

Alabama Workforce Council 2021-2022 Ten Points on K-12 Education

1. Disseminate a best practice guide to local education agencies for using federal ESSER II and III funds to establish high-quality CTE programs aligned to the ACCCP's list of in-demand jobs. Recommended completion date: December 31, 2021.
2. Develop annual targets for reaching a 100 percent FAFSA completion rate by 2025. Recommended completion date: December 31, 2021.
3. Develop biennial targets for reaching the national average in fourth and eighth grade reading and mathematics on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by 2026. Recommended completion date: December 31, 2021.
4. Establish a policy requiring career coaches and CTE directors to attend regional workforce council meetings no later than September 30, 2021, and establish a policy requiring career coaches to collaborate with the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship to establish in-school youth apprenticeships. Recommended completion date: December 31, 2021.
5. Pass an administrative rule code change to ensure students earn at least one college and career readiness indicator by the time of their graduation. Recommended completion date: December 31, 2021.
6. Adopt an administrative rule code change that requires Career Readiness Indicators to be registered to the Alabama Credential Registry and aligned to the ACCCP's Compendium of Valuable Credentials. Recommended completion date: December 31, 2021.
7. Establish an incentive program, by policy, rule, or Act of the Legislature, for schools to reduce the rate of student and teacher absenteeism to no more than ten days per academic year. Recommended completion date: March 31, 2022.
8. Conduct a gap analysis and resource audit of all CTE programs to determine the level of alignment of CTE programs of study offered at each local education agency to the ACCCP's regional and statewide list of in-demand jobs. Recommended completion date: March 31, 2022.
9. Establish baselines for grade-level reading proficiency based on the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment System and set annual targets for increasing the number of students entering the fourth grade as proficient readers to 100 percent by 2025. Recommended completion date: June 30, 2022.
10. Ensure that Alabama Terminal on Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) is built using national best practices and governed by an authorized & effective P-20W Council with full engagement of necessary state agency partners. Recommended completion date: June 30, 2022.

Reasoning Behind the Alabama Workforce Council 2021-2022 Ten Points on K-12 Education

1. Alabama's schools are sitting on billions of dollars in federal recovery funds that must be used strategically. ALSDE must provide recommendations for local school systems on how to use the unprecedented levels of COVID-19 recovery funding to establish Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that prepare students for in-demand jobs in Alabama.
2. If students don't complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), they are much less likely to go to college or to receive training. The ALSDE must provide leadership to encourage all school systems in Alabama to assist every graduating senior with completing the FAFSA before graduation.
3. Alabama's reading and mathematics scores are pathetic. We are at or near the bottom of the charts in every measure. The ALSDE must provide the leadership needed so that Alabama reaches, or surpasses, the national average on the nation's report card—the National Assessment of Educational Progress—by 2028.
4. Alabama's workforce system cannot help our high schools if high school representatives are not communicating with the Regional Workforce Councils. The ALSDE must provide the leadership needed to ensure that CTE leaders in each school system are attending Regional Workforce Council meetings and are working with the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship to establish apprenticeships for high school students.
5. How can a student graduate high school but not be college or career ready? It happens every year for 12-15 percent of our students. The ALSDE must bring forward a resolution and rule from the Alabama State School Board requiring all students to be college and career ready before graduation.
6. Credentials are not valuable if they are not recognized by industry. The ALSDE must bring forward a resolution and rule from the Alabama State School Board, or legislation, requiring all K-12 credentials to be listed on Alabama's list of valuable credentials and credential registry.
7. Students can't learn if they aren't at school, and poor attendance habits will keep students from holding a job. The ALSDE must bring forward a resolution and rule from the Alabama State School Board, or legislation, reducing the number of allowable student absences to 10 per year.
8. CTE programs should be aligned to in-demand jobs—full-stop. The ALSDE must audit every CTE program in the state to determine whether they are preparing students for in-demand jobs.
9. We do harm to the student and to our entire state by promoting students to the fourth grade when they can't read. Nothing else we do in K-12 matters if our students can't read. The ALSDE must provide the leadership needed to ensure that every student enters fourth grade reading proficiently by 2025.
10. Data are essential for determining whether education and workforce programs are effective. Without a longitudinal database system, for policymakers in Alabama, "the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing."