

Several studies suggest that urban and rural systems, particularly those with a poor record of student achievement and high family poverty rates, are struggling to fill vacant school principal positions (Farkas, Johnson, & Foleno, 2001; The New Teacher Project, 2006; Olson, 2008). Often a superintendent's effectiveness is determined by his/her ability to recruit, develop, and retain high quality school principals. Innovative practices such as school system-based programs to recruit, support, and reward aspiring leaders have shown promise. The ability to negotiate principal salaries and recent changes to the Alabama Tenure Law (establishing contract principals) have been perceived by many as successful efforts to increase the pool of quality applicants for school principals.

5.10 Organizing the Central Office Staff

An important aspect of the superintendent's ability to influence student achievement and to promote school system effectiveness is his/her decisions about the organization of the central office staff. The setting of priorities for central office work and evaluating the effectiveness of central office personnel is a key element of the superintendent's job responsibility. Until recently, little research existed on the function and role of the central office in school improvement efforts. A study to examine when considering re-organization of the central office is the one reported in 2010 by the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy (CTP) at the University of Washington. This study, supported by the Wallace Foundation, is summarized by Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, and Newton (Education Research Service, 2011) in an article entitled *Central Office Transformation for System-wide Teaching and Learning Improvement: Executive Summary*. The study looked inside central offices to understand more specifically what central office administrators were doing as part of the school system's transformation process.

5.11 Students First Act (Code of Alabama §16-24C-1 through §16-24C-14)

Passed in early 2011 the Students First Act of 2011 replaces the previous Teacher Tenure Act and Fair Dismissal Act. The Alabama Legislature described the primary purpose of this act (also identified as Act 2011-270) in its opening lines: The purpose of this chapter is to improve the quality of public education in the State of Alabama. The Act sets out to accomplish this purpose by:

- Providing for fundamental fairness and due process to employees covered by this chapter.
- Restoring primary authority and responsibility for maintaining a competent educational workforce to employers covered by this chapter.
- Enhancing the ability of public educational agencies to increase student academic achievement and student performance through effective allocation of personnel resources.
- Investing employers covered by this chapter with the discretion and flexibility necessary to make the most effective use of limited educational resources.
- Eliminating costly, cumbersome, and counterproductive legal challenges to routine personnel decisions by simplifying administrative adjudication and review of contested personnel decisions.

Employees Covered by the Students First Act

All employees who are considered teachers and classified employees are covered by the Students First Act. Classified employees include full time employees such as bus drivers, CNP workers, custodians, maintenance personnel, secretaries, instructional aides, and non-certified supervisors. Teachers are those who must hold a professional educator certificate. The Students First Act does not cover superintendents, Chief School Financial Officers, temporary/part-time/substitutes, summer school personnel, pilot program personnel, and occasional, season, or supplemental personnel.

Tenure and Non-Probationary Status under the Students First Act

Tenure is applicable to all employees covered by the Students First Act. Tenure/Non- probationary status is earned after three consecutive years with the Board of Education. For the purposes of tenure/non-probationary status, a full year includes employees hired prior to October 1 of a given year. If an employee is hired after October 1 of a year, it will not serve as credit for tenure.

Employees will earn tenure after the third year unless they are notified in writing prior to the close of the third year. The third year is defined as the last day of the third year for teachers and June 15 of the third year for classified employees. All service credit must be consecutive in order to count as credit for tenure/non-probationary status. Further, teachers must hold a professional certificate for each of the three years. Credit from time as a classified employee and as a teacher cannot be combined to serve as time toward tenure/non-probationary status. Neither tenure nor non-probationary status apply to a specific position, rank, work site, assignment, title, or compensation.

Termination of Employees under the Students First Act

Probationary Classified Employees

Classified employees who have not yet earned tenure may be terminated during the probationary period. The termination is effectuated by a recommendation by the superintendent and the approval of the Board of Education. The terminated employee gets 15 days of pay, and the decision cannot be appealed.

Non-Tenured Teachers

Teachers who have not yet earned tenure may be terminated during the three-year probationary period. If the termination is during the school year, a 30-day notice is required. The teacher can submit a letter to the Board of Education to explain why the Board of Education should not take such action. If the termination is at the end of the year for the following year, the written notice must be before June 15 unless it is the teacher's third year. If it is the teacher's third year, written notice must be on or before the last day of the school year. The non-tenured teacher's termination cannot be appealed.

Tenured and Non-probationary Employees

Employees who have tenure/non-probationary status may be terminated for the following reasons: justifiable decrease in number of positions, incompetency, and insubordination, neglect of duty, immorality, and failure to perform duties in a satisfactory manner and other and just cause. The process for terminating a tenured or non-probationary employee requires written notice of the termination which must include the reason, the facts, the statutory grounds for the termination, and the opportunity to request a hearing with the Board of Education within 15 days of the notice. The termination hearing is with the Board of Education and the employee. If the Board of Education votes to accept the termination recommendation, a written notice must be provided within 10 calendar days of the Board of Education's vote. The notice of the right to appeal must be included. If the employee appeals within fifteen (15) days of the vote, the case goes to a hearing officer. If the hearing officer upholds the decision, the final appeal by either party can be with the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals.

Suspension of Employees under the Students First Act

Employees can be suspended with or without pay for 20 workdays. The suspension is done by the superintendent providing written notice with the reasons for the suspension. The employee can provide a letter to the Board of Education and request to meet with the Board of Education. The Board of Education votes on the recommendation. If approved, the superintendent provides written notification to the employee of the suspension. The employee has no right to appeal the decision after the approval of the Board of Education. Employees may be suspended for more than 20 workdays with the same process used for terminations.

Transfers and Re-assignments of Employees under the Students First Act

The Students First Act differentiates between a transfer (between schools) and a re-assignment (within a school/facility).

Re-Assignment of Tenured and Probationary Teachers

A superintendent, without Board of Education approval, can re-assign a teacher within the same school (grade change, work location within the school) or campus/facility as long as it is done by the 20th calendar day after school begins. However, the teacher must hold certification for the newly assigned position and there cannot be a loss of compensation as a result of the re-assignment. There is no appeal to this re-assignment.

Re-Assignment of Probationary and Non-Probationary Classified Employees

A re-assignment for probationary and non-probationary classified employees, while not directly addressed in the Students First Act, may be done with notice, recommendation to the Board of

Education by the superintendent, approval by the Board of Education, and notice of the decision. There is no appeal to this re-assignment.

Transfer of Tenured Teachers

For teachers, proper certification must be held, there should not be any reduction in compensation, the transfer should be done within the first 20 calendar days of school, and the transfer should only take place once per school year. If the transfer is within a high school feeder pattern, the teacher can request a meeting with the Board of Education. If the transfer is outside of the high school feeder pattern, then a hearing with the Board of Education can be requested. Upon the recommendation of the superintendent and the approval of the Board of Education, the decision to transfer the employee is final with no appeal rights.

Transfer of Probationary Teachers

A transfer of a probationary teacher, while not directly addressed in the Students First Act, may be done with a superintendent's recommendation to the Board of Education. If approved, the decision to transfer the probationary teacher is final with no appeal rights.

Transfer of Probationary Classified Employees

A transfer of a probationary classified employee, while not directly addressed in the Students First Act, may be done with a superintendent's recommendation to the Board of Education. If approved, the decision to transfer the employee is final with no appeal rights.

Transfer of Non-Probationary Classified Employees

For non-probationary classified employees, a transfer cannot result in a reduction in compensation. Written notice of the transfer must be provided 15 days before the decision, and the effective date of the transfer cannot be less than 15 calendar days from the decision. If a non-probationary classified employee is recommended to a transfer outside of the high school feeder pattern, the appeal process is the same that for appealing a termination.

Voluntary Transfers for All Employees

Employees can voluntarily be re-assigned or transferred at any time.

Reduction in Pay for Employees

Probationary and non-tenured employees can be transferred with a reduction in pay assuming proper certification is held (if applicable), written notice is provided with an explanation of the compensation changes, and there is an opportunity to object in writing before the Board of Education's vote. The transfer must be effective 15 days after the vote.

Non-probationary and tenured transfers with a reduction in pay are handled in the same manner as a termination.

Administrative Leave

A superintendent can place an employee on paid administrative leave.

Resignation

A tenured teacher is not permitted to resign within 30 calendar days before the first day of school for students. A tenured teacher or other employee may terminate his or her employment at any other time by giving five days' written notice to the employing board of education. Any teacher terminating his or her employment in violation of this section is guilty of unprofessional conduct, and the State Superintendent of Education may revoke or suspend the certificate of such teacher.

Teacher Certification Loss

A loss of teacher certification results in a termination.

Reduction in Force (RIF)

The Students First Act provides that the Students First Act does not cover actions due to a RIF. A RIF policy must be in place and there is no right to contest a reduction in force layoff with the Students First Act. Objective criteria for determining which employees will be affected by a reduction in force may be announced at the time the Board of Education declares the RIF. Selections of employees to be released due to a reduction in force must not be for personal or political reasons. Additional information about reductions in force and employee layoffs are available in the Code of Alabama §16-1-33 (1975) as amended <https://alison.legislature.state.al.us/code-of-alabama?section=16-1-33>

The Alabama Association of School Boards (AASB) also has published resources for board members and superintendents that describe key features of the Students First Act of 2011. The 120-page booklet Guidelines for Implementing the Students First Act is available free from <http://www.alabamaschoolboards.org/training/boardmanship-basics>

5.12 Teacher Accountability Act (Code of Alabama §16-24B-1 through §16-24B-8)

The Teacher Accountability Act applies to principals hired after July 1, 2000. Principals hired prior to this time are covered under the previous teacher tenure act. The entire act may be downloaded from <http://www.legislature.state.al.us/codeofalabama/1975/153240.htm>. T

Probationary Period

Newly hired principals may be hired for a probationary period for up to two years. If the newly hired principal has previously served as a principal, the probationary period can only be one year in length.

Termination of Contract Probationary Principal

Probationary principals may be terminated at the end of the probationary period. While reasons may be provided, they are not required. If the termination recommendation is made during the probationary period, the probationary principal is able to request a hearing.

Contract Principal

If the Board of Education keeps the probationary principal past the probationary period, the principal is provided a contract for not less than three years.

Termination and Non-Renewal of Contract Principal

A contract principal can be terminated during his/her contract period for specified reasons (immorality, insubordination, neglect of duty, conviction of a felony or crime, failure to fulfill the duties and responsibilities imposed upon principals by state law, willful failure to comply with board

policy, a justifiable decrease in the number of positions due to decreased enrollment or decreased funding, failure to maintain her or his certificate in current status, other good and just cause, incompetency, and failure to perform duties in a satisfactory manner). The principal has specific process rights if the contract is terminated during the contract period.

A contract principal can be non-renewed at the end of the contract period. The non-renewal must be done at least 90 days before the expiration of the current contract. The superintendent's recommendation to non-renew the contract principal must include reasons for such action. Aside from personal or political reasons, the reason for non-renewal can be for any reason beyond those provided for during the contract period. The contract principal has specific process rights should he or she be recommended for non-renewal.

Evaluation of Contract Principals

All contract principals must be evaluated each year. For each year the contract principal is not evaluated with an Alabama State Department of Education approved instrument, the contract period extends the contract period for one year.

5.13 Employee Leave

Managing the various types of leave can be a challenge for school and system leaders. The information below provides a basic overview of the types of leave available to employees in Alabama schools. An additional challenge is to obtain reliable, qualified substitutes when teachers or other employees are away from their duties.

Sick Leave

Full-time employees earn one day of sick leave per month of contract. The number of days of sick leave that can be accumulated by an employee is unlimited. The reasons for taking sick leave are as follows:

- Personal illness or doctor's quarantine.
- Incapacitating personal injury.
- Attendance upon an ill member of the employee's immediate family (parent, spouse, child, foster child currently in the care and custody of the employee, sibling); or an individual with a close personal tie.
- Death in the family of the employee (parent, spouse, child, sibling, parent-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, nephew, niece, grandchild, grandparent, uncle or aunt).
- Death, injury, or sickness of another person who has unusually strong personal ties to the employee, such as a person who stood in loco parentis.

Sick Leave Banks

Employees may voluntarily become members of the local sick leave bank. The bank allows a member to borrow days from the collective bank when his/her accrued sick leave has been exhausted. The borrowed days must be repaid to the sick leave bank.

Catastrophic Leave

Members of the sick leave bank are eligible to request donated days for the purpose of catastrophic leave. Catastrophic leave is defined as “*Any illness, injury, or pregnancy or medical condition related to childbirth, certified by a licensed physician which causes the employee to be absent from work for an extended period of time.*” This enables other members to donate sick days to a sick leave bank member after all personal and sick leave days are exhausted.

Personal Leave

Employees are entitled to at least two days but not more than five personal leave days. Unused personal leave days cannot be accrued but can be converted to sick leave days, or employees can receive payment for the cost of the substitute. Employees are not required to provide reason for the personal leave. The state pays for the first two personal leave days for employees. If additional personal leave days are granted, they are paid for by the local board of education.

On-the-Job Injury (OJI)

OJI is defined as “...any accident or injury to the employee occurring during the performance of duties (or when directed or requested by the employer to be on the property of the employer), which prevents the employee from working or returning to his or her job.” After such injury, an employee has 24 hours to report to the superintendent or another as stipulated by local policy. If the OJI is supported, the employee has up to 90 days to be out without an impact on compensation and his/her own sick leave days. An approved OJI also allows the employee to file with the State Board of Adjustments for unpaid medical expenses.

Leaves of Absences

Employees may be granted, in accordance with local policies, one year but no more than two consecutive years of a leave of absence.

Vacation

Local boards of education have the authority to establish policies to grant vacation leave.

Military Leave

Employees are provided no more than 168 hours of leave for federal military leave per calendar year. Employees in the military also have explicit protections under the *Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)*.

Family Medical Leave Act

Eligible employees have rights to take leave in accordance with the FMLA. The FMLA allows eligible employees to take up to 12 weeks of leave in a one-year period for specified reasons. Qualifying reasons include the birth of a child; adoption of a child; to care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition, a serious health condition of the employee; a qualifying exigency from the employee’s spouse, child or parent on “covered active duty” or 26 workweeks to care for a servicemen with a serious injury or illness if the member is a spouse, child, parent or next of kin. For more information see <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla>

Local policies can stipulate if FMLA can be taken concurrently with paid leave options such as sick leave, personal leave, and vacation leave.

6. ALIGNING THE CURRICULUM

From the perspective of a superintendent, the curriculum is the body of content, knowledge, skills, and processes taught by the school system. The challenge is to assure that there is consistency among the mandated curricula, the taught curricula, and the tested curricula of a school. To provide direction in fulfilling this responsibility, this handbook focuses on the following broad areas:

- the official or required curriculum in Alabama public schools,
- the resources that are helpful in implementing the required curriculum,
- the state tests (and other tests) which should be considered for purposes of curriculum alignment,
- how superintendents can determine what is actually being taught, and
- methods for determining whether a misalignment among the official, taught, and tested curricula exists.

6.1 Needs Assessment

Needs assessment is, first and foremost, a process—a process that can help educators at all levels successfully identify, understand, and better address education challenges. Needs assessment is generally defined as a systematic examination of the gap that exists between the current state and desired state of an organization and the factors that can be attributed to this gap. The needs assessment process is an important first step in improving the effectiveness of education investments that lead to better outcomes for students.

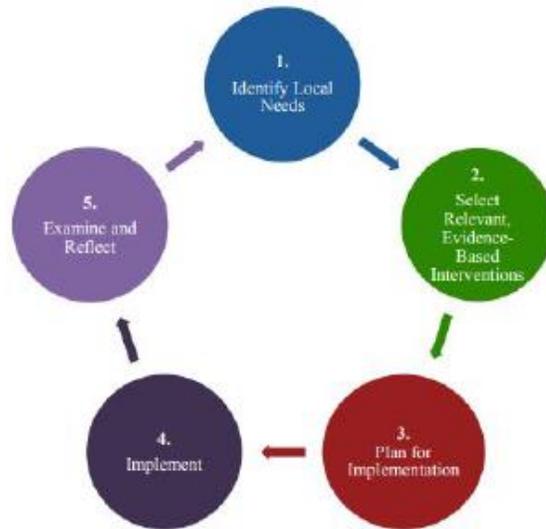
Why Conduct a Needs Assessment?

An effective needs assessment helps local stakeholders and system leaders understand how the pieces of a complex educational system interact. Whether that system reflects a school, a district, or an entire state, a needs assessment can uncover both strengths and challenges that will inform growth and improvement.

The goal of a needs assessment is to help educators identify, understand, and prioritize the needs that districts and schools must address to improve performance. Identifying priority needs is the first in a series of closely tied steps that also include understanding root causes that contribute to the areas of need, selecting evidence-based strategies that address those areas, preparing for and implementing selected strategies, and evaluating whether those strategies are addressing improvement needs and achieving desired results. The needs assessment becomes the beginning step of each iteration of a continuous improvement cycle.

The U.S. Department of Education, in its 2016 non-regulatory guidance on Using Evidence to Strengthen Education Investments (U.S. Department of Education, 2016), presents this process as a five-step cycle (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Continuous Improvement Cycle



Source: U.S. Department of Education, 2016

Link to USDOE Needs Assessment Guidebook:

https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/2020/10/needsassessmentguidebook-508_003.pdf

Curriculum Audit

Curriculum audits, by internal committees of teachers, administrators, parents, external consultants, or professional firms, are valuable for determining needs through the identification of the actual content being taught in schools. There are many survey instruments and recommended organizational structures for assessing needs and evaluating a system's or school's implementation of the published curriculum.

In order to maintain accredited status, the accreditation process requires that schools examine the instructional program and its resources during annual reviews and periodic site visits. In addition, State Department of Education periodic monitoring teams examine the implementation of the State Courses of Study and instructional standards mandated in the Alabama Administrative Code during their on-site reviews.

When establishing system policies and procedures for curriculum audits and reviews, it is important to determine what is being taught, how it is being taught, the timelines and appropriate pacing of teaching, how teaching of the content is documented, and how student achievement reflects the mastery of the content. Reports of these studies and recommendations for changes based on these studies can be very beneficial to school improvement efforts.

6.2 Indicators of Data-Driven Decision Making

Evidence that a school or school system is engaged in data-driven decision making include:

- Leaders enable the systematic collection of information pertaining to school, system, and state goals and standards.
- Principals and faculty analyze and interpret the data to inform decision making.
- Educators at every level are trained to use and analyze the data.

Test scores are useful, but any teacher can tell you that they don't tell the whole story. Data-driven decision making begins with a line of inquiry about the facts. Educators can verify or disprove intuitions about why certain students score lower on reading tests than others, for example.

Each school and system need to identify performance indicators and the types of data to collect. The most pertinent information will vary across schools and systems, depending on their unique goals and challenges. The types of data include:

- Test scores (standardized tests, ACT Aspire, and ACT scores)
- Graduation rates
- Grade point averages
- Attendance
- Discipline
- Demographics (gender, ethnicity, language proficiency, socioeconomic data)
- School readiness
- Parental involvement
- Perceptions and beliefs

Examining relationships across multiple categories of data can provide new insight into student learning and ways to improve it. Collecting and interpreting data, using data to improve learning, and the study of data over time are all requirements of accountability reporting systems. This requires training and practice in using data as well as the time and forum to have purposeful discussions about the data and what it means.

School leaders have many resources to assist with data collection, analysis and evaluation. In 2006 Lorna M. Earl and Steven Katz published *Leading School in a Data-Rich World: Harnessing Data for School Improvement* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press). The book presents case studies and scenarios to guide administrators in the use of data to improve teaching and learning.

The chapter (8) on alignment and instructional benchmarking in Elaine K. McEwan's *Ten Traits of Highly Effective Schools: Raising the Achievement Bar for All Students* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2009) provides practical information for school leaders on benchmark assessment in academic courses and steps to aligning assessment and instruction. The sections on characteristics of data-driven schools and using data to improve teachers' instruction (Chapter 9, Results) provide practical instructions to implementing improvement strategies and measuring the results of these strategies using student achievement data.

6.2 AIM

The ALSDE Identity Management (AIM) portal is the one-and-only site to manage your ALSDE identity. All ALSDE-developed web applications use AIM credentials, meaning you only have to remember one email address and password to access all of your authorized applications.

<https://aim.alsde.edu/>

6.3 Curriculum Mandated for K-12 Schools

The primary source for curriculum content standards by subject and by grade level is the published set of Courses of Study developed by the Alabama State Department of Education and adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education. By law, these publications form the minimum content standards for lesson plans and curriculum development for local school systems in Alabama. Subject areas are revised by committees of teachers, administrators, parents and SDE personnel on a six-year cycle. When needed, revisions or addenda are published at points within the six-year cycle.

The Administrative Code of Alabama and the Courses of Study publications describe the minimum course requirements for high school graduation. These sequences of courses must be made available to students within the system. K-8 curriculum must be planned to support student success in the high school program of study. Local school systems have discretion in offering additional courses to fulfill graduation requirements and to meet the goals of the system.

6.4 Alabama State Standards K-12

At one time, the concept of Common Core Standards in mathematics and English Language Arts were embraced in Alabama. The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) developed the K-12 standards for English-language arts and mathematics in the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI). In 2010 the State of Alabama joined forty-eight other states in adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The Common Core State Standards were scheduled to be implemented during the 2012-13 school year. These standards were considered by Gene Wilhoit, the executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officer, to be the critical for the transformation of state education systems

These standards defined the knowledge, and skills students should have within their K-12 education careers so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs. The standards are:

- Aligned with college and work expectations;
- Clear, understandable and consistent;
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- Informed by other top performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- Evidence-based.

These standards are available at www.corestandards.org. Alabama now has its own set of standards. Information about Alabama standards and courses of study can be found <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/acad-stand/>

6.5 Scheduling Curriculum Revisions

Local systems may consider curriculum revision activities following the State adoption of a new course of study and preceding the adoption of textbooks in the same content area. Such a schedule assists in familiarizing faculty and staff with the new course of study and serves as preparation for informed adoption of texts. Participation of local teachers and administrators on state course of study revision committees allows for local input and serves to inform the LEA of upcoming curriculum changes.

When the school year is established on a fall-spring semester calendar, curriculum revision activities should be completed by the end of the first term to allow for publication of proposed changes, secure teachers and materials, and allow adequate time for students to make course selections in the spring term. Addition or deletion of credit requirements required courses, or substitution of courses must be made with the four-year cycle of a class of students in mind. Phasing in or phasing out courses over one or two years allows students to finish programs of study and/or to plan substitutions without undue penalty.

6.6 Evaluating Curriculum Implementation and Instructional Programs

Annual evaluation of standardized test data, student achievement reports, and local interests can provide valuable information on which to base decisions about needs for curriculum additions, deletions, and revisions.

Schools and school systems that participate in that receive accredited status, must commit to develop and implement programs of continuous improvement. Such continuous improvement programs must address the standards for systematically evaluating curriculum implementation, teaching, and the progression toward measurable performance goals for students (Cognia Performance Standards, 2018). These revised accreditation standards are organized into three domains: Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity, and Resource Capacity. Cognia Performance Standards clearly place the responsibility for regularly evaluating the effectiveness of the instructional program on the system leadership. A sample of these standards and indicators focused on curriculum, instruction, and evaluation of teaching and learning include:

- Standard 2.5: Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels.
- Standard 2.6: The system implements a process to ensure the curriculum is clearly aligned to standards and best practices.
- Standard 2.7: Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the system's learning expectations.
- Standard 2.8: The system provides programs and services for learners' educational future and career planning.
- Standard 2.9: The system implements processes to identify and address the specialized needs of learners.

- Standard 2.10: Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.
- Standard 2.11: Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to demonstrable improvement of student learning.
- Standard 2.12: The system implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning.

6.7 Involving Stakeholders in Curriculum Revision

Establishing a system policy and set of procedures for teachers, parents, administrators, and community members to follow when suggesting changes to the local curriculum allows all stakeholders to contribute ideas and to understand the parameters for curriculum change. A major responsibility of a superintendent and his/her staff is skillful involvement of all stakeholders in decisions that impact student achievement. Anticipating and effectively managing and monitoring the instructional process and curriculum change are critical abilities for successful education leaders at every level.

Many sources of survey instruments are available to school systems from commercial entities and from professional education organizations. Surveys can add valuable information to determinations about the effectiveness of the current curriculum and the opinions of the system's stakeholders.

Schools participating in the school improvement model of accreditation review designed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools may obtain from SACS a variety of survey instruments to collect data from parents, students, and community members about the effectiveness of the instructional program and about school climate.

The Office of Prevention and Support Services requires that each school system complete a needs assessment of its students, teachers, and parents pertaining to school safety and drug use. The nationally normed Pride Survey can be utilized to gather and analyze this data which produces information about individual schools (grades 6-12), about the school system, about the state, and about national trends.

6.8 Where Does One Find the Mandated Curriculum?

The minimum course content and mandated curriculum for Alabama schools is found in the published Courses of Study adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education abamaachieves.org.

In addition to these Courses of Study, the following resources are helpful when evaluating course content and curriculum offerings at the local school and system level:

ALEX (Alabama Learning Exchange)

Accessed through <https://alabamalearningexchange.org/courses>

ALEX is an exchange for educators of lesson plans, web resources, and teacher information related to the Alabama Courses of Study. Teachers may contribute lesson plans, units,

resources, and ideas and may share in collaborative planning for instruction. Questions may be posted on the exchange site, and educators may recommend and review teaching resources and materials.

Local Publications, Curriculum Guides, Pacing Guides

Local school systems may publish curriculum guides, course syllabi, pacing guides, and other materials that assist teachers in coordinating lessons, integrating curriculum and providing students with effective instruction. Many systems are providing access to these resources on the school system website or through other technology. Local curriculum guides are useful in establishing system and school priorities and to ensure that specific local content standards are addressed.

6.9 Virtual Assessment

Act No. 2024-209 (effective January 1, 2025)

Starting with the 2025/2026 school year, any virtual program or school in Alabama may administer state-required assessments in a virtual setting that aligns with the regular academic instruction of the student, provided they meet certain conditions and funds are available. The law contains several conditions for virtual assessments:

- Assessments must be given on an assigned date at an assigned time.
- Students must attend a live (synchronous) session initiated and managed by designated school personnel.
- The assessment must be administered to the student through a device that permits the proctor to monitor the student by video for the entire duration of the assessment.
- If the assessment platform does not support built-in camera proctoring, the student must use two devices: one for taking the assessment and one for camera monitoring by the proctor. If the platform allows the proctor to see the student and background, only one device is needed.
- There must be one proctor for every ten students or fewer.
- Students cannot leave the assessment area until the proctor gives permission.
- The proctor must verify the submission of the assessment.
- Only teachers with a valid Alabama professional education certificate can serve as assessment proctors for purposes of this law.

This law does not apply to public higher education institutions, so courses provided to K-12 students by colleges and universities are not affected. In addition, college and workforce readiness assessments provided by a national provider are not affected until those assessments are available via remote access.

6.10 Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program

ACCESS for ELLs

Alabama has been a member of World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA), a consortium of 28 states, since 2005. The role of WIDA is to advance academic language

development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students through high-quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for educators. WIDA's English language proficiency assessment, *Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners* (ACCESS for ELLs), has been administered annually to English language learners (ELs) in the state of Alabama since joining the consortium in 2005. During the 2011-12 school year, over 17,000 students were assessed with ACCESS for ELLs.

ACCESS for ELLs is a standards-based, criterion-referenced English language proficiency test designed to measure English language learners' social and academic proficiency in English. It assesses social and instructional English, as well as the language associated with language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, within the school context, across four language domains, including reading, writing, speaking and listening. In order for students to demonstrate English language proficiency, a composite proficiency level of 4.8 must be attained. Once a student attains this score, he/she is determined to be English language proficient and will no longer be assessed with ACCESS for ELLs.

WIDA is in the final stages of developing its 2012 Edition of the English Language Development Standards, which include a direct connection to the Common Core English language arts and mathematics standards. In addition, Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will be administered in Alabama for the first time during the 2012-2013 school year. This assessment was developed through an Enhanced Assessment Grant (EAG) and is administered to the most severely, cognitively-disabled EL students. WIDA is also the recipient of the ASSETS grant that will allow for the development of the next generation, technology-based English language proficiency tests available for all consortium states in 2016. Alabama will be a part of this effort as well.

Early Years Assessments (2024-2025)

There are six approved vendors for early years reading assessments for 2024-2026. Vetting of vendors and assessments is not yet complete, thus, contracts with vendors should not extend beyond 2025-2026.

- *mCLASS Alabama Edition (Amplify),
- Ready (Curriculum Associates)
- ISIP (Istation)
- Map (NWEA)
- *aimswebplus (Pearson)
- Star Reading and Star Early Literacy (Renaissance)

*Indicates those determined by the Alabama Literacy Task Force to best meet the requirements of the Alabama Literacy Act.

ACT Assessment

The ACT Assessment is designed to assess high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The tests cover four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. An optional 30-minute writing test is now available. Virtually all colleges and universities in the U.S. accept the ACT. The ACT includes 215 multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes to complete. In the

US, the ACT is administered on five national test dates, in October, December, February, April and June. Currently, some states offer a sixth national test date in September. ACT staff are studying the feasibility of adding the September date to all state test schedules. The ACT is administered to all Alabama juniors during the spring each year.

Examination of students' ACT scores in the academic areas can reveal important information to local schools and school systems about the strength and weakness of the curriculum and its implementation. The scores are tied to empirically derived College Readiness Standard ACT has aligned the ACT Assessment with the Alabama Courses of Study and the Alabama High School Graduation Exam. Utilizing ACT data and resources, schools and systems can develop an action plan to ensure college readiness for all students. Under Alabama's new assessment program, the ACT will replace the AHSGE as the culminating measure of high school students' academic abilities.

Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP)

The Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) includes a series of summative assessments with item analysis and specifications, as well as interim formative assessments with instructional resources. The following link identifies assessments and resources included in ACAP: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rBa5vBRjxZCd-u_03myLr4tf8KccjPg/view (also located in Appendices)

The ACAP Summative will be administered to grades 2-8, once a year, in the spring, starting in spring 2020. The assessment will be administered 100% online, with the exception of a documented need for paper assessments (IEP, 504 plan, or I-ELP). The content areas to be assessed are math and English/language arts, to include a writing section. In addition, grades 4, 6, and 8 will be administered an assessment in science.

The Grade 2 assessment will not be used for measuring achievement for accountability purposes but will serve as a baseline for 3rd-grade growth. The writing assessment will only be administered to students in grades 4-8 and will comprise a text dependent analysis in order to develop a comprehensive, holistic essay response. The demand required of a student's reading and writing skills in response to a text-dependent analysis prompt is similar to the demands required for a student to be college-and-career ready.

Test items will be aligned to the Alabama Courses of Study. Test items will be written and reviewed by Alabama educators selected from a pool of subject-matter experts identified by their superintendents. In addition to subject matter experts, specialists in the fields of special education, hearing and visually impaired, and English-language learners (ELLs) will be included in these activities.

Advanced Placement (AP) Tests

With 37 courses and exams across 22 subject areas, the Advanced Placement (AP) program allows high school students to get a head start on college-level work; improve writing skills and sharpen problem-solving techniques; and develop the study habits necessary for tackling rigorous course work. Many colleges and universities award credit or allow advanced placement for students who earn a qualifying score on an end-of-course AP test. Aligning curriculum in

advanced placement courses with the end-of-course test is essential to the quality of a system's AP program.

Alternate Assessments

The goal is for all students, including special education students, to participate in the general education assessment to the maximum extent possible. The Administrative Code of Alabama, Chapter 290-4-2, states the following:

All students must be provided the opportunity to participate in the state testing program.

The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Team decides whether the student will participate in the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) with or without accommodations, or an alternate assessment for students unable to participate in the general assessment (even with accommodations). Alternate testing is limited to about 1% of the total tested population. For more information on accessibility supports and accommodations, see

https://www.alabamaachievers.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/ASMT_20240122_ASAP-Manual-Accessibility-Supports-and-Accommodations-Policy-State-Assessments_V1.0.pdf

6.11 What Curriculum is Being Taught?

Curriculum Audits by Internal Committee and/or External Consultant

Curriculum audits, by internal committees of teachers, administrators, parents, external consultants, or professional firms, are valuable for determining the actual content being taught in schools. There are many survey instruments and recommended organizational structures for evaluating a system's or school's implementation of the published curriculum.

In order to maintain accredited status, the accreditation process requires that schools examine the instructional program and its resources during annual reviews and periodic site visits. In addition, State Department of Education periodic monitoring teams examine the implementation of the State Courses of Study and instructional standards mandated in the Alabama Administrative Code during their on-site reviews.

When establishing system policies and procedures for curriculum audits and reviews, it is important to determine what is being taught, how it is being taught, the timelines and appropriate pacing of teaching, how teaching of the content is documented, and how student achievement reflects the mastery of the content. Reports of these studies and recommendations for changes based on these studies can be very beneficial to school improvement efforts.

Collaborative efforts of teachers and school system staff are very effective when analyzing course content and identifying the tasks, skills, and standards from the various state tests relative to each grade level and subject area. Attached are sample copies of elementary curriculum guides with SAT10 and State Course of Study objectives identified. When these are provided for teachers in a consolidated format, lesson planning and assessment activities are more easily accomplished.

Secondary course syllabi, pacing guides, and standardized test alignment information are attached to illustrate the curriculum products that can be developed by system or school level curriculum committees. Making these documents accessible to teachers in print form or over local area computer networks enables teachers to coordinate teaching and facilitate lesson planning. When teachers identify in lesson plans specific objectives related to the assessment standards, documentation is created for accountability purposes.

Curriculum mapping projects, curriculum development consulting firms or individuals, and commercially available computer programs are available to assist systems with curriculum planning or revision projects.

Curriculum Mapping

Curriculum mapping is a process for collecting data that identify the core content, processes, and assessment used in curriculum for each subject area in order to improve communication and instruction in all areas of the curriculum.

A curriculum map is useful in:

- helping teachers understand what is taught and when in all subject areas and all grades.
- assisting teachers in creating unified interdisciplinary units that foster students' understanding of concepts, ideas, and activities across many subject areas.
- assisting arts teachers in scheduling performances and field trips without interfering with state assessments or major testing blocks in the academic subjects.
- helping coordinate areas of study into larger interdisciplinary units (even if they are assessed separately by subject area).
- acting as a successful venue for fostering conversation about curriculum and instruction among all faculty members.
- assisting teachers in reflecting and adjusting their own lesson units during the school year.

There are many models for successful curriculum mapping and many companies now produce software products to assist individual schools or systems manage the curriculum mapping process. Basic procedural steps in most curriculum mapping models are included in the following outline:

1. Teachers of various subject areas construct a timeline detailing what they actually teach during a unit and when. Descriptions on the timeline should contain content, an objective, activities, an assessment, and, as appropriate, field trips or special events that would take place in conjunction with the unit.
2. Each subject area map is posted, reviewed, and discussed by the entire staff.
3. The staff looks for common ideas, concepts, and/or themes. Adjustments are discussed and units moved from one time to another to create a more comprehensive interdisciplinary unit. (Hint: Post-it notes temporarily placed on timelines help move areas of study more easily).

4. The maps are kept posted in an area that may be accessed by all members of the staff for continued review and revision as the curriculum evolves during the school year. (from *Guide to Curriculum Mapping* by Joyce Payne, 2001).

A great resource on curriculum mapping, which includes a detailed definition of the process and the rationale for developing a curriculum map, is education consultant Heidi Hayes Jacobs's book, *Mapping the Big Picture: Integrating Curriculum & Assessment K-12*. Check the ASCD website for curriculum mapping resources <http://www.ascd.org/Default.aspx>

Teacher, Parent, Student, and Administrator Surveys

Many sources of survey instruments are available to school systems from commercial entities and from professional education organizations. Surveys can add valuable information to determinations about the effectiveness of the current curriculum and the opinions of the system's stakeholders. See Section 6.7 for additional information on stakeholder surveys.

Compilation and Analysis of Student Performance Data

It is very beneficial for school officials, teachers, parents, and community members when student performance data are compiled and presented in a variety of understandable and useful formats. Student performance data resulting from standardized testing, interest inventories, graduation data, attendance reports, discipline data, student recognition programs, and follow-up reports of graduates and/or dropouts can reveal valuable information for analysis, program revision, and instructional strategies.

To be of benefit, student achievement test data must be reported both individually, by disaggregated sub-groups, in summary, and over time. Examinations of the same group of students as they progress through the grade levels can provide important clues to curriculum strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and overlapping content. Comparing student achievement with norming groups, with similarly- and differently-abled peers, as well as among schools provides teachers and administrators with data for curriculum decision-making.

Reports of causes of student dropouts, reports on post-secondary placements of career technical students, graduates, scholarships, and student retentions are required at the end of each school year. Procedures for the timely collection and accurate maintenance of these data are critical to the success of the academic planning process for a system. Very often, the same data are useful for grant applications, inclusion in community profiles, and to local business/industry planning agencies.

Data-driven Decision Making

Data collection, analysis and reporting are critical components of school improvement. School systems must collect more data, in more detail and disaggregate them. State-level systems and support are being developed for collecting and integrating student assessment data with demographic information.

The National Education Technology Plan, *Toward A New Golden Age in American Education* <https://tech.ed.gov/netp/> calls upon states, systems and schools to establish a plan to integrate data systems; use data from both administrative and instructional systems to understand relationships; ensure interoperability; and use assessment results to inform instruction.

6.12 Character Education

The state of Alabama legislative support for character education started in 1995, Act(s) 1975 Code of Alabama, Section 16-6B-2(h); 1995 Accountability Law, Act 95-313.

Summary

The 1975 Code of Alabama mandates that ten minutes per day of character education are required for all k-12 students. The 1995 Accountability Law mandates character education. Direct Quotes from Legislation: “The State Board of Education and all local boards shall develop and implement a comprehensive character education program for all grades to consist of not less than ten minutes instruction per day focusing upon the students’ development of the following character traits: Courage, patriotism, citizenship, honesty, fairness, respect for others, kindness, cooperation, self-respect, self-control, courtesy, compassion, tolerance, diligence, generosity, punctuality, cleanliness, cheerfulness, school pride, respect for the environment, patience, creativity, sportsmanship, loyalty, and perseverance. Each plan of instruction shall include the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag” (1995 Accountability Law).

Professionals interested in Character Education can join a list-serve to receive information on the latest trends and news pertaining to character education. The form for joining is available on the Alabama Achieves website <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Character-Education-List-Serve-Form.pdf>

6.13 Methods for Diagnosing Instructional Strengths and Weaknesses

Formative Assessments

Formative assessments should be used regularly and should be used to guide instruction taking place in the classroom. Formative assessments should be standards based and should depict where students are performing in regard to standards mastery.

Performance Assessments

Performance assessment is a measure of assessment based on authentic tasks, such as activities, exercises, or problems that require students to show what they can do. Some performance tasks are designed to have students demonstrate their understanding by applying their knowledge to a particular situation. For example, students might be given a current political map of Africa showing the names and locations of countries and a similar map from 1945 and be asked to identify and explain differences and similarities. To be more authentic (more like what someone might be expected to do in the adult world), the task might be to prepare a newspaper article explaining the changes.

Performance tasks often have more than one acceptable solution; they may call for a student to create a response to a problem and then explain or defend it. The process involves the use of higher-order thinking skills (e.g., cause and effect analysis, deductive or inductive reasoning, experimentation, and problem solving). Performance tasks may be used primarily for assessment at the end of a period of instruction but are frequently used for learning as well as assessment.

Authentic Assessments

Assessments developed by teachers to be administered in the classroom are critical in determining student progress. The types of assessments teachers design can contribute to or detract from students' abilities to demonstrate learning on standardized tests. Recent innovations in teaching/learning models involve assisting teachers in constructing authentic assessments of student learning and curriculum content mastery.

Authentic assessment shifts the focus from "Do you know it?" to "How well can you use what you know?" This relevant, real-world assessment method enables students to construct knowledge and apply complex thinking skills. Authentic assessment engages students in applying knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful and reflective of real life.

Authentic assessment takes many forms. The following list from *Curriculum Design for the New Millennium* (Litchfield Public Schools) provides a sample of the opportunities for authentic assessment throughout a student's K-12 experience:

Letter writing
Role playing
Interviewing
Inventing
Peer editing, conferring with peers
Comparing/contrasting
Debating
Writing an analysis
Displaying information
Keeping a scientific journal, writing lab reports
Designing
Comparing genres
Composing a song
Drawing
Critiquing artwork
Writing fiction, writing nonfiction
Problem solving with algebra, problem solving with geometry

Standards

"The standards-based accountability movement views standards as answers to the question, 'What do we want students to know and to be able to do?' It rarely asks, 'What do we want student to be or become?'" (Kenneth A. Strike, *Ethical Leadership in Schools: Creating Community in an Environment of Accountability*, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA: 2007).

Standards are statements of what students should know and be able to do. Different types of standards address various aspects important to learning:

1. content standards cover what students are to learn in various subject areas, such as math or science;
2. performance standards specify what levels of learning are expected;

3. opportunity-to-learn standards state the conditions and resources necessary to give all students an equal chance to meet performance standards; and,
4. world-class standards indicate content and performances that are expected of students in other industrialized countries.

The term “standards” is also attached to the movement in the United States to bring United States students’ academic achievement and knowledge on a par with students’ accomplishments in the other industrialized countries. Debate continues over which standards are relevant, what benchmarks indicate adequate mastery of standards at various periods of time, and over the definitions of the rigor and relevance of particular standards.

ACT Assessment

The ACT Assessment, or ACT as it is commonly called, is a national college admission examination that consists of tests in English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. Virtually all U. S. colleges and universities accept ACT results. The ACT includes 215 multiple-choice questions and takes approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes to complete with breaks. Actual testing time is 2 hours and 55 minutes.

In the U.S., the ACT is administered on five national test dates, in October, December, February, April, and June. In selected states, the ACT is also offered in late September. The ACT measures high school students’ general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. It is most often taken during the 11th and/or 12th grade years.

The ACT is not an aptitude or an IQ test. Instead, the questions on the ACT are directly related to what students have learned in high school courses in English, mathematics, and science. Because the ACT tests are based on what is taught in the high school curriculum, students are generally more comfortable with the ACT than they are with the traditional aptitude tests or tests with narrower content. A perfect score on the ACT is 36.

In addition to the four tests, the ACT also provides test takers with a unique interest inventory that provides valuable information for career and educational planning and a student profile section that provides a comprehensive profile of the student’s high school work and future plans. Detailed information about the ACT Assessment test, its results, practice test questions, test registration procedures, and test accommodations for students with disabilities is available from www.act.org.

An optional Writing test has been added to the ACT as a fifth test. Students who elect to take the Writing test must also sit for the ACT; the Writing test may not be taken as a stand-alone assessment. Parents, students, and school personnel may obtain more information from www.act.org.

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) administered by The College Board

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 5,000 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves seven million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,500 colleges through major programs and services in college admissions, guidance,

assessment, financial aid, enrollment, and teaching and learning. Among its best-known programs are the SAT, the PSAT/NMSQT, and the Advanced Placement Program (AP). The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities, and concerns.

The SAT (pronounced "S-A-T") Reasoning Test, formerly called the Scholastic Aptitude Test and Scholastic Achievement Test, is a type of standardized test frequently used by colleges and universities in the United States to aid in the selection of incoming students. In the U.S., the SAT is administered by the private College Board, and is developed, published, and scored by the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

The SAT Subject Tests are 20 one-hour multiple-choice tests given in individual subjects. A student chooses which ones he or she will take, depending upon individual factors, such as college entrance requirements. Until 1994, the SAT Subject Tests were known as Achievement Tests; until January 2005 they were formally named "SAT II," the name by which they are still well known. The exception to the one-hour time was the Writing test, which was divided into a 20-minute essay question and a 40-minute multiple choice section; it was discontinued after January 2005. A student may take up to three SAT Subject tests on any given date, which are the same dates as for the administration of the SAT Reasoning Test.

The SAT Reasoning Test™ was administered for the first time on March 12, 2005. Changes to the test include the addition of third-year college preparatory math, more critical reading, and a new writing section. The College Board made these changes to better reflect what students study in high school. Changes included the removal of analogy questions from the Critical Reading (formerly verbal) section and quantitative comparisons from the mathematics section. A writing section (with an essay) based largely on the former SAT II Writing Subject Test was added to the exam, and the mathematics section was expanded to cover three years of high school mathematics. Also, since the writing section was included in the SAT I, the SAT II Writing Subject Test was discontinued. Short passages with one or two questions following them replaced analogies. Scores on each section range from 200 to 800, with scores always being a multiple of 10.

The new SAT contains ten sections and a total length of 3 hours 45 minutes; with the additional writing section, a "perfect" score on the new SAT is 2400. Scores are calculated by the addition of the score on each section; thus, a score of 800 on the Critical Reading, Math and Writing sections is needed for a perfect score. The ten sections are divided up as follows: three math, three reading, and three writing, with one equating section which may be any one of the three types. The equating section does not count in any way towards a student's score; it is used to test questions for future exams and to compare the difficulty level of each exam. During the test, takers do not know which section is the equating section (however, it is never the essay or Section 10, which is always a ten-minute writing section). Each of the questions within a section is ordered by difficulty (the test is commonly said to be "powered"). However, an important exception exists: questions that follow the long and short reading passages are organized chronologically instead of by difficulty. It's also important to note that each question carries the same weighting. Each question now has five answer choices. Ten of the questions in one of the math sections are not multiple-choice. Instead, these questions require the test taker to input the result of their calculations in a four-column grid. For each correct answer, one raw point is

added; for each incorrect answer one-fourth of a point is deducted. However, for the ten student-produced answers in the math section, no points are deducted for a wrong answer. The final score is derived from the raw score; the precise conversion chart varies between test administrations due to minor variations in test difficulty.

Many American colleges requiring the test will continue to consider only the reading and math score combination in the criteria of their admissions process. Some colleges will now accept the writing section in lieu of the SAT II: Writing Subject Test, which has been discontinued. For additional information on the College Board, administration dates for the SAT, and score reporting, see www.collegeboard.com.

NAEP Pilot Assessments

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test is a standardized norm-referenced test. The NAEP test is commonly described as a national academic achievement test. It is a series of timed tests assessing students' performance in selected subjects (English, mathematics, reading, science, writing, U. S. History, geography, civics, and the arts). It includes multiple choice items, constructed responses (short and extended), and science hands-on tasks. The results of NAEP tests are reported on the national level and by region of the country, not by school system, school, or individual student. Only group statistics are reported, broken down by gender, ethnicity and other variables that illuminate students' instructional experiences. NAEP results are based on a sample of populations.

Participation in NAEP pilot assessments is by random selection. Schools within systems are asked to participate in the norming activities by taking all or portions of the planned assessments in grades 4, 8 and 10. Results from the pilot administrations can provide a system with information about student performance compared to similarly prepared students across the nation. Conclusions about curriculum, instructional strategies, materials, and course sequencing can be drawn when this information is analyzed in light of local circumstances.

Additional information about the NAEP testing program and state profiles of results from previous administrations of the NAEP assessments can be found at www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard.

PSAT/NMSQT

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) is a co-sponsored program by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). The PSAT/NMSQT is a standardized test that provides firsthand practice for the SAT I: Reasoning Test and SAT II: Writing Test. It also gives students a chance to qualify for National Merit Scholarship Corporation's scholarship programs.

The PSAT/NMSQT measures verbal reasoning skills, critical reading skills, math problem-solving skills, and writing skills. The most common reasons students take the PSAT/NMSQT test are (a) to receive feedback on strengths and weaknesses on skills necessary for college study; (b) to see how one would perform on an admissions test and to compare oneself with others applying to college; (c) to enter the competition for scholarships; and (d) to help prepare for the SAT Program tests. Students typically take the PSAT/NMSQT in the sophomore or junior year of high school. It is a junior level test, and only juniors are considered for National Merit status.

School officials, teachers, counselors, parents and students obtain valuable information for student planning and curriculum development from the PSAT/NMSQT results. Only individual student results are returned from this assessment. For additional information on PSAT administration dates and sites and information about the National Merit Scholarship program see <http://www.nationalmerit.org>.

Other ACT service offerings include:

ACT Aspire, ACT Tessaera, PreACT8/9, PreACT for grade 10, ACT Academy, ACT Online prep, ACT CollegeReady, ACT Workkeys, ACT Certified Educator See act.org for more information.

WorkKeys

WorkKeys assessments give students and workers reliable information about their workplace skill levels. Combined with information about skill levels required for jobs, this assessment information can enable users to make better career and educational decisions. The WorkKeys assessment, developed by ACT, Inc., is used by schools, businesses, and industries to determine the workplace skill level of prospective employees, and to collect data on the workplace skills needed for various occupations. Both computer-based and paper-and-pencil versions of the WorkKeys assessment are available. The skill areas tested in the assessment program include applied mathematics, applied technology, business writing, listening, locating information, observation, readiness, reading for information, teamwork, and writing.

WorkKeys is typically administered during the 12th grade. Using WorkKeys employers can identify and develop workers for a wide range of skilled jobs. Students and workers can document and advance their employability skills. WorkKeys results enable educators to tailor instructional programs to help students acquire the skills employers need. The student profile of test results provides information for teachers about student abilities in the skill areas so that remediation, intervention, or additional instruction can be provided. Progress in the skill areas can be determined when students take the assessment over appropriate time intervals. KeyTrain, an instructional software package, is aligned with the WorkKeys assessment, is available from ACT, Inc. to allow for individualized instruction to improve workplace skills and abilities as measured on WorkKeys. More information about WorkKeys and KeyTrain is available from www.act.org/workkeys/.

6.14 Accreditation Standards

In 2018, leading education nonprofits AdvancED® and Measured Progress® came together. With more than a century of experience in accreditation and school improvement and decades of leadership in student assessment solutions, the new organization—Cognia™—brings institutions around the world a new, holistic way to view school performance and student achievement.

“To assure that our Performance Standards remain relevant and forward-thinking, we undertake review and development of our Standards on a recurring 5-year cycle. We expect to publish new Cognia standards in 2022; accreditation reviews based on the new standards will begin in school year 2022–23. The AdvancED Performance Standards in this document remain in effect until then.”

Four key characteristics are evident when institutions effectively adopt the Cognia Performance Standards and engage in Cognia's peer review process for accreditation and continuous improvement.

- **CULTURE OF LEARNING:** the institution's focus on the challenges, joys, and opportunities for learning, and the coherence with its mission and vision
- **LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING:** the responsibility of an institution's leaders to influence and impact all aspects of the institution in positive ways
- **ENGAGEMENT OF LEARNING:** the inclusion of all learners in the learning process, and their development of confidence and love of learning
- **GROWTH IN LEARNING:** the growth of learners in the programs and curricula provided by the institution and their readiness to successfully transition to next levels of learning

These characteristics serve as our model for identifying and discussing school and system quality. Additional information will be available to members to show how the standards align with these characteristics. To be accredited, a system must:

- **Meet the Cognia Performance Standards for Quality School Systems**
The standards require that the system and its schools have a clear vision and purpose; have effective and responsive leadership; have a rigorous curriculum taught through sound, research-based methods; collect, report, and use performance results; provide adequate resources and support for its educational programs; and value and communicate with their stakeholders.
- **Engage in continuous improvement**
To demonstrate continuous improvement, the system and its schools must implement an improvement plan based on student performance and school/community data that includes clear goals for raising the achievement of all students. The system and its schools also must document growth in student performance and organizational effectiveness.
- **Demonstrate quality assurance through external reviews**
Systems must be evaluated by a team of professionals from outside the system on a periodic basis. The team engages the system staff in a healthy, professional dialogue about system improvement efforts, validates that the system meets the standards for accreditation, and provides feedback and makes recommendations concerning future efforts to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness. The standards described by Cognia materials are comprehensive statements of quality practices and conditions that research and best practice indicate are necessary for schools to achieve quality student performance and organizational effectiveness. As systems reach a higher level of implementation of the standards, they will have a greater capacity to support ever-increasing student performance and organizational effectiveness. Each of the seven standards has corresponding indicators and an impact statement.

Cognia Performance Standards for Diagnostic Reviews for schools and school systems can be accessed at: <https://www.cognia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Performance-Standards.pdf>

7. INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

ALSDE Instructional Supports

Link: <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/divisions-offices/>

7.1 Alabama Reading Initiative

The Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) is a statewide K-12 initiative managed by the Alabama State Department of Education. The primary goal of ARI is to support the implementation of the Alabama Literacy Act (ALA). The goal of the Literacy Act is to ensure that students are able to read at or above grade level by the end of the third grade.

Professional learning, leadership and implementation teams, data-informed decision making, assessment, community and family involvement, intervention, and universal core instruction work together to foster the accomplishment of the established reading goals for Alabama students. More information is available from <https://sites.google.com/alsde.edu/ari/cogs-for-student-success>

7.2 Alabama Literacy Act

See Section 3.1

7.3 Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide

The purpose of the [Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide](#) is to provide continually updated guidance, useful information, and links to valuable resources to assist educators, administrators, and parents or guardians as they provide dyslexia-specific services and support for students in Alabama's public schools. The Alabama State Board of Education Dyslexia Resolution was unanimously adopted on April 8, 2015. The Dyslexia Resolution defined dyslexia, recognized the significant educational implications that may result for students with dyslexia, called for the creation of a Dyslexia Advisory Council, and called for revision of the Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1 to acknowledge and address dyslexia and subsequent services needed to ensure the success of students with dyslexia.

The Dyslexia Amendments to Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-1 were adopted by the State Board of Education and are included in the Resources portion of the guide. Implementation of these amendments within a tiered, instructional framework was designed to improve educational outcomes for all students. The Alabama State Board of Education Dyslexia Resolution and the Alabama Administrative Code identified the following definition of dyslexia:

Dyslexia is defined as a learning challenge that is neurological in origin and characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to

other cognitive abilities and the delivery of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

As the ALSDE develops instructional supports to embed effective practices, dyslexia learning labs are being established in districts throughout Alabama and will serve as model districts for other systems to visit.

The Alabama Dyslexia Resource Guide can be viewed at https://www.alabamaachievers.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/CAS_20221014_DRG-2022_V1.0.pdf

Additional Dyslexia Resources can be viewed at https://www.alabamaachievers.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/SE_20210303_5-Questions-About-Terms_V1.0.pdf

7.4 Alabama Numeracy Act

See Section 3.2

7.5 Alabama Math, Science and Technology Initiative (AMSTI)

The Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative, commonly referred to as AMSTI, is the Alabama Department of Education's initiative to improve math and science teaching statewide. A Blue-Ribbon committee comprised of K-12 educators, higher education representatives, and business leaders designed AMSTI. The committee pursued every step possible to design the most effective statewide initiative for improving math and science teaching. AMSTI is research-based and incorporates best practices for math and science teaching. Additional information about current activities of AMSTI as well as achievement data for participating schools is available from the AMSTI website: www.amsti.org.

The initiative provides three basic services: professional development, equipment and materials, and on-site support. Schools become official AMSTI Schools by sending all their math and science teachers, and administrators to two-week Summer Institutes for two summers. At the Summer Institutes teachers receive grade and subject specific professional development that is highly applicable to their own classrooms. Instruction is delivered at the Summer Institutes by “master” teachers who have been certified as AMSTI trainers after successfully completing AMSTI trainer workshops.

AMSTI sites provide AMSTI School teachers with essentially all equipment, supplies, and resources needed to effectively engage students with hands-on, inquiry-based learning. Examples of equipment include labware, chemicals, global positioning devices, plants with growth containers, and many other items. The resources arrive packaged in “kits” ready for immediate use. Each kit is customized for the specific activities that will be taught. Once students complete the activities from a kit, it is returned to a materials center where it is refurbished to “like new” condition. Another kit targeting the next activities to be undertaken is delivered to the teacher and the newly refurbished kit is sent to another teacher.

AMSTI sites also provide extensive, on-site support and mentoring. Once teachers complete the Summer Institute, math and science specialists from the site regularly visit the schools where they serve as mentors, helping teachers implement what was learned during the summer. Such support is vital for teachers to become comfortable and skilled at inquiry-based, hands-on learning.

Each region of the state must have an AMSTI site to support schools within the region. The AMSTI site conducts the Summer Institutes for teachers within the region, under the supervision of the Alabama Department of Education. The site also operates a materials center that refurbishes kits and rotates them among teachers. In addition, it provides the math and science specialists that deliver on-site mentoring.

Evaluation results, provided by the initiative's external evaluator, indicate that AMSTI is highly successful in improving student achievement. Students in AMSTI Schools scored dramatically higher on the Stanford Achievement Test in math, science, and reading, and on the Alabama High School Graduation Exam, as compared to schools with similar demographics that had not participated in AMSTI.

AMSTI has a proven track record for helping students develop the math and science skills and knowledge necessary for success in the workforce and postsecondary studies. The initiative provides equity and adequacy for all students in Alabama, regardless of their location or background. The goal is to have AMSTI available to all schools statewide. Currently, the growth of AMSTI is limited only by funding.

AMSTI training emphasizes having students learn by doing. Teachers learn how to engage student in solving real-life problems using the same equipment and processes that mathematicians and scientists use to solve problems. Such hands-on learning helps bring science and math to life for students. Technology plays a major role in the initiative.

7.6 Educational Technology

Link: <https://www.alabamaachievers.org/educational-technology/>

Educational Technology's mission is to use technology as a tool to prepare today's student to become a productive, contributing citizen of tomorrow. The office serves and supports LEAs as a contact in school system technology planning; implements the Alabama Technology Plan for K-12 Education; leads the ACCESS Distance Learning program; and coordinates the Alabama Educational Technology Conference.

7.7 Instructional Services

The Alabama State Department of Education Instructional Services section is responsible for leading the frameworks, systems, and supports for Alabama schools to provide standards-driven instructional innovation that is both evidence-based and student-centered; facilitating the development of the Alabama Courses of Study and facilitating the adoption of textbooks and instructional materials. Instructional Services provides instructional support for the

following content areas Arts Education, English Language Arts, Health and Physical Education, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and World Languages. Instructional Services also supports and leads professional school counselors and school library media specialists from all grade-levels in developing and implementing their respective exemplary instructional support programs at each of Alabama's public schools. In addition, Instructional Services is leading implementation of Alabama's Multi-Tiered System of Support (AL-MTSS) framework to equitably improve and increase opportunities for student achievement and success for every child, every chance, every day.

Link to Instructional Services: <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/divisions-offices/#> ; Click on Division of Instruction to view the Division Departments.

7.8 Career Technical Education

What Is Career/Technical Education?

Alabama's Career and Technical Education (CTE) program is the foundation for our state's future. CTE is focused on developing the skills of K-12 students and strives to prepare them for postsecondary learning and workforce opportunities. It also provides them essential leadership skills through participation in student organizations. CTE is learning that works for Alabama.

Career and technical education is about helping students, workers and lifelong learners of all ages fulfill their working potential. First and foremost, it's about high school and college education that provides students with:

- Academic subject matter taught with relevance to the real world, often called contextual learning.
- Employability skills, from job-related skills to workplace ethics.
- Education pathways that help students explore interests and careers in the process of progressing through school.
- But career and technical education is also about:
Second-chance education and training for the unemployed and those seeking to upgrade their employability skills.
- Education to earn additional degrees, especially when related to career advancement.
- Corporate training, continuing education, skills upgrades and refresher courses for those already in the workplace.

Work-Based Learning

Work-Based Learning provides students with educational opportunities that typically cannot be replicated in the classroom. The *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2018* (Perkins V) provides opportunities for students to explore, choose, and follow career and technical education programs and career pathways to earn credentials of value.

Work-based experiences are designed to connect information learned in the classroom with skills obtained in an occupational setting as an apprentice or intern. Work-based learning promotes improved skills, higher efficiency and the availability of a better-trained labor pool that encourages business growth and productivity. Well-managed work-based learning experiences build confidence in the school system and have benefits for the student, employer, mentor, school, and community.

Work-based learning is a major component of career and technical education. Improved skills lead to higher efficiency and the availability of a better-trained labor pool that encourages business growth and productivity. Well-managed work-based learning experiences build confidence in the school system and have benefits for the student, employer, mentor, school, and community.

The students may be given the opportunity in work-based learning experiences to:
Receive specific school-based and work-based training in a chosen career while attending high school.

- Earn income and become financially literate in some experiences.
- Reinforce and apply academic competencies.
- Develop, demonstrate, and refine safe work habits.
- Demonstrate responsibility, maturity, job competency, and decision-making skills.
- Gain an understanding of the financial operations, employment opportunities, and organizational structure of business and industry.
- Develop a portfolio of academic, technological, occupational, and work-readiness skills.
- Improve the transition from school to work.
- Participate in Career Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) related to their career objectives and coursework.

The employer or the employer-mentor may be given the opportunity to:

- Be involved in the total school program.
- Participate in the development of a work-based training plan that meets labor market demands.
- Create an awareness of training needs for their business and industry.
- Employ part-time employees that provide more flexible scheduling.
- Develop positive public relations and build goodwill through partnerships with schools.

The school may be given the opportunity to:

- Increase the graduation rate.
- Create broader curricula that encourage students to accomplish their educational goals.
- Allow flexibility of instruction.
- Meet the career goals of a diverse student population.
- Correlate school-based learning with work-based learning.
- Provide valuable industry contacts and opportunities for partnership development.
- Enable students to receive training in a number of occupations in state-of-the-art facilities, utilizing the most current technology with minimal capital expense for the school.

The community may be given the opportunity to:

- Participate in partnership development with the school system.
- Increase the local economy with student earnings.
- Provide awareness of local career opportunities.
- Assist students in appropriate career selection.
- Participate as a member of a local CTE Advisory Council/Committee.

Counseling, Guidance, and Advisement

<https://www.alabamaachieves.org/counseling-guidance/>

Alabama Association For Career and Technical Education

AACTE is affiliated with the National Association for Career and Technical Education, which is career and technical education's voice in Washington, D.C. We are Alabama's link to Capitol Hill on federal legislative issues affecting career and technical education.

The mission of the Alabama Association for Career and Technical Education is to provide educational leadership in developing a competitive workforce by providing opportunities for:

Advocacy/Public Policy – ALACTE advocates good career and technical education/workforce development policy for Alabama. ALACTE works to educate policymakers, education colleagues, administrators, parents, students, business and industry representatives, and the public about the value of career and technical education programs. ALACTE seeks to foster excellence in career and technical education by providing leadership opportunities and recognition.

Professional Development – ALACTE encourages career development, professional involvement and leadership among the ALACTE membership.

Public Relations – ALACTE seeks to promote career and technical education to the general public and business and industry.

One of their main functions is to represent our membership before the legislature. AACTE tracks legislation, educate legislators on career and technical education issues, attend meetings and network with other education organizations.

Perkins V

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) was signed into law by President Trump on July 31, 2018. This bipartisan measure reauthorized the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) and continued Congress' commitment in providing nearly \$1.3 billion annually for career and technical education (CTE) programs for our nation's youth and adults.

Perkins V represents an important opportunity to expand opportunities for every student to explore, choose, and follow career and technical education programs of study and career pathways to earn credentials of value. As States and local communities embark on the development of new plans for CTE, the Department hopes that the videos, resources, links, and media found below and throughout this Website can be useful tools for States and local recipients in "rethinking CTE" and arriving at bold goals under the newly authorized Perkins V statute. For more information on Perkins V, resources, video library, and guide, click the following link: <https://cte.ed.gov/legislation/perkins-v> For more information regarding Alabama's interpretation of Perkins V, click the following: <https://www.alabamactso.org/perkinsv/>

Other Links: <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/career-and-technical-education/>
<https://www.alacte.org/links.html>

7.9 Meeting the Needs of English Learners – English As A Second Language

Alabama’s ESL Framework

Alabama serves English Learners through an English acquisition model. The English Learners (ELs) Guidebook

(<https://www.morgank12.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=5821&dataid=7552&FileName=ALSDE%20EL%20Guidebook%202018-2019.pdf>) , is an outgrowth of the Alabama State Department of Education’s voluntary agreement with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (Compliance Review #04-98-5023), for providing services to students who are English learners (ELs). It incorporates requirements and applicable references to Title III of Every Student Succeeds Act of 2016 (ESSA). This document is intended to provide basic requirements and guidance for policies, procedures, and practices for identifying, assessing, and serving ELs.

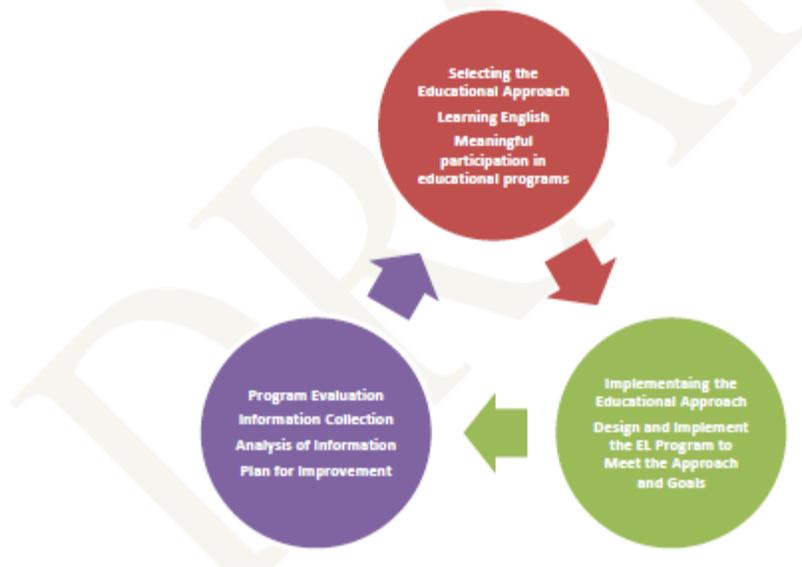
Determining an LEA’s instructional model

The SDE does not prescribe the type of LIEP model for LEAs to implement. Decisions concerning the instructional program model must be made by each LEA. Not all program models are suitable for an LEA’s particular situation; therefore, the SDE encourages LEAs to select a program after conducting a comprehensive needs assessment. When conducting a needs assessment, LEAs should collect and analyze data from various sources that will help inform program selection. A comprehensive needs assessment allows LEAs to set data-driven goals and strategies for meeting those goals.

Castañeda v. Pickard

The court case *Castañeda vs. Pickard* established a three-pronged test for evaluating programs that serve ELs. The SDE has developed a model to provide LEAs with technical assistance to comply with this law (see Figure 1 below).

Three Principles for Serving EL Students based on Castaneda vs. Pickard



This case established a three-part test to evaluate the adequacy of a district's program for the English language learner:

1. Is the program based on an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or is it considered by experts as a legitimate experimental strategy?
2. Are the programs and practices, including resources and personnel, reasonably calculated to implement this theory effectively?
3. Does the school district evaluate its programs and make adjustments where needed to ensure that language barriers are actually being overcome?

Examples of Language Assistance Programs (ALSDE EL Guidebook, p 31):

A. English as a Second Language (ESL): Program of techniques, methodology, and special curriculum designed to teach ELs explicitly about the English language, including the academic vocabulary needed to access content instruction, and to develop their English language proficiency in all four language domains (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, and writing). ESL programs teach the following: conversational English, grammar, reading, listening comprehension, writing and vocabulary.

B. English Language Development (ELD): Program of techniques, methodology, and special curriculum designed to teach ELs explicitly about the English language, including the academic vocabulary needed to access content instruction, and to develop their English language proficiency in all four language domains (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, and writing). Effective ELD programs include the following components:

- Phonology: the sound system of English

- Morphology: the forms and formation of words, including prefixes, affixes, suffixes, root words, inflections, etc.
- Syntax: the structure of language, including the rules that govern phrases and sentences
- Semantics: the meaning of language, including vocabulary and academic language
- Pragmatics: situational appropriateness of language use

C. Structured English Immersion (SEI): Program designed to impart English language skills so that the ELs can transition and succeed in an English-only mainstream classroom once proficient. The goal of this program is acquisition of English language skills so that the EL student can succeed in an English-only mainstream classroom. All instruction in an immersion strategy program is in English. Teachers have specialized training in meeting the needs of EL students, possessing either a bilingual education or ESL teaching credential and/or training, and strong receptive skills in the students' primary language.

Examples of techniques, methodology, and special curriculum:

A. **SDAIE:** An instructional approach that allows EL students full access to content in the classroom while supporting levels of English proficiency. ELs comprehend key concepts in content areas without needing full comprehension of the English language. This is achieved using highly effective teaching strategies using comprehensible input. This especially supports intermediate levels proficiency within a positive affective environment.

B. **Sheltered Instruction:** An instructional approach used to make academic instruction in English understandable to EL students. In the sheltered classroom, teachers use physical activities, visual aids, and the environment to teach vocabulary for concept development in mathematics, science, social studies, and other subjects.

C. **Structured Immersion:** Use only English, but there is no explicit ESL instruction. As in sheltered English and content-based programs, English is taught through the content areas. Structured immersion teachers have strong receptive skills in their students' first language.

D. **ESL push-in** is in contrast with ESL pull-out instruction. The ESL teacher goes into the regular classrooms to work with ELs. Communication and collaboration between ESL teachers and content-area teachers are essential for this model to be successful.

E. **ESL pull-out** is generally used in elementary school settings. Students spend part of the school day in a mainstream classroom but are pulled out for a portion of each day to receive instruction in English as a second language. Although schools with a large number of ESL students may have a full-time ESL teacher, some systems employ an ESL teacher who travels to several schools to work with small groups of students scattered throughout the district.

F. **Newcomer Program** addresses the specific needs of recent immigrant students, most often at the middle and high school levels, especially those with limited or interrupted schooling in their home countries. Major goals of newcomer programs are to acquire beginning English language skills along with core academic skills and to acculturate the student to the school system of the United States. Some newcomer programs also include an orientation to the student's new community. English Learners in newcomer programs must be assessed regularly

to monitor their language progress. Students typically remain in newcomer programs for less than one year.

G. **ESL class period** is generally used in secondary school settings. Students receive ESL instruction during a regular class period and usually receive course credit. They may be grouped for instruction according to their level of English proficiency.

H. **An ESL resource center** is a variation of the pull-out design, bringing students together from several classrooms or schools. The resource center concentrates ESL materials and staff in one location and is usually staffed by at least one full-time ESL teacher.

I. **Sheltered English or content-based programs** group language minority students from different language backgrounds together in classes where teachers use English as the medium for providing content area instruction, adapting their language to the proficiency level of the students. They may also use gestures and visual aids to help students understand. Although the acquisition of English is one of the goals of sheltered English and content-based programs, instruction focuses on content rather than language.

More information regarding assessment, placement, and monitoring is located at <https://www.morgank12.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=5821&dataid=7552&FileName=ALSDE%20EL%20Guidebook%202018-2019.pdf> .

7.10 Alabama EL/Multi-Lingual Framework

https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/ASMT_2022919_EL-Resource-Guide-2022-2023_V1.0.pdf

Vision Statement

Alabama multilingual learners will have equitable access to high-quality, rigorous instruction designed within a systematic framework built on values and respect for students' culture and language and a socially and emotionally supportive learning environment, empowering MLLs to excel socially, academically, and linguistically and lead productive lives.

Principles

Principles are the guiding light, informing every decision being made. They describe the fundamental principles that will be pervasively followed through the execution of the vision.

Asset Oriented System

All educators foster an inclusive mindset that values and affirms their students' and families' cultures and languages, empowers students' voices and maximizes human, social and physical capital that exists within the school and community.

High Quality Instructional System

Ensures that all Multilingual Learner students have access to a clearly defined, evidence-based, rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum and instruction; access to all programs (gifted, co- and extracurricular, CTE programs); rigorous and targeted professional

learning; culturally and linguistically valid and reliable assessments; and a multi-tiered system of support.

Enabling Conditions that Support Responsive Leaders, Educators and Staff

At each level of the system there are educators and leaders who are knowledgeable and responsive to ML student needs and address civil rights laws, who know how to use data systems in conjunction with tiered supports for continuous improvement and have a shared responsibility to leverage strengths and meet the needs of MLs; includes adequate resources to support the conditions required to support ML needs.

Alignment and Coherence Within and Across Systems that Support MLs.

English learners experience a clearly defined, aligned and coherent set of practices and pathways across grade levels (early childhood through secondary) and beyond (graduation, higher education and career opportunities) and across the educational system itself (schools, districts and state); Secures and allocates human and fiscal resources to support high quality core instruction to meet the diverse needs of MLs/ELs, including professional learning opportunities for all staff.

The Alabama EL/Multi-Lingual Framework - https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/ASMT_2022919_EL-Resource-Guide-2022-2023_V1.0.pdf

7.11 Department of Early Education 1st Class PreK

Pre-K Now, a Pew Charitable Trust, has been a forerunner in the quest to advance high-quality, voluntary pre-k-kindergarten for all three- and four-year olds. They have championed the nation's policy makers to transform public education by moving away from the current K-12 system to Pre-K-12. In Alabama, the Department of Children's Affairs (DCA) oversees various Pre-K programs including, Head Start, *First Class*, First Teacher, the Children Trust Fund and the Early Childhood Advisory Council.

Pre-K programs are an effective means to ensure children enter school with:

- An enthusiasm for learning,
- An ability to function in a social setting,
- Age-appropriate communication and problem-solving skills,
- Age-appropriate physical and emotional skills, and
- Optimal health.

Numerous studies have shown that students who have participated in high-quality pre-kindergarten programs:

- Are less likely to repeat a grade, require remedial education, or be placed in special education,
- Score higher on achievement tests,
- Are more likely to graduate from high school and go on to college,
- Get higher paying salaries as adults, and
- Are more likely to stay out of prison and off welfare.

However, since limited funding for voluntary Pre-K programs is included in the state's educational budget which leaves systems/schools to look for other sources of revenue. Federal funds may be allocated for programs, local funds and/or dollars from Title VI-B may contribute if students with disabilities are enrolled. Few municipalities have seen the need in their community and offered assistance; however, the best source of sufficient funding is through competitive grants. First Class provides funding and support for entities interested in adding Pre-K programs. Before embarking on a grant, it is advised that the system read the guidelines for the agreement. System leaders should expect a close partnership with OSR to ensure the program is of high-quality. <https://www.children.alabama.gov/adece/first-class-pre-k/>

In 2005-06, the Alabama Office of School Readiness within the Alabama Department of Children's Affairs invested \$4.3 million to provide funding for 57 classrooms. A \$17 million federal grant received in 2014 paved the way to add 100 First Class Pre-K classrooms per year for four years. All types of programs in any Alabama county are encouraged to apply from childcare centers, faith-based centers, private schools, Head Start programs, military centers, and public-school systems. Many systems simply do not have the space needed to expand programs to include Pre-K; however, joint partnerships with community-based entities are encouraged to ensure Alabama's children have the readiness skills needed for success in school. For the 2019-2020 school year there are 1, 089 First Class Pre-K classrooms funded through the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (formerly the Alabama Department of Children's Affairs). This award-winning program funds classrooms in public schools, private schools, daycare programs, Head Start programs, church schools, colleges and universities, and classes sponsored by community organizations.

7.12 A+ College Ready

History of A+ Education Partnership

A+ Education Partnership was founded in 1991 to unite business, civic, government, and education leaders around one common goal: improving student opportunity and achievement for every child in Alabama, no matter their zip code or circumstance. A+ worked relentlessly to become the foremost change agent in K-12 education in the state by speaking out for progress in education and conducting town hall meetings across the state to discuss a blueprint for improving public education. When resulting legislation was defeated, A+ chose to stay the course.

Today, A+ continues with the promotion of policies but now also works directly with schools to demonstrate that with high expectations and support for teachers and students, more students can excel in education. Some highlights of our past accomplishments are below.

A+ College Ready

A+ College Ready (A+CR) opens the doors to Advanced Placement (AP) and other challenging coursework for all students. This proven program partners with middle and high schools to develop a diverse pipeline of students prepared for rigorous high school course work, including AP. In grades 6-10, we focus on developing the high expectations, skills, and content needed to

prepare students for AP and other rigorous coursework in grades 11 and 12 - and for college, career, and life through:

- **Increasing the number of students** engaged in rigorous coursework that promotes access to higher-level academic classes
- **Increasing access to AP for underrepresented students**, giving every student the opportunity to reach their potential
- **Training, supporting, and equipping** teachers with research-based teaching strategies, deeper content knowledge, and classroom resources in 35 subjects, including math, science, English, social studies, and computer science
- **Empowering administrators** to be more effective instructional leaders

For more information about A+ College Ready: <https://aplusala.org/college-ready/>

7.13 Scientifically-Based Research Instructional Approaches – Evidence-Based Education

To lead and support efforts to improve student achievement, superintendents and school administrators have opportunities to influence change in instructional practices. Unfortunately, there is no quick fix answer or series of specific activities that guarantee increased student achievement. The process is complex and requires perseverance, patience and a multi-faceted approach to sustain improvement over time. In an article to summarize research on classroom effective classroom practices and achievement for the National Middle School Association in 2005 entitled What Works to Improve Student Achievement, Susan Trimble provides an excellent overview of the literature on this topic to inform administrators. While the specific target of Trimble’s article is the middle school administrator, the research studies and principles cited can benefit school system leaders for all grade levels. The entire article can be downloaded from the National Middle School Association website at www.nmsa.org

Trimble’s identifies the most beneficial classroom practices and teaching strategies including:

Clear Academic Focus

- **Learning goals that are performance based** contribute to increased student learning by focusing instruction on targeted outcomes (Brophy & Good, 1986; Cotton, 2000).
- **Learning goals based on standards and measured periodically** are most effective for student learning (Black & William, 1998, a synthesis of 250 articles). The Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB) report, Raising the Bar (SREB, 2001a), reports effective teacher practices as presenting challenging requirements, giving students actual examples of high-quality student work, and sharing the assessment criteria by indicating the amount and quality of work needed to earn an A or B.
- **Task orientation** where class is businesslike with emphasis on completing work has been associated with higher achievement (Lee & Smith, 1993). A comparison of students in the 90% level of achievement with students in the 10% level of achievement found their perceptions of the learning environment differed on task orientation, student involvement, and rule clarity (Waxman & Huange, 1996).

Teaching Strategies

Quality of instruction has a strong impact on student learning (Brophy & Good, 1986; Stigler & Heister, 1999). This is a widely accepted generalization. The following strategies have been identified as effective by major research studies (Darling-Hammond, 1996; Hattie, Biggs, & Purdie, 1996):

- **Establishing high standards** and expressing a willingness to help students achieve them are teacher practices associated with higher achievement (Phillips, 1997; Southern Regional Education Board SREB, 2001a, 2001b).
- **Implementing assessments to measure progress toward goals and to inform practice** (Black & William, 1998; Darling-Hammond, Aness, & Falk, 1995; Falk & Ort, 1998; Pressley, Yokoi, Rankin, Wharton-McDonald, & Mistretta, 1997; Stiggins, 2002) provides descriptive feedback of teaching effectiveness, while building students' confidence and resulting in adjustment to instruction (Cotton, 2000; SREB, 2001a; Stiggins, 2002). Likewise, teachers learn more if they assess their teaching and the students' learning and use it to change instruction. Constantly assessing student progress is one of the practices of teachers "who succeed at developing real understanding of challenging subjects" (Darling-Hammond, 1996, p. 11).
- **Applying a deep understanding of subject matter** and of the characteristics of young adolescents is a requirement of teaching certification. Mertens and Flowers (2003, February) reported that certified middle level teachers in teams with common planning times had the highest levels of effective team and classroom practices. Team practices were defined as curriculum coordination and integration practices, coordination of student assignments, parent contact and involvement, and contact with other building resource staff. Classroom practices were defined as small group, active instruction, integrated and interdisciplinary practices, authentic instruction and assessment, critical thinking practices, reading and writing skill practices, and math skill practices. Numerous other studies present evidence of the association between certified teachers and student learning (Chatterji, 2002; SREB, 2001b; Wenglinsky, 2000). A deep understanding of subject matter provides teachers with the background for higher order thinking and questioning skills (SREB, 2001c).
- **Promoting critical thinking and higher order thinking** (McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993). Teachers who are able to discern students' level of thinking and use it to construct knowledge help them to develop a better understanding of content (Darling-Hammond, 1996).
- **Learning in context** with integrated and interdisciplinary practices, using meaningful tasks (Flowers, et al., 2000) and an integrated curriculum (Jackson & Davis, 2000; also, see Hartzler's meta-analysis of studies on integrated curriculum and achievement, 2000).
- **Implementing mastery learning** and the scaffolding of successful steps to develop confidence and skills (Hattie, et al., 1996).

Promoting student engagement with a task orientation (Waxman & Huang, 1996). Hattie et al. (1996) found promoting higher student engagement was a common feature of 51 studies of learning skills. Student involvement is increased by using effective questioning techniques (Cotton, 2000). Motivation and homework were found to have a significant effect on the achievement of eighth graders (Bruce & Singh, 1996).

- **Using small groups and individual attention** (Flowers, et al., 2000a) with cooperative learning properly implemented (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

Support for Teaching and Learning

- **Extra help and resources for students.** Supporting students through enhancement and extra practice has been related to greater achievement (McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993). Large-scale reform programs repeatedly report achievement gains associated with enhanced practice in reading, math, and writing (Middle Start, 2002; Mid-South Middle Start, 2002). In a study of 26 middle schools in Massachusetts implementing *Turning Points* recommendations (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989), math manipulatives and extended writing were associated with achievement gains (DePascale, 1997). Extra resources provided to reforming schools are also an essential component of conditions to enable achievement gains, reported by Balfanz and Mac Iver (2000). Likewise, extra resources for schools, particularly middle schools with high populations of at-risk students, were a condition of 31 Illinois middle schools that implemented *Turning Points* (Carnegie Council on Adolescents) <https://www.carnegie.org/publications/turning-points-preparing-american-youth-for-the-21st-century/>
- **Collaborative structures for teachers.** Instructional improvements in the classroom occur best in schools that have established organizational conditions to support teacher collaboration, such as, common planning time, teams that engage in positive adult-child relationships, heterogeneous groupings of students, and flexible scheduling (Flowers, et al., 2000a, 2000b; Miles & Darling-Hammond, 1998).
- **Time for teachers to work together** provides support for learning together, solving problems, and discussing values (McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Miles & Darling-Hammond, 1998). Common planning time enables teachers to work together on interdisciplinary teams, resulting in student achievement scores improving (Mertens & Flowers, in press).
- **Professional development** is needed for teachers to gain the skills necessary for school improvement processes, for teaming, for teaching young adolescents, and for implementing alternative assessments and data-based decision making (Flowers, Mertens, & Mulhall, 2002; Wengling, 2000). Among the leadership skills necessary to improve school effectiveness are collecting and evaluating school and classroom data (King, 1999; Stiggins, 2002). Other skills needed to positively influence student achievement are working with special populations, high-order skills for math, and laboratory skills for science with frequent hands-on activities and testing of classroom learning tied to standards (Wengling, 2000). Spigler and Hiebert (2000) concluded, after analyzing teaching videos of eighth grade math classrooms in Japan, Germany, and the United States, that teachers would benefit from examining lessons for more content and more problem-solving

situations that are aligned to standards. They recommended that teachers learn in groups how to incorporate more content and problem solving.

UDL – Universal Design Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an approach to teaching and learning that gives all students equal opportunity to succeed.

To understand what UDL is, it helps to understand what it's not. The word *universal* may throw you off. It may sound like UDL is about finding one way to teach all students. But UDL actually takes the opposite approach.

The goal of UDL is to use a variety of teaching methods to remove any barriers to learning. It's about building in flexibility that can be adjusted for every person's strength and need. That's why UDL benefits all learners.

This approach to teaching or to workplace training doesn't specifically target people who learn and think differently. But it can be especially helpful for the 1 in 5 kids and adults with these challenges — including those who have not been formally diagnosed. It can also be very helpful for English language learners.

UDL is a framework for how to develop lesson plans and assessments. It's based on three main principles:

1. Engagement

Look for ways to motivate learners and sustain their interest. Here are some examples:

- Let people make choices
- Give assignments that feel relevant to their lives
- Make skill building feel like a game
- Create opportunities for learners to get up and move around

2. Representation

Offer information in more than one format. For example, the instructor could provide a worksheet along with:

- Audio, which could be as simple as saying the written directions out loud
- Video showing how to solve one of the problems
- Hands-on learning

3. Action and expression

Give learners more than one way to interact with the material and to show what they know. For example, they might get to choose between:

- Taking a pencil-and-paper test
- Giving an oral report
- Making a video or a comic strip
- Doing a group project

Source: [understood.org](https://www.understood.org). For more information on UDL:

<https://www.understood.org/articles/en/universal-design-for-learning-what-it-is-and-how-it-works>

Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning, or PBL (often "PjBL" to avoid confusion with "Problem-based Learning"), is the use of classroom projects, intended to bring about deep learning, where students use technology and inquiry to engage with issues and questions that are relevant to their lives. Students participate in interdisciplinary learning projects that promote inquiry and collaboration. The object of the project is to present solutions to real work problems. Such learning promoted the application of learned concepts and the creation of creative solutions.

Project-based learning (PBL) provides complex tasks based on challenging questions or problems that involve the students' problem solving, decision making, investigative skills, and reflection that include teacher facilitation, but not direction. Project Based Learning is focused on questions that drive students to encounter the central concepts and principles of a subject hands-on.

With Project-based learning students learn from these experiences and take them into account and apply them to their lives in the real world. PBL is a different teaching technique that promotes and practices new learning habits. The students have to think in original ways to come up with the solutions to these real-world problems. It helps with their creative thinking skills by showing that there are many ways to solve a problem.

Project-based learning (PBL): is an approach for classroom activity that emphasizes learning activities that are long-term, interdisciplinary and student-centered. This approach is generally less structured than traditional, teacher-led classroom activities; in a project-based class, students often must organize their own work and manage their own time. Within the project-based learning framework students collaborate, working together to make sense of what is going on. Project-based instruction differs from inquiry-based activity by its emphasis on collaborative learning. Additionally, project-based instruction differs from traditional inquiry by its emphasis on students' own artifact construction to represent what is being learned. Students can spend the entire length of the project involved or come in and out as they see fit.

The core idea of project-based learning is that real-world problems capture students' interest and provoke serious thinking as the students acquire and apply new knowledge in a problem-solving context. The teacher plays the role of facilitator, working with students to frame worthwhile questions, structuring meaningful tasks, coaching both knowledge development and social skills, and carefully assessing what students have learned from the experience. Advocates assert that project-based learning helps prepare students for the thinking and collaboration skills required in the workplace.

Rigorous and in-depth Project Based Learning:

- **is organized around an open-ended Driving Question or Challenge.** These focus students' work and deepen their learning by centering on significant issues, debates, questions and/or problems.
- **creates a need-to-know essential content and skills.** Typical projects (and most instruction) begin by presenting students with knowledge and concepts and then, once learned, give them the opportunity to apply them. PBL begins with the vision of an end

product or presentation which requires learning specific knowledge and concepts, thus creating a context and reason to learn and understand the information and concepts.

- **requires inquiry to learn and/or create something new.** Not all learning has to be based on inquiry, but some should. And this inquiry should lead students to construct something new— an idea, an interpretation, a new way of displaying what they have learned.
- **requires critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and various forms of communication.** Students need to do much more than remember information—they need to use higher-order thinking skills. They also have to learn to work as a team and contribute to a group effort. They must listen to others and make their own ideas clear when speaking, be able to read a variety of material, write or otherwise express themselves in various modes, and make effective presentations. These skills, competencies and habits of mind are often known as "21st Century Skills".
- **allows some degree of student voice and choice.** Students learn to work independently and take responsibility when they are asked to make choices. The opportunity to make choices, and to express their learning in their own voice, also helps to increase students' educational engagement.
- **incorporates feedback and revision.** Students use peer critique to improve their work to create higher quality products.
- **results in a publicly presented product or performance.** What you know is demonstrated by what you do, and what you do must be open to public scrutiny and critique.

Project-based learning creates opportunities for groups of students to investigate meaningful questions that require them to gather information and think critically. Typical projects present a problem to solve (What is the best way to reduce the pollution in the schoolyard pond?); a phenomenon to investigate (Why is best way to stay on a skateboard?).

Rigor/Relevance Framework

The Knowledge Taxonomy by Bloom was the first to define levels of cognition. Several revisions/adaptations of Bloom's from Norman Webb, R. J. Marzano, and others have been used over the years. The Rigor/Relevance Framework is an approach to looking at curriculum standards and assessment. It is based on traditional elements of education but encourages movement to the application of knowledge instead of maintaining an exclusive focus on the acquisition of knowledge.

The framework is based on four quadrants. Quadrant A is acquisition of knowledge, basically the teacher gives information and the student memorizes. Quadrant B refers to application in which students use acquired knowledge to solve a problem. Quadrant C is assimilation of knowledge in which students extend and refine their knowledge so they can use it automatically to analyze and solve problems and create solutions. Quadrant D is adaptation of knowledge in which when students are confronted with perplexing unknowns, they can use their extensive knowledge base and create unique solutions and take action. In other words, Quadrant A is teacher driven and Quadrant D is student driven with teacher guidance.

Rigor refers to academic rigor – learning in which students demonstrate a thorough, in-depth mastery of challenging tasks to develop cognitive skills through reflective thought, analysis,

problem solving, evaluation, or creativity. Rigorous learning can occur at any school grade and in any subject. Relevance refers to learning in which students apply core knowledge, concepts, or skills to solve real-world problems. Further information <http://www.leadered.com>

7.14 Alabama Multi-Tiered Systems of support – AL-MTSS

What is MTSS?

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a systemic, continuous-improvement framework in which data-based problem solving and decision-making is practiced across all levels of the educational system for supporting students.

The elements of MTSS include:

- Multiple tiers of instruction, intervention, and support. Includes learning standards and behavioral expectations. ...
- Problem-solving process. ...
- Data evaluation. ...
- Communication and collaboration. ...
- Capacity building infrastructure. ...
- Leadership.

Alabama MTSS

The AL-MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) is aligned to the Priority Areas of the Alabama Achieves Strategic Plan (See Figure 1), and we believe AL-MTSS is how ALSDE will achieve the goals outlined of the Alabama Achieves Strategic Plan to ensure we proactively ensure equitable access to opportunities to improve outcomes for all children.

Alabama Multi-Tier System of Supports



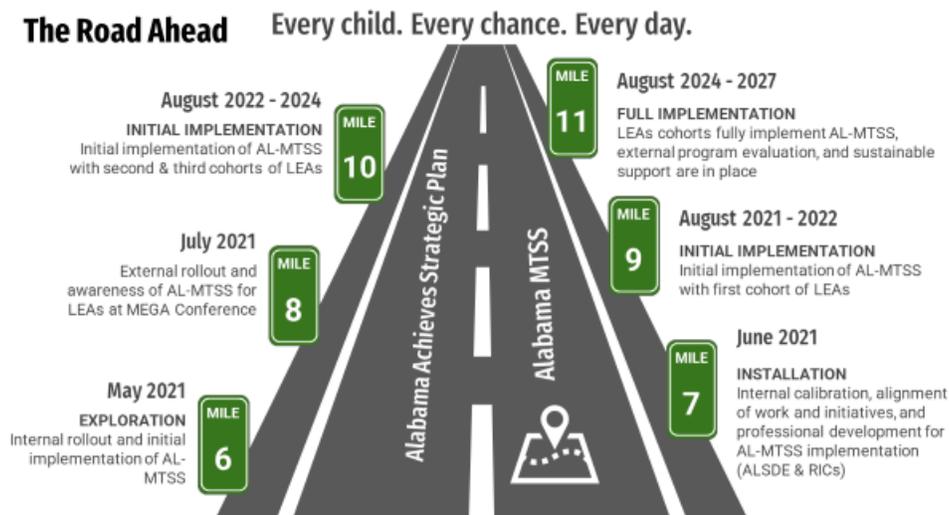
The Timeline for AL-MTSS Implementation

Figures 2 & 3 illustrate the timeline for AL-MTSS Development and Implementation. For more detailed information on AL-MTSS:

Figure 2: The Development Timeline

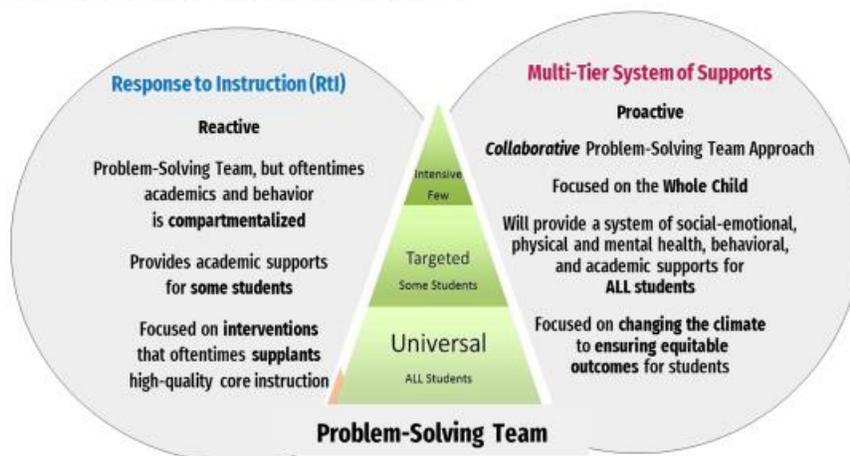


Figure 3: The Implementation Timeline



Why MTSS?

Key Differences between RtI and MTSS



Source : <https://www.novakeducation.com/blog/mtss-vs-rti-what-is-the-difference>

Link to The Alabama Literacy Act Implementation Guide:

https://www.aamu.edu/academics/colleges/education-humanities-behavioral-sciences/research-outreach-centers/regional-inservice-center/_documents/alabama-literacy-act-implementation-guide.pdf

7.15 School Problem Solving Teams

A Problem-Solving Team (PST) is a school-based, data-driven, deliberative approach to meet the needs of at-risk students in regular education classroom settings. Team members discuss issues related to specific individual needs of students and teachers and offer teachers assistance in resolving learning problems. The team is composed of regular program teachers, administrators, counselors and other individuals, as needed (i.e., special education personnel).

This team pools their expertise from many areas to help resolve many school and student issues. Using this collaborative approach, educators are given the opportunity to address concerns and find solutions. Through this team effort, referrals to programs outside the regular classroom can be significantly reduced.

Alabama schools are required to have at least one PST according to AAC 290-3-1-.02-(19). The code defines the PST as a model to guide general education intervention services for all students who have academic and/or behavioral difficulties. The PST is central to the schools' successful implementation of the Response to Instruction (RtI) framework. The documentation requirements for a student's referral to special education must be collected and provided by the PST. Any student who is reevaluated and determined not eligible for special education services must be referred to the school's PST to determine the appropriate supplemental services to facilitate successful transition to the general education program.

[Guidance Manual for Problem Solving Teams](#)

7.16 Response To Instruction (RtI)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) includes a provision that allows states and school systems to use high quality, research-based instruction in general and special education to provide services and interventions to students who may be at risk of or suspected of having learning disabilities. Alabama schools now use RtI practices to provide intervention for struggling students.

To ensure adequate instruction for students with a specific learning disability, identification must focus on assessments that are directly related to instruction. Services for struggling students must focus on intervention, not eligibility.

A "three-tier" system is required which will include research-based instruction, continuous progress monitoring, differentiated curriculum and variations in duration, frequency and time of interventions. Additional information about RtI and its implementation in Alabama schools is available from https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ARI_20240415_Foundational-Literacy-Tiered-Levels-of-Instruction-Utilizing-High-Quality-Instructional-Materials_V1.0.pdf.

7.17 Alabama Coaching Framework

https://compcenternetwork.org/sites/default/files/AL_Coaching_Framework_FINAL.pdf

Alabama believes that all children will achieve their full potential. Alabama Achieves: A New Plan for a New Decade (ALSDE, 2020) is the strategic plan that unites the work of the Alabama State Department of Education and all stakeholders around this effort. State Superintendent, Dr. Eric Mackey states:

Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day is not only our department's motto, but a guiding philosophy about the work that we undertake on behalf of the 725,000 children who cross the thresholds into public schools every day. The state's guiding philosophy is that every child should be afforded every chance to succeed

in school and, thus, make wise choices every day leading to success in career, family, and life after high school. Indeed, from the first day of kindergarten, all that we do in K-12 schools is designed to empower students through education, to open new opportunities and widen horizons, and, ultimately, to help them to use knowledge and experience to make wise decisions. Alabama's aspiration is that with support, all children will seize the opportunities, rise to the challenges, and overcome any barriers in their way. (p. 4)

To support students and raise achievement for all, it is necessary to support educators as they continuously hone their knowledge, skills, and abilities in the classroom. Coaching is a vehicle for job embedded growth and support to improve instructional practice. Coaching fosters a community of learners working together toward a common goal: improved student achievement in all content areas.

Educators' knowledge, skills, and abilities must include a thorough understanding of

- what it takes to be a skillful learner of content;
- what can interfere with students' comprehension of content;
- what the research says is necessary to help all students succeed in the content; • how to determine if students have learned what was taught, how much practice is needed for each student, when to move on, and when to reteach;
- how to provide intervention to support student learning;
- how to determine the relative value of various activities outlined in a lesson plan; when to require faithful implementation of a lesson; when to eliminate certain activities; and when to substitute and/or add a more valuable instructional activity;
- various types of assessment (e.g., formative assessment); the value of progress monitoring assessments; and how to use student data to adjust instruction; and
- effective strategies that will engage students in their own learning.

Coaching provides opportunities for teachers to learn and refine these instructional practices, develop their abilities to reflect on and learn from their own teaching and the teaching of others, and incorporate new practices into their teaching routines.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY

FEDERAL -ESSA

8.1. Navigating ESSA Accountability Reporting

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the latest reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. ESSA requires states to submit plans to the U.S. Department of Education (US ED) describing the state systems for evaluating school performance and holding schools accountable for improvement. States could submit their plans to the US ED by either April 3 or September 18, 2017. After receiving feedback on their plans from the US ED, states finalize their plans. State accountability systems take effect in school year 2017-18.

States are not required to include college- and career-readiness expectations in their accountability systems under ESSA. Many SREB states, however, did set college- and career-readiness expectations in their plans, in the form of long-term goals and school performance indicators. Alabama included the following two college- and career-readiness expectations in its plan.

1. **Long-term goal.** ESSA requires that states establish long-term goals based on academic achievement, high school graduation rate and English language proficiency for English learners. In addition to setting goals in these areas, Alabama also established a college- and career-readiness goal: By 2030, 94 percent of high school graduates will be identified as college and career ready, by meeting at least one college- and career-readiness milestone.
2. **School performance indicator.** ESSA requires states to set an indicator for school quality or student success, which can but does not have to include such measures as school climate and safety, student engagement and college readiness. Alabama's indicator of school quality or student success measures the percentage of high school students meeting any of the following college- and career-readiness milestones:
 - Scoring 18 in English, 22 in math, 22 in reading or 23 in science on the ACT exam; scoring 3 or higher on an AP exam; scoring 4 or higher on an IB exam; or earning a silver certificate or higher on the ACT WorkKeys exam
 - Attaining college credit or a career and technical education industry credential
 - Enlisting in the military

Long Term Goals

Every Student Succeeds Act requires that states establish long-term goals for all students and student groups based on academic achievement, high school graduation rate and English language proficiency for English learners.

School Performance Indicators

ESSA specifies a set of indicators that states must use to assess school performance. Indicators for all schools must include academic achievement as measured by proficiency on annual state assessments of English language arts and math in grades three through eight and once in high school. States must require 95 percent of students to participate in these assessments and factor this requirement into the school accountability system. States must also include two

more indicators for all schools – English language proficiency for English learners and an indicator of school quality or student success, such as school climate and safety, student engagement and college readiness. For elementary and middle grades schools, states must include an additional academic indicator of the state’s choice, such as student growth on state assessments. For high schools, states must also include an indicator of four-year cohort graduation rate.

Accountability Indicators – Academic Achievement

An Accountability System Indicator determined based on the number of students in the areas of reading/English and math utilizing assessments results in tested grades within the achievement levels. The Academic Achievement indicator score is based on achievement levels as outlined below from student assessments.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL	WEIGHT
Level I	0
Level II	0.50
Level III	1.00
Level IV	1.25

Participation rate plays a part in the calculation of the Academic Achievement Indicator Score. Per ESEA Section 1111(c) (4) (E) (ii), a state must use as the denominator for any measure in the Academic Achievement Indicator, the greater of:

- 95 percent of all students, or all students in the applicable subgroup, who were enrolled in the school at the time of testing; or
- The number of all students, or all students in the applicable subgroup, who participated in the assessments.

Participation rates for each subgroup will be supplied to the Office of Accountability by Student Assessment/IS.

Accountability Indicators – Academic Growth

An Accountability System Indicator determined based on individual students who demonstrate improvement in reading/English and/or math with a growth record within the growth categories. The Academic Growth Indicator Score is based on the weighted growth categories outlined below.

GROWTH CATEGORY	WEIGHT
Category 1	0
Category 2	0.75
Category 3	1.25
Category 4	1.50

Accountability Indicators – Graduation Rate

Only those students who are considered Full Academic Year (FAY) are used to calculate the indicator scores for Academic Achievement, Academic Growth, and Progress in English Language Proficiency.

- A student is considered FAY at the school level if the student is enrolled 85% of the school year with a matched assessment record. A break in enrollment does not disqualify a student from being FAY for a school.
- A student is considered FAY at the district level if the student is enrolled 85% of the school year in a district with a matched assessment record. A break in enrollment does not disqualify a student from being FAY for a district.

Accountability Indicators – College and Career Readiness (CCR)

An Accountability System Indicator determined based on the percentage of students enrolled in the 4-year cohort who met at least one of the College and Career Readiness Indicators. The fall 2019 Accountability System utilizes the 2017-2018 CCR data.

The College and Career Readiness Indicators are:

- Benchmark on any ACT Subtest
- Qualifying Score on AP or IB Exam
- Military Enlistment
- Approved Transcript College or Postsecondary Credit While in High School
- Silver Level or Higher on the ACT WorkKeys
- Approved Industry Credentials

Accountability Indicators – Chronic Absenteeism

An Accountability System Indicator determined based on the percent of students in grades K-12 who missed 18 or more days (both excused and unexcused). Chronic Absenteeism points are based on students present (by subtracting the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator Score from 100 before multiplying by the Chronic Absenteeism weight).

Accountability Indicators – Progress in English Language Proficiency

An Accountability System Indicator determined based on the percentage of students who met their growth target utilizing ACCESS 2.0 in grades 3-8 and 11 as measured against progress targets.

Accountability Indicators – Full Academic Year (FAY Students)

Only those students who are considered FAY are used to calculate the indicator scores for Academic Achievement, Academic Growth, and Progress in English Language Proficiency.

- A student is considered FAY at the school level if the student is enrolled 85% of the school year with a matched assessment record. A break in enrollment does not disqualify a student from being FAY for a school.

Accountability Indicators – Insufficient Data (ID)

Any school/system that does not have sufficient indicator data will not have a letter grade assigned to it. The school/system will receive a label of “ID” for “Insufficient Data”.

Accountability Indicators – Accountability Subgroups

Subgroups within the Alabama Accountability System are:

- All Students
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Economically Disadvantaged
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Students with Disabilities
- Students with Limited English Proficiency
- Two or More Races
- White

Each subgroup that meets the minimum count of 20 students will have an indicator score calculated. The n-count of 20 applies to the “All Students” group, as well as all subgroups. Only the “All Students” group indicator scores will be used in tabulating the final letter grade. All other subgroup indicator scores are provided for informational purposes only.

Accountability Indicators – Accountability Minimum N-Count

Each indicator and subgroup must meet the minimum N-Count of 20 to be included in the Accountability Systems calculations as a subgroup.

8.2 Define CSI, TSI and ATSI Schools

Every Student Succeeds Act requires that states establish a methodology for identifying low-performing schools. States must identify two categories of schools at least once every three years: those that need Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and those that need Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI). States may also establish other categories of schools, for example those not in need of improvement.

Alabama established the following identification and exit criteria, and interventions to support schools.

Designation (What is my identification?)	Identification Criteria (What caused my designation?)	Duration (How long will the designation last?)	Supports (What will the SDE provide because of the designation?)	Exit (How may the school exit designation?)
<p>Comprehensive Support & Improvement (CSI)</p> <p>See pp. 33-36 in ESSA Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title I School Bottom 5% of Title I schools Graduation rate that is below 67% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not to exceed 4 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve, Monitor, and review plan Provide technical assistance as requested/ needed Provide funding to support evidence-based interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform above the bottom 5% of schools receiving Title I, Part A funds Show Improvement as compared to when the school was originally identified Must have a graduation rate at or above 67%
<p>Additional Targeted Support & Improvement (ATSI)</p> <p>See pp. 33-36 in ESSA Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more subgroups that perform below the threshold for the “all students” in the lowest performing schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical assistance as requested/ needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No longer meets the eligibility criteria for ATSI Demonstrates improved student performance as compared to student performance at the time of identification for the student subgroup for two consecutive years
<p>Targeted Support & Improvement (TSI)</p> <p>See pp. 33-36 in ESSA Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more consistently under-performing subgroups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical assistance as requested/ needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No longer meets the eligibility criteria for TSI
<p>Priority Schools (formerly “Failing”) (AAA)</p> <p>See State Accountability Guide for business rules. AAA is outside of ESSA Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D or F on School Report Card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical assistance as requested/ needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No longer meets the eligibility criteria to be identified as a Failing School

8.3 Measuring/Testing/Assessment (NAEP)

In an age of standards and accountability, school systems are increasingly making decisions about educational achievement based on standardized test scores. Advocates of making decisions based on standardized tests contend that it is the most efficient, fair, and measurable way to measure how well a school is meeting its educational goals. Critics of standardized tests argue that these tests were never meant to be used in the manner in which they are currently being utilized. Others point out that standardized tests are culturally biased. Parents throughout the United States have organized resistance to the reliance on test scores by keeping their children home on these test dates.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

The History of NAEP

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as "the Nation's Report Card," is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, assessments have been conducted periodically in [reading](#), [mathematics](#), [science](#), [writing](#), [U.S. history](#), [civics](#), [geography](#), and [the arts](#). In 1987, a highly visible national study panel issued The Nation's Report Card, a report that recommended massive changes in governance and procedures for the NAEP. The panel proposed, for example, that state-by-state test score comparisons be undertaken. NAEP does not provide scores for individual students or schools; instead, it offers results regarding subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for populations of students (e.g., fourth graders) and subgroups of those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students). NAEP results are based on a sample of student populations of interest. National NAEP reports information for the nation and specific geographic regions of the country. It includes students drawn from both public and nonpublic schools and reports results for student achievement at grades 4, 8, and 12.

Since 1990, NAEP assessments have also been conducted to give results for participating states. Those that choose to participate receive assessment results that report on the performance of students in that state. Detailed information about the NAEP assessments and reports of NAEP data may be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>. A particularly helpful "snapshot" of results of NAEP testing of Alabama students in grade 4 and grade 8 is found at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/stt2009/2010460AL4.pdf>

NAEP Studies

The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), also known as "the Nation's Report Card," is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in key subject areas at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. NAEP is mandated by the U.S. Congress and is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) at the U.S. Department of Education. It provides reliable student achievement profiles to American educators and citizens. Since 1969, assessments have been conducted periodically at the

fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, economics, geography, and the arts.

NAEP, which is administered by outside contractor staff, does not provide scores for individual students or schools; instead, it offers results regarding subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for populations of students (e.g., fourth-graders) and subgroups of those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students). NAEP results are based on a sample of student populations of interest. Detailed information about the NAEP assessments and reports of NAEP data may be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.

NAEP Pilot Assessments

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test is a standardized norm-referenced test. The NAEP test is commonly described as a national academic achievement test. It is a series of timed tests assessing students' performance in selected subjects (English, mathematics, reading, science, writing, U. S. History, geography, civics, and the arts). It includes multiple choice items, constructed responses (short and extended), and science hands-on tasks. The results of NAEP tests are reported on the national level and by region of the country, not by school system, school, or individual student. Only group statistics are reported, broken down by gender, ethnicity and other variables that illuminate students' instructional experiences. NAEP results are based on a sample of populations.

Participation in NAEP pilot assessments is by random selection. Schools within systems are asked to participate in the norming activities by taking all or portions of the planned assessments in grades 4, 8 and 10. Results from the pilot administrations can provide a system with information about student performance compared to similarly prepared students across the nation. Conclusions about curriculum, instructional strategies, materials, and course sequencing can be drawn when this information is analyzed in light of local circumstances.

Additional information about the NAEP testing program and state profiles of results from previous administrations of the NAEP assessments can be found at www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard.

8.4 Differentiated Support & Accountability Guide

The ALSDE provides guidelines to understand and interpret the ESSA & Alabama Accountability Framework. See <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/accountability/> for more information.

8.5 Alabama's Report Card – Navigating State Accountability

State

Alabama Accountability Act: <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/AAA-Talking-Points-2020.pdf>

Link: [Navigating the Alabama Report Card](#)

In 2012, the Alabama legislature secured a bi-partisan vote that created the Legislative School Performance Recognition Program Act – Act No. 2012-402, which legally requires a letter grade assessment to be assigned to most Alabama public schools. In accordance with this law, as well as the requirements from the federal Alabama’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Alabama school officials have worked to create the “Alabama State Report Card”.

Alabama State Report Card Q&A

Why do we have a report card? Why Now?

The Alabama State Department of Education is developing the report cards to comply with state and federal law, following passage of Alabama Act 2012-402 and the federal Every Student Succeeds Act in 2015. The state law passed in 2012 was never implemented but implementing it now in conjunction with the federal law means there will be one report card, not two. The Alabama State Report Card seeks to communicate how our schools are doing. It is one tool to highlight what we are doing well and where we need to improve. It is meant to encourage honest conversations about what we need to do to help all students succeed.

How are the letter grades determined?

For schools with a grade 12, letter grades are determined using a formula that includes multiple indicators based on state test scores, student absenteeism, graduation rates, and college- and career-readiness rates. For schools without a grade 12, the formula is adjusted to account for the lack of graduation and college- and career-readiness rates.

8.6 Measuring/Testing/Assessment – ACAP

The Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) includes a series of summative assessments with item analysis and specifications, as well as interim formative assessments with instructional resources. The following chart identifies assessments and resources included in ACAP (The document can also be accessed in the Appendix and at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rBa5vBRjxZCd-u_03myLr4tf8KccjJPg/view)



Assessment	Description	Link
<i>ACT with Writing</i>	The <i>ACT with Writing</i> Test Webinar	The ACT with Writing Webinar
<i>ACT with Writing</i>	ACT Performance Level Descriptors -Mathematics	Mathematics ACT PLD
<i>ACT with Writing</i>	ACT Performance Level Descriptors- Science	Science ACT PLD
<i>Scantron</i>	Quizzes4All	Scantron Quizzes4All
<i>Scantron</i>	Scantron and Classwork: You Have Your Test Scores, Now What?	Scantron and Classwork
<i>ACAP Summative</i>	In this presentation, viewers are introduced to the purpose and goals of the Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs). The PLDs are anchored by the <i>Alabama Course of Study Standards</i> which provide a starting point to make the critical connections between instruction and assessment. PLDs convey the information about the knowledge and skills required of students as well as how the knowledge is assumed to be attained across the levels. Viewers are guided as to how the PLDs group students on the assessment performance levels. An overview of each of the Performance Levels is provided for the content areas of ELA, Math, and Science. The relationship of PLDs between the standard setting process, determination of cut scores, reporting and instruction is outlined.	ACAP Summative: Performance Level Descriptors ACAP Summative: Performance Level Descriptors PowerPoint PLD Activities referred to in the presentation: - ELA - Mathematics ACAP Performance Level Descriptors

Assessment	Description	Link
<i>ACAP Summative</i>	This presentation focuses on the Item Specifications that are available for all grades assessed on the <i>ACAP Summative</i> . Item Specifications are mainly used as a guide by item writers to define content limits, Depth of Knowledge Levels (DOK), item types and specific vocabulary that may be used in the development of items. A summary is provided in each content-specific specification that includes sample item stems and their related keys, standards, item types, and DOK levels. New this year are appendices for each content area with sample items that are representative of items appearing on the <i>ACAP Summative</i> . ELA Item Specifications also include a Text Dependent Writing (TDW) item with actual Alabama student responses at each score point.	ACAP Summative: Item Specifications
<i>ACAP Alternate</i>	In this presentation, viewers are introduced to the purpose and goals of the Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs). The PLDs are anchored by the <i>Alabama Alternate Achievement Standards</i> which provide a starting point to make the critical connections between instruction and assessment. PLDs convey the information about the knowledge and skills required of students as well as how the knowledge is assumed to be attained across the levels. Viewers are guided as to how the PLDs group students on the assessment performance levels. An overview of each of the Performance Levels is provided for the content areas of ELA, Math, and Science. The relationship of PLDs between the standard setting process, determination of cut scores, reporting and instruction is outlined.	ACAP Alternate: Performance Level Descriptors ACAP Alternate: Performance Level Descriptors PowerPoint PLD Activities referred to in the presentation: - Alternate ELA - Alternate Mathematics ACAP Performance Level Descriptors
<i>ACAP Summative</i>	Take a deep-dive into the <i>Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP)</i> English language arts text-dependent writing (TDW) task from creation to scoring. Become familiar with all the components of text-dependent writing, including how reading comprehension, writing, and language are all measurable aspects of the task. Explore the Alabama educator involvement in creating, reviewing, and even scoring of student responses for the TDW. Participation is encouraged through a simulated scoring exercise with in-depth rubric discussions and review of sample student responses. Discuss how the expectations of TDW correlate to students being career and college ready.	ACAP Summative: ELA Text-Dependent Writing

Assessment	Description	Link
ACAP Summative	Connecting instruction to the <i>ACAP Summative</i> English language arts assessment is explored with a focus on the Alabama Educator Instructional Supports. Examples of question types are shared, including TDW and technology-enhanced questions that deepen the connection between instruction and assessment. A summary of the <i>ACAP Summative</i> is presented, as well as information about the test development process, educator involvement, test quality, and bias and sensitivity concerns. Participation is encouraged through activities including instructional strategies, standards alignment, complexity levels, and the rationales behind incorrect answer choices.	ACAP Summative: Connecting Instruction to Assessment--English Language Arts
ACAP Summative	Connecting instruction to the <i>ACAP Summative</i> math assessment is explored with a focus on the Alabama Educator Instructional Supports. Examples of question types are shared, including technology-enhanced questions that deepen the connection between instruction and assessment. A summary of the <i>ACAP Summative</i> is presented, as well as information about the test development process, educator involvement, test quality, and bias and sensitivity concerns. Participation is encouraged through activities including instructional strategies, standards alignment, complexity levels, and the rationales behind incorrect answer choices.	ACAP Summative: Connecting Instruction to Assessment: Math
ACAP Summative	Connecting instruction to the <i>ACAP Summative</i> science assessment is explored with a focus on the Alabama Educator Instructional Supports. Examples of question types are shared, including technology-enhanced questions that deepen the connection between instruction and assessment. A summary of the <i>ACAP Summative</i> is presented, as well as information about the test development process, educator involvement, test quality, and bias and sensitivity concerns. Participation is encouraged through activities including instructional strategies, standards alignment, complexity levels, and the rationales behind incorrect answer choices.	ACAP Summative: Connecting Instruction to Assessment--Science

Assessment	Description	Link
ACAP Alternate	In this workshop, educators will be trained on how to write items to meet quality expectations, including how best to write items that measure the <i>Alabama Alternate Achievement Standards</i> . Participants will be trained on the careful consideration of the standards, which will provide for the critical link between assessment questions and instruction in the classroom. Participants will also be trained to consider other important aspects of item writing, such as item context, assumed student knowledge, and cognitive complexity as reflected in the <i>Alabama Alternate Achievement Standards</i> .	ACAP Alternate: Developing High-Quality, Technically Sound Items
ACAP Summative and Alternate	DRC has introduced a comprehensive interactive reporting platform as part of the DRC INSIGHT™ Online Learning System for the ACAP. The platform presents actionable information aligned to the unique needs of users at each level, from teachers, to school administrators, district leaders, and up to the Superintendent's Office. Classroom highlights, combined with school and district summaries, enable quicker, more fully informed decisions about enhancements to instruction and assessment across Alabama. Participants will be immersed in a live demonstration of the platform, highlighting the modern report designs, intuitive user interface, longitudinal capabilities, and customizable components. Be prepared to see your assessment results like never before.	ACAP Reporting: DRC INSIGHT Interactive Reporting Platform
ACAP Alternate	This presentation focuses on the Item Specifications that are available for all grades assessed on the <i>ACAP Alternate</i> . Item Specifications are mainly used as a guide by item writers to define content limits, Depth of Knowledge Levels (DOK), item types and specific vocabulary that may be used in the development of items. A summary is provided in each content-specific specification that includes sample item stems and their related keys, standards, item types, and DOK levels. New this year are appendices for each content area with sample items that are representative of items appearing on the <i>ACAP Alternate</i> . ELA Item Specifications also include a Performance Task item with a modeled student response at each score point.	ACAP Alternate: Item Specifications Video

8.7 Approaches to Grading

Local

Competitive Grading

Assigning grades to student work in any form (number, letter, points, marks) is so pervasive and routine, that teachers and administrators rarely contemplate their effect beyond ranking or classifying students. Attention should be given to the meaning of grades and the effect of grades on students. Authors Krumboltz and Yeh discuss the negative impact of competitive grading in their 1996 article in volume 76 of *Phi Delta Kappan*:

Students are not the only victims of the competitive grading system...it hurts teachers as well by skewing their values and ultimately robbing them of the satisfactions inherent in promoting student learning...to assign grades, teachers must become critics whose focus is negative, always seeking errors and finding fault with students' work.

Moreover, students must be compared with one another, because there is no accepted standard for a given letter grade.

While most educators consider reporting student progress a necessary and valuable component of accountability and responsibility, little thought or study has gone into the meaning of the grades assigned to report student achievement. A performance that earns an A in one classroom could earn a C in another classroom because of the differences in the teachers' standards or in the composition of the two classes. Upon close examination of many gradebooks or marking schemes, it can be argued that grades are assigned based on the students' obedience to teacher instructions or compliance with teacher requests rather than on the students' mastery of content standards.

A thought-provoking discussion of the impact of competitive grading on student learning can be found in William Glasser's *The Quality School: Managing Students Without Coercion*, Revised edition (1998, New York: Harper Collins). Additional alternatives to competitive grading can be found in *Grades and Grading Practices: Obstacles to Improving Education and to Helping At-Risk Students*, Second Edition by Charles H. Hargis (2003, Charles C. Thomas Publisher, Ltd., Springfield, IL).

Standards-Based Grading

What are standards-based grading? Studies show standards-based teaching practices correlate to higher academic achievement (Craig, 2011; Schoen, Cebulla, Finn, & Fi, 2003). Therefore, it is critical that teachers also link assessments and reporting to the standards (Guskey, 2001). Beatty (2013) suggests standards-based grading (SBG) is based upon three principles.

First, grades must have meaning. Indicators, marks and/or letters should provide students and parents with information related to their strengths and weaknesses, separating out non-academic behaviors. Second, classroom-grading systems must incorporate multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding based on feedback. The final

principle of standards-based grading is separating academic indicators from extraneous factors such as homework completion and extra credit.

- **Principle 1:** Grades should have meaning Grades should provide meaningful feedback to students, document their progress, and help teachers make decisions about what instruction a student needs next (Wormeli, 2006). Traditional grades and report cards are muddled and misleading when they combine both academic factors and non-academic factors into a single grade. Non-academic behaviors are important and merit their own reporting mechanism because they matter in college and in a career. These behaviors include factors such as punctuality, work ethic, attendance, participation, and ability to meet deadline. But when these behaviors are combined with academic information (does my child know how to do algebra?) to form a single grade, learners and their parents can be deceived by a false and inaccurate calculation. Vatterott (2015) gives these examples:
 - A student can compensate for low understanding of the content and standards by maintaining perfect attendance, turning in assignments on time, and behaving appropriately in class. A different student may understand content and standards perfectly well but receive a low grade because he or she is late to class, fails to turn in assignments on time or acts inappropriately (p. 63-54). A grading system shouldn't allow a student to mask their level of content understanding with their attendance, their effort level or other peripheral issues (Scriffiny, 2008). These are separate issues and should be reported separately. Instead, a grading system should be based upon clear learning targets, a practice in which Marzano (2003) supported because students perform up to 20 percent higher compared to instruction without clear targets.
- **Principle 2:** Multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning based on feedback Wormeli (2011) proposed allowing “redos” and retakes, a practice often ignored in traditional grading. He argued retakes are necessary in order for the grade to truly capture student growth at the time of reporting rather than a single moment in the past. According to Marzano and Heflebower (2011), if the purpose of a grade is to report mastery, then educators must look for evidence of learning over time with multiple opportunities for updates. Standards-based grading is a logical extension of this idea and allows teachers to provide clearer and more effective feedback when compared to traditional letter grades. Haystead and Marzano (2009) conducted a comprehensive review of studies on classroom instructional strategies, concluding the use of scoring scales and tracking student progress over time towards a learning goal yielded a 34-percentage point gain. When students were provided additional time and feedback for the purpose of learning the intended standards, strong evidence indicated a positive correlation between added instructional time and achievement (see Brown & Saks, 1986 for seminal work).
- **Principle 3:** Putting homework and extra credit in its proper place Although assigning high grades as rewards can sometimes motivate students (Guskey & Bailey, 2001; Marzano, 2000), assigning low grades as punishment does not encourage students to do better (Dueck, 2014; Guskey, 2000; Guskey & Bailey, 2001; Marzano, 2000;

O'Connor, 2009, 2011; Wormeli, 2006). Furthermore, grades used as external incentives can sometimes lead to decreased motivation (Guskey, 2011), diminished performance, addictive behaviors, or cheating (Matthis, 2010).

- In a meta-analysis of the research on homework, Cooper, Robinson and Patall (2006) described a connection between homework and student learning lasting through the unit test, but not any longer. The limited nexus between homework and more long-term indicators suggests the predictability of student learning is better measured with more formal measures such as tests, essays and other classroom assessments. Furthermore, educational assessment experts recommend all formative work (that is, intended for practice) should not be included in the final grade (Stiggins, Frisbie & Griswold, 1989)

Extra credit is problematic in that the students who would benefit the most from completing it are often not the ones taking advantage of it (Harrison, Meister & LeFevre, 2011; Moore, 2005). More succinctly, awarding extra credit in classrooms has the potential to artificially widen the gap between students performing well and those who are struggling.

Resource:

Title: What does the research say about standards-based grading? A research primer

Authors: Matt Townsley (currently University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA) Tom Buckmiller (currently Drake University, Des Moines, IA)

Publication Date: January 2016

Resource: [Components of Standards-Based Scoring/Grading](#)

8.8 Promotion/Retention Decisions

School systems continue to deliberate over promotion criteria and the value of retaining students who fail to meet promotion standards. A 2005 study by C. Ryan Kinlaw for the Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University reported that 2.4 million students per year were retained in US schools during the late 1990s. Nagoaka and Roderick conducted a six-year study of Chicago's efforts to end social promotion for the Consortium on Chicago School Research and reported their conclusions in March 2004. They found little evidence that low-performing 3rd-grade students who were retained did better than their counterparts who were promoted. At the 6th-grade level, the study concludes that retention was detrimental to student achievement growth.

A digest of research findings about social promotion and retention may be found in the ERIC Digest No. 161 published in 2000. In its overall summary, it concludes that "neither social promotion nor retention is effective in boosting the achievement of low-performing students." The digest stresses the importance of (a) ensuring that preschool programs prepare children to succeed in school, (b) closely tracking student progress through all grades, (c) providing swift remediation to students who are lagging, and (d) paying special attention to the transitions into middle and high school for student at risk of retention.

When one considers that retained students are 2 to 11 times more likely to drop out of school when compared to underachieving, but promoted, peers (Anderson, G. E., A. D. Whipple, & S. Jimerson (2002) "Grade retention: Achievement and mental health outcomes." Position paper, National Association of School Psychologists. (<http://naspcenter.org>), education leaders must examine all alternatives if significant gains in graduation rates are to be accomplished.

Behavioral and emotional difficulties evidenced by over-age students and their impact on non-retained classmates are also becoming increasingly difficult for schools to manage. Opponents of "no social promotion" policies do not defend social promotion so much as say that retention is even worse. They argue that retention is not a cost-effective response to poor performance when compared to cheaper or more effective interventions, such as additional tutoring and summer school.

Summer Learning Program

For Alabama's students, the months away from school can result in a large loss of knowledge in reading, math, science and other core subject matter. The Alabama Summer Learning Challenge raises awareness of the summer loss epidemic, shares research on the importance of personalized activities and provides access to a variety of free resources to targeted summer learning.

For guidance about Alabama's Summer Learning Programs, See <https://sites.google.com/alsde.edu/oxl/summer-learning>

Resources

Keep learning fun all summer long with Alabama Public Television! If you are a parent, grandparent, guardian, or know some kids looking for something fun to do this summer. Take a peek at Alabama Public Television's online education resources and see if there is anything your learner might be interested in. Visit the Learn at Home with Alabama Public Television website today – [Alabama Public Television | Education \(aptv.org\)](http://alabamapublictelevision.org/education)

We encourage students to be part of reading opportunities and utilize technology at Alabama's public libraries. Locations and information can be found at:

<https://publiclibraries.com/state/alabama/>

More Resources, Videos and Printable Items

[More Summer Learning Resources](#)

[Math and Science Literature Resources](#)

[Community Activities – Summer Learning Challenge 2021](#)

[Summer Reading Challenge Certificate](#)

[Summer Math Challenge Certificate](#)

[Summer Learning Challenge Bookmark](#)

[Summer Math Learning Flyer](#)

[Parent Poster](#)

[Librarian Poster](#)

8.9 Measuring/Testing/Assessment – Formative/Interim

The standards-based reform movement has resulted in the widespread use of summative assessments designed to measure students' performance at specific points in time. Under IASA, testing was required at three grades: once each at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 required increasing the number of these large-scale summative tests to every grade 3–8 and at least once in high school. Policymakers' goal for these assessments generally has been to measure students' attainment of the state content knowledge and skills against some defined level of performance, such as attaining the level of Proficient or Distinguished or simply meeting the standard.

Educators and policymakers have realized that other forms of assessments are necessary to inform instruction during the school year. This need for measuring student performance throughout the year has resulted in a rapid influx of products.

There are three tiers of assessment— summative, interim, and formative (Perie, Marion & Gong, 2009). The triangle illustrates that formative assessments are used most frequently and have the smallest scope (i.e., the narrowest curricular focus) and the shortest cycle (i.e., the shortest time frame, typically defined as 5 seconds to 1 day), while summative assessments are administered least frequently and have the largest scope and cycle. Interim assessments fall between these other two types on all dimensions.

Three main assessment types and what they are used for:

Summative Assessment – Certifies Learning

Generally, educators administer a summative assessment near the end of an instructional unit to help them answer the question, "What did students learn?" All sorts of different assessment instruments are used for summative assessment, including:

- end-of-unit tests and end-of-course tests
- performance tasks/simulations
- portfolios
- oral examinations
- research reports
- standardized state summative assessments

Despite the array of possible summative instruments, it's the state summative assessments that often come to mind. Federal educational policy requires data collected from these tests to be used for accountability purposes; other high stakes are associated with summative assessment, such as selection, promotion, and graduation. Legislators also use state summative assessment data to communicate the state of education to the public.

Since summative assessment happens so late in the instructional process, the most effective use of its test data is more evaluative than instructional. For teachers, data can help guide decisions, such as assigning grades for a course, promotion to the next grade, graduation, credit for courses, and more. Summative assessment data also plays a role at the administrative level,

where it's for planning curricula, determining professional development needs, and identifying the resources and federal assistance the district needs to flourish.

Interim Assessment – Guides and Tracks Learning

A wide middle ground exists between teachers' day-to-day formative assessment of student learning and the formal protocols of state summative assessment. This middle ground offers opportunities—captured under the umbrella term interim assessment—to gather information about many things that are relevant to the teaching and learning process, including:

- individual and collective student growth
- effectiveness of teaching practices, programs, and initiatives
- projection of whether a student, class, or school is on track to achieve established proficiency benchmarks
- instructional needs of individual students

Educators can use interim assessments in a formative way to directly guide instruction. When this happens, data aggregation is considered the key difference between formative and interim assessment. This ability to aggregate data at critical points in the learning cycle allows interim assessment to have a broader set of purposes than both formative and summative assessment. As a result, interim assessment is the only type of assessment that provides educators with data for instructional, predictive, and evaluative purposes. To understand the value of interim assessment, it's helpful to understand its variety of purposes. One is to provide educators insight into growth patterns in student learning.

Formative Assessment – Guides Learning

Formative assessment includes sharing learning goals, modeling what success looks like, and giving clear, actionable feedback to students. By design, formative assessment:

- has an explicit connection to an instructional unit
- consists of many kinds of strategies, and can be as informal as asking a well-crafted question – and using the evidence collected from the question
- helps educators guide the learning process, rather than measure student performance
- provides students with data they can use to determine where they are in their learning, set goals, monitor their learning progress, and serve as instructional resources for their peers

Formative & Interim Assessment Links:

- https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Brian-Gong/publication/227711414_Moving_Toward_a_Comprehensive_Assessment_System_A_Framework_for_Considering_Interim_Assessments/links/5a4ed57f458515e71b0862c9/Moving-Toward-a-Comprehensive-Assessment-System-A-Framework-for-Considering-Interim-Assessments.pdf
- <https://measurementinc.com/sites/default/files/2017-04/It%20Takes%20Three.pdf>
- <https://www.nwea.org/blog/2017/understanding-formative-interim-summative-assessments-role-student-learning/>

9. ALABAMA ACHIEVES 2020 – A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR A NEW DECADE

9.1. Flexibility Request Waiver Application

In its Flexibility Request Waiver Application to the US Department of Education, the Alabama State Department of Education put forth Plan 2020, Alabama’s eight-year strategic plan for education. Plan 2020 was crafted in a manner that maintains the most promising aspects of No Child Left Behind (NCLB)—the focus on closing achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates, and moving students to proficiency—but its primary emphasis is placed on college-/career-ready goals. Such an approach addresses the needs of students in a more global manner with an eye on their futures, not just their present. Plan 2020 also provides a more balanced approach to assessment and offers annual growth expectations at the student, classroom, grade, school, system, and state levels.

Alabama’s Plan 2020 addresses all three principles of the waiver request:

- Principle 1: College- and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students
- Principle 2: State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support
- Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership

Alabama’s proposed statewide accountability system has been designed to make annual determinations based on four different categories of components —

- college- and career-ready students;
- school- and system-level metrics shown to be leading indicators of students’ success;
- teacher and leader effectiveness based on multiple measures of student learning; and
- a local indicator taken from the school’s/system’s improvement plan.

The new state accountability system also incorporates core components found in Act 2012-402, recently passed by the Alabama Legislature, which requires the State Superintendent of Education to develop a school grading system reflective of school and system performance. The proposed accountability model maintains the focus on proficiency, increasing the quality of instruction and improved outcomes for diverse populations that was the hallmark of No Child Left Behind, but it increases the acceptable standard of achievement to college- and career-readiness while at the same time allowing schools and systems to address an issue that is specific to their own situations. The Alabama Plan 2020 approach to accountability moves the focus of accountability off a single test and towards a more comprehensive set of measures. This move will ensure that all schools are provided an opportunity to adequately and accurately showcase their strengths, as well as identify areas for improvement.

The revised ALSDE Flexibility Waiver Request Form is available [here](#)

9.2 Vision, Mission, Goals, Strategies, and Components of Alabama Achieves 2020

Alabama Achieves 2020 Vision Statement:

“In the knowledge-based economy of the future, a dynamic, healthy, and prosperous Alabama will increasingly rely on the education of its population. The first step to realizing that vision is a high-performing system of public schools that challenges all children with world-class

expectation for understanding English and its rich literature, mathematics, history, and the requirements of a democracy, the sciences, and the arts. Such a system demands educators with a deep understanding of the subject being taught, a personal allegiance to continuous self-improvement, and a commitment to helping all children find the success in school and in their lives thereafter. It is our collective vision and plan to promote and support such an equitable, accountable, and just system.”

Alabama Achieves 2020 Mission:

“It is the Mission of the Alabama State Department of Education to be an agency of innovation, creativity, service, and accountability in order to support local schools and school systems as they undertake the important work of educating children in communities across this state.”

Alabama Achieves 2020 Motto:

“Every Child. Every Chance. Every Day”

The complete document can be accessed at <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/ACHIEVES2020-V20.pdf>

The 2023 update can be accessed at https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/SBOE_2023913_Initiatives-and-Strategy-School-Board_V1.0.pdf



9.3 Differentiated Support for Local School Systems

The goal of the ALSDE is to build capacity at the system and school level to engage in continual improvement practices that impact student achievement, close achievement gaps, promote student growth, and increase the number of graduates that are prepared for college and career. All ALSDE efforts to support this goal will be customized for each of the systems based on their current data and capacity. There are common expectations for all systems and schools to plan for continuous improvement. However, when it comes to interventions and supports, one size does not fit all.

An accurate and comprehensive on-site assessment of the lowest performing systems will determine precise strategies for improvement and support. This assessment will be based on the eight turnaround principles:

1. **School Leadership:** The principal has the ability to lead the turnaround effort.
2. **School Climate and Culture:** A climate conducive to learning and a culture of high expectations are evident.
3. **Effective Instruction:** Teachers utilize research-based effective instruction to meet the needs of all students.
4. **Curriculum, Assessment, and Intervention System:** Teachers have the foundational documents and instructional materials needed to teach to the rigorous college- and career-ready standards that have been adopted.
5. **Effective Staffing Practices:** The system and school have skills to better recruit, retain, and develop effective teachers and school leaders.
6. **Enabling the Effective Use of Data:** There is schoolwide use of data focused on improving teaching and learning, as well as climate and culture.
7. **Effective Use of Time:** Time is designed to better meet student needs and increase teacher collaboration focused on improving teaching and learning.
8. **Effective Family and Community Engagement:** There is a system for increasing academically focused family and community engagement.

[Differentiated Support & Accountability Guide](#)

10. OVERVIEW OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS

The system-level infrastructure supporting today's public schools arose historically for pragmatic reasons. As cities and the number of schools within them grew, administering and supervising public schools became increasingly complex and labor intensive. The first appointed county officials and superintendents inspected schools, kept official records, selected, certified, and assigned teachers and arbitrated county and system boundary disputes (Norton, Webb, Dlugosh, & Sybouts, 1996). Consistent with these early expectations, for much of this century superintendents spent most of their time managing the school system in an efficient manner.

Since the 1960's, a growing concern for educational equity, higher levels of ethnic diversity, and the shift to an information-based society have challenged the traditional mission of education as well as the traditional role of the superintendent (Kowalski, 1999). Professional standards, professional organizations, and many school board members now call for today's superintendents to do more than manage the school system. The following national, professional, and state standards provide direction for superintendents in performing their roles as **instructional leaders**.

10.1. Alabama Leadership Development Standards

October 19, 2006, marked the effective date for implementation of new standards for leadership development in Alabama public education. These new rules are found in the Alabama Administrative Code (AAC) §290-4-3-.01. The Code establishes the Office of Leadership Development to implement Inservice education and professional development for instructional leaders. Members of the Alabama Council for Leadership Development (ACLD) are appointed by the State Superintendent of Education, using nominations received from State Board of Education members, education organizations, and other entities, and serve three-year staggered terms.

Members of the Alabama Council for Leadership Development (ACLD) include, but are not limited to, the following active practitioners: local superintendents, local education agency directors of instruction or equivalent position, elementary principals, middle school principals, high school principals, assistant principals, teacher leaders, and aspiring principals who have distinguished themselves by leading sustained student achievement in their schools or local education agencies (LEAs). Membership of the Alabama Council for Leadership Development shall not exceed 15 members.

This group defines the criteria for the approval of all professional development activities and programs used to meet requirements of instructional leader certification renewal which shall be called Professional Learning Units (PLUs). Criteria aligns with the Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders and the Alabama Standards for Professional Development (Code of Alabama 1975, §§16-23-7, 16-23-8, and 16-23-12 through 13.1, and AAC Rule 290-3-3-.48.)

10.2 Alabama Standards for Professional Development

Approved professional development for educators in Alabama shall:

1. Organize adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school, the system, and the state.
2. Require knowledgeable and skillful school and system leaders who actively participate in and guide continuous instructional improvement.
3. Provide resources to support adult learning and collaboration.
4. Use disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement.
5. Use multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.
6. Prepare educators to apply research to decision making.
7. Use learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal.
8. Apply knowledge about human learning and change.
9. Provide educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate.
10. Prepare educators to understand and appreciate all students; create safe, orderly, and supportive learning environments; and hold high expectations for their academic achievement.
11. Deepen educators' content knowledge, provide them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepare them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately.
12. Provide educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.

Instructional Leader is defined in the legislation as

1. Superintendent
2. Local Education Agency (LEA) Central Office Instructional Administrators
3. Principal
4. Assistant Principal
5. Aspiring Principal
6. Teacher Leader

Approved professional development is defined as educational experiences meeting the requirements of the Office of Leadership Development standards and aligning the practice of instructional leaders with the Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders. Only the proposed activities and/or programs which meet the criteria prescribed in the ACC rules shall be approved for meeting the:

- a. Renewal requirements for instructional leader certification which relate to professional development (AAC Rule 290-3-2-.04).
- b. Professional development requirements which are a result of the administrative component of LEADAlabama, the formative, online, evaluation system for educational leaders in Alabama, consisting of self-assessment, collaborative dialogue, a professional learning plan (PLP), and evidence collection.

The Office of Leadership Development works with LEAs to ensure that opportunities for professional development are equally available throughout the state. Both the Office of Leadership Development and the Alabama Council for Leadership Development collaborate with university schools of education to ensure that the Alabama Continuum of Leadership Development begins with content for pre-service education and is comprehensive enough to create the seamless system of professional development for instructional leaders supporting them throughout their careers.

10.3 Alabama Educator Code of Ethics

Educators, including Superintendents, central office administrators, school leaders, and teachers, are subject to the standards of ethical conduct expressed in the Alabama Code of Ethics. Requirements for reporting violations of the Code of Ethics are included in this set of standards as published by the Alabama State Department of Education https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Alabama_Educator_Code_of_Ethics.pdf

The Alabama Educator Code of Ethics defines the professional behavior of educators in Alabama and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The code of ethics protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators; outlines objective standards of conduct for professional educators; and clearly defines actions of an unethical nature for which disciplinary sanctions are justified.

Alabama Educator Code of Ethics Standards

Standard 1: Professional Conduct

An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Encouraging and supporting colleagues in the development and maintenance of high standards.
- Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional and supportive teaching environment.
- Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to developing professionally in order to promote student learning.

Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the certificate holder's ability to function in his or her employment position or a pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Harassment of colleagues.
- Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials.
- Inappropriate language on school grounds.
- Physical altercations.
- Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students.

Standard 2: Trustworthiness

An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
- Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children.
- Embodying for students the characteristics of intellectual honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting professional qualifications, criminal record, or employment history when applying for employment or certification.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted to federal, state, and/or other governmental agencies.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting reasons for absences or leaves.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation.

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts

An educator should abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4: Teacher/Student Relationship

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

- Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Fulfilling the roles of trusted confidante, mentor, and advocate for students' growth.
- Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students.
- Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
- Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Committing any act of child abuse, including physical or verbal abuse.
- Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment.
- Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act.
- Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion, or disability.
- Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student.
- Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs.

Standard 5: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession

An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during the course of professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs.
- Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages or using tobacco. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc., where students are involved.

Standard 6: Public Funds and Property

An educator entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds.
- Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Misusing public or school-related funds.
- Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents.
- Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay.
- Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts.
- Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body.

Standard 7: Remunerative Conduct

An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Ensuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain.
- Ensuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body.
- Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there appears to be a conflict of interest.
- Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education.

Standard 8: Maintenance of Confidentiality

An educator should comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
- Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status/income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law.
- Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items.
- Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standard 9: Abandonment of Contract

An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer
- Refusing to perform services required by the contract.

Reporting Ethics or Standards Violations

Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics as soon as possible, but no later than sixty (60) days from the date the educator became aware of the alleged breach, unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of their local school board policies and procedures and/or chain of command for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the local or state school boards, or with the State Department of Education Teacher Certification Section, must be filed in writing and must include the original signature of the complainant. Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05

(1)-5-c Each Superintendent shall submit to the State Superintendent of Education within ten calendar days of the decision, the name and social security number of each employee holding an Alabama certificate or license who is terminated, or non-renewed, resigns, or is placed on administrative leave for cause, and shall indicate the reason for such action.

Disciplinary Action for Ethics Violations

Disciplinary action shall be defined as the issuance of a reprimand or warning, or the suspension, revocation, or denial of certificates. "Certificate" refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate issued by the authority of the Alabama State Department of Education.

Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05

(1) Authority of the State Superintendent of Education

(a) The Superintendent shall have the authority under existing legal standards to:

1. Revoke any certificate held by a person who has been proven guilty of immoral conduct or unbecoming or indecent behavior in Alabama or any other state or nation in accordance with Ala. Code §16-23-5 (1975).
2. Refuse to issue a certificate to an applicant whose certificate has been subject to adverse action by another state until after the adverse action has been resolved by that state.
3. Suspend or revoke an individual's certificate issued by the Superintendent when a certificate or license issued by another state is subject to adverse action.
4. Refuse to issue, suspend, or recall a certificate for just cause.

Any of the following grounds shall also be considered cause for disciplinary action:

- Unethical conduct as outlined in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, Standards 1-9.
- Order from a court of competent jurisdiction.
- Violation of any other laws or rules applicable to the profession.
- Any other good and sufficient cause.

An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, or substitute teacher during the period of his or her revocation, suspension, or denial.

10.4 The Alabama Ethics Act

In addition to the proposed Alabama Educator Code of Ethics described above, all Alabama public educators as public employees are subject to the Alabama Ethics Act found in Code of Alabama (1975) Sections §36-25-1 through §36-25-30, amended in 2010, 2011 and 2012 and rules of the Alabama Ethics Commission. While most of these rules concern finances, exchanging things of value for official actions, conflicts of interest, and legislative lobbying, as public employees school leaders must follow ethical behavior rules while carrying out their responsibilities. Portions of these rules address standards of confidentiality, the performance of one's official duties, and requirements to make official decisions without consideration of personal gain and with impartiality. Although the most publicized and contested portions of the act's revisions concerned the value of gifts educators may receive, the directives for school leaders to be honest, professional, and fair while performing their duties are underlying facets of the legislation. See <https://alison.legislature.state.al.us/code-of-alabama> Title 36 Chapter 5 for the ethics law.

The methods for reporting ethics complaints or suspected violations of the Alabama Ethics Act are also found at the Alabama Ethics Commission website and in official publications of the Alabama Ethics Commission. Investigations of suspected violators may be conducted by the Ethics Commission and punishments upon conviction vary from fines and sanctions to removal from office or position or imprisonment. A beneficial publication for superintendents, school system financial officers, board of education members, and principals is the Guidelines for Public Officials and Employees (2012) available from the Alabama Ethics Commission ([State of Alabama - Ethics Commission](#)).

10.5 Alabama State Department of Education Ethics Training

As a result of *Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05* and the growing occurrences of sexual misconduct involving students, the Alabama State Department of Education developed an ethics training curriculum in collaboration with the state prosecutors' association, colleges and universities. The training has been provided for all Alabama schools and school systems to use. The Alabama Education Association will provide assistance in conducting the training across Alabama. The Ethics Training includes modules addressing the following topics:

- Ethics overview
- Social Media overview
- Teacher-Student Boundaries and Interaction
- Understanding and reporting borderline behaviors
- Confronting and reporting inappropriate behaviors

The Ethics Training modules can be found at https://www.alabamaachievers.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/COMM_20240327_Guide-for-Conducting-Educator-Ethics-Training_V1.0.pdf

10.6 Alabama Standards for Instructional Leaders

The curriculum for instructional leaders builds on Chapter 290-3-3 Education Supp. 12/31/19 3-3-248 candidate knowledge and abilities acquired through preparation for and employment as a teacher. The standards are based on the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL) prepared by the Council of Chief School Officers with support from numerous professional associations to update the former Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards.

Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Effective instructional leaders develop, advocate for, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Develop an educational mission for the school to promote the academic success and well-being of each student.
2. In collaboration with members of the school and the community and using relevant data, develop and promote a vision for the school focused on the successful learning and development of each child and on instructional and organizational practices that promote such success.
3. Articulate, advocate, and cultivate core values that define the school's culture and stress the imperative of child-centered education; high expectations and student support; equity, inclusiveness, and social justice; openness, caring, and trust; and continuous improvement.
4. Strategically develop, implement, and evaluate actions to achieve the vision for the school.
5. Review the school's mission and vision and adjust them to the changing expectations and opportunities for the school and changing needs and situations of the students.
6. Develop shared understanding of and commitment to mission, vision, and core values within the school and the community.
7. Model and pursue the school's mission, vision, and core values in all aspects of leadership.

Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms

Effective instructional leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Act ethically and professionally in personal conduct, relationships with others, decision making, stewardship of the school's resources, and all aspects of school leadership.
2. Act according to and promote the professional norms of integrity, fairness, transparency, trust, collaboration, perseverance, learning, and continuous improvement.
3. Place children at the center of education and accept responsibility for each student's academic success and well-being.
4. Safeguard and promote the values of democracy, individual freedom and responsibility, equity, social justice, community, and diversity.
5. Lead with interpersonal and communication skill, social-emotional insight, and understanding of all students' and staff members' backgrounds and cultures.

6. Provide moral direction for the school and promote ethical and professional behavior among faculty and staff.

Standard 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness

Effective instructional leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Ensure that each student is treated fairly, respectfully, and with an understanding of each student's culture and context.
2. Recognize, respect, and employ each student's strengths, diversity, and culture as assets for teaching and learning.
3. Ensure that each student has equitable access to effective teachers, learning opportunities, academic and social support, and other resources necessary for success.
4. Develop student policies and address student misconduct in a positive, fair, and unbiased manner.
5. Confront and alter institutional biases of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, and disability or special status.
6. Promote the preparation of students to live productively in and contribute to the diverse cultural contexts of a global society.
7. Act with cultural competence and responsiveness in their interactions, decision making, and practice.
8. Address matters of equity and cultural responsiveness in all aspects of leadership.

Standard 4: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Effective instructional leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Implement coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that promote the mission, vision, and core values of the school, embody high expectations for student learning, align with academic standards, and are culturally responsive.
2. Align and focus systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment within and across grade levels to promote student academic success, love of learning, the identities and habits of learners, and healthy sense of self.
3. Promote instructional practice that is consistent with knowledge of child learning and development, effective pedagogy, and the needs of each student.
4. Ensure instructional practice that is intellectually challenging, authentic to student experiences, recognizes student strengths, and is differentiated and personalized.
5. Promote the effective use of technology in the service of teaching and learning.
6. Employ valid assessments that are consistent with knowledge of child learning and development and technical standards of measurement.
7. Use assessment data appropriately and within technical limitations to monitor student progress and improve instruction.

Standard 5: Community of Care and Support for Students

Effective instructional leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Build and maintain a safe, caring, and healthy school environment that meets the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each student.
2. Create and sustain a school environment in which each student is known, accepted and valued, trusted and respected, cared for, and encouraged to be an active and responsible member of the school community.
3. Provide coherent systems of academic and social supports, services, extracurricular activities, and accommodations to meet the range of learning needs of each student.
4. Promote adult-student, student-peer, and school-community relationships that value and support academic learning and positive social and emotional development.
5. Cultivate and reinforce student engagement in school and positive student conduct.
6. Infuse the school's learning environment with the cultures and languages of the school's community.

Standard 6: Professional Capacity and School Personnel

Effective instructional leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Recruit, hire, support, develop, and retain effective and caring teachers and other professional staff and form them into an educationally effective faculty.
2. Plan for and manage staff turnover and succession, providing opportunities for effective induction and mentoring of new personnel.
3. Develop teachers' and staff members' professional knowledge, skills, and practice through differentiated opportunities for learning and growth, guided by understanding of professional and adult learning and development.
4. Foster continuous improvement of individual and collective instructional capacity to achieve outcomes envisioned for each student.
5. Deliver actionable feedback about instruction and other professional practice through valid, research-anchored systems of supervision and evaluation to support the development of teachers' and staff members' knowledge, skills, and practice.
6. Empower and motivate teachers and staff to the highest levels of professional practice and to continuous learning and improvement.
7. Develop the capacity, opportunities, and support for teacher leadership and leadership from other members of the school community.
8. Promote the personal and professional health, well-being, and work-life balance of faculty and staff.
9. Tend to their own learning and effectiveness through reflection, study, and improvement, maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

Standard 7: Professional Community for Teachers and Staff

Effective instructional Leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Develop workplace conditions for teachers and other professional staff that promote effective professional development, practice, and student learning.
2. Empower and entrust teachers and staff with collective responsibility for meeting the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each student, pursuant to the mission, vision, and core values of the school.
3. Establish and sustain a professional culture of engagement and commitment to shared vision, goals, and objectives pertaining to the education of the whole child; high expectations for professional work; ethical and equitable practice; trust and open communication; collaboration, collective efficacy, and continuous individual and organizational learning and improvement.
4. Promote mutual accountability among teachers and other professional staff for each student's success and the effectiveness of the school as a whole.
5. Develop and support open, productive, caring, and trusting working relationships among leaders, faculty, and staff to promote professional capacity and the improvement of practice.
6. Design and implement job-embedded and other opportunities for professional learning collaboratively with faculty and staff.
7. Provide opportunities for collaborative examination of practice, collegial feedback, and collective learning.
8. Encourage faculty-initiated improvement of programs and practices.

Standard 8: Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community

Effective instructional leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Be approachable, accessible, and welcoming to families and members of the community.
2. Create and sustain positive, collaborative, and productive relationships with families and the community for the benefit of students.
3. Engage in regular and open two-way communication with families and the community about the school, students, needs, problems, and accomplishments.
4. Maintain a presence in the community to understand its strengths and needs, develop productive relationships, and engage its resources for the school.
5. Create means for the school community to partner with families to support student learning in and out of school.
6. Understand, value, and employ the community's cultural, social, intellectual, and political resources to promote student learning and school improvement.
7. Develop and provide the school as a resource for families and the community.
8. Advocate for the school and district, and for the importance of education and student needs and priorities to families and the community.
9. Advocate publicly for the needs and priorities of students, families, and the community.
10. Build and sustain productive partnerships with public and private sectors to promote school improvement and student learning.

Standard 9: Operations and Management

Effective instructional leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Institute, manage, and monitor operations and administrative systems that promote the mission and vision of the school.
2. Strategically manage staff resources, assigning and scheduling teachers and staff to roles and responsibilities that optimize their professional capacity to address each student's learning needs.
3. Seek, acquire, and manage fiscal, physical, and other resources to support curriculum, instruction, and assessment; student learning community; professional capacity and community; and family and community engagement.
4. Be responsible, ethical, and accountable stewards of the school's monetary and nonmonetary resources, engaging in effective budgeting and accounting practices.
5. Protect teachers' and other staff members' work and learning from disruption.
6. Employ technology to improve the quality and efficiency of operations and management.
7. Develop and maintain data and communication systems to deliver actionable information for classroom and school improvement.
8. Know, comply with, and help the school community understand local, state, and federal laws, rights, policies, and regulations so as to promote student success.
9. Develop and manage relationships with feeder and connecting schools for enrollment management and curricular and instructional articulation.
10. Develop and manage productive relationships with the central office and school board.
11. Develop and administer systems for fair and equitable management of conflict among students, faculty and staff, leaders, families, and community.
12. Manage governance processes and internal and external politics toward achieving the school's mission and vision.

Standard 10: School Improvement

Effective instructional leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student's academic success and well-being. Prospective instructional leaders will be prepared and able to:

1. Institute, manage, and monitor operations and administrative systems that promote the mission and vision of the school.
2. Strategically manage staff resources, assigning and scheduling teachers and staff to roles and responsibilities that optimize their professional capacity to address each student's learning needs.
3. Seek, acquire, and manage fiscal, physical, and other resources to support curriculum, instruction, and assessment; student learning community; professional capacity and community; and family and community engagement.
4. Be responsible, ethical, and accountable stewards of the school's monetary and nonmonetary resources, engaging in effective budgeting and accounting practices.
5. Protect teachers' and other staff members' work and learning from disruption.
6. Employ technology to improve the quality and efficiency of operations and management.
7. Develop and maintain data and communication systems to deliver actionable information for classroom and school improvement.
8. Know, comply with, and help the school community understand local, state, and federal laws, rights, policies, and regulations so as to promote student success.
9. Develop and manage relationships with feeder and connecting schools for enrollment management and curricular and instructional articulation.
10. Develop and manage productive relationships with the central office and school board.

11. Develop and administer systems for fair and equitable management of conflict among students, faculty and staff, leaders, families, and community.
12. Manage governance processes and internal and external politics toward achieving the school's mission and vision.

10.7 State Evaluation Standards of School Leaders

The program components for the Alabama Principal Leadership Program include:

- Alabama Standards for School Leadership
- Alabama Principal Leadership Framework
- ALPDS Evaluation System
- High-Quality Professional Learning
- Alabama New Principal Mentoring Program
- Alabama Leadership Academy

The Alabama Standards for School Leadership are used in the ALPDS Evaluation System. There are five standards, each with indicators. They include:

Visionary Leadership. Effective visionary leaders facilitate the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a shared vision that guides the learning of every student. An effective school leader:

- Collaboratively develops a clear, measurable, and shared vision and school improvement plan based on the needs of all students identified through multiple sources of data.
- Develops a shared understanding of and commitment to the vision and school improvement plan within the school and community.
- Collects, analyzes, and interprets data to monitor progress toward meeting goals, makes adjustments as needed, and evaluates results for continuous school improvement.

Instructional Leadership. Effective instructional leaders ensure intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curricula, instruction, and assessment while facilitating productive collaboration and professional learning to drive growth and achievement for all students. An effective school leader:

- Engages and supports staff to implement a coherent system of curricula, instruction, and assessments that is rigorous, relevant, and aligned to state standards.
- Maintains high expectations for all staff and students, with a focus on the quality of instruction in their schools that emphasizes evidenced-based strategies to improve teaching and learning as determined by formative and summative student assessment data and classroom observations.
- Observes classroom instruction and provides meaningful and timely feedback on teacher practice and evidence of student learning to drive instructional improvement.
- Works with teachers to analyze student performance data from formative and summative assessments and other measures to support student learning and provide helpful feedback to students.
- Analyzes and acts upon multiple sources of student, school, and district-level data to improve learning for all students, with an emphasis on closing achievement gaps.
- Develops a culture of ongoing, collaborative professional learning that builds collective efficacy and leads to student learning.

Managerial and Operational Leadership. Effective managerial leaders strategically oversee school operations, staff, and resources to foster a safe and productive school community. An effective school leader:

- Provides and oversees a functional, safe, and clean facility and campus.
- Establishes routines, procedures, and schedules to maximize learning time and maintain a safe and orderly learning environment.
- Recruits, hires, places, inducts, develops, and retains a diverse and effective staff with a goal of ensuring that students from all backgrounds have access to effective educators.
- Models and communicates high expectations, clear guidelines, and systematic procedures in alignment with the state’s code of ethics for educators.
- Guides the development of teachers' and staff members' professional knowledge, skills, and practice through intervention, coaching, and differentiated opportunities for learning and growth.
- Knows, complies with, and helps the school community understand local, state, and federal laws, rights, policies, and regulations so as to promote student success.
- Manages, allocates, aligns, and efficiently utilizes fiscal and non-fiscal resources to support school goals and priorities.

Relational Leadership. Effective relational leaders cultivate a welcoming, supportive, and collaborative learning environment for all students, staff, families, and the community. An effective school leader:

- Promotes a student-centered learning environment of high expectations and support that addresses the comprehensive and diverse needs of all students.
- Advocates for the welfare of all students.
- Establishes positive and supportive relationships with all students.
- Develops and supports open, productive, caring, and trusting working relationships among faculty and staff to promote professional growth and the improvement of practice.
- Ensures a collaborative culture of professionalism and respect among staff.
- Cultivates leadership in others by empowering and entrusting teachers and staff with collective responsibility for meeting the comprehensive needs of each student.
- Builds and sustains positive, collaborative, and productive relationships with families for the benefit of all students.
- Establishes a positive presence in the community to build productive partnerships to support the school’s mission and vision.

Innovative Leadership. Effective innovative leaders continue professional growth, actively engage in reflective practices, and apply new knowledge and understanding to drive change. An effective school leader:

- Acquires and applies knowledge, skills, and evidence-based practices to improve teaching and learning.
- Engages in a professional network of peers and mentors as a means for growth.
- Demonstrates a commitment to reflective practices and ongoing growth and development.
- Seeks and utilizes feedback to improve performance.
- Maintains a focus on high priorities related to academic achievement and school climate.
- Creates a culture of innovation that continuously examines strategies for improvement and adapts to change.

10.8 Professional Standards for Content Areas and Subjects

Glatthorn (2000) predicts that the influence of professional organizations on the curriculum in K-12 schools will increase. While the adopted Alabama Courses of Study guide the content for Alabama classrooms, superintendents and their staff designated for monitoring curriculum development and implementation, may consider standards offered by the content-specific national organizations when determining rigor, relevance and variety in course offerings and curriculum sequence. The following documents guide the curriculum development process.

Arts

National Core Art Standards. *Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts*.

<https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>

Civics

Center for Civic Education. *National standards for civics and government* along with other civics education resources

<https://www.civiced.org>

Economics

The Council for Economic Education, *Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics, 2nd Edition*, New York, NY, Council for Economic Education, 2010.

<https://www.councilforeconed.org/resource/voluntary-national-content-standards-in-economics/#sthash.rZCveJAV.dpbs>

English/Language Arts

National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association. NCTE/IRA Standards for the English language arts. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1996; revised in 2009. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and its affiliate organization, the International Reading Association (IRA), regularly revise and publish content standards in the areas of reading and language arts. Consideration of these standards in local curriculum decisions ensures that national measures of learning in these areas are included. NCTE and IRA standards are available on the NCTE [website http://www.ncte.org](http://www.ncte.org).

Foreign Language

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages*. <https://www.actfl.org/publications/all/world-readiness-standards-learning-languages>

Health

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *National Health Education Standards*.

<http://www.aahperd.org/aahe/publications/HE-Standard.cfm>

History

National Center for History in the Schools.

The National Center for History in the Schools has developed and published national standards for history by grade span (K-4 and 5-12). The standards were developed with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the US Department of Education at the University of California, Los Angeles. The standards address historical thinking, United States

history, and world history. The standards may be accessed and downloaded from the UCLA website at <http://nchs.ucla.edu/Standards/>

Mathematics

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Principles and Standards for School Mathematics. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) regularly revises and publishes content standards in mathematics. Consideration of these standards in local curriculum decisions ensures that national measures of learning in mathematics are included. NCTM standards are available on the NCTM [website http://www.nctm.org](http://www.nctm.org).

Physical Education

Society of Health and Physical Education. *National PE Standards*
<https://www.shapeamerica.org/standards/pe/>

Social Studies

National Council for the Social Studies.

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning and Assessment, NCSS, Waldorf, MD, 2010. The revised standards, like the earlier social studies standards published in 1994, continue to be structured around the ten themes of social studies. However, the revised standards offer a sharper focus on:

- Purposes
 - Questions for Exploration
 - Knowledge: what learners need to understand
 - Processes: what learners will be capable of doing
 - Products: how learners demonstrate understanding
- The revised standards also include:
- Enhancements in the descriptions of the ten themes and the associated learning expectations
 - The addition of new descriptions of standards-based class practices to time- tested descriptions that were included in the original edition of the standards
 - A stronger focus on student products and their assessment
 - An updated list of essential social studies skills and strategies, including literacy strategies

Additional related content standards available from the National Council for the Social Studies include those for History, Geography, Civics and Government, Economics, Psychology and Education Technology. NCSS publications of their recommended standards may be found at <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards>

Science

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) developed by a consortium of 26 states, represents the efforts of science educators and researchers to bring K-12 science instruction to higher standards in three important dimensions—science and engineering practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts. The NGSS are based on the NRC Framework for K-12 Science Education. Lesson plans, instructional videos, web-based seminars, as well as valuable background information and teaching resources are available at <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/18290/next-generation-science-standards-for-states-by-states>

10.9 Alabama Content Standards

The Alabama Core Curriculum Standards are referred to as the College and Career Readiness Standards. Courses of study based on these standards are available at

<https://www.alabamaachieves.org/acad-stand/>

10.10 Standards for 21st Century Learners

In the mid-1990s, education writers and researchers began to publish standards and sets of learning skills to be added to or integrated with traditional academic content to better prepare students for 21st century learning and for living successfully in 21st century society. Two organizations, the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the (P21), have each published a set of standards and/or frameworks for these recommended standards. In its 2007 publication *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner*, AASL advocates an integrated approach to literacy, technology, and inquiry while stressing ethical behavior in the use of information.

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) is a national organization that advocates for 21st century readiness for every student. The organization, formed in 2002 as a collaboration among the US Department of Education, AOL Time Warner Foundation, Apple Computer, Inc., Cable in the Classroom, Cisco Systems, Inc., Dell Computer Corporation, Microsoft Corporation, the National Education Association, and SAP. They are based in Washington, DC and the list of strategic council members includes representatives from a wide array of companies and organizations that supply school materials, computer equipment, software, textbooks, and education products. Two outstanding organizations that have joined the partnership are AASL and The College Board's Advanced Placement Program (AP Program). Their mission is "to serve as a catalyst to position 21st century readiness at the center of US K12 education by building collaborative partnerships among education, business, community and government leaders." A summary of the organization's beliefs is included in all their publications:

Every child in the U.S. needs 21st century knowledge and skills to succeed as effective citizens, workers and leaders. This can be accomplished by fusing the three Rs and four Cs.

There is a profound gap between the knowledge and skills most students learn in school and the knowledge and skills they need in typical 21st century communities and workplaces.

To successfully face rigorous higher education coursework, career challenges and a globally competitive workforce, U.S. schools must align classroom environments with real world environments by fusing the three Rs and four Cs:

- The three Rs include: English, reading or language arts; mathematics; science; foreign languages; civics; government; economics; arts; history; and geography.
- The four Cs include: critical thinking and problem solving; communication, collaboration; and creativity and innovation.

Sixteen states have endorsed the P21 standards and beliefs and have been designated as P21 Leadership States. P21 Leadership States design new standards, assessments, and professional development programs to ensure 21st century readiness for every student. To become a P21 Leadership State, a state demonstrates commitment from the governor and chief state school officer and submits an application to P21 that describes the state's plan to fuse the three Rs and four Cs (critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation) within standards, assessments and professional development programs. Participating states thus far include Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, South Dakota, South Carolina, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

Additional details about the P21 projects, their Framework describing student outcomes and support systems, publications, professional development opportunities, implementation guides, and scheduled events may be found at www.p21.org.

Of particular interest is the P21 Framework graphic and its supporting information on education standards. Standards for core subjects (3Rs) are presented in light of 21st century themes. In addition to the academic core, P21 describes standards in three other critical areas necessary for student success: Life and Career Skills, Learning and Innovation Skills (the 4 Cs), and Information, Media and Technology skills.

Authors Bernie Trilling and Charles Fadel have embraced the P21 framework and disseminated it widely in their 2009 publication *21st Century Skills: Learning for Life in our Times* (published by Wiley and Sons, San Francisco, CA: 2009). The book has an accompanying DVD and the authors maintain an active blog and website for the exchange of teaching/learning ideas related to the "21st Century Education movement:" The authors identify and illustrate "the skills needed to survive and thrive in a complex and connected world," dividing the learning needed by today's students into three categories: learning and innovation skills, digital literacy skills, and life and career skills. "Route 21" is their web repository of 21st century learning resources and examples. It can be accessed at https://www.battelleforkids.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/P21_framework_0816_2pgs.pdf

10.11 Alabama Teacher Quality Standards

See Educator Evaluation 5.8.

10.12 Technology Standards for Administrators

<p>(3) Technology Curriculum – The curriculum shall provide the prospective educational administrator with the following knowledge and ability.</p>	
<p>Knowledge of:</p>	<p>Ability to:</p>
<p>(i) the skills required to develop a shared vision for the comprehensive integration of technology, communicate that vision, and facilitate a process for fostering and nurturing a culture to achieve the vision.</p>	<p>(i) describe mechanisms for creating a shared vision for the comprehensive integration of technology, communicating that vision, and facilitating a process that fosters and nurtures a culture to achieve the vision.</p>
<p>(ii) technology plan development, resource alignment (e.g., funding, staff and time, hardware/software, total cost of ownership issues), and leadership skills necessary to integrate technology to support effective learning and administration.</p>	<p>(ii) develop a technology plan including resource alignment (e.g., funding, staff and time, hardware/software), and demonstrate leadership skills necessary to integrate technology to support effective learning and administration.</p>
<p>(iii) technologies appropriate for curriculum areas, instructional strategies, and student-centered learning environments to maximize learning and teaching to meet the individual needs of all learners.</p>	<p>(iii) facilitate the selection and use of technologies appropriate for curriculum areas, instructional strategies, and student-centered learning environments to maximize learning and teaching to meet the individual needs of all learners.</p>
<p>(iv) available technologies; existing Alabama and national technology standards for students, teachers, and administrators; related trends and issues; current research; and professional development resources in order to enhance professional practices of educational leaders, increase job-related technology use, and improve the productivity of self and other school personnel.</p>	<p>(iv) apply and model technology applications professional practices that demonstrate knowledge of available technologies; existing Alabama and national technology standards for students, teachers, and administrators; related trends and issues; current research; and professional development resources in order to enhance professional practices of educational leaders, increase job-related technology use, and improve the productivity of self and other school personnel.</p>

<p>(v) prevalent technology-based managerial, financial, and operational systems used in Alabama schools.</p> <p>(vi) the use of technology to facilitate effective assessment and evaluation, including: the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and communication of findings to improve instructional practice and student learning; the use of assessment of staff knowledge, skills, and performance in using technology to facilitate quality professional development and guide personnel decisions; the use of technology to assess and evaluate managerial and operational systems; and . assessment and evaluation of, using multiple methods, appropriate uses of technology resources for learning, communication, and productivity</p>	<p>(v) use prevalent technology-based managerial, financial, and operational systems used in Alabama schools.</p> <p>(vi) use technology to facilitate effective assessment and evaluation, including: the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and communication of findings to improve instructional practice and student learning; the use of assessment of staff knowledge, skills, and performance in using technology to facilitate quality professional development and guide personnel decisions; the use of technology to assess and evaluate managerial and operational systems; and assessment and evaluation of, using multiple methods, appropriate uses of technology resources for learning, communication, and productivity.</p>
<p>(vii) the social, legal, and ethical issues related to technology.</p>	<p>(vii) demonstrate responsible decision making that reflects understanding of social, legal, and ethical issues related to technology.</p>

10.13 Alabama’s K-12 Digital Literacy and Computer Science Standards

National Educational Technology Standards for Students

The *National Educational Technology Standards for Students* produced by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has established technology literacy as a national goal. The six strands as defined ISTE are: (1) basic operations and concepts, (2) social, ethical, and human issues, (3) technology productivity tools, (4) technology communications tools, (5) technology research tools, and (6) technology problem-solving and decision-making tools.

The Code of Alabama

The *Code of Alabama* (1975), §16-35-4 specifies the minimum required content standards students need for achieving technology literacy. These content standards are consistent with the ISTE standards. In developing local curriculum, school systems may go beyond the minimum standards.

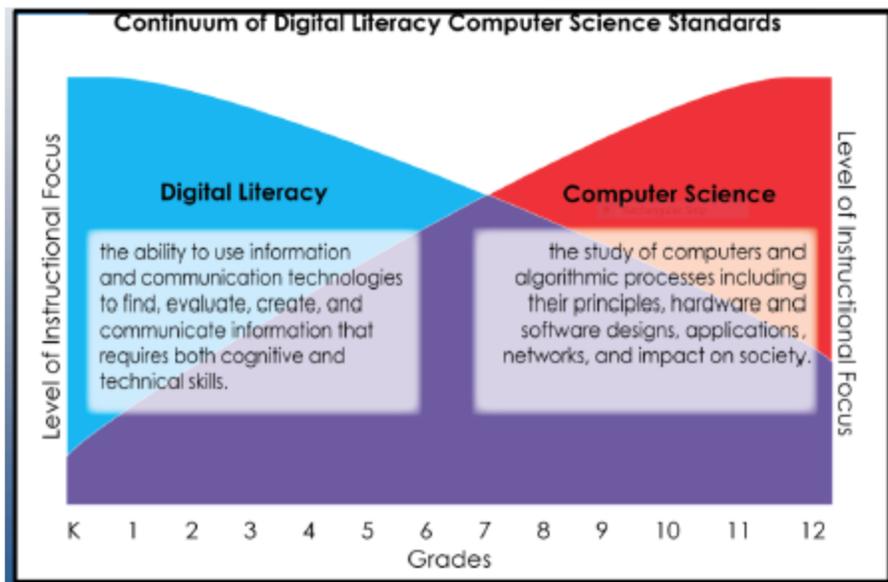
The Alabama Course of Study: Digital Literacy and Computer Science Standards

The *Alabama Course of Study: Digital Literacy and Computer Science Standards* defines the minimum required content needed by students for achieving technology literacy in the State of

Alabama. The contents are consistent with the requirements of both the *Code of Alabama* (1975), §16-35-4 and the Governor's *Strong Start, Strong Finish* initiative.

Developed and reviewed by educators, as well as business and community leaders, the Course of Study standards are based on a foundation provided by the *K–12 Computer Science Framework (K12CS)*, the *Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA)*, and the *International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)*.

Alabama's Vision For K-12 Computer Science:



In the early grades, the continuum focuses more on digital literacy, the skills that students must learn with the introduction of computer science standards. In the later grades, the instructional focus transitions toward computer science while continuing to address more advanced digital literacy skills. While both focus areas are present along the entire continuum, this graph represents the transition in the level of instructional focus as students progress along the continuum.

Integrating Technology into the Curriculum: A Definition

The technology content standards are designed to enhance learning within and across all curricula. The International Society for Technology in Education describes the curricular integration of technology as follows: "Curriculum integration with the use of technology involves the infusion of technology as a tool to enhance the learning in a content area or multidisciplinary setting. Technology enables students to learn in ways not previously possible. Effective integration of technology is achieved when students are able to select technology tools to help them obtain information in a timely manner, analyze and synthesize the information, and present it professionally. The technology should become an integral part of how the classroom functions—as accessible as all other classroom tools" (*National Educational Technology Standards for Students*, p. 6).

Where Should Computers be Located?

Integration of technology into the classroom does not require a computer lab. Nevertheless, computer labs are recommended for every school. In classrooms with one computer, placing the computer in a central location available to all learners is recommended. With three to five computers in the classroom, creating computer stations with two chairs around each computer is recommended in order to promote collaboration and cooperative learning. For greatest accessibility by students, computers should be available for use in each classroom and in the library media center as well as in the computer lab.

How Should Computer Literacy be Assessed?

The intertwining of the knowledge, processes, and applications of technology in the standards necessitates a variety of assessment methods to ensure that all students, including students with disabilities, acquire the needed knowledge of technology and skills of technology use. Assessment must include the use of a variety of assessment instruments such as multiple-choice items, pre- and post-exams of performance, checklists, open-ended essay items, journals, lab reports, creative dramatics, verbal explanations, portfolios, and projects.

11. TECHNOLOGY CURRICULUM AND INTEGRATION

11.1 Pairing Technology and Effective Instructional Strategies

Unfortunately, many classrooms have not advanced the use of technology beyond teacher or student presentations (using PowerPoint or a similar product) or drill/practice games used by students at learning stations. Relatively few teachers have had opportunities to learn and practice varied products to enhance instruction. A resource for teachers and administrators that demonstrates a wide variety of classroom instructional technology uses is *Using Technology with Classroom Instruction that Works* (Pitler, Hubbell, Kuhn, & Malenoski. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2007). The book is a companion for the highly successful McREL/ASCD 2001 publication *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement* (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock). The authors group instructional technology into seven genres (see table that follows) -- word processing applications, organizing and brainstorming software, multimedia, data collection tools, spreadsheet software, communication software, and Web resources—and provide examples of how these various types of technology support the nine categories of research-based strategies proven to be effective in increasing student achievement. Whether a teacher is trained in the “classroom instruction that works” strategies or not, this resource provides practical examples of a broad array of technology-enhanced lessons and ideas for using technology to engage students at every grade level.

With the passage of the Alabama Ahead Act of 2012, public schools in Alabama have an opportunity to make meaningful progress with instructional technology. Professional development for teachers as well as improved infrastructure will be components of the new initiative to equip every high school student with pen-enabled digital devices and to move toward digital textbooks and instructional resources.

The increased availability and technological training will enhance teachers’ use of technology applications and artificial intelligence in Alabama public schools’ classrooms.

11.2 The Digital Divide in Schools

Research conducted in 2010 by the Pew Internet & American Life Project found the following:

“Six in ten Americans go online wirelessly using a laptop or cell phone; African Americans and 18–29-year-olds lead the way in the use of cell phone data applications, but older adults are gaining ground. Six in ten American adults are now wireless Internet users, and mobile data applications have grown more popular over the last year. As of May 2010, 59% of all adult Americans go online wirelessly. Our definition of a wireless Internet user includes the following activities:

- Going online with a laptop using a Wi-Fi connection or mobile broadband card. Roughly half of all adults (47%) go online in this way, up from the 39% who did so at a similar point in 2009.

- Use the Internet, email or instant messaging on a cell phone. Two in five adults (40%) do at least one of these using a mobile device, an increase from the 32% of adults who did so in 2009.

Taken together, 59% of American adults now go online wirelessly using either a laptop or cell phone, an increase over the 51% of Americans who did so at a similar point in 2009. Cell phone ownership has remained stable over the last year, but users are taking advantage of a much wider range of their phones' capabilities compared with a similar point in 2009. Of the eight mobile data applications we asked about in both 2009 and 2010, all showed statistically significant year-to-year growth" (Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, April 29 May 30, 2010, Tracking Survey).

N=2,252 adults 18 and older; n=1,917 based on cell phone users

(<http://pewinternet.org>).

A student with a Smartphone (cell phone) today may record, edit, stream, and publish/share a video, send or receive instant communication and real-time collaboration, play music, access the internet, send or receive email, play a game, send or receive text messages or take a picture -- all for educational purposes. Technology is cheaper and easily accessible which makes integration into the classroom effortless. Moreover, the technology industry, rapidly recognizing that the average student no longer needs extensive training to work with classroom technology, has greatly diminished the cost of materials and equipment. The learning curve for students has dramatically decreased for students who now have technology in the classroom, library, computer labs, and home.

11.3 Technology Professional Development

School Leadership Teams need to help develop a plan for professional development for their respective schools that incorporates technology integration in all subject and content areas.

Components of effective professional plans include the following:

- providing a variety of learning experiences;
- active participation by all educators;
- hands-on, interactive activities;
- connecting what educators learn to students' learning;
- learning applications specific to the curriculum;
- sufficient time for learning, practicing, and planning;
- technology support;
- administrative support;
- adequate resources;
- funding;
- evaluation; and
- ongoing development opportunities, rather than one-time workshops.

Professional development opportunities are readily available to educators with the advent of webinars, podcasts, videoconferencing, and other technological communications tools. Many of these services are free. Alabama offers numerous professional development opportunities provided by a variety of organizations as well as on the Internet. The Alabama Learning

Exchange (<http://alex.state.al.us>) is a resource that has a wealth of options for administrators and faculty. Many publishers of professional development materials as well as companies who market K-12 professional development services now provide professional development programs delivered via technology. Examples include:

Knowledge Delivery Systems (www.kdsi.org)
School Improvement Network Online Professional Development (www.pd360.com/)
iNACOL—International Association for K-12 Online Learning (www.inacol.org)
Learner.org (www.learner.org)
Online Teachers: Professional Development (www.srebonlineteachers.org)
PBS TeacherLine (www.pbs.org/teacherline/)
Intel Teach for K-12 Educators (www.intel.com)
Staff Development for Educators (www.ed2go.com/sde/)

11.4 Planning for the Future of Instructional Technology Integration

School design and infrastructure considerations must include plans for the integration of technology and technological delivery of instruction. An excellent source for revising planning for facilities is *Teaching the Digital Generation: No More Cookie-Cutter High Schools* by Frank Kelly, Ted McCain and Ian Jukes (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2009). The authors provide thought-provoking rationales to move communities from industrial age high schools to more flexible learning environments that incorporate and take advantage of 21st century instructional technology.

An additional resource for instructional leaders who want ideas for planning is *The Future of Schooling: Educating America in 2020* by Goodwin, Lefkowitz, Woempner and Hubbell, (Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press, 2010). It is a research-based set of scenarios to assist educators in identifying the actions to be taken today to maximize success for future schools.

Link to Virtual/Hybrid Information:

<https://www.digitallearningcollab.com/blog/2021/4/19/remote-online-and-virtual-cousins-not-clones>

11.5 Implications of Artificial Intelligence

In an editorial in *School Leadership & Management*, Michael Fullan states, “The development of AI has advanced exponentially in recent years with the creation of new groundbreaking GenAI technologies that directly impact on education, at all levels, such as ChatGPT (Tajik and Tajik [Citation2023](#)). This latest Gen AI technology, and the technology that will inevitably follow it, is already beginning to upend the educational landscape.

In this editorial, we consider the rise of AI generally, GenAI specifically, and its impact on schools and school leaders. We consider some of the implications for education and look at the challenges and opportunities associated with the infusion of AI into all parts of daily life. We then consider school leadership and reflect on how it may be altered or influenced by the arrival of this latest technological disrupter.”

Full editorial: [Artificial Intelligence & School Leadership: Challenges, opportunities, and Implications](#)

Resource: [Michael Fullan](#), [Cecilia Azorín](#), [Alma Harris](#) & [Michelle Jones](#)

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11.6 K-12 Technology & Cybersecurity Leadership Act

Act No. 2024-444 (effective June 1, 2024)

As our school systems and schools face increased threats and scrutiny over cybersecurity, this Act seeks to better utilize our technology personnel. The goal of the K-12 Technology and Cybersecurity Leadership Act is to strengthen the qualifications for those holding the technology director position.

The Act renames the position of technology coordinator in public schools to “technology director” and declares that any references to a technology coordinator in the Alabama Code or other official documents are now deemed to refer to the “technology director.” The Act also sets a requirement that the employee filling the position must be a 12-month employee and that school systems may not fill the position with a contractor or the local superintendent.

Any person hired or assigned to the position after October 1, 2024, must have professional training and work experience commensurate with the position’s responsibilities and meet these minimum qualifications:

- A degree in a technology-related curriculum from a regionally accredited two-year or four-year institution of higher education; or
- A degree in another field from a regionally accredited two-year or four-year institution of higher education and full-time work experience in a technology support or management position; or 28 | 2024/2025 AASB Policy Pipeline | policy@AlabamaSchoolBoards.org
- A diploma from a regionally accredited high school with at least one current certification in industry recognized technologies including, but not limited to, networking, cybersecurity or data management, and full-time work experience in a technology support or management position.

School systems unable to fill the position with a candidate meeting the minimum qualifications may ask for a waiver from the State Superintendent.

The Act tasks the Alabama Leaders in Educational Technology (“ALET”) with the establishment and administration of a professional development program for technology directors. The program includes a required orientation with the Chief Technology Officer Academy and Continuing Education Units program established by ALET that addresses all of the following:

- Roles and responsibilities;
- Laws, ethics, and policies;
- Data management and governance;
- Teaching and learning; Information technology management and cybersecurity; and
- Technology planning and budgeting.

Newly hired or appointed technology directors must complete the chief technology officer academy training program within 24 months of beginning service in the position. All other

technology directors must complete 12 in-person hours of continuing education credits for each fiscal year. ALET will take a lead role in developing the professional development as well as maintaining and verifying training records. It is recommended that boards review job descriptions and postings to make sure they align with these new requirements.

Another part of this law updates the K-12 Capital Grant Program administered by the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. Under that program, the Lieutenant Governor's Office accepts grant proposals from public schools to help with capital projects, deferred maintenance, or technology needs. While unused grant funds must be returned in certain circumstances, the law now allows recipients to amend their proposals to allow full usage of funds for eligible purposes.

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Acceptable Technology Use

11.7 Data Governance and Acceptable Use Policies

Acceptable Use Policies (AUP) are developed by schools and school systems to govern the use of technologies in a school/system. Such policies should focus on the responsible use of various technologies by teachers, staff and students, including individual computers and peripherals, computer networks, the Internet, and access and transmitting of information to K-12 classrooms and the library. When developing an Acceptable Use Policy, include (a) illegal use and copying of copyrighted software, (b) fair use of copyrighted materials, and (c) use of copyrighted materials in employee and student presentations. Educators need to be sensitive to issues and make an effort to ensure that students are directed to appropriate websites for K-12. Students and employees should have signed the school system's AUP policy, and these should be on file at the school or employee worksite.

Acceptable Use Policies (AUP) are developed by schools and school systems to govern the use of technologies in a school/system. Such policies should focus on the responsible use of technologies by teachers, staff and students, including individual computers and peripherals, computer networks, the Internet, and access and transmitting of information to K-12 classrooms and the library media center. Following is a checklist to assist in the development of Acceptable Use Policies.

- Preamble explaining the reasons for the policy and describing how the policy was adopted
- Description of the instructional philosophies and strategies that will be supported by technology use in the school/system
- Description of the educational uses and advantages of using of technology in the school/system
- Definitions of key words used in the policy
- Delineation of the responsibilities of educators, parents, and students for using available technologies
- Code of conduct governing behavior while using technologies

- Statement that users should comply with all federal and state laws governing the use of technologies (i.e., Alabama Criminal Computer Act, Copyright Laws, Fair Use)
- Description of the consequences of violating the code of conduct outlined in the AUP
- Description of what constitutes acceptable uses of the technologies
- Description of what constitutes unacceptable uses of the technologies (i.e., plagiarism, copyright infringement, software piracy, slander, libel, defamation of character, profanity, obscenity, and pornography)
- Disclaimer releasing the school/system from responsibility under specific circumstances
- Statement reminding users that use of technologies is a privilege not a right
- Statement that e-mails are not private, but belong to the institution
- Description of types of filtering, how users are protected while using the Internet
- Description of types of digital materials allowed by teachers and students and how these materials will be preserved (i.e., web sites)
- Description of possible risks to users while using technology
- Description of appropriate behaviors and etiquette while using technology (i.e., not making personal disclosures over the Internet, using Netiquette, etc., using ethical behavior)
- Statement that the AUP is in compliance with state and national telecommunication rules and regulations

There should be an acknowledgement/signature form for teachers, staff, students, and parents indicating their intent to abide by the AUP.

11.8 Social and Ethical Considerations of Acceptable Technology Use

The integration of computers into educational institutions requires not only knowledge of the laws regarding technology, but also the need for identifying social and ethical considerations in the use of the technology. Although certain practices may not be unlawful, they may still be unethical or unacceptable. Recent cases involving students' and/or teachers' use of social media, violations by students or employees of system technology policies while off campus, and fraudulent use of school system technology resources will have an impact on future acceptable use policies and codes of conduct.

Issues related to "cyberbullying" leading to student suicide, terrorist threats and acts of terrorism communicated via Internet or social media, and recent proliferation of "sexting" will present challenges to school system leaders, teachers, and parents. School system policies and procedures must be in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) of 2000, both to be eligible for e-Rate funding and to protect students.

The following resources will help school leaders understand their responsibilities and provide sample policies:

- <http://stopbullying.gov>. <http://maine.gov/doe/bullying/laws/modelpolicy.html>
- <http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/doc/list/instructional-technology/cyberbullying/177-852/>
- <http://www.criminaldefenselawyer.com/resources/cyberbullying-laws-alabama.htm>

Other issues involved in the use of technology in education are equity issues. Educators must be sensitive to these issues and make an effort to ensure that computers are equally available for all students, to select software and computer activities that are appropriate for all children, and to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to use computers.

Additional Resources and Useful Links Related to Copyright and Acceptable Use Copyright Law of the United States of America

<http://www.copyright.gov/title17/>

Copyright Basics

<http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ01.pdf>

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA)

U.S. Copyright Office Summary

<http://www.loc.gov/copyright/legislation/dmca.pdf>

Educause - The Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998

<http://www.educause.edu/library/digital-millennium-copyright-act-dmca>

Fair Use of Copyrighted Materials

<http://copyright.lib.utexas.edu/copypol2.html>

South Washington County Schools Acceptable Use Policy

For staff:

<http://www.sowashco.k12.mn.us/files/policies/400/429%20Technology%20Acceptable%20Use%20and%20Safety.pdf>

For students:

<http://www.sowashco.k12.mn.us/files/policies/500/524%20Technology%20Acceptable%20Use%20and%20Safety.pdf>

Eugene, OR School System - 4JNet, E-mail, Internet use, student privacy guidelines, copyright and plagiarism

<http://www.4j.lane.edu/4jnet/>

Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual

<http://policy.cps.edu/download.aspx?ID=2>

The Teach Act

<http://copyright.lib.utexas.edu/teachact.html>

11.9 Commercially Produced Media

The increasing availability and variety of commercially produced media to supplement classroom instruction create opportunities for enriched instruction and for abuse. Local school systems by policy and through the implementation of adopted practices should make every effort to ensure that audiovisual materials used in the schools are best suited to the educational needs, age, and maturity of students. Guidelines for review and use of materials to be used in school setting include the following considerations:

- **Internal Materials**
When selecting library/media center acquisitions, an administrator or the administrator's designee should work closely with teachers to choose appropriate instructional materials for the various grade levels and content areas. All books, magazines, tapes, audiovisual materials, computer software, and other teaching aids located in the individual school libraries/media centers that are to be used by students should be examined and approved by the principal or designee before such materials are made available to students and teachers.
- **External Materials**
When materials are obtained from sources external to the school, standards to be met prior to use in the classroom should be established and published. Such standards may include, but are not limited to the following:
 - (1) The material should relate directly to the school system curriculum and serve as a means of teaching a specific objective(s).
 - (2) The material should relate directly to the lesson or unit plan being taught.
 - (3) The material should be previewed in its entirety by the teacher and receive written approval by the school principal prior to using the material in the classroom. It is recommended that commercial audiovisual materials with a uniform rating code of PG or PG-13 may be considered for showing in schools (PG rated material may be considered for use in grades K-12; PG-13 rated material may be considered for use only in grades 7-12)
 - (4) Commercial audiovisual material with a uniform rating code above PG-13 should not be shown in K-12 schools.

11.10 Challenges to Instructional Materials and/or Library/Media Resources

It is important that LEAs and Board of Education support the principles of academic and intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. In so doing, conflicts may arise when the teacher's choice of instructional material or the library/media specialist's choice of materials differs with the values or beliefs of students, parents, and/or community members. A system procedure should be established to allow for the fair and orderly review of print and non-print materials so that all involved parties would know that opinions will be considered and that appropriate educational materials will be used by the school system.

Typical policies and procedures to review print and non-print materials when challenges or complaints arise include the following components:

- The identification of personnel to receive complaints about materials
- The steps to be followed when materials are challenged
- The personnel to be involved in the review of the challenged material
- Criteria to be used in review of the challenged material
- How the decisions about the materials will be reported
- Procedures for appeal of a decision regarding challenged material

Consultation with board attorneys and/or other legal agencies is recommended when developing procedures for reviewing instructional materials and for handling challenges. Professional development for teachers and school staff members should be provided on materials selection, appropriate instructional materials development, and how challenges to materials are to be handled in the school system.

12. SERVING DIVERSE AND SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Special Education Services

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** is a United States law that governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to children with disabilities. It addresses the educational needs of children with disabilities from birth to age 18 or 21 in cases that involve 13 specified categories of disability.

The IDEA is "spending clause" legislation, meaning that it only applies to those States and their local educational agencies that accept federal funding under the IDEA. While States declining such funding are not subject to the IDEA, all States have accepted funding under this statute and are subject to it.

The IDEA and its predecessor statute, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act arose from federal case law holding the deprivation of free public education to disabled children constitutes a deprivation of due process. It has grown in scope and form over the years. IDEA has been reauthorized and amended a number of times, most recently in December 2004, which contained several significant amendments. In defining the purpose of special education, IDEA 2004 clarifies Congress' intended outcome for each child with a disability: students must be provided a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) that prepares them for further education, employment and independent living.

12.1 IDEA 2004

A summary of the changes and new provisions of the IDEA 2004 revisions and how these changes incorporate the requirements of NCLB is available from the National Center for Learning Disabilities and is downloadable in its entirety from its website: www.nclid.org. The new IDEA provisions became effective July 1, 2005 and contain more than 40 references to No Child Left Behind. These references range from new provisions that allow IDEA funds to be used for activities required under NCLB and new requirements for the qualifications of special education teachers to a variety of new requirements dealing with the assessments of students with disabilities. With this new alignment to the nation's main education law, it is critical for parents to understand several of NCLB's most important provisions.

1. **Complaints:** A new provision requires that a complaint must be limited to a violation that occurred not more than two years before the date the parent or school system knew or should have known about the alleged action.
2. **Consent for Services:** Schools must obtain informed parental consent before providing special education and related services to a child. Should a parent refuse to consent to the provision of services, the school system may not use procedures such as mediation and due process in order to provide services.
3. **Discipline:** Changes to provisions covering the treatment of students who violate a code of student conduct allows school personnel to make decisions regarding a change in

placement on a case-by-case basis. Provisions to conduct a manifestation determination and to continue educational services in alternative settings have been maintained.

4. **Dispute Resolution:** Changes allow the use of mediation without first requiring the filing for a hearing and also introduce a new "Preliminary Meeting" that can be used to seek a resolution prior to a due process hearing. Additionally, new provisions substantially change the awarding of attorneys' fees.
5. **Evaluation Before Graduation:** The new bill makes it clear that schools are not required to perform an evaluation before termination of a child's eligibility due to graduation from secondary school with a standard diploma or due to exceeding the age eligibility for a free appropriate public education.
6. **Federal Funding:** While the new bill provides an authorization schedule for federal appropriations that is designed to achieve the full federal commitment by year 2011, appropriations are not mandatory and will, therefore, be subject to the yearly appropriations process.
7. **Highly Qualified Teachers:** NCLB calls for a highly qualified teacher in every public-school classroom as of the 2005-2006 school year. To align IDEA with NCLB and provide guidance for states and schools on how special education teachers can meet the highly qualified standard, the bill requires all special education teachers be certified in special education. New special education teachers teaching multiple subjects must meet the NCLB highly qualified standard in at least one core subject area (language arts, math, or science) and will have two years from the date of employment to take advantage of certain NCLB provisions to demonstrate competence in other core subject areas.
8. **Individualized Education Programs (IEPs):** IEPs must contain measurable annual goals and a description of how the child's progress toward meeting those goals will be measured and reported, such as quarterly reports to parents. Additionally, special education and related services and supplementary aids and services must be based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable. Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals must be included in the IEP beginning no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is 16. Any transition services needed to assist the child in reaching those goals must be included. Additional new provisions encourage systems to consolidate IEP meetings with reevaluation meetings and to use alternative means of meeting participation when conducting IEP team meetings, such as conference calls and video conferences. Changes to IEPs in effect can be made without convening the IEP team if both the school system and parent agree.
9. **IEP Team Attendance:** A member of the IEP team can be excused from attending the IEP meeting, in whole or in part, if the parent and school system agree that attendance is not necessary because the member's area of curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed, or because the member has submitted input to the team in writing. Such agreements must be in writing.

10. **Notice of Procedural Safeguards:** Schools must distribute a copy of the procedural safeguards once per year, upon initial referral or request for evaluation, upon filing of a complaint, and upon request by a parent.
11. **Over-identification of Minorities:** A new provision requires states to have policies and procedures that are designed to prevent the inappropriate over-identification or disproportionate representation by race and ethnicity of children as students with disabilities.
12. **Paperwork Reduction and Multi-Year IEP Pilot Program:** New provisions call for pilot programs in not more than 15 states to carry out activities designed to reduce paperwork burdens, enhance educational planning, improve positive outcomes for children with disabilities, promote collaboration between IEP team members and ensure satisfaction of family members. Additionally, up to 15 states can apply to take part in a pilot program focused on the development of a comprehensive, multi-year IEP.
13. **Prohibition of Mandatory Medication:** A new provision requires states to prohibit state and local school system personnel from requiring a child to obtain a prescription for a substance covered by the Controlled Substance Act as a condition of attending school, receiving an evaluation or receiving services under IDEA.
14. **Request for Evaluation:** The bill clarifies that a parent may initiate a request for an initial evaluation to determine if a child has a disability.
15. **Special Rule for Eligibility:** Expanded provision precludes schools from finding a child to be a child with a disability if the determinant factor for such determination is lack of appropriate instruction in reading, including in the essential components of reading instruction as defined in No Child Left Behind.
16. **Specific Learning Disabilities:** A new provision releases schools from the current regulatory requirement that a child must show a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability in order to be determined to have a specific learning disability. Additionally, schools may begin to use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures as defined in IDEA. See NCLD's at www.nclid.org for more information on these new provisions.
17. **Summary of Performance:** A new provision requires schools to provide a summary of a child's academic achievement and functional performance upon the termination of services. Such a summary must include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's postsecondary goals.
18. **Time Frame for Evaluation:** A new provision requires that an initial evaluation be completed within 60 days of receiving parental consent for the evaluation.

19. **Transferring From One School System to Another:** New provisions direct school systems to provide services to students with IEPs who transfer into a new school, including services comparable to those described in the previously held IEP. The new school must take steps to promptly obtain the child's records for the previous school and the previous school must take steps to promptly respond to such requests. For students who did not have an IEP in effect, but for whom an evaluation had begun, systems are required to promptly complete the evaluation.

12.2 Child Find

LEAs serving children with disabilities must develop and implement procedures that ensure that all children within their jurisdiction, birth to twenty-one, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who need special education and related services are identified, located, and evaluated. Child Find also applies to children with disabilities who attend private schools, including children attending religious schools, within the LEA's jurisdiction, highly mobile children with disabilities (e.g., migrant children), homeless children, or children who are wards of the State and children who are suspected of having a disability and are in need of special education, even though they have not failed, been retained in a course or grade, or are advancing from grade to grade.

Child Find includes a practical method of determining which children with disabilities are currently receiving needed special education and related services and is designed to ensure the equitable participation of parentally placed private school children with disabilities, as well as an accurate count of these children. Each LEA in which private, including religious, elementary schools and secondary schools are located must; in carrying out the Child Find provisions, include parentally placed private school children who reside in a state other than the state in which the private schools are located.

For children who are transitioning from Part C (IDEA Early Intervention) to Part B preschool programs, LEAs are required to make FAPE available to each eligible child residing in their jurisdiction no later than the child's third birthday and have an IEP developed and implemented for the child by that date. If the child's third birthday occurs during the summer months, the child's IEP Team will determine when special education services will begin. LEAs must participate in a transition planning conference arranged by the Early Intervention service provider in order to experience a smooth and effective transition to preschool programs.

12.3 Eligibility for Special Education Services

A simplified outline of the steps for determining a student's eligibility for Special Education services is provided below:

- Request for Initial Evaluation Received
- No evaluation is needed –provide the parent with a *Notice of Intent Regarding Special Education Services*, a copy of the *Special Education Rights* and refer to Problem Solving Team (PST)
- Yes, evaluation is needed –
 - Obtain Notice and Consent for Initial Evaluation
 - Conduct Initial Evaluation

- Provide parents Notice of Proposed Meeting Letter and provide the parent with a copy of the *Special Education Rights*.
Convene IEP/Eligibility Committee
- If Not Eligible – refer to PST
- If Eligible –
 - FAPE may be offered at this time. Notice and Consent for the Provision of Special Education Services must be obtained prior to the provision of services.
 - IEP must be conducted within 30 days.
 - Provide Notice of Proposed Meeting Letter
 - Develop IEP

12.4 Individualized Education Plans

The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a legally binding document. It establishes a plan for an individual student who is identified as having one or more of 13 disabilities defined in IDEA. The document should contain an identification of the student's disability, a statement of the student's present level of performance, long- and short-term instructional objectives that relate to present levels of performance, evaluation procedures, and a statement of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for that student.

Teachers and related service providers who will be implementing the IEP must be informed about the student's IEP and should be given a copy. The complete IEP process includes identification and intervention, the multi-factored evaluation, development of the IEP, implementation of the IEP, and an annual review.

System procedures for special education referrals, testing, and determining eligibility should follow established State Department of Education guidelines and must be completed within firmly defined time frames. Parent permission to evaluate must be obtained before any individualized testing or student evaluation can begin. When evaluations are complete, and it is determined that the student is eligible to receive special education services, an IEP meeting will be scheduled at a mutually acceptable place and time. The following people are to be included in an IEP meeting:

- parents or guardians
- not less than one regular education teacher of the child
- not less than one special education teacher of the child
- a system representative who is able to provide or supervise the provision of special education services and
- an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results
- the child, whenever appropriate
- Additional individuals who may attend are:
 - other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child
 - appropriate service providers
 - other individuals chosen by the parent or school system.

During the IEP meeting team members will:

- review evaluation results
- review the current IEP
- determine the area(s) of strengths and needs
- write goals and short-term objectives
- determine services needed and the duration of services
- determine the least restrictive setting in which to deliver the services
- ensure that the student participates to the maximum extent appropriate with their non-disabled peers
- consider the need for extended school year

The law requires that an Individual Education Plan be implemented as soon as possible after the IEP conference has taken place. All education employees who work with the child are legally responsible to help the child meet the objectives of the IEP. Lack of participation in the IEP conference does not exclude any education employee from this responsibility. Therefore, it is imperative that the education employee has access to the child's IEP.

The IEP may be reviewed at any time during the school year at the parent's or teacher's request but must be reviewed at least annually and *the Persons Responsible for IEP Implementation* form signed. This form must be completed for every student who has an IEP. The teacher or parent has the authority to reconvene the IEP team to review goals and objectives, modify the plan, and/or request additional assessment(s).

12.5 Inclusion

Inclusion is a term that expresses commitment to educate each child, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom he or she would otherwise attend. It involves bringing the support services to the child (rather than moving the child to the services) and requires only that the child will benefit from being in the class (rather than having to keep up with the other students). Proponents of inclusion generally favor newer forms of education service delivery for students with special education needs.

Full inclusion means that all students, regardless of disability will be in a regular classroom/program full time. All services must be taken to the child in that setting.

Inclusion is a philosophy and practice for providing educational services for special needs students that has come to replace "mainstreaming." Generally, mainstreaming has been used to refer to the selective placement of special education students in one or more "regular" education classes. Proponents of mainstreaming generally assume that a student must "earn" his or her opportunity to be placed in regular classes by demonstrating an ability to "keep up" with the work assigned by the regular classroom teacher. This concept is closely linked to traditional forms of special education service delivery.

Without some degree of inclusion in the regular education classrooms, special needs students are generally served in resource rooms or in some other self-contained setting. Depending upon the severity of the student's disability or upon the settings and resources available at a

particular school, the resource classroom may be housed in the regular school or may be a specialized facility for students with similar needs.

12.6 Other Related Services

Public agencies must provide related services that are required to assist children with disabilities to benefit from special education. All related services may not be required for each individual child. Each IEP Team must determine what related services, if any, are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education. Related services may include, but are not limited to, audiology services, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling services, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, interpreting services, medical services (for diagnostic and evaluation purposes only), occupational therapy, parent counseling and training, physical therapy, psychological services, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, speech-language pathology, social work services in schools, school nurse services, school health services, and orientation and mobility services.

Related services do not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, the optimization of that device's functioning (e.g., mapping), maintenance of the device, or the replacement of that device. However, nothing limits the right of a child with a surgically implanted device (e.g., cochlear implant) to receive related services as listed above that are determined by the IEP Team to be necessary for the child to receive FAPE. In addition, nothing limits the responsibility of a public agency to appropriately monitor and maintain medical devices that are needed to maintain the health and safety of the child, including breathing, nutrition, or operation of other bodily functions, while the child is transported to and from school or is at school. Finally, nothing prevents the routine checking of an external component of a surgically implanted device to make sure it is functioning properly.

12.7 Discipline of a Student with a Disability

Pursuant to IDEA, when disciplining a child with a disability, one must take that disability into consideration to determine the appropriateness of the disciplinary actions. For example, if a child with Autism is sensitive to loud noises, and she runs out of a room filled with loud noises due to sensory overload, appropriate disciplinary measure for that behavior (running out of the room) must take into account the child's disability. Moreover, an assessment should be made as to whether appropriate accommodations were in place to meet the needs of the child.

According to the IDEA in cases of children with disabilities who have been suspended for 10 or more days for each school year (including partial days), the local education agency (LEA) must hold a manifestation determination hearing within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child resulting from a violation of code of student conduct. The Stay Put rule states that a child shall not be moved from his or her current placement or interim services into an alternative placement if the infraction was deemed to cause danger to other students. The LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the individualized education program (IEP) team (as determined by the parent and LEA) shall review all relevant information in the student's file including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine if the conduct in question was:

- Caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- The direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP.

If the LEA, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP team shall:

- Conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and implement a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) for such child, provided that the LEA had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement.
- In the situation where a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
- Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the LEA agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavior intervention plan.

If it is determined that a student's behavior is a manifestation of his or her disability, then he or she may not be suspended or expelled. However, under IDEA 2004, if a student "brings a weapon to school or a school function; or knowingly possess, uses, or sells illegal drugs or controlled substances at school or a school function"; or causes "serious bodily injury upon another person," he or she may be placed in an interim alternate educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. This allows the student to continue receiving educational services while the IEP team has time to determine the appropriate placement and the appropriate course of action including reviewing the FBA and the BIP.

12.8 Considerations for Desired Post-School Outcomes for Special Education Students

The student's IEP Team makes decisions about the most appropriate outcome from among options available to all students in Alabama schools including:

- Alabama High School Diploma with Advanced Academic Endorsement (AHSD/AAE)
- Alabama High School Diploma (AHSD) without Endorsement (AHSD)
- Alabama High School Diploma with Advanced Career/Technical Endorsement (AHSD/ACTE)
- Alabama High School Diploma with Career /Technical Endorsement (AHSD/CTE)
- Alabama High School Diploma with Credit Based Endorsement (AHSD/CBE)

The diploma options listed above prepare students for many post-school options. These diplomas are:

- Accepted by postsecondary institutions
- Accepted by the military
- Accepted by employers

Another option the IEP Team may consider is The Alabama Occupational Diploma (AOD), available only to students with disabilities as defined by IDEA. It prepares students for competitive employment and limited post-school options. The AOD is

- Accepted by many employers
- Accepted by the Alabama College System in degree programs with an ACT of 16
- Accepted by the Alabama College System in certain non-certificated programs
- May be accepted by the military on a case-by-case basis

If none of the above-described diplomas is appropriate for the student, the IEP Team may recommend that the student receive a Graduation Certificate (CERTIFICATE). The Graduation Certificate is only available to students with disabilities as defined by IDEA. It prepares students for their post-school transitional goals and:

- Is not generally accepted by postsecondary institutions
- Is not accepted by military recruiters
- May not be accepted by some employers

12.9 Special Education Transportation Issues: Length of School Day

School systems and IEP Team members must analyze the transportation routes and how these impact the learning needs of special needs students. Considerations include, but are not limited to these:

- Special needs routes must be in “balance” with regular bus routes
- Long rides can be seen as “punishment” for special needs students
- Must keep up with how long it takes to get each student to/from school
- May require changing sites for low-incidence populations to more central locations
- May require adding bus routes (vehicle, personnel, fuel, etc.)

Additional personnel, specialized equipment, and buses with air conditioning or special safety features may be required to meet IEP and/or related services requirements one or more students.

12.10 Gifted Education

Intellectually gifted children and youth are those who perform or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. These children and youth require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Children and youth possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

Referral for Gifted Services

Each LEA must develop and implement procedures to ensure that students who exhibit gifted characteristics are referred for gifted services. Parents, teachers, and students must be informed of referral procedures. Efforts must be made to identify students among all populations and socioeconomic groups as well as students with disabilities and students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP).

Second Grade Child Find

All second-grade students will be observed as potential gifted referrals using a gifted behavior checklist provided by the State Department of Education. A student may be referred for consideration for gifted services by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, and other individuals with knowledge of the student's abilities. Standard referrals may occur at any time for students six years of age and older. Parents must be informed when students are referred. Each LEA must establish a team(s) to review referrals to determine if further assessment is indicated. Each team should consist of at least three individuals including someone knowledgeable about the student and someone knowledgeable about gifted education.

The LEA must obtain written parental consent prior to administering individual assessments. An identified gifted student may be placed in a program for the gifted upon written approval of the parents. Participation in this program is not mandatory should the parent and/or the student choose not to participate. A copy of the rights pertaining to gifted education services must be given to the parents with the consent for screening and/or evaluation.

Gifted Student Evaluation and Gifted Service Delivery

Each LEA must develop and implement procedures to evaluate students referred for gifted services. Information must be obtained in the following areas: Aptitude should be assessed through an individual or group test of intelligence or creativity. Vision and hearing screening must be completed prior to completing individually administered aptitude assessments (not screeners). At least three examples of student performance that indicate the student is performing at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared to others of his or her age, experience, or environment must be included. A behavior rating scale designed to assess gifted behaviors should be used.

Information must be gathered to determine if there are any environmental, cultural, economic, language differences, or a disabling condition that might mask a student's true abilities and thereby affect student performance in the areas evaluated. Tests and evaluative materials selected and administered should be sensitive to cultural, economic, and linguistic differences and be administered by qualified personnel under the supervision of an LEA. For special populations such children with LEP, or sensory or physical impairments, assessments used must be appropriate for their special needs. For students who exhibit creative thinking abilities the *Torrance Test of Creative Thinking* (or other creativity assessment with prior approval) must be administered unless the student has been determined eligible with a verbal or nonverbal assessment. Each LEA must establish an Eligibility Determination Team (EDT) to implement procedures to determine eligibility of students for gifted services. Each team should consist of at least three individuals including someone knowledgeable about the student being assessed, someone knowledgeable about gifted students in general, and someone able to interpret the assessment information gathered. Eligibility must be determined within 90 days of receiving parental consent for standard referrals.

Referrals generated from the second grade Child Find activity should be completed by the beginning of the student's third grade year. The LEAs must provide written notice to parents

regarding the eligibility decision. Two methods of eligibility determination are available. The student may not be determined ineligible without having the matrix applied. A student may be determined automatically eligible for gifted services when the obtained full scale/composite IQ score on an individually administered test of intelligence (NOT a screener) is two standard deviations above the mean or higher; or either the Verbal Average Standard score or Figural Creativity Index of the *Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking* is at or above the 97th national percentile. The matrix of multiple criteria developed by the State Department of Education requires information in the areas described above.

LEAs must utilize a variety of service delivery options that may include but are not limited to resource room pull-out, consultation, mentorships, advanced classes, and independent study. Gifted students' need for complexity and accelerated pacing must be accommodated for in the general education program. Accommodations may include strategies such as flexible skills grouping, cluster grouping with differentiation, curriculum compacting, subject and grade acceleration, dual enrollment, and advanced classes. Each LEA must establish and implement a procedure for considering any requests for subject or grade acceleration. The procedures must be approved by the State Department of Education and will be included in the LEA Plan for Gifted Education. Modes of service delivery may vary by grade and/or grade level cluster but must be consistent from school to school.

12.11 Lee v. Macon Litigation and Disproportionality

Alabama has worked diligently to address disproportionality in special education since 2000 through the initiatives of the Lee v. Macon Special Education Consent Decree. This Consent Decree required special education programs in this state to address the overrepresentation of African American students identified as having mental retardation (MR – now known as Intellectual Disability - ID) and emotional disturbance (ED) and the underrepresentation of African American students identified as having a specific learning disability (SLD) and giftedness (GT).

Alabama made significant progress in reducing the disparities and, in December 2006, was granted unitary status with the provision that the state would continue to provide training to teachers, administrators, and evaluators regarding disproportionality. With the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA), the focus of disproportionality is taken to the next level. IDEA 2004 regulations extend the directives of the Consent Decree mandates to include an analysis of three additional disability areas: autism (AUT), other health impairment (OHI), and speech or language impairment (SLI) in addition to MR/ID, ED, and SLD. It further requires that we also analyze state and local education agency (LEA) data with regard to disproportionate representation by race and ethnicity in least restrictive environment (LRE) and discipline.

Disproportionality in the context of the IDEA refers to comparisons made among groups of students by race or ethnicity who are identified for special education services. When students from particular racial or ethnic groups are identified at a greater or lesser rate than all other students, then that group may be said to be disproportionately represented. Disproportionate representation encompasses both "overrepresentation" in high incidence disabilities and "underrepresentation" in programs for gifted and talented. When a particular racial or ethnic

group is represented in special education at a rate greater than in the population in general, the group is said to be overrepresented. It is evident that children of some racial or ethnic groups are overrepresented in some categories of special education. More specifically, research data show that the problem of disproportionality is especially apparent for African American males in high-incidence categories such as MR/ID and ED. As a result of two comprehensive studies on disproportionality, Congress requires action to investigate and eliminate it.

Studies have documented apparent discrepancies in the levels of referral and placement of limited English proficient children in special education. Such discrepancies pose a special challenge for special education the referral of assessment of, and provision of services for, our nation's students from non-English language backgrounds. The limited English proficient population is the fastest growing in our nation, and the growth is occurring in many parts of our nation. Studies have documented apparent discrepancies in the levels of referral and placement of limited English proficient children in special education.

African American youth placed in special education programs experience fewer positive outcomes than their white counterparts. They are more likely to be assigned to segregated classrooms or placements; have limited access to inclusive and general education environments; experience higher drop-out rates and lower academic performance; are exposed to substandard and less rigorous curricula (Ferri & Conner, 2005); and (5) may be classified or inappropriately labeled.

The state must have in effect policies and procedures designed to prevent the inappropriate over identification or disproportionate representation by race and ethnicity of children as children with disabilities, including children with disabilities. When there is a finding of significant disproportionality LEAs must provide for the review and revision (if appropriate) of policies, practices, and procedures to ensure compliance with requirements of IDEA; reserve funds to be used for coordinated early intervening services (CEIS) and publicly report on the revisions of policies, procedures, and practices.

Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) was new to IDEA 2004. CEIS is about catching problems early when children are struggling to learn—especially apparent in the early grades and in tasks like reading and math. Under IDEA 2004, school systems are required to use 15% of their Part B funds to develop and provide CEIS to children who are not already identified as children with disabilities but who need academic and behavioral support to succeed in the general education environment. CEIS are for children in kindergarten through 12th grade (with particular emphasis on students in grades K-3). CEIS are not services designated for children with disabilities—in fact, if a child has been determined eligible for special education and related services, that child would not be eligible for CEIS. However, a child who previously was identified as being a child with a disability but who currently does not need special education services would not be prevented from receiving CEIS. The rationale behind using IDEA funds to pay for CEIS is that the earlier that staff identify children's learning difficulties, the quicker and less expensive the task of helping those children catch up will be. The longer a child goes without assistance, the longer the remediation time and the more intense the services must be. The U.S Department of Education believes that the use of Part B funds for CEIS has the potential to benefit children by reducing academic and behavioral problems in the regular education

environment and reducing the number of referrals to special education that could have been avoided by relatively simple regular education interventions. Therefore, it is important to provide timely and appropriate interventions in the general education program. Most of Alabama's Part B funds are used for teacher salaries and benefits. A requirement to use 15% of that funding source could possibly result in the loss of teacher units.

Disproportionality Bibliography and Recommended References

Artiles, A. J., Harry B., Reschly, D.J. Chinn, P.C. (2002). *Over identification of students of color in special education: A critical overview*. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 4, 3-10.

Burdette, Paula. (2007). In Forum: Brief Policy Analysis.

Donovan, M.S., & Cross, C.T, (2002). *Minority students in special and gifted education*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Losen, D.J. & Orfield, G. (2002). *Racial inequity in special education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Williams, Perry. *Building the Legacy: IDEA 2004 Training Curriculum*.
IDEA Part B Regulations. 34 CFR §300.646. <http://idea.ed.gov>
IDEA Statue. 20 U.S.C.1418. <http://idea.ed.gov>

National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems. (NCCRESt). www.nccrest.org.

12.12 Homebound Students

The superintendent is responsible for appointing a qualified person(s) to provide homebound instruction for eligible special education students enrolled in the local school system. Any student diagnosed as having an exceptionality as defined by the Alabama Administrative Code, 290-080-090, Special Programs I, who cannot attend school because of a physical condition must be scheduled to receive instruction according to his/her individualized education program (IEP) within the home. Students eligible to receive homebound instruction for a disability other than physical are determined by the student's IEP team. A homebound placement is a least restrictive environment (LRE) option.

The superintendent may provide homebound services, provided funds are available and upon approval by the Board, for any student with a medically diagnosed condition who may have an extended absence from school. Many school systems have formal application procedures for requesting homebound instruction and for documenting the condition necessitating the service.

Some course content or instructional activities may not be suitable for homebound instruction. For example, courses involving student interaction with classmates, presentations, laboratory experiments, or use of school equipment may require significant modification for homebound instruction or may not be suitable for such students. School system personnel may provide alternate assignments or may postpone the course requirements for eligible students.

12.13 Definition of Assistive Technologies

According to the Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act (Tech Act Legislation - P.L.100-407), which has been adopted in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), an assistive technology device has been defined as: ". . . any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities" [20 U.S.C. Chapter 33, Section 1401].

IDEA goes on to define assistive technology services to include "any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device" [20 U.S.C. Chapter 33, Section 1401]. This law specifically mentions the following services:

(A) the evaluation of the needs of such child, including a functional evaluation of the child in the child's customary environment;

(B) purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by such child;

(C) selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing of assistive technology devices;

(D) coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;

(E) training or technical assistance for such child, or, where appropriate, the family of such child; and

(F) training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education and rehabilitation services), employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of such child.

[20 U.S.C. Chapter 33, Section 1402]

This following site is designed to assist in answering questions about the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** and assistive technology

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/a/300.5>.

12.14 Types of Assistive Technologies

There are many types of Assistive Technologies available from eyeglasses and hearing aids to motorized wheelchairs. Of most concern to administrators is those Assistive Technologies that can be used to provide students with disabilities with an appropriate education. These can range from pencil grips to aid in holding a pencil to Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) devices.

For students who experience difficulty using a standard keyboard, teachers can begin by modifying a standard keyboard. Schmitt (1990) listed 10 ways to modify a keyboard:

- Positioning (wireless keyboard)
- Headstick, mouthstick, utility cuff, or other pointer
- Moisture guard
- Stickers to mark keys
- Removal of auto-repeat features
- Making the shift, control, and other keys locking
- Keyboard delay
- Rearranged keyboard
- Keyguard
- Speed enhancement (word prediction, abbreviations)

If modifying a standard keyboard is not sufficient, there are alternative keyboards available. These include:

Intellikeys

<http://www.intellitools.com/>

- Intelligent, programmable keyboard
- Provides computer access for persons who have difficulty using a mouse or standard keyboard.
- User touches a printed overlay placed over a touch-sensitive panel.

Large Print Keyboards

Large Print and Braille Labels for regular keyboards

The Key Connection

<http://www.customkeys.com/>

Datadesk's Little Fingers™ Keyboard

Infogrip, Inc.

<http://www.infogrip.com>

- Small 101-style keyboard designed specifically for small hands
- Keys are 20% smaller than traditional keys
- Keyboard spacing is more compact
- Available in two models: Little Fingers Combo with a built in three-button trackball and Little Fingers with a numeric keypad

More resources are found in the Appendix

FEDERAL PROGRAMS SECTION

12.15 Migrant Students

Subpart C of Title I (NCLB) describes the local education agency's (LEAs) responsibilities for education services to migrant students. This portion of the NCLB legislation (§200.81 through

§200.87) provides the parameters for identifying and developing appropriate instructional programs for students meeting the Federal statutory definition as migrant. A migrant child is defined as one who is, or whose parent, spouse, or guardian is, a migratory agricultural worker, including a migratory dairy worker, or a migratory fisher, and who, in the preceding 36 months, in order to obtain, or accompany such parent, spouse, guardian in order to obtain, temporary or seasonal employment has moved from one school system to another.

Systems are directed annually to conduct surveys to identify migrant students and to submit reports of migrant students enrolled in the system. Federal funds allocated under Title I, subpart C may be used to provide supplemental educational and other services to migrant students and their families.

12.16 Homeless Students

School systems, as recipients of federal financial assistance and as public entities, must ensure that their educational programs for homeless children are administered in a nondiscriminatory manner. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces federal laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972); age (Age Discrimination Act of 1975); and disability (section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act). The most recent federal legislation describing local school system responsibilities for the education of homeless students is found in the Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

The McKinney-Vento program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, State educational agencies must ensure that each homeless student has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other students. Homeless children and youth should have access to the educational and other services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. States and systems are required to review and undertake steps to revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youth.

The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children and youth (twenty-one years of age and younger) as:

- Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes children and youth who are:
 - sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled-up”);
 - living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - living in emergency or transitional shelters;
 - abandoned in hospitals; or
 - awaiting foster care placement.
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Every local education agency (LEA) is required to designate a local liaison for homeless children and youth. The local liaison serves as one of the primary contacts between homeless families and school staff, system personnel, shelter workers, and other service providers. The local liaisons must ensure that

- Homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other agencies and entities;
- Homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the schools of the LEA;
- Homeless children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, Even Start, and preschool programs administered by the LEA, and referrals to health, mental health, dental and other appropriate services;
- Parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- Parents and guardians and unaccompanied youth are fully informed of any transportation services;
- Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act; and
- Public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated to locations where children and youth receive services under the Act.

In meeting these responsibilities, local liaisons will assist homeless children and youth with activities such as the following:

- Enrolling in school and accessing school services;
- Obtaining immunizations or medical records;

- Informing parents, school personnel, and others of the rights of homeless children and youth;
- Working with school staff to make sure that homeless children and youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment or placement; and
- Helping to coordinate transportation services for homeless students.

States and local systems may be eligible for federal grants to establish programs to assist in the identification and education of homeless children and youth. Such funds may be used to provide additional educational materials and supplies, student transportation, tutoring, medical services, or other activities to meet other demonstrated needs related to the academic achievement of the student. Additional information about best practices for educating homeless children and youth is available from the U.S. Department of Education website (www.ed.gov) and these publications:

- (1) *Educating Homeless Children and Youth: A Resource guide to Promising Practices*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- (2) *Local Homeless Liaison Toolkit* (January 2003) Popp, P. A., Hindman, J.I, Stronge, J. H. National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE Greensboro, NC.

12.17 Neglected and Delinquent Students

Title I, §1115(2)(D) of NCLB specifies as eligible to receive assistance with Federal funds, students who are neglected and delinquent. The law defines neglected and delinquent children as those children living in local institutions for neglected or delinquent children and youth or attending a community day program for such children. Guidelines are provided to LEAs to assist in locating students who meet the definition of neglected and delinquent. Local schools are required annually to report the status and needs of neglected and delinquent students. When students in the system meet these definitions, plans for the use of federal funds to assist them are submitted to the Federal Programs Department of the Alabama State Department of Education for approval.

12.18 Students in Foster Care

Children and youth in foster care represent one of the most vulnerable student subgroups in this country. Of the approximately 415,000 children in foster care in 2014, nearly 270,000 were in elementary and secondary schools. Studies find that children in foster care are much more likely than their peers to struggle academically and fall behind in school. Students in foster care at age 17 are also less likely to graduate from high school, with only 65 percent graduating by age 12 compared to 86 percent among all youth ages 18 to 24.³ A recent study found that children in foster care in California scored lower on assessments and showed less progress in scores over time compared to peers of similar backgrounds who were not in foster care.

Children in foster care experience much higher levels of residential and school instability than their peers; one study showed that 75 percent of children in foster care made an unscheduled school change in one school year, compared to less than 40 percent for children not in foster care. Unplanned school changes may be associated with delays in children's academic progress,

leaving highly mobile students potentially more likely to fall behind their less mobile peers academically. Children experiencing this type of instability, including many students in foster care, are thus more likely to face a variety of academic difficulties.

Over the last several years, particularly following the passage of the Fostering Connections Act, progress has been made at the state and local levels to better support the education of children in foster care through increased collaboration between child welfare agencies and educational agencies. To date, a majority of states have passed laws pertaining to school stability for children in foster care. Many of these laws allow children to stay in their schools of origin, clarify how to determine if staying in the school of origin is in the best interest of a child, and address immediate enrollment and records transfer. A smaller number of state laws specifically address the provision of transportation to maintain children in foster care in their schools of origin, including how such transportation is to be funded. Several states have required LEAs to appoint local foster care liaisons to support students in foster care and a handful have created shared data systems to allow the efficient exchange of information.

In December 2015, Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), and built on the legislative successes outlined above by instituting new protections for children in foster care. These provisions, which take effect on December 10, 2016, complement those in the Fostering Connections Act and require SEAs and LEAs to work with child welfare agencies to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care. Accordingly, ED and HHS collaborated on this guidance in order to ensure coherence across implementation of both laws.

The foster care provisions of Title I, Part A (Title I) of the ESEA emphasize the importance of collaboration and joint decision-making between child welfare agencies and educational agencies. While these provisions do not create new requirements for child welfare agencies, they mirror and enhance similar provisions in the Fostering Connections Act. Considered together, these laws make clear that the educational stability of children in foster care is a joint responsibility of educational and child welfare agencies, and to successfully implement these provisions, these entities will need to collaborate continuously. As previously mentioned, partnerships are already well underway between child welfare and educational agencies in many States and localities. We hope that this guidance is a useful tool that helps SEAs, LEAs, and child welfare agencies to build on this success. Finally, we encourage educational and child welfare agencies, as they work together to ensure educational stability for foster youth and implement these new provisions, to consider other ways to support better outcomes for these students, including by providing supports to youth to facilitate a successful transition from the elementary and secondary education to college and careers.

Key ESSA Provisions

- Children in Foster Care remain in the school of origin unless there is a determination that it is not in his or her best interest.
- If it is in the best interest of the child to leave the school of origin, the child must be enrolled immediately in the new school even if they don't have the required documentation. The enrolling school shall immediately contact the school last attended to obtain the child's records.

- LEAs must collaborate with Child Welfare Agencies (CWA) to implement clear written procedures for how transportation will be provided, arranged, and funded for the duration of a child’s time in foster care.

LEA Foster Care Plans

Each Plan Must Include:

- Number of students in Foster Care for current year and previous year
- List of Agencies in Collaboration
- Description of Policy Review and Revision
- Description of Collaboration and Coordination with Agencies
- LEA Point of Contact
- DHR Point of Contact
- Description of Procedures to Keep Student in School of Origin or Immediate enrollment
- Best Interest Determination Procedures
- Transportation Procedures
- Dispute Resolution
- Immediate Enrollment

Guidance Document for Students in Foster Care: <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Non-Regulatory-Guidance-Ensuring-Educational-Stability-for-Children-in-Foster-Care.pdf>

Foster Care Training Information: <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/DHR-Foster-Care-Training-Updated.pdf>

12.19 EL/Multi-Lingual Students

LEAs must identify in a timely manner EL students in need of language assistance services. The home language survey (HLS) is a questionnaire given to parents or guardians that helps schools and LEAs identify which students are potential ELs and who will require assessment of their English language proficiency (ELP) to determine whether they are eligible for language assistance services. Many SEAs either require a state developed HLS or provide a sample for LEAs to use; thus, it is advisable to check with the SEA about HLS guidance.

Research has shown that there is a great deal of variation in HLS instruments across the United States (Bailey & Kelly, 2010). However, an HLS typically includes questions about what language(s) the student first learned, understands, uses, and hears, and in what contexts. Additional questions about a student’s language exposure and background (e.g., languages used in the home) help ensure that ELs are not missed, and guard against inaccurate reporting of the student’s English abilities. Information from the HLS informs placement into a language assistance program (e.g., a bilingual and/or English as a Second Language [ESL] program).

To obtain accurate information, schools should reassure parents that the HLS is used solely to offer appropriate educational services, not for determining legal status or for immigration purposes. Parents and guardians should also be informed that, even if their child is identified as an EL, they may decline the EL program or particular EL services in the program.

Once students are identified as potential EIs, they must be assessed with a valid and reliable assessment to determine if they are indeed EIs. LEAs and SEAs commonly refer to these assessments as “placement/ screener tests.” Placement/screener tests are typically selected at the SEA level. Such ELP tests must assess the proficiency of students in all four language domains (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, and writing). Some SEAs and LEAs also use ELP assessments that evaluate speaking, listening, pre-reading, and pre-writing for entering kindergarten students with a primary or home language other than English.

Placement tests require that those administering and scoring them receive some level of training. LEA guidelines should describe who will administer and score assessments, and what training is required to ensure valid and reliable results. After the student completes the assessment, parents or guardians must receive in a timely manner information about the student’s ELP level and program options, and an opportunity to opt out of the EL program or particular EL services in the program. Translating this information into the family’s home language is critical, and if a written translation is not provided, an oral interpretation should be made available whenever needed.

Link to EL Toolkit USDOE: <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/EL-Tool-Kit.pdf>

ALSDE EL Resources Brochure: <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Resources-Brochure.pdf>

See Section 7.10 for more information on The Alabama EL/Multi-Lingual Framework. The framework documents and resources will be published by ALSDE by Fall 2021.

PREVENTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

12.20 Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Section 504 requires that a recipient of federal funds “a free appropriate public education” (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school system’s jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. FAPE consists of education, related aids/services, and accommodations designed to meet the student’s individual needs. Section 504 requires a school system to provide to students with disabilities appropriate education services designed to meet the individual needs of such students to the same extent as the needs of students without disabilities are met.

12.21 Homebound Services

The superintendent is responsible for appointing a qualified person(s) to provide homebound instruction for eligible special education students enrolled in the local school system. Any student diagnosed as having an exceptionality as defined by the Alabama Administrative Code, 290-080-090, Special Programs I, who cannot attend school because of a physical condition must be scheduled to receive instruction according to his/her individualized education program (IEP) within the home. Students eligible to receive homebound instruction for a disability other than physical are determined by the student’s IEP team. A homebound placement is a least restrictive environment (LRE) option.

The superintendent may provide homebound services, provided funds are available and upon approval by the Board, for any student with a medically diagnosed condition who may have an extended absence from school. Many school systems have formal application procedures for requesting homebound instruction and for documenting the condition necessitating the service.

Some course content or instructional activities may not be suitable for homebound instruction. For example, courses involving student interaction with classmates, presentations, laboratory experiments, or use of school equipment may require significant modification for homebound instruction or may not be suitable for such students. School system personnel may provide alternate assignments or may postpone the course requirements for eligible students.

12.22 Truancy/Attendance

Alabama Compulsory Attendance Law

Every child between the ages of six and 17 years shall be required to attend a public school, private school, church school, or be instructed by a competent private tutor. Admission to public school shall be on an individual basis on the application of the parents, legal custodian, or guardian of the child to the local board of education at the beginning of each school year, under such rules and regulations as the board may prescribe. The parent, legal custodian, or guardian of a child who is six years of age, may opt out of enrolling their child in school at the age of six years by notifying the local school board of education, in writing that the child will not be enrolled in school until he or she is seven years of age.

(Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-1, §16-28-3 and §16-28-7(1975) as amended by Alabama Act No: 2014-245)

Absences

Explanation Required

- Every parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of any child required to attend public school, private school, or church school, shall as soon as practical explain the cause of any absence of the child under his control or charge which was without permission of the teacher. Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-15(1975)
- Failure to furnish such explanation shall be admissible as evidence of such child being a truant with the consent and connivance of the person in control or charge of the child, unless such person can show to the reasonable satisfaction of the court that he had no knowledge of such absence and that he had been diligent in his efforts to Alabama Department of Education Prevention and Support Services Section Copyright April 2020 8 secure the attendance of such child. Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-15(1975)
- A good cause or valid excuse, as used in this section, exists when on account of sickness or other condition attendance was impossible or entirely inadvisable or impracticable or when, by virtue of the extraordinary circumstances, the absence is generally recognized as excusable. Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-13(1975).

Examples of Excused Absences (as referenced in the 2019 Alabama Attendance Manual)

- Illness that endangers the student's health or the health of others.

- Students that are deemed ill by the school nurse on a given day
- Death of an immediate family.
- Legal quarantine.
- Students that are receiving healthcare, hospitalized, etc.
- Inclement weather that would be dangerous to the life and health of the child as determined by the LEA.
- Legal requirements for students.
- Observance of any sacred day set aside by a recognized religious denomination of which the student is a member.
- Military deployment date of a student's parent.
- Emergency conditions as determined by the LEA.

Chronic Absenteeism

It is generally accepted that a strong relationship exists between student attendance and student achievement. In 2019, the United States Department of Education (USDOE) reported “about one out of every six students missed three weeks or more of school in 2015-16” (USDOE, 2019). While the reasons for students missing school can vary, the obstacles our students and families face includes poor health, limited transportation, and a lack of safety (USDOE, 2019).

According to the United States Department of Education (USDOE), a K-12 student is chronically absent when he/she misses 10% of the school days in the school in which he/she is enrolled at for a minimum of 10 days. Students are considered absent when they are not physically on school grounds and were not participating in instruction or instruction-related activities at an approved off-grounds location for at least half the school day (USDOE, 2018).

Regarding a virtual environment, institutions of higher education glean guidance from the Federal Student Aid Handbook. This handbook specifically states that “in a distance education context, documenting that a student has logged into an online class is not sufficient, by itself, to demonstrate academic attendance by the student” (United States, 2018 p. 5-63). This same handbook provides the following examples of acceptable evidence of attendance (Alabama Department of Education Prevention and Support Services Section Copyright April 2020):

- student submission of an academic assignment,
- student submission of an exam,
- documented student participation in an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction,
- a posting by the student showing the student's participation in an online study group that is assigned by the institution,
- a posting by the student in a discussion forum showing the student's participation in an online discussion about academic matters,
- an email from the student or other documentation showing that the student-initiated contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

Truancy

The definition of Truancy is unexcused absences or skipping school/class for a day or portion thereof. The difference between chronic absenteeism and truancy is that chronic absenteeism identifies, and totals excused and unexcused absences whereas, truancy identifies only unexcused absences. The LEAs analyze and match appropriate interventions/strategies with students that have as few as two absences, regardless of whether it is excused or unexcused through student and student advocacy relationships. This strategy alone provides information imperative to breaking down barriers/obstacles impeding positive student attendance that consequently increases the students' academic performance. Decades of research have identified the link between truancy and serious offenses, both violent and non-violent in later life. Truancy affects not only the student and school, but also society as a whole. Related to substance abuse, gang activity, and criminal activities, truancy is a proven risk factor for delinquent behavior. Students who are truant are structuring their lives for educational failure as well as potential social isolation, violence, marital problems, employment problems, adult criminal behavior, and incarceration.

Support for Pre-Early Warning Interventions

It is important that policies and procedures for implementing school truancy prevention programs include a systematic, directive, and timely process to reflect support for students and families prior to the juvenile court referral for the truancy process. Appropriate interventions prior to the required early warning procedures are necessary to facilitate students staying on track and, hopefully, avoiding a petition to court. Refer to Appendix Q, Early Warning Flow Chart and R, Chronic Absenteeism to be utilized during the development of the intervention process. Refer to Appendix S, Sample Pre-Early Warning School Conference Form as the academic, social, and behavioral issues impacting a student's ability to attend school on a regular basis are identified and aligned with appropriate interventions. Additional information such as research articles, PowerPoints, and pyramids of interventions for tiered support for attendance are stored I then, Prevention and Support Services Section tab on the Alabama State Department of Education website.

The Alabama Attendance Manual can be accessed at <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Absolute-Final-2019-Attendance-Manual-Revised1.pdf>

12.23 Health Plan

ALSDE Health Assessment Record

The purpose of the Health Assessment Record is to provide the school nurse with additional information regarding each student's health needs. All students must have a completed health record on file each year. The school nurse may contact parents for more information and additional reporting requirements when health needs exist. The ALSDE Health Assessment Record can be accessed at <https://content.schoolinsites.com/api/documents/5c42b5206d544a4487dc034b7ca3d188.pdf>

Individual Health Plans

The Alabama Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP) is for all students with specific health concerns (diabetes, ADHD, Asthma, Anaphylaxis, etc). It is the result of the nurse's assessment of the

student's needs and prescriber's orders and how best to meet them within the school environment.

The IHP can be accessed at https://www.alabamaachievers.org/prevention-and-support/alabama-school-health/#Forms_and_Documents

Laws, Policies, Forms, and Resources related to School Health Information can be accessed at https://www.alabamaachievers.org/prevention-and-support/alabama-school-health/#Health_Information

12.24 Whole Child/Well-Being

Whole Child Education – Meeting the Demands Associated with Students' Health, Wellness, and Success ALSDE

Early warning indicators for at-risk behaviors such as violence, poor attendance or limited engagement, stress, inequitable community services, suicide, economics, and health issues have currently been expanded exponentially to affect the needs of many due to state, national and global events. The impact of social isolation alone is traumatic as educators with the assistance of families are busy focusing on ways to enhance instruction for these students, however; we cannot overlook the elephant in the room. (School Practitioner Community of Practice Network, April 2020). There is a need to balance the scales between academic and social/emotional behaviors to reflect personal and community learning supports that address equity and achievement gaps. During these uncharted times, it is imperative that these obstacles/at-risk behaviors are not exacerbated, because this will ultimately impede the success of our students when school resumes (America's Promise Bulletin, April 8, 2020).

The challenge is to determine how to keep students and families connected to their schools amidst social distancing restrictions, and remote learning while maintaining a positive self-care regime. Robert Balfanz, a professor at the Johns Hopkins School of Education and Director of The Everyone Graduates Center, has coined a term called "connectedness" to reflect that the school is more than a place for education, but it is rather a focal point for an entire community to combat this challenge. "It is important that schools do not lose sight of the value of social efforts by doing everything to maintain some sense of business-as-usual just to strengthen this connectedness (Balfanz, April 2020). This includes using remote learning tools and social media to keep the social fabric of the school intact," explains Dr. Balfanz.

The goal of this document is to provide information and resources in the areas of social and emotional behaviors and learning supports to foster a sense of "connectedness" with the school, peers, the individual student, and the community to promote success for everyone during this unprecedented time. This document provides an opportunity for parents, educators and stakeholders at large to fill the gap and balance the scales to promote safe, healthy and successful students, and families and to enrich the quality of community living for everyone.

The entire document is located at: <https://www.alabamaachievers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Whole-Child-Education.pdf>

Alabama Whole Child

Alabama Whole Child (AWC) is a decade-long blueprint for sustainable and comprehensive community-wide change. To be successful, community-wide sustainable change must embrace common vision, language, and experiences to address common conditions that give rise to mental, emotional, behavioral, and health difficulties. Common solutions to address common conditions include shared goals, strategies, and aligned supports ensure that every youth is safe, supported, engaged, healthy, and challenged in schools and in the community-at-large. In this article, we discuss the following aspects of the AWC: 1) The need for a public health approach to sustainable change; and 2) the vision of the AWC model. Need for a Public Health Approach to Sustainable Change According to the American Public Health Association (2020), public health promotes and protects the health and wellness of people and the communities where they live, learn, work and play. Whereas many school initiatives are reactive in nature – focused on quick fixes for academic growth and behavior modification – the Whole Child approach uses proven systems and partnerships to enhance interpersonal relationships and transform schools and communities from the inside out. Whole Child promotes the long-term development and success of all children, as well as their families and communities.

More information on the Whole Child Approach and School Transformation can be found at: <https://www.alabamaachievers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Alabama-Whole-Child-Article.pdf>

12.25 Trauma-Informed Instruction

Trauma-informed teaching starts with an **understanding of how trauma can impact learning and behavior**. With this approach, educators think about what student behavior may be telling them. And they reflect on their teaching practices to find ways to better support students who may be experiencing trauma.

The nervous system and brain are experience-dependent and experience-responsive. During development, trauma and adversity land in our bodies as they also affect the reptilian regions of our lower and mid-brain areas. Implicit memories are fragments of sensory experiences that are not conscious, and they can settle in our bodies. These embodied memories are observed as behavioral impulses, surges of emotions and perceptions encoded with sensory experiences that can be triggered in the present moment. The smell of aftershave; a tone of voice; pieces of clothing; specific sounds like fireworks, a car horn, or a dog's bark—these are examples of sensory experiences associated with the past, yet in the present moment they are detected as dangerous or unsafe.

Trauma can come in many forms, and whether caused by a single event or by a repeated exposure, that experience and perspective shape the way a person feels, thinks, and behaves. Trauma can happen to anyone—as educators, you may encounter both students and colleagues that have been impacted. For more information, access the [Trauma-Informed Care for Educators Resource Guide](#)

Trauma-informed instruction focuses on:

- A deeper awareness of key trauma-related concepts.
- A greater understanding of trauma's effects on behavior.
- Understanding and preventing vicarious trauma.

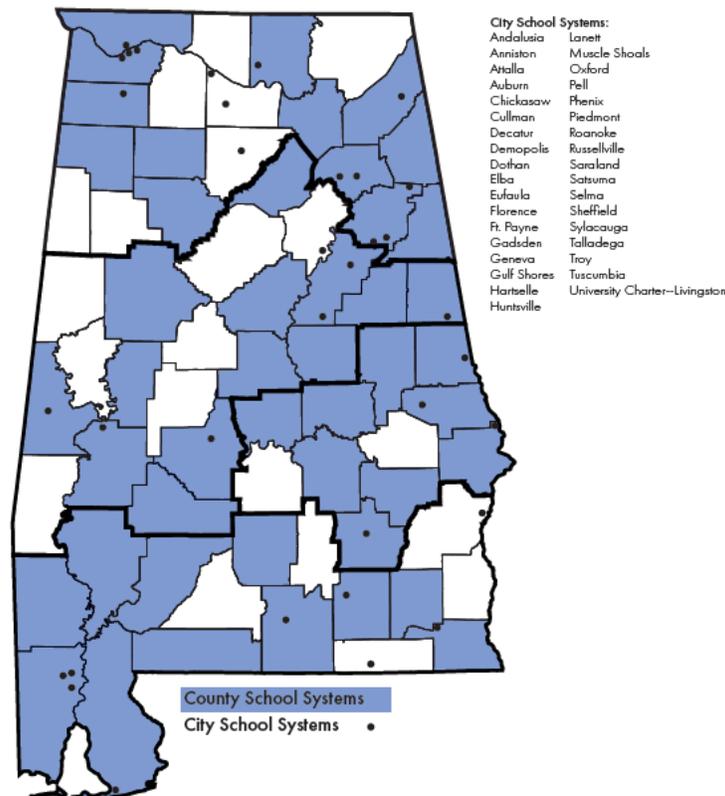
- A De-Escalation Strategies to use with students and colleagues.
- Resources to explore trauma-informed care further.

12.26 Mental Health Collaborative

The Alabama Department of Mental Health has expanded the School-Based Mental Health Services Program since its inception in 2010. The goal of the School-Based Mental Health Services (SBMH) collaboration between the Alabama Department of Mental Health and its providers and the Alabama State Department of Education and Alabama’s local education agencies is to ensure that children and adolescents, both general and special education, enrolled in local school systems have access to high-quality mental health prevention, early intervention and treatment services.

The aim is to achieve greater integration of mental health services between the mental health centers and the public schools and to increase the utilization of evidence-based practices. The integration of these services will foster continuity of care and ensure sustained gains in academic and developmental domains for children, youth, and their families.

Fifteen mental health centers will receive additional funds for the expansion of SBMH services with \$750,000 in FY 22. We currently have 81 school systems and all 19 community mental health centers participating in the School-Based Mental Health Collaboration Program.



12.27 Community/Full-Service Schools

A growing number of students bring social, physical, and emotional problems to school that greatly impact their capacity to learn. Many schools have responded by increasing special personnel (e.g., counselors, social workers) and programs (e.g., on-site medical clinics). Opponents of these services maintain that schools have a limited mission, that is, to teach academic skills. They are reluctant to fund additional operations that are seen as outside the scope of this responsibility.

12.28 Student Restraint and Seclusion – all students

Although the provisions of the Alabama Administrative Code Chapter 290-3-1-.02(1)(f) revised in 2009 describe the rules regarding the use of restraint and seclusion for all students, these rules more frequently impact classrooms and programs for special education students. The code sections require that each local education plan (school safety plan) shall include, at a minimum, the following training features:

- Professional development shall include training appropriate school personnel in positive behavioral support and management of disruptive or dangerous student behavior in order to limit and reduce the use of seclusion and restraint to protect students. Appropriate school personnel may include, but is not limited to, teachers, teacher assistants, school administrators, bus drivers, school resource officers, school psychologists, and school counselors.
- The training shall include instruction in positive behavioral support and management of student behavior, effective communication for defusing and deescalating disruptive or dangerous behavior, and safe and appropriate use of seclusion and restraint. The appropriate personnel with priority for the training shall include those staff members who are most likely to be called upon to prevent or address disruptive or dangerous student behavior.
- Each local board of education shall include in its school safety plan procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of this training in preventing or addressing disruptive or dangerous student behavior. Local boards of education are encouraged to use available sources of discretionary revenue to train personnel in the management of disruptive or dangerous student behavior. By February 1, 2010, local boards of education shall amend their school safety plans to include this training.

Definitions important for school system personnel include:

1. **Physical restraint** is direct physical contact from an adult that prevents or significantly restricts a student's movement. The term physical restraint does not include mechanical restraint or chemical restraint. Additionally, physical restraint does not include providing limited physical contact and/or redirection to a student in order to promote safety or to prevent self-injurious behavior; providing physical guidance or prompting to a student when teaching a skill; redirecting attention; providing guidance to a location; providing comfort; or providing limited physical contact as reasonably needed to prevent imminent destruction to school or another person's property.

2. **Chemical restraint** is any medication that is used to control violent physical behavior or to restrict the student's freedom of movement that is not a prescribed treatment for a medical or psychiatric condition of the student.
3. **Mechanical restraint** is the use of any device or material attached to or adjacent to a student's body that is intended to restrict the normal freedom of movement, and which cannot be easily removed by the student. The term does not include an adaptive or protective device recommended by a physician or therapist when used as recommended by the physician or therapist to promote normative body positioning and physical functioning, and/or to prevent self-injurious behavior. The term also does not include seatbelts and other safety equipment when used to secure students during transportation.
4. **Seclusion** is a procedure that isolates and confines the student in a separate, locked area until he or she is no longer an immediate danger to himself/herself or others. Seclusion occurs in a specifically constructed or designated room or space that is physically isolated from common areas and from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include situations in which a staff member trained in the use of de-escalation techniques or restraint is physically present in the same unlocked room as the student; time-out as defined herein; in-school suspension; detention; or a student-requested break in a different location in the room or in a separate room.
5. **Time-out** is a behavioral intervention in which the student is temporarily removed from the learning activity. Time-out is appropriately used and is not seclusion when:
 - a. The non-locking setting used for time-out is appropriately lighted, ventilated, and heated or cooled.
 - b. The duration of the time-out is reasonable in light of the purpose of the time-out and the age of the child; however, each time-out should not exceed 45 minutes.
 - c. The student is reasonably monitored by an attending adult who is in reasonable physical proximity of the student and has sight of the student while in time-out.
 - d. The time-out space is free of objects that unreasonably expose the student or others to harm.

Additionally, the code specifically prohibits in Alabama public schools and educational programs the use of seclusion, any method of physical restraint that restricts the flow of air to a student's lungs, the use of mechanical restraint, and the use of chemical restraint. The use of physical restraint is prohibited except in those situations in which the student is an immediate danger to himself or others and the student is not responsive to less intensive behavioral interventions including verbal directives or other de-escalation techniques. Notwithstanding the foregoing, physical restraint is prohibited in Alabama public schools and educational programs when used as a form of discipline or punishment. Schools that use physical restraint must develop and implement written policies to govern the use of physical restraint. Parents must be provided information regarding the school's policies governing the use of physical restraint. Specific

features of the written policies and the complete details of this chapter of the Alabama Administrative Code may be downloaded at <http://www.alabamaadministrativecode.state.al.us/docs/ed/290-3-1.pdf>.

12.29 Bullying/Student Harassment Prevention

In 2010 Alabama became the most recent of 44 states to pass an anti-bullying law, which makes it illegal for students to harass, bully, intimidate, harm or threaten to harm fellow students. The law (Legislative Act 2009-571) required Alabama school systems to pass anti-bullying policies by July 1, 2010. Consequences for bullying behaviors must be added to codes of student conduct, and schools must incorporate anti-bullying and harassment prevention instruction into academic or elective courses or through guidance/counseling programs.

12.30 Health and Wellness

Schools have increasingly been asked to assume responsibility for educating students about issues that once were relegated to the home (e.g., sex). In Alabama, schools are called upon to provide health education, sex education, and education about communicable diseases, all of which can be controversial.

Health Education: Section 16-40A-3 Code of Alabama (2001 Replacement) describes the minimum contents to be included in drug abuse prevention education curricula. This section (16-40A-4) also prohibits teaching students illegal conduct (e.g., under-age alcohol use, distribution of controlled substances, etc.).

Sex Education: Section 16-40A-2 Code of Alabama (2001 Replacement) describes the minimum contents to be included in sex education curricula. The Code of Alabama does not address issues related to condom distribution or access to birth control information because these issues are more political than legal ones. Sex Education instruction for Alabama schools must be abstinence-based.

Communicable Diseases: Excluding students from school who have HIV, AIDS, and Hepatitis B may be a form of discrimination. Determinations regarding the programming needs for such students should be made on an individual basis. For example, a student with a propensity for spitting on others may be excluded because of his or her behaviors rather than because of the condition itself. Medical conditions introduced in the student's educational records become protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

13. SCHEDULING

13.1 Length of School Day and School Term

The Alabama Administrative Code (§290-3-1-.02(2)(a)(1) [amended in March 2006], in accordance with the Code of Alabama (195), §16-1-1, specifies that the official school year shall consist of a minimum of 180 teaching days and that the school day shall be at least six (6) hours of actual teaching, exclusive of lunch and recess.

School systems and local boards of education may determine the local school calendar to meet community needs when the minimum number of instructional days, employee contract days, and instructional clock hours are included. However, the State Department of Education is considering the establishment of a uniform “opening of school” window during which all systems must begin school. Having local schools adopt widely different calendars will make compliance with these federal mandates difficult, if not impossible.

With the passage of Alabama Legislative Act 2012-482 (also known as the Flexible School Calendar Act of 2012), rules about the school calendars adopted by local boards of education have changed for the 2012-2013 school year and for the first three months of the 2013-2014 school year. Features of this Act include the following:

- The first day for student instruction can be no earlier than the Monday two weeks prior to Labor Day – August 20, 2012.
- The last day for student instruction must be no later than the Friday immediately preceding National Memorial Day – May 24, 2013.
- The state-required student school year must include a minimum of 180 instructional days based on a minimum of six hours of instruction per day or its hourly equivalent of 1080 hours exclusive of lunch, recess, and class change.
- There are two (2) required holidays—Veteran’s Day and National Memorial Day—with no staff or students in attendance.
- There is one (1) required professional development day each year (Teacher Institute) for certified employees.
- All other holidays and professional development days are at the discretion of the local board of education.

13.2 Guidelines and Suggestions for Local Time Requirements and Homework

***This information is located in each Alabama Course of Study**

Total Instructional Time

The total instructional time of each school day in all schools and at all grade levels shall be not less than 6 hours or 360 minutes, exclusive of lunch periods, recess, or time used for changing classes (§16-1-1 Code of Alabama).

Suggested Time Allotments for Grades 1-6

The allocations below are based on considerations of a balanced educational program for Grades 1-6. Local school systems are encouraged to develop a general plan for scheduling that supports interdisciplinary instruction. Remedial and/or enrichment activities should be a part of the time schedule for the specific subject area. The suggested time guidelines below are found in the end sections of each Alabama Course of Study booklet.

<u>Subject Area</u>	<u>Grades 1-3</u>	<u>Grades 4-6</u>
Language Arts	150 minutes daily	120 minutes daily
Mathematics	60 minutes daily	60 minutes daily
Science	30 minutes daily	45 minutes daily
Social Studies	30 minutes daily	45 minutes daily
Physical Education	30 minutes daily	30 minutes daily
Health	60 minutes weekly	60 minutes weekly
Computer Education	60 minutes weekly	60 minutes weekly
Character Education	10 minutes daily	10 minutes daily

Arts Education Scheduling

Daily instruction with Arts specialists in each of the Arts disciplines is the most desirable schedule. However, schools unable to provide daily Arts instruction in each discipline are encouraged to schedule in Grades 1 through 3 two 30- to 45-minute Arts instruction sessions per week and in Grades 4 through 6 a minimum of 60 minutes of instruction per week.

Interdisciplinary instruction within the regular classroom setting is encouraged as an alternative approach for scheduling time for Arts instruction when Arts specialists are not available.

Kindergarten

In accordance with Alabama Administrative Code r. 290-5-1-.01(5) Minimum Standards for Organizing Kindergarten Programs in Alabama Schools, the daily time schedule of the kindergartens shall be the same as the schedule of the elementary schools in the systems of which they are a part since kindergartens in Alabama operate as full-day programs. There are no established time guidelines for individual subject areas for the kindergarten classroom. The emphasis is on large blocks of time that allow children the opportunity to explore all areas of the curriculum in an unhurried manner.

In accordance with *Alabama Administrative Code* r. 290-5-1-.01(6), the official guide for program planning in kindergarten is *Alabama Kindergartens, Bulletin 1987, No. 28*. Criteria to be used in scheduling are listed on pages 45-46 of this guide. The full-day program should be organized

utilizing large blocks of time for large group, small groups, center time, lunch, outdoor activities, snacks, transitions, routines, and afternoon review. Individual exploration, small-group interest activities, interaction with peers and teachers, manipulation of concrete materials, and involvement in many other real-world experiences are needed to provide a balance in the kindergarten classroom.

Grades 7-12

One credit may be granted in Grades 9-12 for required or elective courses consisting of a minimum of 140 instructional hours or in which students demonstrate mastery of Alabama Course of Study content standards in once credit courses without specified instructional time (Alabama Administrative Code r. 290-3-1-.01 (9)(a)).

In those schools where Grades 7 and 8 are houses with other elementary grades, the school may choose the time requirements listed for Grades 4-6 or those listed for Grades 7-12.

13.3 Class Size/Pupil Teacher Ratio

Class-size reduction proponents reason that students get more one-on-one instruction which, in turn, leads to increased academic achievement. This argument is so convincing and sounds so logical and simple that nearly half of the states have enacted legislation and spent hundreds of millions of dollars a year to reduce the student-teacher ratio to 20 or fewer students per teacher. However, analysis of class-size reduction initiatives paints a confusing and contradictory picture.

- A recent study by the Heritage Foundation found that smaller class size did not boost achievement on the NAEP reading test.
- Small classes of first, second, and third graders performed better on the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills than did students from larger classes.
- An analysis of 277 separate class-size reduction studies found that only 15 percent documented achievement gains.
- A long-term study on the effects of smaller classes found that students who spent the first three years of school in smaller classes had a greater increase in achievement, maintained those gains throughout their school careers, and were less likely to drop out. The study also found a decrease in the achievement gap between black and white students from smaller classes.

Some studies suggest that teacher training and preparation have more influence on student success than the size of the class. Other skeptics are concerned that reducing class size will increase costs without substantially increasing teacher effectiveness or that other less expensive approaches might achieve the same educational goals without costing as much as limiting class size. At times reducing class size has resulted in large numbers of new teachers being thrust into tough situations. Critics then question the educational outcome and quality of education provided. See [Smaller Class Sizes: Pros and Cons](#) for views on class-size reduction.

The Alabama State Board of Education in a resolution on September 11, 1997, adopted class size standards to become effective for kindergarten through sixth grade in January 1998 and for

seventh grade through twelfth grade in the fall of 1998. The standards include the following stipulations describing pupil-teacher ratios and maximum class sizes:

1. Pupil-teacher ratios in all kindergarten through third grade classes shall be limited to 1:18. The State Department of Education must approve any exceptions on a case-by-case basis.
2. Pupil-teacher ratios in all fourth through sixth grade classes shall be limited to 1:26. The State Department of Education must approve any exceptions on a case-by-case basis. This ratio does not include physical education and musical performing groups.
3. Pupil-teacher ratios in all seventh through twelfth grade classes shall be limited to 1:29. The State Department of Education must approve any exceptions on a case-by-case basis. This ratio does not include physical education, music performing groups, JROTC, or typing classes.
4. At the secondary level, the maximum number of students per teacher, other than band, choral, physical education, JROTC, and typing must not exceed 150 per day (750 per week) exclusive of study halls.
5. At the secondary level, the maximum number of student contacts per teacher each week for physical education, musical performing groups, JROTC, and typing is 1,000. High schools (grades 7-12), junior high schools (grades 7-9), middle
6. schools (grades 7-8), and area vocational centers shall also maintain the SACS standards of an overall student/total professional staff ratio of 21:1.
7. At the secondary level, the maximum number of students enrolled in drivers' education programs shall not exceed sixty (60) per teacher per semester.

The recommended pupil-teacher ratios and class size guidelines described above are not to be confused with the class "divisors", used to calculate the allocation of teacher units and related funds to the LEAs.

13.4 Mandatory Age School Requirements

Every child between the ages of six and 17 years shall be required to attend a public school, private school, church school, or be instructed by a competent private tutor. Admission to public school shall be on an individual basis on the application of the parents, legal custodian, or guardian of the child to the local board of education at the beginning of each school year, under such rules and regulations as the board may prescribe. The parent, legal custodian, or guardian of a child who is six years of age, may opt out of enrolling their child in school at the age of six years by notifying the local school board of education, in writing that the child will not be enrolled in school until he or she is seven years of age. Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-1, §16-28-3 and §16-28-7(1975) as amended by Alabama Act No: 2014-245 2.

Minimum Age for Admission

- a. Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, Act 2016-294 entitles any child that turns six years old on or before December 31 to start first grade. This extends the timeframe from the current date of on or before September 1 for first grade only – it does NOT extend the timeframe for enrollment in kindergarten. Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-4(a)(b) (1975) 12

- b. A child whose sixth birthday falls on or before February 1, with the approval of the local board of education, be admitted at the beginning of the second semester in school systems having semi-annual promotions of pupils. *Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-4(1975)*
- c. A child whose fifth birthday falls on or before September 1 (2) * or the date on which school begins in the enrolling district is entitled to admission to the Kindergarten program at the beginning of the school year or as soon as practicable thereafter. *Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-4(1975)* Interpretation based on *Report of Attorney General of Alabama October-December 1963, Volume 113, page 20 *An opinion of the Attorney General states in effect that under the common law one’s age is computed by including the day of birth so that a given age is attained the day before the birthday anniversary.

Age Requirements – Kindergarten and Grade 1 Out of State Transfers

- a. An underage child who transfers from the first grade of a school in another state may be admitted but must have the approval of the local board of education. *Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-4(1975)*
- b. An underage child who has moved into this state and has completed a mandated kindergarten program in another state shall be entitled to admission to the public elementary school regardless of age. *Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-4(1975)*
- c. An underage child who transfers to Alabama from the public-school Kindergarten in another state may be admitted but must have prior approval of the local board of education. *Authority: Ala. Code §16-28-4(1975)*
- d. The age requirements apply to the provision of special education and related services for preschool children with disabilities by the child’s third birth date. Public agencies may not use school admission cutoff dates to deny special education services for eligible preschool children. However, these children may not attend the regular kindergarten program, unless they meet the age requirements. *Authority: Alabama Administrative Code: 290-8-9-.04(3)(a)*

The Alabama Attendance Manual can be accessed at <https://www.alabamaachievers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Absolute-Final-2019-Attendance-Manual-Revised1.pdf>

13.5 Home School Students – Enrollment & Schedule Requirements

Home School Requirements

In Alabama, there are three options under which you can legally homeschool. Note that church schools and private schools can establish their own policies for teacher qualification, days of instruction, and required school subjects.

Option 1: Homeschooling with a church school

A church school offers instruction in grades K–12 or any combination thereof, including preschool, through onsite or home programs, and is operated as a ministry of a local church, group of churches, denomination, and/or association of churches that does not receive any state or federal funding. A home may be the location where a child receives instruction as a student attending a church school.

To homeschool under this option, you must take the following steps:

1. **Enroll your child in a church school.** The Christian Home Education Fellowship (CHEF) of Alabama has compiled a list of church schools that enroll homeschool students. That list

is available on CHEF's website [here](#). Before you enroll your child in a church school, call the school office or browse their website to become familiar with their homeschool policy and to get answers to any questions you may have about fees, enrollment deadlines, etc.

2. **File a church school enrollment certificate.** When your child is first enrolled in a church school, you must notify the superintendent of your local public school by filing a church school enrollment form. The church school administrator may assist you in obtaining this form. This form must be signed by a parent or legal guardian and by the church school administrator. There is no requirement to file annually.
3. **Keep an attendance register.** The principal teacher of the church school must keep an attendance register for every school day of the year.
4. **Comply with any policies established by the church school.** Some church schools have policies regarding teacher qualification, number of days of instruction, and required subjects. If so, you are responsible to comply with them.

Option 2: Homeschooling with a private school

A private school is established, conducted, and supported by a nongovernmental entity or agency offering educational instruction in grades K–12 or any combination thereof, including preschool, through onsite or home programs. A home may be the location where a child receives instruction as a student attending a private school. A parent may establish a home-based private school, or the home may be an extension of an existing private school.

1. **Notify your local superintendent.** Five days after the start of public school, your private school must report to the county or city superintendent the names and addresses of all school-age children enrolled in the school. Thereafter, your private school must report the names and addresses of all school-age children (1) who enroll in the school, or (2) who are absent without a lawful excuse on a weekly basis, if applicable. Private school enrollment and absence reporting forms for HSLDA members are available below.
2. **Keep an attendance register.** The principal teacher of a private school must keep an attendance register for every school day of the year.
3. **Obtain proof of immunization.** Private schools must require their students to show proof of immunization, or medical or religious exemptions from immunization.
4. **Teach Physical Education.** Private schools must include a good faith program of physical education.

Option 3: Homeschooling using a private tutor

1. **Select a private tutor with the required qualifications.** Private tutors must be Alabama-certified teachers.
2. **Ensure that your child is instructed in the required subjects and for the required number of days.** A private tutor's instruction must be in English and must include the same branches of study that are required to be taught in the public schools. The tutor must teach for at least three hours a day, for 140 days each calendar year, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
3. **The private tutor must comply with reporting and recordkeeping requirements.** The private tutor must submit a statement to the county or city superintendent, listing the tutor's students, the subjects taught, and the proposed tutoring schedule. The tutor must also keep a register of work, showing daily the hours of instruction, and of attendance

(including absences). The tutor must also make such reports as the State Board of Education may require.

AHSAA Non-Traditional Students Participating in Interscholastic Athletics

Enrollment

- Students must enroll in a member public school in order to participate in an interscholastic contest or practice.
- Must be enrolled at the member public school that serves the area in which the student's parents reside.
- Must be within the first 20 days of the semester in the school they are zoned to attend. Note: All home school students are eligible their initial year of enrollment based on local board policy.

Academic Accountability

- Students will adhere to all AHSAA rules applicable to academic accountability (Rule I, Section 9: Academic Rule, Requirements).
- Students will be required to take AHSAA criteria tests developed by the ALSDE for the AHSAA in all four core subjects at the end of each semester for academic eligibility beginning with grade 7 through the end of the first semester in grade 12.
- (ALL assessment testing will be conducted on campus of the school under the supervision of a certified instructor employed by the school.) Note: Home school students who opt to take core courses through the school's virtual program or college course credit are not required to take the criteria tests.

Home School students must:

- Enroll and attend two electives on the campus of the school. Amendments to AHSAA Bylaws
 - The AHSAA recommends taking physical education class or athletic PE on campus for safety reasons.
 - If the school requires an athlete to take a PE to participate in athletics, the home school student will be required as well.
 - If the school does not require athletic PE to participate in athletics, home school students may take PE through the schools' virtual program.
- Take one elective class on campus and one through the school's virtual program or both elective classes through the school's virtual program.

Transfers

- A home school student who decides to enroll in a traditional school full time is eligible to participate if all other eligibility requirements are met.
- A traditional student who decides to be homeschooled because of failing grades is deemed ineligible to participate in athletics for a period of one year. (If in good standing academically at the time of withdrawal, the student remains eligible.)

Practice Time

- A home school student's practice time must be equivalent to but not to exceed that of a traditional student during a school day.

VIRTUAL SCHOOL GUIDELINES

Enrollment

- Virtual school students must follow all ALSDE policies. } Local board policy must be in accordance with all AHSAA bylaws.

Academic Accountability

- The AHSAA recommends taking a physical education class or athletic PE on campus for safety reasons.
- If the school requires an athlete to take a PE to participate in athletics, the virtual school student will be required as well.

Transfers

- A virtual school student who elects to transfer schools must be in accordance with all AHSAA bylaws pertaining to transfers.

Practice Time

- A virtual school student's practice time must be equivalent to but not to exceed practice that of a traditional student during a school day.

CHARTER SCHOOL GUIDELINES

Enrollment

- Alabama public charter school students must enroll within the first 20 days of the semester in the school they are zoned to attend.
- For eligibility in an Alabama public charter school, enrollment must be at the public charter school that serves the area in which the student's parents reside, and all other requirements are met.
- A conversion public charter school will assume the same attendance zone of its former traditional public school until the time the local education agency (LEA) or local school board of education reestablishes attendance zones for those students who choose not to attend the conversion public charter school within their current zone. If the former attendance zone changes, the public charter school attendance zone cannot exceed the municipality (city) or county school system zone. Note: Determination of attendance zones for conversion public charter schools will be locally determined by each LEA and local school board of education.
- A start-up public charter school will adopt the attendance zone of its municipality in which the school is located. If the school is not located within a municipality, the school zone lines are the same as the county school system where it is located. An index of 1.35 multiplier will be used to determine the enrollment figure for classifying each start-up public charter school.
- Public charter school attendance zones (conversion or start-up) cannot exceed beyond the municipality (city) or county school system zones.
- If a public charter school (conversion or start up) does not have athletics, the student may return to his/her home school (based on the student's residence) to participate.

- If the former attendance zone of the school prior to conversion does not remain the same after the conversion, an index of 1.35 multiplier will be used to determine the enrollment figure for classifying the public charter school.

Academic Accountability

- Public charter school students will adhere to all AHSAA rules applicable to academic accountability (Rule 1, Section 9: Academic Rule, Requirements).

Transfers

- Public charter school students will adhere to all AHSAA rules applicable to transfers (Rule I, Section 12: Transfer Rule).

Link to Complete Document:

<https://www.ahsaa.com/Portals/0/PDF's/AHSAA/Home%20School/Memo-%20for%20link%20to%20Non-traditional%20school%20laws%20changes.pdf?ver=2016-04-12-170214-927>

13.6 Schedule Types & Implications (LEAPS Subject & Personnel Codes), FTE/Local Units/Unit Planning

Grouping for Instruction

A wide variety of instructional grouping strategies are available for public schools at every level. Schools today employ many varied schedules and class arrangements to accommodate the varied learning styles of students, school system budget limitations, and the increased academic requirements.

Effective instructional practices involve assessing the needs of students at a particular age level, utilizing multiple teaching modes, and altering student grouping arrangements as the situation requires it.

Many secondary schools have used varied instructional day schedules to promote learning. Some common arrangements are:

- A six-period day: Students attend six classes each day, four academic core courses and two others, for approximately 60 minutes each.
- A seven-period day: Students attend seven classes each day, four academic core courses and three others, for approximately 50 minutes each day.
- A four-period day (semester block): Students attend four classes each day for approximately 96 minutes each. Students take four classes first term and four classes second term, typically taking two academic core courses and two others each term.
- A four-period day (alternating block): Students attend four classes each day with alternating classes every other day.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each of these and other scheduling plans. Schools and systems must study the student, personnel, and fiscal resources of the system to determine the best scheduling plan.

Most elementary schools use some variation of self-contained class schedules for the majority of the school day. Some, especially at upper elementary grades, have begun to departmentalize for all or portions of the instructional day.

Self-contained Classrooms

The majority of elementary school classrooms and some middle school classrooms are described as self-contained. In these settings a single teacher or team of teacher and instructional aide provide instruction for all students assigned to the room. Students in the self-contained classroom may be homogeneously grouped by ability or may be a heterogeneous grouping of students of different abilities. In self-contained classrooms, the teacher or instructional personnel provide learning activities on all the subjects in the curriculum for the majority of the student's day.

Self-contained classrooms can provide students with a sense of identity in belonging to the group and allow students to establish familiarity with the teacher's instructional techniques and the classroom resources. Recent additions of more specialists to the elementary school's program (certified physical education teachers, certified arts and music teachers, counselors, etc.) provide opportunities for students in self-contained classes to socialize with peers and provide opportunities for teachers to engage in planning while students attend specialized classes weekly or daily.

Self-contained classrooms serve as the least-restrictive environment (LRE) for many students with special needs. Students who are not appropriate candidates for mainstreaming or inclusion may be in self-contained classes for all or part of the instructional day.

A disadvantage of self-contained classrooms is the limitation of the teacher in preparing a large number of in-depth study units as allowed in departmentalized classrooms. Self-contained classes may contain students of one chronological age group or grade level or may be designed for multi-age groups spanning two or more years.

Homogeneous Classrooms

Homogeneous groupings of students for instruction most often involve assigning students based on their academic abilities or talents. Advanced levels of academic classes, musical or artistic performance classes, classes for English language learners, remedial classes, and gifted programs are all examples of appropriate homogeneous instructional grouping. Critics of homogenous classes site the tendency to limit student access to certain programs of study by "tracking" students into particular academic paths or sequences of study.

Heterogeneous Classrooms

Heterogeneous groupings of student for instruction place students with varying abilities and characteristics in the same classroom. Teachers of heterogeneous classrooms become proficient in differentiated instruction. Proponents of heterogeneous classrooms site achievement gains of struggling students who learn with able students. Heterogeneous classes reflect the real-world settings in which students will ultimately apply their learning.

Development of student collaboration skills, increased tolerance for differences, and development leadership skills are but some of the positive outcomes cited by researchers as benefits of heterogeneous student groupings.

Looping

Looping is an educational practice in which a single graded class of children stays with a teacher for two or more years or grade levels. The children and the teacher remain together as the class is promoted. At the end of the second or third year in the pattern, the children move on to a new teacher while the looping teacher returns to the lower grade level to receive a new group of students.

For students, the benefits of looping include reduced apprehension at starting a new school year, increased continuity, and more in-depth relationships with teacher and with peers. For teachers, the benefits of looping consist of becoming familiar with other developmental stages of children and working with students and parents for longer periods of time.

The long-term relationships established through looping have been shown to support student learning. For further information on looping, refer to the following sources: *Looping: Supporting Student Learning Through Long-Term Relationships* (Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory, 1997) or *Looping Through the Years: Teachers and Students Progressing Together* (McClellan, 1995).

Looping at the Middle School Level

In the United States, looping is most often used at the elementary level of schooling. However, because early adolescence can be an especially difficult time, a fair amount of research has targeted this age group as one that could benefit from looping. Some of that research is published in an ERIC Digest titled [Looping: Adding Time, Strengthening Relationships](#). A 1997 pilot program, sponsored by East Cleveland (Ohio) Schools and Cleveland State University, found students in a looping program exhibited substantially higher reading and mathematics achievement scores on standardized tests than did students in the traditional grade organization, even when both groups were taught by the same teacher. (Source: [Looping: Adding Time, Strengthening Relationships](#)). A study in 1981 compared academic outcomes of students in two schools of similar socioeconomic levels, one with a traditional grade-level structure and the other a school in which the students remained with the same teacher for more than one year. Those in the extended-relationship school outperformed their counterparts in the traditional school on basic skills tests. Despite these positive findings, many of the studies that exist are not recent and many rely on personal evaluation. Additional high-quality empirical research not dependent on personal evaluation is needed in order to determine whether, as many contend, looping really has a positive effect on student performance.

Block Scheduling

The traditional high school scheduling process remained unchanged for most of the 20th century. In 1994, the National Commission on Time and Learning issued a report (*Prisoners of Time*) encouraging the use of block scheduling to give teachers the time to engage students in learning. Various forms of block scheduling have been implemented.

Forms of Block Scheduling

- 4 x 4 Four Four 90-minute periods per semester
- A/B or Eight Block A two-day rotating system with students completing eight classes during the year
- Modified Block Two to three 90-minute blocks couples with split 45-minute classes

Positive Outcomes of Block Scheduling

The evidence that block scheduling increases student achievement as measured by standardized test scores is inconclusive. However, Queen (2000) summarized the following positive outcomes of block scheduling:

- Students have access to a broader array of courses
- Fewer disciplinary referrals because of the reduced number of class changes
- Improved class attendance
- Increased numbers of students completing the Advanced Placement courses
- Advanced mastery of subject content
- Improved course grades
- More in-depth engagement of students
- More teacher/student interaction
- Reduced amount of instructional time spent on classroom administration
- Lessons extended and maintained with greater continuity
- Less fragmentation because students focus on fewer courses at a time
- Teachers have more planning time
- Absent students have fewer courses in which to make up work
- Students who need remedial assistance or who fail a course during the first semester have the opportunity to repeat the course during the second semester and still remain with their age mates, thus limiting the need for summer school, improving student self-esteem, and increasing the likelihood that students will graduate
- Advanced students have the opportunity for acceleration and enrichment
- Number of class preparations, record keeping, and grades by teachers reduced.
- Time available for extended laboratory investigation or classroom experiments
- Single-period field trips close to school possible
- Students have fewer homework assignments in one day
- Students suspended for a semester can still earn four credits for the year

Block scheduling has come under attack because the instructional time per class is reduced. The following demonstrates that the number of teaching minutes for the traditional two-semester approach to scheduling and the block approach to scheduling compare favorably.

Two-semester course-180 days-50 minutes each = 9,000 minutes instructional time
4x4 block course-90 days-90-minutes each = 8,100 minutes instructional time

However, if ten minutes of each class is devoted to administrative functions at the beginning of each period, 1,800 minutes are lost under the traditional schedule (180 days x 10 minutes)

whereas only 900 minutes are lost under the 4x4 block (90 days x 10 minutes). Because of the reduction in administrative tasks associated with course delivery, the actual instruction time for both the traditional and the block schedule format is 7,200 minutes.

A major drawback to block scheduling during periods of declining funding for education is that it costs more to implement. On a four-period block schedule in a secondary school, 75% of teachers are available to teach students during each period rather than 86% during a 7-period day. Schools who are successfully continuing with block scheduling during economic downturns are using teachers efficiently for parts of traditional planning time to intervene with struggling students, for enrichment teaching of advanced students, or for collaborative planning and/or grant writing.

Block scheduling is more likely to achieve its promise when teachers use a variety of classroom strategies. Superintendents of systems where block scheduling is in use or being considered can increase the likelihood that block scheduling achieves its promise by assuring that teachers receive both initial and continuing training so they can master a variety of instructional strategies, such as cooperative learning, inquiry method, group discussion, concept development, simulations, and seminars.

Multi-age Classrooms

Multi-age educational practices are grounded in a philosophy that holds that every child can learn and has the right to do so at his or her own pace, that learning is a continuum rather than a series of steps, that diversity is not only a reality but is something to be embraced, and that a classroom is a family of learners. By purposefully structuring a class to include a span of ages and to take advantage of the resulting diversity, proponents of multi-age grouping believe that students naturally become more accepting of one another's differences. There is an atmosphere of nurturing rather than one of competition in which children pressure one another to fit an arbitrary norm. The teacher finds himself or herself supporting each individual child as to their own complex set of needs rather than trying to lead a group of students to complete an age-based step.

Multi-age classrooms are purposefully designed to contain students with similar academic needs but whose ages differ. It differs from the combination or split-grade class where the teacher works separately with the two different grade level groups housed in one room. The multi-age room teacher allows all students in the group to develop at his/her own rate and to support one another's learning, much like a family with children of different ages.

Most often, multi-age classroom groups span two traditional grade levels with the students' ages differing by two to three years. Rarely does a multi-age classroom contain students who ages differ by more than three years. Although most commonly found in elementary schools, multi-age groupings in middle and secondary schools can be found for some subject areas.

Departmentalized Classes

Many upper elementary grades and almost all secondary classrooms in traditional public schools are organized along department lines. The academic core areas (English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) and electives form the basis of the departmentalized

school. In these instructional arrangements, teachers specialize in a particular subject and grade level. They develop activities and learning experiences to present the designated curriculum in that subject or department and for the assigned grade level. Students rotate daily, or by some other time increment, through a series of classes taught by the departmentalized teachers.

Departmentalization in secondary school is most often dictated by the teacher certification requirements for secondary school teaching. Departmentalization in elementary schools results from the amount of preparation needed in some content areas. In-depth study in elementary school science and social studies sometimes cannot be accomplished without departmentalizing for some or all subjects to allow teachers to maximize resources and preparation time.

Four Blocks Literacy Model

The Four Blocks Literacy Model is a research-based, multi-level, balanced literacy approach to primary school language arts instruction that includes four basic components: guided reading, self-selected reading, working with words, and writing. It was developed by Pat Cunningham and Dottie Hall of Wake Forest University in 1989. It is now used in thousands of elementary school classrooms in grades 1, 2, and sometimes 3.

Four Block ensures that all children are exposed to all four components each day, allows all children to experience success at challenging levels within a variety of grouping structures, and provides a strong phonics component in an appropriate context. This model can be implemented with any reading/language arts materials and is designed for beginning readers in grades 1 and 2 or struggling readers in grade 3.

The major components of the program, called “blocks,” are:

1. **Guided Reading:** Children are exposed to a wide range of literature experiences with a focus on building comprehension using a variety of reading formats and before- and after-reading activities.
2. **Self-Selected Reading:** Children are provided with opportunities to become lifelong readers through teacher read-alouds and reading self-selected books at their own level.
3. **Working With Words:** Children are empowered to read and spell words through interactive experiences that build phonemic awareness and help children to apply phonics.
4. **Writing:** Children develop essential writing skills through mini-lessons, modeled writing, collaborative writing, and independent writing.

Training workshops for teachers, several “4 Blocks Literacy” websites, and numerous publications provide resources for teachers who use the 4 Blocks Literacy approach in primary classrooms. The original authors of the program have also developed a pre-school/kindergarten level of the program called Building Blocks.

Distance Learning

Distance learning involves taking classes in locations other than the classroom or places where teachers present the lessons. Distance learning uses various forms of technology, especially television and computers, to provide educational materials and experiences to students. Small high schools may arrange for their students to take courses, such as those for advanced foreign

language instruction, by television. Many colleges and universities broadcast credit courses for students who live in isolated locations or who for other reasons cannot attend classes on campus.

Flipped Classroom

In the traditional classroom, the teacher provides instruction, and the follow-up takes place after class in the form of homework. In the flipped classroom, lectures are prerecorded. Students view video content online at home. In class the following day, students engage in activities based on what they learned in the previous evening's video. A key point is that the teacher is present as students engage in these activities, allowing the teacher to clear-up misconceptions and provide assistance as needed.

Full-Service Schools

A growing number of students bring social, physical, and emotional problems to school that greatly impact their capacity to learn. Many schools have responded by increasing special personnel (e.g., counselors, social workers) and programs (e.g., on-site medical clinics). Opponents of these services maintain that schools have a limited mission, that is, to teach academic skills. They are reluctant to fund additional operations that are seen as outside the scope of this responsibility.

Instructional Teams

Instructional teams or pods are a feature of many middle schools and some high schools. In these arrangements, large numbers of students enrolled in one school, or one grade level can be divided into smaller learning communities or teams. Typically, a team or group of students is taught by one group of teachers (academic core subjects) so that teachers become familiar with students' academic, social, and emotional needs. Using this method, a school of approximately 700 students could be divided into 6 instructional teams with each team of teachers teaching a group of approximately 125 students.

When the team of teachers for a particular group of students has common planning time, parents may schedule conferences conveniently, meeting with a students' teaching team as a group or individually. Team teachers can compare student progress and coordinate instruction more effectively using the instructional team arrangement.

13.7 Electives

Course offerings beyond the required academic core are most commonly referred to as elective courses. In most schools, students may select from among elective courses designated for the grade level or diploma path. Graduation requirements now include courses previously designated as electives (a fine arts course, a computer course, a career/technical course for AOD students, foreign languages, etc.). However, schools may offer more than one course to meet the requirement in each category. Students must select from electives that meet the graduation requirements when more than one of these types of courses is offered.

Elective courses may pose the greatest challenge when developing the secondary school's master schedule. When few students elect to take a particular course, one or few sections are

needed. The placement of such “singleton” courses in the schedule needs careful planning to avoid conflicts with other courses.

13.8 Scheduling Access to Support Services

Library/Media Centers

The library/media center is a fundamental part of the educational program of any successful school. An effective school library/media program provides:

- Equal and maximum access to information resources that extend the limited content of textbooks.
- Instruction for students in acquiring the research skills necessary for independent learning.
- Motivation for students to read and enjoy good literature.
- Encouragement for students to use a variety of media for a lifetime of learning and pleasure.

Each school’s philosophy and goals help to establish direction and unique qualities and services for the school’s library media program. Therefore, schools’ library/media programs may vary somewhat in components, resources, and/or services. However, accreditation standards and system policies describe common elements of successful library/media programs. Those common elements include:

- Equal access to information in the school library/media collection.
- Provision of supplementary materials to enhance the school curriculum.
- Integration of information skills instruction with classroom activities.
- Assistance to teachers in using a variety of media formats to improve instruction.
- Motivation for students to enjoy good literature and other worthwhile resources.
- Access to the use of current technologies to improve instructional effectiveness.

Each local school system is responsible for establishing policies and procedures for the selection of library/media materials. Selection procedures are most effective when they are a cooperative process involving teacher, administrators, parents, students and professionally trained library media center personnel. The American Association of School Librarians recommends the following as valuable objectives in the process of evaluation and selection of school library/media materials:

- To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
- To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
- To provide information that will enable students to develop critical thinking skills and make intelligent judgments in an objective manner.
- To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that students may develop the practice of making critical analyses of all media.

- To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users.

Certification requirements for school library/media specialists are set by State Board of Education regulations and accreditation standards.

Laboratories

Equipped science laboratories are required for the full implementation of the Alabama Science Course of Study. Instructional design features of the science curricula for grades 7-12 call for laboratory experiments and hands-on application of learning. Guidance is available from SDE specialists for design and equipment specifications for science labs. See the Classroom Improvement Section of the Office of Curriculum and Instruction of the Alabama State Department of Education.

Counseling/Guidance

Accreditation standards and State Board of Education directives indicate that all students should have the benefit of a functional guidance program. The design and components of school guidance and counseling programs in Alabama public schools is described in The Revised Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance State Model for Excellence in Alabama's Public Schools (The State Plan). The rationale for the services provided by counselors in Alabama public schools is based on the following tenets:

1. Each student has the right to respect and dignity as a human being and to the counseling and guidance services described in the State Model without regard to person, character, belief, or race.
2. Each student has the right to self-direction and self-development.
3. Each student has the right of choice and the responsibility for choices made.
4. Counseling and guidance programs are for all students and the purpose is to assist individuals in attaining their maximum potential in knowledge of self and others, as well as in educational and career planning.

A comprehensive counseling and guidance program is an essential component of the total instructional program through which the students have maximum opportunity for their development. In this regard, counseling and guidance involves a planned, purposeful, and sequential program of activities which begin in kindergarten and continue through the twelfth grade. Comprehensive counseling and guidance are intended to be habilitative as well as rehabilitative, active as well as reactive, preventive as well as remedial, and skill building as well as problem reductive.

The program components include:

1. A guidance curriculum designed to facilitate the total development of the student in all areas-knowledge of self and others, the ability to develop an educational plan that supports a career plan.
2. Individual planning with students and their parents to overcome difficulties in students' personal and social effectiveness, educational progress, career planning competencies and individual planning for the next steps, educational and occupational development.

3. Responsive services of counseling, consultation, and referral.
4. System support activities that promote the effective delivery of guidance services.

Counseling and guidance services must be comprehensive. Counselors work with all students to help them acquire competencies in the knowledge of self and others, educational, and career planning domains as students progress through their school years and prepare to enter the world of work. School counselors have unique preparation, grounded in the behavioral sciences, with training in clinical skills adapted to the school setting. Services provided by the counselor in elementary, middle/junior high, and high school are differentiated by tasks necessary for different stages of student growth.

Comprehensive counseling and guidance programs in Alabama collaborate with other school instructional programs by providing comprehensive Guidance Curriculum, Individual Planning, Responsive Services, and System Support components designed to assist students to acquire competencies in the following domains: Knowledge of Self and Others, Educational Planning, and Career Planning. The activities and services of the four program components should be comprehensive in nature and appropriate to the needs of the students. They may be delivered directly to students or indirectly through consultation and collaboration with other professional staff and/or with parents. The state Model recognizes the need for uniformity in basic student goals and competencies for all local education agency (LEA) programs in counseling and guidance. Local programs should include all of the elements, goals, and competencies recognized as essential in the total development of all students.

A complete compendium of the guidance and counseling program curriculum by grade level for K-12 Alabama schools may be found at the State Department of Education website.

13.9 Virtual, Online and Blended Learning Models

Blended Learning

Face-to-Face Model. This is the model in most classes in traditional educational settings. Certain students will be given opportunities to participate in any different forms of learning. It allows for students who are struggling or working above grade level to progress at their own pace using technology in the classrooms or for the use of technology to collect real time assessment data to drive instruction. It also allows for the integration of technology into traditional classwork and homework and project-based learning activities.

Rotation Model. This model allows for students to rotate between different stations on a fixed schedule- either working online or spending face-to face time with the teachers. Some research results indicate that when students are allowed to rotate between learning stations using adaptive learning software in a traditional classroom setting, they become more active learners and often challenge themselves to work harder and learn material that has yet to be introduced. Student experiences might include activities such as small-group or full class instruction, group projects, individual tutoring, and pencil and paper assignments. The students learn mainly on campus, except for homework assignments. Several versions of the rotation model exist including the following:

- **Individual rotation-** a course or subject in which each student has an individualized plan of study and does not necessarily rotate to each available station or modality. The teacher and/or a data driven software program sets an individual student schedule.
- **Station rotation-** course or subject in which students experience the rotation model within a contained classroom or group of classrooms. The Station rotation model differs from the individual rotation model because students rotate through all the stations, not only those on their custom schedules.
- **Lab rotation-** a course or subject in which students rotate to online-learning stations.

Flipped classroom. A course of subject in which students participate in online learning off-site in place of traditional homework and then attend class for face-to-face, teacher - guided practice or projects is a flipped classroom. The primary delivery of content and instruction is online, which differentiates a flipped classroom from students who are merely doing homework practice online at night.

Flex Model. Material is primarily delivered online in this model. Teachers are in the room to provide on-site support as needed, learning is self-guided, as students learn and practice new concepts in a digital environment, There is a large range of levels of support in this model depending on the content, course or subject. Some courses offer heavy teacher support while others offer some level of staff support to monitor student progress

A La Carte Model. A model in which students take one or more courses entirely online with an online teacher of record is the A La Carte model. This model may be used off-campus or during the traditional school day. It differs from full-time and Enriched Virtual Learning models because it is not a full-time experience.

Online Course. A course that a student takes entirely online to accompany other experiences a student is having on campus is an online course and the teacher is an online teacher. The student may take this course from home, off site or on campus. This differs from a full-time online learning model because it is not an exclusively online experience. Students choose to take some courses A La Carte, and others face-to-face on campus. Students attend school in a traditional environment, but they also opt to supplement their learning through online courses offered remotely. In order for this method of blended learning to be successful, students must be self-motivated. It is ideal for a student who wants to take additional courses, or who has interest in a subject that is not offered in the general course catalog.

Online School. This model is at the opposite end of the spectrum from the face-to-face delivery model. Students work remotely and material is primarily delivered via an online platform. Although face-to-face “check-ins” are optional, students can usually chat with teachers online if they have questions. This model of learning is ideal for students who need more flexibility and independence in their daily schedules. This approach requires a student to be highly motivated or self-driven.

Full Online School. All courses are taken virtually in a school that is fully online.

Enriched Virtual Course (Hybrid) Model. The hybrid models involve students taking courses in full virtual school and in some face-to-face classes.

14. SELECTED CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

14.1 Education Partnership with Economic/Workforce Development

The ALSDE Career and Technical Education/Workforce Development is focused on helping students achieve success through leadership development, career awareness, and academic excellence. To meet the demands of a growing state economy, partnerships have formed between government, education, and industry to build Alabama's workforce. Partnership organizations include the Alabama Workforce Council, the development of AlabamaWorks to unify our workforce focus, AIDT, and the Alabama Department of Commerce.

Alabama Workforce Council - <https://alabamaworks.com/alabama-workforce-council/>

Created at the recommendation of Governor Bentley's Career Readiness Task Force to foster collaboration between government, industry and education, the Alabama Workforce Council is comprised of educators and business and industry executives from throughout the state tasked with ensuring that all Alabamians have the capacity to pursue their educational goals and realize long-term career opportunities.

The Alabama Workforce Council (AWC) is comprised of business executives from some of the most important industries and organizations in the state of Alabama. The Council's goal is to facilitate collaboration between government and industry to help Alabama develop a sustainable, top-notch workforce that is competitive on a global scale. Since its inception, the Council has been committed to analyzing important issues related to workforce development and making sound recommendations that will help to create more and better opportunities for all Alabamians.

AlabamaWorks! - <https://alabamaworks.com/>

In the fall of 2015, the Alabama Workforce Council undertook a statewide effort to understand the structure, function, organization and perceptions of the Alabama workforce system. The results showed that Alabama is endowed with plentiful state, educational, business support and other service organizations that provide training, placement and informational resources that could better serve business, industry and the public if they were organized in an effective network and unified under a common vision, mission and brand.

This new and unified system resulted from hundreds of hours of input from workforce and educational professionals, industry leadership, families and students. Thousands of Alabamians participated in-person and online in developing the charter for AlabamaWorks. AlabamaWorks stands for opportunity, innovation, accountability and inclusion with the vision of a better future for Alabama in which communities, business, and industry are supported in a collaborative process to build prosperity through the opportunity of meaningful work and a growing economy. Our mission is to recruit, train, and empower a highly skilled workforce driven by business and industry needs and to be the competitive advantage for Alabama's economic growth. Whether you're an employer, a job seeker or a student, AlabamaWorks is the springboard for your success and promises to provide profitability and economic growth by creating opportunities for success and an improved quality of life for Alabamians.

AIDT - <https://www.aidt.edu/>

AIDT, an independent agency under the supervision and oversight of the Secretary of Commerce, encourages economic development through job-specific training. Training services are offered in many areas, at no cost, to new and expanding businesses throughout the State.

Alabama Career Development Model: https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/CTE_2022106_ACDM-2022_V1.0.pdf

14.2 High Reliability Schools

The Marzano High Reliability Schools framework does not add a new initiative to school efforts. Many schools are already implementing a wide range of effective initiatives, and many educators are already practicing research-based strategies. The HRS framework does not replace professional learning communities, the Art and Science of Teaching framework, teacher evaluation and development, sound curriculum (including those aligned with the Common Core State Standards), vocabulary instruction, instruction in critical thinking and reasoning skills, formative assessment, standards-based grading and reporting systems, or student mastery systems. Instead, this framework shows how best practices work together and provides indicators to empower districts and schools to measure their progress on attaining five increasing levels of reliability:



Using the framework and indicators, districts and schools can drive permanent, positive, and significant impacts on student achievement by synthesizing multiple complex initiatives into one harmonious system.

<https://www.marzanoresources.com/hrs/high-reliability-schools>

ALSDE Proficiency Scales Development

Facilitators from Marzano Resources assisted ARI specialists in narrowing the number of standards that utilize proficiency scales. Here are the criteria that were utilized for determining which standards would be included when writing Proficiency Scales.

1. Endurance - Knowledge and skills that will last beyond a class period or course
2. Leverage - Knowledge and skills that cross over into many domains of learning
3. Readiness - Knowledge and skills important to subsequent content or courses

4. Teacher judgment - Knowledge of content area and ability to identify more- and less important content
5. Assessment connected - Student opportunity to learn content that will be assessed in a high-stakes assessment

Other Important Information

6. The Essential Standards that have been identified by the Literacy Task Force are included as Critical or Supporting Standards.
7. In grades K-3, at least one standard from 5 + 2 (Oral Language, Phonological Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Writing) is represented by at least one standard.
8. In grades 4-5, at least one standard from phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing is included.
9. The remainder of the standards are represented by the weight on the content needing mastery at that grade level (e.g., Phonological Awareness will probably be more highly represented by the number of standards included in kindergarten and first grade and comprehension standards may be more represented in fifth grade).

Alabama ELA K-5 Proficiency Scales - https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/ARI_202316_ELA-K-5-Proficiency-Scales-Cover-and-Contents_V1.0.pdf

Examples of Standards-Referenced Reporting - <https://www.usd259.org/Page/20040>

15. RESOURCES: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AAA: *Alabama Alternate Assessment*; administered to a special education student whose IEP team determines the student is unable to participate in state assessments, with or without accommodations.

Advanced Placement (AP): Classes at the high school level that teach college-level material. General course descriptions are available from the College Board for high school teachers interested in such classes.

Annual Measurable Objective (AMO): state's established annual requirement for the percentage of students scoring proficient or higher in a grade and subject.

Articulation: Describes course content and performance expectation linkages from one grade level or one school level to the next (Guthrie & Reed, 1991).

Assessment/Evaluation/Measurement/Testing (Oliva, 2001)

Evaluation: A continuous process of collecting and interpreting information in order to assess decisions made in designing a learning system.

Assessment: Frequently used interchangeably with evaluation to denote the general process of appraisal.

Measurement: The means of determining the degree of achievement of a particular competency.

Testing: The use of instruments for measuring achievement.

Authentic Assessment: (also called performance assessment, alternative assessment) Authentic assessment is any type of assessment that requires students to demonstrate skills and competencies that realistically represent problems and situations likely to be encountered in daily life. Students are required to produce ideas, to integrate knowledge, and to complete tasks that have real-world applications. Such approaches require the person making the assessment to use human judgment in the application of criterion-referenced standards. Authentic assessment is a contrast to traditional educational testing and evaluation, which focuses on reproducing information such as memorized dates, terms, or formulas.

Authentic Learning: The curriculum goal in which students acquire real-world skills and knowledge by developing their abilities to read, write, solve problems, and apply concepts in a manner that prepares them for their lives beyond school (Strong, Silver & Perini, 2001).

AYP: Adequate Yearly Progress; used to describe if a school or system has met its annual accountability goal.

Baseline: state's established beginning point for percentage of students that must be proficient

Bilingual Education: An educational approach involving the use of two languages of instruction at some point in the student's schooling (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003).

Bilingual Education Act (1968): Also known as Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (PL 89-10), acknowledged that the educational needs of children who are LEP cannot be met effectively by traditional schooling in which English is the only medium of instruction. This landmark legislation was revised in 1974, 1978, 1984, and 1988 and was part of the Improving America's School Act of 1994 (PL 103-382). This legislation provided for funding to state education agencies and local school systems to encourage the development and implementation of bilingual education programs designed to meet the needs of LEP students (Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999, p. 19).

Brain-based Learning

Emerging insights from neuroscience regarding how the human brain functions are generating considerable interest among educators (see www.ascd.org for information about professional educators who have formed groups around this topic). For example, Given (2002) used the brain's natural learning systems (emotional, social, cognitive, physical, reflective) as a framework for educational practice. In general, however, translating findings from neuroscience into educational practice is spotty and many argue that such applications are premature.

Career Education (290-080-020-.01) The Alabama Career Education State Plan, 1978-1983, adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to P.L. 95-207, is hereby incorporated by this rule and made a part of the Rules of the State Board of Education. A copy of the state plan titled, "Alabama Career Education State Plan", may be obtained from the State Superintendent of Education, State Department of Education.

Common Concepts of Curriculum (Posner, 1995)

- (1) **Scope and Sequence:** The depiction of curriculum as a matrix of objectives assigned to successive grade levels (i.e., sequence) and grouped according to a common theme (i.e., scope).
- (2) **Syllabus:** A plan for an entire course, typically including rationale, topics, resources, and evaluation.
- (3) **Content Outline:** A list of topics covered organized in outline form.
- (4) **Textbooks:** Instructional materials used as the guide for classroom instruction.
- (5) **Course of Study:** A series of courses that the students must complete.
- (6) **Planned Experiences:** All experiences students have that are planned by the school, whether academic, athletic, emotional, or social.

Planning Elements (Posner, 1995)

- (1) **Objectives:** What knowledge, skills, or attitudes should students acquire?

- (2) *Rationale or educational philosophy behind the curriculum:* Why should they learn this? What is the value of this?
- (3) *Content:* What content (i.e., what topics, concepts, skills, etc.) should be covered?
- (4) *Characteristics of target audience:* Who is this for? (consider interests, abilities, background knowledge.)
- (5) *Activities:* What should they do?
- (6) *Materials:* What resources will they need?
- (7) *Sequencing principles:* In what order should this be done?
- (8) *Schedule:* How long will each part take?
- (9) *Teacher training and attitudes:* What do the teachers need to know, be able to do, and be committed to?
- (10) *Evaluation:* How will success be determined? What will count as success?
- (11) *Administrative structure, school facilities, and financial constraints:* How will it be implemented in a school?
- (12) *Other parts of curriculum:* How will it related to other subjects?

Confidence Interval: a method of meeting AYP by testing whether or not a proficiency index is statistically different from the goal

Conventional Schools: Schools that tend to make improvements only after a majority of other schools have tested and demonstrated that the improvements work. Conventional schools seldom pioneer improvements.

Cooperative Learning: An instructional technique diminishing competition among students while increasing the use of democratic learning communities (Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 2001).

Curriculum Alignment: Refers to the relationship among the written, taught, and tested curriculum. When curriculum is truly aligned, school systems define the curriculum and write it down; teachers use these curriculum documents to plan and deliver instruction; students are taught in a manner that enables them to reach mastery of the curriculum; and students are then able to demonstrate that mastery on teacher-made tests and system, state, and national assessments. (English and Larson, 1996 in Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 2001, p. 73).

Curriculum Compacting: The collapsing of time for sequenced material (and even the elimination of assignments and material), permitting students to master or demonstrate mastery in a much shorter time than usual. Curriculum compacting is often used with the gifted student in order to provide further, deeper enrichment activities (Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999, p. 216).

Curriculum Development: The process of providing learning experiences that students encounter under the direction of the school.

Curriculum Diffusion: The spontaneous and unplanned spread of new ideas. Curriculum diffusion occurs when groups or individuals who know something about an innovation communicate about it.

Curriculum Dissemination: Curriculum dissemination refers to intentional efforts to inform individuals about an innovation and gain their interest in it.

Curriculum Evaluation: The phase of the development in which the results are assessed and successes of both the learners and the programs are determined.

Curriculum Goal: A purpose or end stated in general terms without criteria of achievement. Curriculum planners wish students to accomplish the goal as a result of exposure to segments or all of a program of a particular school or school system. A curriculum goal is derived from a statement of philosophy, defined aims of education, and assessment of needs.

Curriculum Implementation: The translation of plans into action, thereby transforming the realm of curriculum into the realm of instruction.

Curriculum Objectives: A purpose or end stated in specific, measurable terms. Curriculum planners wish students to accomplish it as a result of exposure to segments or all of a program of the particular school or school system.

Curriculum Planning: The preliminary phase of curriculum development when the curriculum workers make decisions and take actions to establish the plan that teachers and students will carry out. Planning is the thinking or design phase.

Curriculum Standards: During the last decades of the 20th century, a growing national consensus emerged regarding the need for state standards. By 1993, 45 states had developed or were developing curriculum frameworks (Pechman & Laguarda, 1993). The frameworks were moving from very general guidelines to more prescriptive mandates accompanied by state-developed tests. Glatthorn (2000) clarifies the language associated with state standards.

Content Standard: Statement of what the learner is expected to be able to do, in one subject. Example (Language Arts): Uses the reading process to analyze and understand types of literary texts.

Benchmark: A more specific component of a standard, usually for a particular grade or grade level. Example (Language Arts, Grades 6-8): Understands the features of myths.

Objective: A component of a benchmark, usually the focus of a given lesson. Example (Language Arts, Grade 6): Identifies the features of a mythical hero.

Disaggregate: breakdown by subgroup

Displaced Student: student who was displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina or some subsequent natural disaster or disastrous event.

Distance Education: Any instruction delivered through television, videotapes, or computer (Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999).

Developmental Appropriateness (Bredekamp, 1987)

Age Appropriateness: There are predictable sequences of growth and change that occur in children during the first 9 years of life. All areas of growth and development—physical, emotional, social, and cognitive—have been studied and knowledge of these changes “provide a framework form which teachers prepare the learning environment and plan appropriate experiences (p. 2).

Individual Appropriateness: This includes variables such as personality, learning style, and family background. Knowledge of the individual differences regarding these variables, combined with the age variables of physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth, should contribute to well-designed educational environments for children. Attention also needs to be paid to “tradition, the subject matter of the disciplines, social or cultural values, and parental desires” to plan developmentally appropriate practices (p. 2).

Characteristics of a developmentally appropriate curriculum for young children:

- Accommodates all areas of growth and development—physical, emotional, social, and cognitive—in an integrated manner.
- Bases curriculum development on teachers’ observations of children.
- Emphasizes active learning.
- Consists of activities and materials that are concrete, real, and relevant to the lives of young children
- Provides a range of appropriate activities and materials wide enough to encompass the age and individual differences within the group.
- Includes robust activities and materials, that is, children can be engaged at difference levels of difficulty and complexity.
- Encourages children to choose from a variety of activities and materials.
- Provides multicultural and nonsexist activities and materials for children of all ages.
- Balances active and quiet activities.
- Includes outdoor activities as part of the regular program.

Disaggregated Data: Addresses gender, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status etc. in ways that help educators compare results across categories. A carefully examining ensures that educators understand the impact of any measure on various sub-groups of students (Hirsh, 2002).

Diagnostic Tests: Given to students, normally by highly trained professionals, in order to determine specific learning problems (Hoy & Hoy, 2003).

Effective Schools Research: Research conducted among inner city schools in the 1970s and 1980s proving that some inner-city schools were more effective than others. Schools using *effective schools' practices* (high expectations, time on task, frequent assessment and feedback, and instructional leadership) tended to produce students with better habits of attendance, behavior, and achievement. *Effective schools research* tended to disprove the long held 1960s' theories of James Coleman that a major cause of poor students' achievement was poverty, minority and inner-city status (Kaiser, 1996).

Effective schools' practices include:

- Decentralized school governance, often site-based management
- Shared decision-making among principal, teachers, and parents
- Principal serves as chief executive officer and instructional leader
- High parental involvement
- High expectations of student achievement by principal, parents, and teachers
- Increased time on task devoted to teaching and learning
- Orderly school climate and clean facilities
- Frequent evaluation of achievement and feedback to students, teachers, and parents
- Staff development closely linked to reform goals

Effective schools' outcomes include increases in:

- Student attendance
- Teacher attendance
- Principal and teacher job satisfaction
- Student and parent satisfaction with school
- Better student behavior
- Better teacher performance
- Better student achievement
- Trust among principal, teachers, students, and parents

Effective schools' outcomes include decreases in:

- Students' misbehavior
- Graffiti and vandalism
- Violence
- Student failure and dropout

ESL: English-as-a-Second Language; a systematic, comprehensive approach to teaching English to students whose native language is not English. It is usually an important component of a bilingual program, but it can also exist by itself (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003).

Enrichment: A qualitatively different set of additional educational experiences provided to gifted and talented students that typically broaden the area of study (Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999).

Every Student Succeeds Act ESSA: 2015 Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Inclusion: The process of placing special needs students in the regular classroom in order to provide meaningful and substantive educational opportunities with dignity (Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999).

Individual Education Program (IEP): The annual document that must be written to document the program of study for children classified as having special needs. Before a child can receive special education services, an IEP must be developed by the multidisciplinary team of individuals within the school, or other associated agencies that represent, for example, health, speech pathology, and psychological services (Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999, p. 216).

Interim 2% Flexibility for Special Education: a method of meeting AYP by adjusting the percent proficient for the special education group if this group is the only group that does not make AYP for a school or system.

Lau v. Nichols (1974) U.S. Supreme Court decision requiring schools to provide English language instruction to non-native English speakers

Mainstreaming: A universal term to denote placement of exceptional students in the regular classroom. Where students with disabilities are placed in the general education setting where students without disabilities receive their education. At the onset of the mainstreaming movement, special needs students typically spent a portion of their day in the special education classroom (resource room) and the other portion of their day, depending on the severity of the disability, in regular education classrooms (Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999, p. 216).

Mastery Learning: An approach to accommodating students who have the ability to move quickly through material. It is less formal than curriculum compacting (Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999).

Multimedia: Using audio, text, pictures, video and other media so that students with a variety of learning styles gain knowledge and apply it to solving problems (Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 2001).

N-2 Rule for Small Schools: for schools and school systems that do not meet the minimum requirement of 40 in the aggregate; required to test at least two fewer students than their enrollment in order to meet the participation requirement.

Norm-Referenced Tests: Cover a wide range of general objectives in measuring overall student achievement across a large number of participants (Hoy & Hoy, 2003).

Partially Proficient: partially meets academic content standards (Level II).

Participation Rate: percentage of students participating in state assessments

Policies: Broad guidelines relied upon by organizations to direct individuals and groups toward goal attainment (Kowalski, 1999).

Problem-Based Learning: A four-step instructional strategy of engaging in problem solving: 1) forming a hypothesis, 2) collecting information to test the hypothesis, 3) drawing conclusions based on gathered information, and 4) reflecting on the process of drawing the conclusions (Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 2001). This problem-solving model calls upon students' skills in analysis, comparison, induction, and deduction and the higher-order thinking skills found in Bloom's taxonomy.

Proficient: meets academic content standards (Level III)

Proficiency Index: reporting metric that allows test scores to be combined across grades in determining AYP.

Progressive Education: Early twentieth century educational reforms that created student centered rather than subject centered schools, experimented with activity-based core curriculum, and advocated interdisciplinary studies.

Pull-out Programs: Programs that pull special education children out from regular education classes. Pull-out programs are offered, more than likely, in a resource room where a child with special needs can receive more intensive services than would be available in a regular education classroom (Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999, p. 216).

Safe Harbor: a method of meeting AYP if a subgroup decreases by at least 10% from the preceding year those not proficient, meets the 95% participation rate, and makes progress on the additional academic indicator

Scoring Rubric: A checklist or rating scale delineating specific feedback about elements to determine the quality of a performance (Hoy & Hoy, 2003).

School Improvement: used to describe whether a school or school system has met its accountability goals over time.

School Organization: Grouping and arranging curriculum, instruction, students, and staff for the purpose of educating students.

School Reform: Act of changing school procedures to improve student achievement by removing ineffective practices, faults, and abuses.

School Restructuring: Act of rearranging a school's governance, curriculum, instruction, operations, communications, and organizational relationships among administration, staff, students, parents, central office, and community in order to implement school reform.

School Transformation: Act of making thorough changes in the external structure and operation of a school to create reform, for example site-based management or developing schools within-schools.

School Transmutation: Complete change in the internal as well as external structure and operation of a school, for example, to create reform through core curriculum, interdisciplinary instruction, and team teaching as well as site-based management or developing schools within-schools.

Subgroup: distinct group within a larger group; Alabama identifies the following subgroups: economically disadvantaged (free/reduced lunch), major racial/ethnic groups, special educational students, and limited-English proficient students

Tier I school: Lowest achieving five (5) Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring based on proficiency for past three years; and Title I high schools with a graduation rate below 60% for past three years; and Title I eligible elementary schools in the bottom 20% of all schools based on proficiency. The schools identified in this portion of the bottom 20% can be no higher achieving than the highest performing school in the lowest achieving five Title I schools.

Tier II school: Lowest achieving five (5) Title I eligible, but not served, secondary schools based on proficiency for past three years; and Title I eligible, but not served, high schools with a graduation rate below 60% for past three years; and Title I eligible secondary schools in the bottom 20% of all schools based on proficiency. The schools identified in this portion of the bottom 20% can be no higher achieving than the highest performing school in the lowest achieving five Title I eligible schools.

Tier III school: Remaining Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring and not in Tier I; and remaining schools (elementary or secondary) in the bottom 20% based on proficiency and do not qualify as Tier I or Tier II schools.

Uniform Averaging: a method of meeting AYP by averaging the proficiency index of the most recent three years, including the current year's proficiency index.

16. RESOURCES: PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

ACTE -- Association for Career and Technical Education <http://www.acteonline.org>

The Association for Career and Technical Education is the largest national education association dedicated to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for careers? This area offers information about the history, mission and structure of ACTE, as well as details on our annual awards program and information about how you can participate in the annual observance of Career and Technical Education Week.

AASA – American Association of School Administrators <http://www.aasa.org/>

AASA, founded in 1865, is the professional organization for over 14,000 educational leaders across America and in many other countries. AASA's mission is to support and develop effective school system leaders who are dedicated to the highest quality public education for all children. The four major focus areas for AASA are:

- Improving the condition of children and youth
- Preparing schools and school systems for the 21st century
- Connecting schools and communities
- Enhancing the quality and effectiveness of school leaders

About 75 percent of today's superintendents belong to AASA.

ASCD – Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development <http://www.ascd.org/>

Founded in 1943, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) is an international, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that represents 160,000 educators from more than 135 countries and 66 affiliates. ASCD was initially envisioned to represent curriculum and supervision issues. Over the years, the focus has changed. This organization now addresses *all aspects of effective teaching and learning*—such as professional development, educational leadership, and capacity building. About 40 percent of today's superintendents belong to ASCD.

NSBA – National School Boards Association <https://www.nsba.org>

The National School Boards Association serves as the national voice for school board members and public-school children. NSBA works closely with its Federation Member leaders in formulating its advocacy agenda and is positioned as a national leader in the formulation and implementation of federal and national education policy. NSBA's advocacy springs from one essential conviction: Education of public-school children must be the nation's top priority. This organization is committed to ensuring that the local school board voice is heard in every public policy forum in which education decisions are made or influenced.

NAEYC -- National Association for the Education of Young Children <http://www.naeyc.org>

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for all children from birth through age 8. NAEYC is committed to becoming an increasingly high performing and inclusive organization.

Founded in 1926, NAEYC is the world's largest organization working on behalf of young children with nearly 100,000 members, a national network of over 300 local, state, and regional Affiliates, and a growing global alliance of like-minded organizations.

SSA – School Superintendents of Alabama – <http://ssaonline.org>

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS of Alabama (SSA) is the professional association for school system executives and their leadership teams.

SSA's purpose is to give superintendents:

- Quality Professional Learning** Opportunities
- A Leading Voice in **Sound Public Policy** Development and Advocacy
- Meaningful **Collaboration and Networking**

School Superintendents of Alabama is the only association in Alabama for all school superintendents and members of their leadership team. There are approximately 1525 members, including 138 public school systems, individual, retired, associate, and business members.

SSA is a professional non-profit organization comprised of superintendents and school system leaders from across Alabama who are committed to improving education for Alabama's children. SSA has a full-time office staff who represent your viewpoint year-round in a definitive voice to the Legislature, Governor's Office, and other policy making bodies including the State Board of Education and keep the SSA membership informed on important issues.

TESOL – Teachers of English as a Second Language, Inc. <http://www.tesol.org>

TESOL is a global professional association for English language educators involved in the teaching of English as a second language. The organization establishes and publishes standards for English teaching, provides professional development for educators, and serves as a resource for educators.

AACTE: <https://aacte.org/about-aacte>

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and its Alabama affiliate provides research, publications, and networking information for teacher education and teacher preparation programs. An additional resource from this organization is their collection of education policies related to teachers and teacher education issues. It is available from AACTE Education Policy Clearinghouse at www.edpolicy.org.

ACTE -- (<http://www.acteonline.org>)

The Association for Career and Technical Education is the largest national education association dedicated to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for careers? This area offers information about the history, mission and structure of ACTE, as well as details on our annual awards program and information about how you can participate in the annual observance of Career and Technical Education Week. The Alabama affiliate for this organization (Alabama ALACATE can be contacted through <https://www.alacte.org/>

Alabama Educational Technology Conference <https://www.alacte.org/general-information.html>

ALACTE Conference is Alabama's annual Educational Technology Conference providing educators and administrators a myriad of professional development opportunities.

ALEX -- Alabama Learning Exchange <https://alex.state.al.us/>

AVL -- Alabama Virtual Library -- <http://www.avl.lib.al.us/>

The Alabama Virtual Library provides all students, teachers, and citizens of the State of Alabama with online access to essential library and information resources.

Best Practices Center: <http://www.bestpracticescenter.org>

The Best Practices Center was established in mid-1999 by A+ as a public/private partnership to focus on improving student achievement by raising the quality of teaching through professional development. The concept of the Best Practices Center emerged during the work of the Task Force on Teaching and Student Achievement, organized by A+ to study and make recommendations about ways that the state could improve student achievement in Alabama. In the report, "Teaching and Learning: Meeting the Challenge of High Standards," the Task Force on Student Achievement recommended that a statewide "Teaching Innovations Center" be established to "help provide schools with the ready access they need to information, training and networking opportunities" to achieve high quality classroom teaching. The Best Practices Center publishes a quarterly journal "Working Toward Excellence (WTE)" that highlights successful programs and practices in Alabama school systems.

ERIC – Educational Resources Information Center <http://eric.ed.gov/>

FindLaw -- <http://www.findlaw.com/>

Cases and Codes, legal subjects, legal forms, legal dictionary, U. S. Supreme Court, U. S. Code, Constitutional

Institute for Education Science (IES)-- <http://www.ed.gov/about/pubs/intro/innovations.html>

The Innovations in Education book series is published by the Office of Innovation and

Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. The books detail how school systems around the country have put the *No Child Left Behind Act* to work. Titles include *Creating Strong System School Choice Programs*, *Successful Charter Schools*, *Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification*, *Creating Strong Supplement Education Services Programs*, *Creating Successful Magnet Schools Programs*, *Improving Teacher Quality*, and *Innovative Pathways to School Leadership*.

National Association of Elementary School Principals

<https://www.naesp.org/> Resources on inclusion and diversity, including teaching strategies

National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS): <http://www.nbpts.org>

NBPTS is recognized for developing the professional standards that define what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. NBPTS also administers National Board Certification, a voluntary assessment program that certifies educators who meet those standards.

National Center for Education Statistics -- <http://nces.ed.gov/>

NCES is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data that are related to education in the United States and other nations

NFES – National Forum on Education Statistics <http://www.nces.ed.gov/forum/>

NSDC – National Staff Development Council <http://www.nsd.org>

PTA -- <http://www.pta.org/>

Southern Regional Education Board -- <http://www.sreb.org/>

SREB helps government and education leaders work cooperatively to advance education and, in doing so, improve the social and economic life of the region.

Visible Learning – What Works Best for Teachers (John Hattie) – <https://visible-learning.org/>

Visible Learning means an enhanced role for teachers as they become evaluators of their own teaching. According to John Hattie Visible Learning and Teaching occurs when teachers see learning through the eyes of students and help them become their own teachers.

Wallace Foundation--<https://www.wallacefoundation.org/pages/default.aspx>

Resources about school leadership, learning enrichment, the arts, and other current issues.

17. RESOURCES: ADDITIONAL DIGITAL RESOURCES AND SITES

LINKS TO ALSDE RESOURCES:

Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rBa5vBRjxZCd-u_03myLr4tf8KccjPg/view

Alabama Achieves Strategic Plan - <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/ACHIEVES2020-V20.pdf>

AMSTI4AL - <https://www.amsti.org/>

Literacy Act Implementation Guide - <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Implementation-Guidance-of-the-Alabama-Literacy-Act-for-English-Learners.pdf>

Dyslexia Resource Guide - <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/DRG-10-16-2020.pdf>

Waiver Application - https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/COMM_2022331_Alabama-State-Department-of-Education-Waiver-Options-and-Request-Procedures-TEAMS_V1.0.pdf

EL Toolkit - <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/EL-Tool-Kit.pdf>

Alabama Coaching Framework - https://region7comprehensivecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/8-b374f2fd02733c6aec06c025c48a190f/2020/11/AL_Coaching_Framework_FINAL.pdf

ALSDE State Selection Process: Textbooks & High Quality Instructional Materials - <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/content-areas-specialty/textbook-adoption-and-procurement/>

FAFSA - <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Alabama-Free-Application-for-Federal-Student-Aid-FAFSA-Completion-Project-and-Non-Participation-Waiver-for-the-Graduating-Class-of-2022.pdf>

Alabama Dual Enrollment Equivalency List - <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2021-2022-Dual-Enrollment-Equivalency-List.pdf>

School Board: Boardmanship Publication – <https://www.alabamaschoolboards.org/training/boardmanship-basics>

School Improvement Planning Resources - <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/school-improvement/>

ALSDE, Federal Programs Resources - <https://www.alabamaachieves.org/federal-programs/>

Cognia Support for Alabama Schools - <https://alsde.onlinehelp.cognia.org/>

Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program



Assessment	Description	Link
<i>ACT with Writing</i>	The <i>ACT with Writing</i> Test Webinar	The ACT with Writing Webinar
<i>ACT with Writing</i>	ACT Performance Level Descriptors -Mathematics	Mathematics ACT PLD
<i>ACT with Writing</i>	ACT Performance Level Descriptors- Science	Science ACT PLD
<i>Scantron</i>	Quizzes4All	Scantron Quizzes4All
<i>Scantron</i>	Scantron and Classwork: You Have Your Test Scores, Now What?	Scantron and Classwork
<i>ACAP Summative</i>	In this presentation, viewers are introduced to the purpose and goals of the Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs). The PLDs are anchored by the <i>Alabama Course of Study Standards</i> which provide a starting point to make the critical connections between instruction and assessment. PLDs convey the information about the knowledge and skills required of students as well as how the knowledge is assumed to be attained across the levels. Viewers are guided as to how the PLDs group students on the assessment performance levels. An overview of each of the Performance Levels is provided for the content areas of ELA, Math, and Science. The relationship of PLDs between the standard setting process, determination of cut scores, reporting and instruction is outlined.	ACAP Summative: Performance Level Descriptors ACAP Summative: Performance Level Descriptors PowerPoint PLD Activities referred to in the presentation: - ELA - Mathematics ACAP Performance Level Descriptors

Assessment	Description	Link
<i>ACAP Summative</i>	This presentation focuses on the Item Specifications that are available for all grades assessed on the <i>ACAP Summative</i> . Item Specifications are mainly used as a guide by item writers to define content limits, Depth of Knowledge Levels (DOK), item types and specific vocabulary that may be used in the development of items. A summary is provided in each content-specific specification that includes sample item stems and their related keys, standards, item types, and DOK levels. New this year are appendices for each content area with sample items that are representative of items appearing on the <i>ACAP Summative</i> . ELA Item Specifications also include a Text Dependent Writing (TDW) item with actual Alabama student responses at each score point.	ACAP Summative: Item Specifications
<i>ACAP Alternate</i>	In this presentation, viewers are introduced to the purpose and goals of the Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs). The PLDs are anchored by the <i>Alabama Alternate Achievement Standards</i> which provide a starting point to make the critical connections between instruction and assessment. PLDs convey the information about the knowledge and skills required of students as well as how the knowledge is assumed to be attained across the levels. Viewers are guided as to how the PLDs group students on the assessment performance levels. An overview of each of the Performance Levels is provided for the content areas of ELA, Math, and Science. The relationship of PLDs between the standard setting process, determination of cut scores, reporting and instruction is outlined.	ACAP Alternate: Performance Level Descriptors ACAP Alternate: Performance Level Descriptors PowerPoint PLD Activities referred to in the presentation: - Alternate ELA - Alternate Mathematics ACAP Performance Level Descriptors
<i>ACAP Summative</i>	Take a deep-dive into the <i>Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program</i> (ACAP) English language arts text-dependent writing (TDW) task from creation to scoring. Become familiar with all the components of text-dependent writing, including how reading comprehension, writing, and language are all measurable aspects of the task. Explore the Alabama educator involvement in creating, reviewing, and even scoring of student responses for the TDW. Participation is encouraged through a simulated scoring exercise with in-depth rubric discussions and review of sample student responses. Discuss how the expectations of TDW correlate to students being career and college ready.	ACAP Summative: ELA Text-Dependent Writing

Assessment	Description	Link
ACAP Summative	Connecting instruction to the <i>ACAP Summative</i> English language arts assessment is explored with a focus on the Alabama Educator Instructional Supports. Examples of question types are shared, including TDW and technology-enhanced questions that deepen the connection between instruction and assessment. A summary of the <i>ACAP Summative</i> is presented, as well as information about the test development process, educator involvement, test quality, and bias and sensitivity concerns. Participation is encouraged through activities including instructional strategies, standards alignment, complexity levels, and the rationales behind incorrect answer choices.	ACAP Summative: Connecting Instruction to Assessment--English Language Arts
ACAP Summative	Connecting instruction to the <i>ACAP Summative</i> math assessment is explored with a focus on the Alabama Educator Instructional Supports. Examples of question types are shared, including technology-enhanced questions that deepen the connection between instruction and assessment. A summary of the <i>ACAP Summative</i> is presented, as well as information about the test development process, educator involvement, test quality, and bias and sensitivity concerns. Participation is encouraged through activities including instructional strategies, standards alignment, complexity levels, and the rationales behind incorrect answer choices.	ACAP Summative: Connecting Instruction to Assessment: Math
ACAP Summative	Connecting instruction to the <i>ACAP Summative</i> science assessment is explored with a focus on the Alabama Educator Instructional Supports. Examples of question types are shared, including technology-enhanced questions that deepen the connection between instruction and assessment. A summary of the <i>ACAP Summative</i> is presented, as well as information about the test development process, educator involvement, test quality, and bias and sensitivity concerns. Participation is encouraged through activities including instructional strategies, standards alignment, complexity levels, and the rationales behind incorrect answer choices.	ACAP Summative: Connecting Instruction to Assessment--Science

Assessment	Description	Link
ACAP Alternate	In this workshop, educators will be trained on how to write items to meet quality expectations, including how best to write items that measure the <i>Alabama Alternate Achievement Standards</i> . Participants will be trained on the careful consideration of the standards, which will provide for the critical link between assessment questions and instruction in the classroom. Participants will also be trained to consider other important aspects of item writing, such as item context, assumed student knowledge, and cognitive complexity as reflected in the <i>Alabama Alternate Achievement Standards</i> .	ACAP Alternate: Developing High-Quality, Technically Sound Items
ACAP Summative and Alternate	DRC has introduced a comprehensive interactive reporting platform as part of the DRC INSIGHT™ Online Learning System for the ACAP. The platform presents actionable information aligned to the unique needs of users at each level, from teachers, to school administrators, district leaders, and up to the Superintendent's Office. Classroom highlights, combined with school and district summaries, enable quicker, more fully informed decisions about enhancements to instruction and assessment across Alabama. Participants will be immersed in a live demonstration of the platform, highlighting the modern report designs, intuitive user interface, longitudinal capabilities, and customizable components. Be prepared to see your assessment results like never before.	ACAP Reporting: DRC INSIGHT Interactive Reporting Platform
ACAP Alternate	This presentation focuses on the Item Specifications that are available for all grades assessed on the <i>ACAP Alternate</i> . Item Specifications are mainly used as a guide by item writers to define content limits, Depth of Knowledge Levels (DOK), item types and specific vocabulary that may be used in the development of items. A summary is provided in each content-specific specification that includes sample item stems and their related keys, standards, item types, and DOK levels. New this year are appendices for each content area with sample items that are representative of items appearing on the <i>ACAP Alternate</i> . ELA Item Specifications also include a Performance Task item with a modeled student response at each score point.	ACAP Alternate: Item Specifications Video

Types of Cloud Based Services, Types of Classroom Technology

Renaissance Learning products such as Accelerated Reader, Math, Early Literacy, and Math Facts in a Flash measure reading and math online. (<http://www.renlearn.com/>)

Follett Destiny (library catalogue) is a site students and parents may access from home. (<http://www.follettsoftware.com/>)

IXL math highlights students' progress as they practice math skills and generates detailed performance reports to give teachers valuable insight about their students' abilities in math. (<http://www.ixl.com/reports/>)

Investigations is a complete K-5 mathematics curriculum, developed at TERC in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It is designed to help all children understand fundamental ideas of number and operations, geometry, data, measurement and early algebra. (<http://investigations.terc.edu/>)

Sqworl is a web application that provides a clean and simple way to visually bookmark multiple URLs. (<http://sqworl.com/>)

LiveBinders is a 3-ring binder for the Web that allows students or teachers to collect resources, organize them neatly and easily, and present them with professional ease. (<http://livebinders.com/>).

OTHER ASSESSMENTS AND STANDARDS

TIMSS Study

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS, formerly known as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study) resulted from the American education community's need for reliable and timely data on the mathematics and science achievement of

U.S. students compared to that of students in other countries. TIMSS is the most comprehensive and rigorous assessment of its kind ever undertaken. Offered in 1995, 1999, 2003, and 2007 TIMSS provides trend data on students' mathematics and science achievement from an international perspective.

Summaries of the comparative indicators of education in the United States with other countries and summaries of the studies' results are available from the National Center for Education Statistics <https://nces.ed.gov/timss/>

In 2011, more than 60 countries and jurisdictions, including the United States, will participate in TIMSS. More than 20,000 students in more than 1,000 schools across the United States will take the assessment in spring 2011, joining almost 500,000 other students around the world taking part in TIMSS. Because the **Progress in International Reading Literacy Study** (PIRLS) will also be administered at grade four in spring 2011, TIMSS and PIRLS in the United States will be administered in the same schools to the extent feasible. Students will take either TIMSS or PIRLS on the day of the assessments.

In addition, to address the interest in states benchmarking to international standards, NCES is initiating a new effort to link the states scores from the national assessment—NAEP-- to TIMSS. The 2011 NAEP-TIMSS Linking Study is designed to provide all states with estimates that compare their own students' performance against international benchmarks. Alabama is one of eight states to participate in the NAEP-TIMSS Linking Study. The other seven states are California, Colorado, Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and North Carolina.

Outcomes and goals of this effort to link TIMSS and NAEP are to:

- provide better NAEP-TIMSS linkage through common items taken by the same student at the same time,
- evaluate the success of both the projection method that makes use of the correlation in performance between NAEP and TIMSS and the simpler “statistical moderation” method of linking, and
- measure the impact of administering assessments later in the school year on test performance (winter vs. spring comparison).

Actual TIMSS results for the eight validation states will be released at the same time as the international and national results, currently scheduled for December 2012. The results of the 2011 NAEP-TIMSS Linking Study—with predicted TIMSS mathematics and science scores for all 50 states and the System of Columbia—will be released after the TIMSS results.

National Council of Teachers of English Standards

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and its affiliate organization, the International Reading Association (IRA), regularly revise and publish content standards in the areas of reading and language arts. Consideration of these standards in local curriculum decisions ensures that national measures of learning in these areas are included. NCTE and IRA standards are available on the NCTE website <http://www.ncte.org>.

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Standards

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) regularly revises and publishes content standards in mathematics. Consideration of these standards in local curriculum decisions ensures that national measures of learning in mathematics are included. NCTM standards are available on the NCTM website <http://www.nctm.org>.

National Geography Standards

The National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) has established eighteen national geography standards. The goal of the National Geography Standards is to produce a geographically informed person who sees meaning in the arrangement of things in space and applies a spatial perspective to life situations. The standards as well as instructional activities, lesson plans, and assessment instruments related to the geography standards may be found at <http://ncge.org/publications> or <http://www.nationalgeographic.com>.

National History Standards

The National Center for History in the Schools has developed and published national standards for history by grade span (K-4 and 5-12). The standards were developed with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the U.S. Department of Education at the University of California, Los Angeles. The standards address historical thinking, United States history, and world history. The standards may be accessed and downloaded from the UCLA website at <https://phi.history.ucla.edu/nchs/history-standards/>

National Science Education Standards

The National Science Education Standards, developed in 1995 and updated in 2003 by the National Research Council (NRC) and the Center for Education, present a vision of a scientifically literate populace. They outline what students need to know, understand, and be able to do to be scientifically literate at different grade levels. They describe an educational system in which all students demonstrate high levels of performance in the areas of science and technology. The National Science Standards rest on the premise that science is an active process; they describe standards for science teaching, standards for assessment in science education as well as science content. The latest science standards (2013) referred to as Next Generation Science Standards, can be found at <https://www.nextgenscience.org/>

NAEP Studies

The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), also known as “the Nation’s Report Card,” is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America’s students know and can do in key subject areas at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. NAEP is mandated by the U.S. Congress and is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) at the U.S. Department of Education. It provides reliable student achievement profiles to American educators and citizens. Since 1969, assessments have been conducted periodically at the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, economics, geography, and the arts.

NAEP, which is administered by outside contractor staff, does not provide scores for individual students or schools; instead, it offers results regarding subject-matter achievement, instructional experiences, and school environment for populations of students (e.g., fourth-graders) and subgroups of those populations (e.g., female students, Hispanic students). NAEP results are based on a sample of student populations of interest. Detailed information about the NAEP assessments and reports of NAEP data may be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.

SCANS Skills

The Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) was appointed in 1991 by the Secretary of Labor to determine the skills students need to succeed in the world of work. The Commission’s fundamental purpose is to encourage a high-performance economy characterized by high-skill, high-wage employment. The SCANS initial report, *What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000*, concluded that a high-performance workplace requires workers who have a solid foundation in the basic literacy and computational skills, in the thinking skills necessary to put knowledge to work, and in the personal qualities that make workers dedicated and trustworthy. Curriculum materials, lesson

plans, and professional development activities for teachers have been developed by a wide variety of organizations to incorporate results of the SCANS report into K-12 school programs. Additional information and specific descriptions of the SCANS skills may be found at <http://www.academicinnovations.com>.

WorkKeys

The WorkKeys Employment System is a comprehensive system for measuring, communicating and improving the common skills required for success in the workplace. It allows these skills to be quantitatively assessed in both individual persons and in actual jobs. WorkKeys was developed by ACT, Inc., the creators of the ACT Assessment college entrance exam. WorkKeys measures the basic skills that individuals can apply to workplace situations. This assessment is in use in all 50 states and is considered by many to be the nationwide standard for measuring workplace skills. The Workkeys assessment is administered to all Alabama seniors each year.

National Career Readiness Certificate

The National Career Readiness Certificate, based on the WorkKeys system, is building momentum in many states across the country. Government leaders and businesses are embracing the concept of this portable employability credential. Through this system, students have the chance to qualify for a certificate to show employers that they have the foundational skills necessary for job training. The idea is to have our nation accept the National Career Readiness Certificate as a standard of work readiness. Alabama two-year colleges have developed an Alabama Career Readiness Certificate, and their goal is to work with secondary schools so that their students leave high school with a certificate as well as a diploma.

NAEYC Standards

The National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is the nation's largest and most influential organization of early childhood educators and others dedicated to improving the quality of programs for children from birth through third grade. Founded in 1926, NAEYC celebrated its 75th anniversary with over 100,000 members and a national network of nearly 450 local, state and regional affiliates. NAEYC Affiliate Groups work to improve professional practice and working conditions in early childhood education and to build public support for high quality early childhood programs. Information about recommended curricula, assessment, and educational setting for young children is available from NAEYC in their publications and from their website <http://www.naeyc.org>.

It is the belief of NAEYC that curriculum decisions not only involve questions about how children learn, but also what learning is appropriate and when it is best learned. NAEYC guidelines address both curriculum and assessment for young children. NAEYC acknowledges the importance of rich, meaningful content in a program of developmentally appropriate teaching practices for young children.

International Reading Association Guidelines

The International Reading Association (IRA) is a professional membership organization dedicated to promoting high levels of literacy for all by improving the quality of reading instruction, disseminating research and information about reading, and encouraging the lifetime reading habit. The IRA membership includes classroom teachers, reading specialists,

consultants, administrators, supervisors, university faculty, researchers, psychologists, librarians, media specialists, and parents. With membership and affiliates in 99 countries, the IRA network extends to more than 300,000 people worldwide.

The International Reading Association provides curriculum guidance, professional development activities, and research resources for the improvement of reading instruction and literacy development for all ages.

The IRA organization has formed a partnership with the National Council of Teachers of English in the development of twelve standards for language skills necessary for students to pursue life's goals and to participate as fully informed, productive members of society. The association has a wide range of publications which can be located through their office headquarters at 800 Barksdale Road, P. O. Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714 or the organization's website <http://www.reading.org>.

Tech Prep Consortia Agreements

Secondary schools offering career/technical programs may enter into agreements with post-secondary institutions to implement a Tech Prep Program. There are currently 22 tech prep consortia operating in Alabama. Tech Prep grants provide funds for teacher training, curriculum alignment projects between secondary and post-secondary schools, content and skills articulation efforts, assessment activities, and equipment. A Tech Prep program is a program of study that:

- Combines at least two years of secondary education with at least two years of postsecondary education in a non-duplicative, sequential course of study based on recommended career/technical education secondary programs.
- Integrates academic instruction and career/technical instruction.
- Uses work-based and worksite learning where available and appropriate.
- Provides technical preparation in a career field such as Family and Consumer Sciences, Technical Education, Agriscience Education, Business and Marketing Education, and Health Care Science.
- Builds student competence in mathematics, science, reading, writing, communications, economics, and workplace skills through applied, contextual academics and integrated instruction in a coherent sequence of courses.
- Leads to an associate degree, a two-year postsecondary certificate, or a postsecondary two-year apprenticeship with a provision, if applicable, for the student to continue toward the completion of a baccalaureate degree.
- Leads to placement in appropriate employment or to further education.

High Schools That Work (HSTW)

Many high schools in Alabama and throughout the United States are enlisting in the High Schools That Work program to align curriculum with current standards and to improve student achievement. High Schools That Work (HSTW) provides a framework of goals, key practices, and key conditions for accelerating learning and setting higher standards for high school students.

Its goals are to:

- Raise the mathematics, science, and communication, problem-solving, and technical achievement of students to the national average and above.
- Blend the essential content of traditional college-preparatory studies with quality career/technical education studies by creating conditions that support school leaders, teachers, and counselors in carrying out key practices.
- Advance state and local policies and leadership initiatives necessary to sustain a continuous school-improvement effort.

Competitive grant funds are available to assist schools that wish to participate in the HSTW initiative. Professional development for school staff is essential to the success of the program. Collaborative planning by academic and career/technical teachers is essential, and clear communication of student achievement goals and performance standards is a key component of the program.

HSTW is an initiative of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Additional information about HSTW is available from Southern Regional Education Board <https://www.sreb.org/high-schools-work>.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Alternative Input Devices

1) Penny & Giles Roller Joystick II

DonJohnston, Inc

<http://www.donjohnston.com/>

- Functions like standard joystick
- Colored buttons for click and drag
- 3" high
- Includes three jacks so switches can perform button functions
- For Windows and Macintosh computers
- Uses PS/2 and USB connections
- Comes with interchangeable SoftKnob and T-bar joystick handles

2) HeadWay

DonJohnston, Inc

<http://www.donjohnston.com/>

- Mouse alternative that uses a small, infrared transmitter
- Head movements control the mouse cursor on-screen
- Adjustable sensitivity to reduce unwanted cursor movements due to unintentional head motion
- Switch for mouse clicks

3) TouchFree™ Switch by Edmark/Riverdeep

Infogrip, Inc.

<http://www.infogrip.com>

- Use with single switch scanning software
- No touch action required
- Digital video camera and easy to install switch software
- Flexible and customizable click capabilities
- TouchFree Switch can be activated by a choice of large or small body movements; can be customized
- Point camera at arm, elbow, face or foot
- Zoom in or out to capture small or large movements

4) *Tash's Switch Click*

Infogrip, Inc.

<http://www.infogrip.com>

- Enters a left mouse click
- Plugs directly into mouse port
- Can use Switch Click alone with scanning software or plug pointing device into Switch Click and use pointing device to move cursor and Switch Click to handle left mouse clicks
- External switch jack; can choose to use size switch to best fit needs

5) *ScanSoft's Dragon NaturallySpeaking®* (Speech Recognition Software)

Infogrip, Inc.

<http://www.infogrip.com>

- True continuous speech
- Speak to computer naturally, at normal pace of up to 160 words per minute, without pausing between words
- Create, edit and format word or phrase using intuitive commands

6) *Commodio's QPointer Voice*

Infogrip, Inc.

<http://www.infogrip.com>

- Complete and intuitive computer control by voice
- Allows operation of any application and complete control over Windows
- Dictate directly into any application, write and send email, surf the web and emulate all mouse functions

7) *Visual Impairment*

For students who are visually impaired, there are several options, including voice output, large screen monitors, and Braille text. Voice or speech output devices use digitized human speech or synthesized robotic-sounding speech.

8) *BIGSHOT Screen Magnifier by Ai Squared*

Infogrip, Inc.

<http://www.infogrip.com>

- Magnifies computer screen allowing focus on work without straining to see

- 20 levels of magnification, from 105% to 200%
- Change the magnification level with a mouse wheel
- Full Screen Mode, which enlarges entire monitor screen to the magnification level selected

9) *TextHELP! ScreenReader by TextHelp Systems*

Infogrip, Inc.

<http://www.infogrip.com>

- Simple text to speech product
- Reads window menus, documents, emails or Internet pages
- Easy to use toolbar provides five features to select from

Augmentative Alternative Communication Devices

LightWRITER

1) ZYGO Industries, Inc.

<http://www.zygo-usa.com/lighwrts.htm>

- Portable text-to-speech communication aid
- Large, bright displays
- Easily seen by both the user and the listener(s)
- For users with autism, laryngectomies, C.P., head injury, ALS, etc.
- Now accessible through Morse code

2) *DynaWrite*

DynaVox Systems LLC

<http://www.dynavoxsys.com/>

- Keyboard-based communication device
- Accessed using variety of selection methods and scanning configurations
- Documents created and stored on DynaWrite can be backed up to PC or Mac
- Function keys activate features common to all DynaVox devices
- Text-editing capabilities
- Personal reminders menu
- Integrated help menu
- Store thousands of Keyboards, single- and dual-switch scanning
- DEctalk™ with 10 synthesized voices
- VeriVox with 3 synthesized voices
- Digitized speech and sound available

3) *Pathfinder with Unity 128*

Prentke Romich Company

- <http://store.prentrom.com/cgi-bin/store/index.html>
- Powerful communications tool
- Static keyboard plus a color dynamic display
- Contains vocabulary (Unity 128), pictures, computer keyboard emulation and infrared controls
- Synthesized speech with memory capacity that holds thousands of words

- Range of age and gender appropriate voice options.
- Digitized speech option for adding fun sounds, songs or additional languages

4) *ChatBox and ChatBox-DX*,

Prentke Romich Company <http://store.prentrom.com/cgi-bin/store/index.html> Voice output communication devices

Combine use of meaningful pictorial images with the latest technology

For use by individuals experiencing cognitive and language limitations, brain disorders, cerebral palsy or conditions that result in temporary loss of speech.

ChatBox-DX for individuals with visual difficulty or very poor motor skills

Assistive Software

CameraMouse

Infogrip, Inc.

<http://www.infogrip.com>

- Hands free computer control
- Uses video camera to track body movements and convert movements to cursor movements on computer screen
- Built-in toolbar allows emulation of the mouse
- Non-intrusive
- Works with all standard software
- No wires, dots, infrared beams, or other head apparatuses needed for activation

PixWriter - Slater Software, Inc.

(Don Johnston Inc.)

<http://www.donjohnston.com/>

- Easy-to-use early writing intervention
- Users write by selecting pictures and word buttons
- Built-in speech provides immediate, lets teachers create talking documents

Assistive Writing Tools

Write Outloud

(Don Johnston Inc.)

<http://www.donjohnston.com/>

- Easy to use word processor
- Gives immediate speech feedback as words, sentences and paragraphs are typed
- Extensive keyboard shortcuts

Braille 'n Speak

Freedom Scientific

<http://www.blazie.com/>

Combines speech with a standard Perkins-style keyboard

- Weighs less than one pound
- Includes word processing with spell check

- Built-in speech synthesizer for input and editing directly into memory
- Information read back at the press of a single command.
- Input information in Grade 1 or Grade 2 Braille through six-key mode

Braille Blazer

Freedom Scientific

<http://www.blazie.com/>

- Compact and quiet
- High-quality Braille on many sizes of Braille paper, plastic labels and index cards
- Internal speech synthesizer for quick and simple configuration
- Can be used with any PC or Freedom Scientific notetaker

Critical Thinking Tools

Inspiration - Visual Learning Tool

Inspiration Software, Inc.

<http://www.inspiration.com/>

Grades 6-Adult

- Strengthens critical thinking, comprehension, and writing across the curriculum
- Diagramming and outlining environments

Kidspiration -

Inspiration Software, Inc.

<http://www.inspiration.com/>

- Grades K-5
- Brainstorm ideas with pictures and words
- Organize and categorize information visually
- Create stories and descriptions using visual tools
- Explore new ideas with thought webs and visual mapping

Other Devices

- Closed captioning
- Pencil grips
- Raised line paper
- Talking calculators
- Tape recorders

Resources for Information on Assistive Technologies Local Resources and Information

Alabama Statewide Technology Access and Response Project System for Alabamians with Disabilities (STAR) <http://www.rehab.state.al.us/star/>

800-STAR-656

UAB Civitan International Research Center's Sparks Clinic

<http://www.circ.uab.edu/>

800-822-2472

CTE Links and Resources

ACTE LINKS

[National ACTE](#)
[Career Technical Store](#)

CAREER TECHNICAL LINKS

[Vocational School versus Higher Education](#)
[Techniques magazine](#) (requires login)
[Career Tech Is More Than “Shop](#)
[Career Tech Talk](#) (podcast)

GENERAL LINKS

[Alabama Attorney General's Office](#)
[Alabama Department of Education](#)
[Alabama Department of Industrial Relations](#)
[Alabama Education](#)
[Alabama Governor's Office](#)
[Alabama Legislature](#)
[Alabama Schools and Systems](#)
[U.S. Department of Education](#)
[U.S. Department of Labor](#)
[U.S. House of Representatives](#)
[U.S. Senate](#)

CT STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

[DECA](#)
[Skills USA-VICA](#)
[Business Professionals of America](#)
[Family, Career and Community Leaders of America](#)
[Future Business Leaders of America](#)
[Health Occupations Students of America](#)
[Technology Student Association](#)
[The National FFA Organization](#)

RELATED LINKS

[Education News](#)
[Jobs for the Future](#)
[Career Explorer](#)
[eSchool Newsonline](#)
[National Skills Standard Board](#)
[Center for Occupational Research and Development \(CORD\)](#)
[National Dissemination Center for Career/Technical Education](#)
[Office of Vocational and Adult Education \(OVAE\)](#)
[ERIC – Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Ed.](#)
[Southern Regional Education Board](#)

AbilityHub - Assistive Technology Solutions
<http://www.abilityhub.com/>

Abledata
<https://abledata.acl.gov/>

Alliance for Technology Access (ATA)
<http://www.ataccess.org/>
415-455-4575

American Printing House for the Blind
www.aph.org/
502-895-2405

Barrier Free Education - Tools for Learning <http://barrier-free.arch.gatech.edu/Tools/index.html>

CLNA & Cogna - <https://www.alabamaachievers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/CLNA-and-Cogna-v2.pdf>

18. Education Laws & Required Training 2010-2022

Alabama Achieves Amendment Center – All amendments to the Alabama Administrative Code
<https://www.alabamaachieves.org/communication/legal/amendment-center/>

2022 Legislative Enactments

https://alabamaschoolboards.org/_assets/documents/Advocate%20for%20Schools/Advocate%20for%20Schools%204.20.22%20Special%20Edition%20Part%202.pdf

The following graphic identifies the most current mandated training as a result of federal and state legislation. Links and contacts need updated.

Training	Reference(s)	Requirement(s) Training Audience	ALSDE Section Contact	Information & Resource(s)
Addressing Disproportionality in Alabama Schools	U.S. Department of Justice Compliance Agreement Lee v. Macon Co. Bd. Of Education, 231 F. Supp 743 (M.D. Ala 1964)	Required <i>one-time training</i> for all new certified employees who have not previously participated in this awareness training (certification of completion should be provided)	Special Education Services Theresa Farmer	https://www.alsde.edu/sec/sec/Reports/Addressing%20Disproportionality%20in%20Alabama%20Schools%20(Reader's%20Notes).pdf#search=Lee%20v%20Macon
Alcohol & Drug Abuse Student Prevention	16-40A-1 Code of Alabama (1975)	Alcohol and drug prevention training for school administrators, teachers, and counselors	Prevention & Support Services Dr. Marilyn Lewis	https://www.alsde.edu/sec/ps/Pages/suicideprevention-all.aspx?navtext=Prevention/Intervention
Anaphylaxis Preparedness	16-1-48 Code of Alabama (1975)	<i>Annual</i> training provided to teachers to recognize and respond to anaphylactic emergencies <i>Annual</i> training provided to Food Service Personnel, Coaches, Athletic Directors, After-School Volunteers, and Bus Drivers on the school program information, the signs and symptoms	Prevention & Support Services Jennifer Ventress	<i>Anaphylaxis Preparedness Guidelines</i> https://www.alsde.edu/sec/ps/Health%20Medications/Approved%20Anaphylaxis%20Preparedness%20Program%202015.pdf#search=Anaphylaxis%20Emergency%20Training

Training	Reference(s)	Requirement(s) Training Audience	ALSDE Section Contact	Information & Resource(s)
		of anaphylaxis, the location of the medication and forms, and how to recognize and respond to anaphylactic emergencies		
Athletic Head Injury Safety Training	Section 22-11E-2 Code of Alabama (2013)	<i>Annual</i> training for all certified coaches (faculty and non-faculty) to learn how to recognize the symptoms of concussion and how to seek proper medical treatment for person suspected of having a concussion. Should be received before the beginning of practice for school athletic teams	Education Technology/AHS AA Board Member Larry Raines	AHSAA Handbook Online NFHS Concussion Course
Bus Drivers	Ala Admin. Code r. 290-2-4-.04 and 16-27-4 Code of Alabama (1975)	<i>Annual</i> recertification for bus drivers	Transportation Chad Carpenter	Transportation Supervisor's Information Notebook
1% Cap Requirements on Students Assessed with Alternate Assessment (AA)	U.S. Department of Education (May 16, 2017, Memorandum) ESEA section 1111(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)	"The State must describe how it will monitor and regularly evaluate to ensure that <i>the LEA provides sufficient training</i> such that school staff who participate as members of an IEP team or other placement team understand and implement guidelines	Special Education Services Susan Goldthwaite Assessment Nannette Pence	<i>Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alabama Alternate Assessment Program Handbook</i> developed by ALSDE Student Assessment and Special Education Services March 2019

Training	Reference(s)	Requirement(s) Training Audience	ALSDE Section Contact	Information & Resource(s)
		established by the State for participation in AA-AAAS so that all students are appropriately assessed.”		
Caring for Students with Diabetes	The Alabama Safe at Schools Act 16-30A-3, Code of Alabama (1975)	<i>Annual</i> diabetes training for “unlicensed mediation assistants” in the school setting	Prevention & Support Services Jennifer Ventress	https://www.alsde.edu/sec/ps/s/Safe%20At%20School/Final%20Diabetic%20Curriculum%20Revised%20August%202018.pdf
Dyslexia	Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-3-1-.02 (20) HB388 Alabama Literacy Act (2019)	Training regarding dyslexia and implications for the classroom teachers will be provided & <i>annually reported</i> (HB388) PD targets dyslexia awareness training, screening, dyslexia specific classroom strategies, academic accommodations, and use of assistive technology	Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) Reeda Betts	https://www.alsde.edu/sec/ari/Pages/dyslexia-all.aspx?navtext=Dyslexia
Gifted Updates, Best Practices, Differentiation, Concept-Based Curriculum, Affective Needs of Gifted, etc. Training	U.S. Department of Justice Compliance Agreement, Office of Civil Rights, Title VI Resolution Agreement (1999)	ALSDE “will provide training to appropriate local school district personnel including classroom teachers...”	Special Education Services Gifted Specialist Emily Hurst	<i>Alabama Gifted Continuous Improvement Procedures Handbook</i> (website link coming soon)
Juvenile Sex Offender	Annalyn’s Law 16-1-51.1 Code of Alabama	Comprehensive training for school personnel to take	Prevention & Support Services Dr. Marilyn	https://www.alsde.edu/sec/ps/s/Suicide%20Prevention/Annalyn's%20Law.PDF

Training	Reference(s)	Requirement(s) Training Audience	ALSDE Section Contact	Information & Resource(s)
Behaviors	(1975)	appropriate action upon noticing an increase or escalation of those behaviors in a low-risk juvenile sex offender student	Lewis	
Mandatory Reporting Sexual Abuse Prevention	Erin's Law 16-40-9, Code of Alabama (1975)	Public schools shall establish a child sexual abuse prevention instructional program for students that includes a <i>professional training component for administrators, teachers, and other school personnel</i> on talking to students about child sexual abuse prevention, effects of child sexual abuse on children, handling of child sexual abuse disclosures, and mandated reporting	Prevention & Support Services Dr. Marilyn Lewis	https://www.alsde.edu/sec/ps/Pages/suicideprevention-all.aspx https://www.alsde.edu/sec/ps/Suicide%20Prevention/Erin's%20Law%20State%20Guidelines%20(003).pdf http://training.dhr.alabama.gov/ http://www.erinmerryn.net/erins-law.html
School Board Governance	16-1-41.1 Code of Alabama (1975)	Ongoing training for local school boards	General Counsel	AASB
School Emergency Operations Safety Plan	16-1-44 (g) Code of Alabama (1975) HB385 (2019) Amends Sections 16-1-44 and 36-19-10	Principal or designee will hold <i>annual</i> training session for school employees regarding school lockdown plan, drills, and procedures to be conducted during a school year	Prevention & Support Services Dr. Greg DeJarnett	https://www.alsde.edu/sec/ps/Pages/schoolsafety-all.aspx
Seclusion and Restraint Training	Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-3-1-.02	Training for all staff who use physical restraints	Prevention & Support Services Dr. Marilyn Lewis	Alabama SBOE Guidance https://www.alsde.edu/sec/ps/Seclusion%20and%20Restraint/Guidance%20Seclusion%20and%20Restraint%20AL%20Gui

Training	Reference(s)	Requirement(s) Training Audience	ALSDE Section Contact	Information & Resource(s)
				de.pdf#search=Restraint%20Training
Special Education Training, Confidentiality, & Shortened School Day	U.S Department of Education Office for Civil Rights	<i>Annual</i> in-service topics required for all administrators, teachers, and support staff	Special Education Services Crystal Richardson	<i>Help Guide for School Administrators: What Successful School Administrators Need to Know about Educating Disabilities</i> Document & <i>Plain Language</i> Document
Suicide Awareness Prevention	Jason Flatt Act (portions of law later named Jamari Terrell Williams Student Bullying Prevention Act)	<i>Annual</i> suicide education training for all certified school personnel	Prevention & Support Services Dr. Marilyn Lewis	https://www.alsde.edu/sites/memos/Memoranda/FY16-2087.pdf#search=jason%20flatt%20act http://www.alsde.edu/sec/pss/Pages/suicideprevention-all.aspx?navtext=Prevention/Intervention Training video link: https://youtu.be/eNhY9_s_s_g
Testing Security and Monitoring Process	Student Assessment Integrity Handbook Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-4-2	<i>Annual</i> (minimum) training must take place prior to testing day(s).	Accountability Maggie Hicks	<i>Alabama Student Assessment Program Handbook</i> https://www.alsde.edu/sec/sa/Testing/Integrity_Handbook_for_Test_Administration_2018-19_%207.31.2018.pdf
Universal Precautions	Occupational Safety and Health Standards 29 CFR 1910.1030	<i>Annual</i> training of standard precautions (bloodborne pathogens, process of disease transmission, communicable and infectious diseases, etc.) in the school setting	Prevention & Support Services Jennifer Ventress	Standard Precautions in the School Setting: Resource Procedure Guidelines

19. RESOURCES: PRINTED MATERIAL REFERENCES

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