

## **PK-20 Initiative**

The purpose of the PK-20 Initiative is to coordinate the human and fiscal resources on all levels of education with participation by external partners that could include the governor, legislative members, education representatives from the public and higher education private not-for-profit sectors, parents, and business/industry interests.

This type of coordinated partnership, as represented by a PK-20 Council, will allow an emphasis on preparing children to become successful students at all levels of education and exit the system prepared for the workplace.

This effort needs the support of all levels of government, business/industry and education to be successful and must be incorporated at a state policy level. The PK-20 Council is necessary to lead in an effort to integrate all levels of education in order to obtain a successful end result. This would allow Alabama to expand its role in the competitive international arena. The Council should reflect a cross section of partners, who can make decisions to move their component of the responsibility forward.

Recognizing Alabama's educational structure and partnerships with business/industry, Gov. Robert Bentley signed Executive Order 36 on January 15<sup>th</sup> which established the Governor's College and Career Ready Task Force.

By building collaborative relationships on all levels through discussion on common areas of interest and concern, the state will be able to use its many, but sometimes limited resources to determine an action plan for collaborative activities. This plan will provide recommendations to solve issues and problems, as well as to format opportunities for educational and economic development advancement.

Alabama has been recognized nationally in pre-kindergarten preparation, reading programs, and its total system student data base. For example, the student data base is an important tool for the PK-20 system. The student data can be utilized to identify areas of weakness, strength, and opportunity in serving students if utilized in the decision making process. With 6.5 million student records, Alabama has a clear picture of its present public educational system.

As stated by the Consortium for Public Research in Education, "the time has come to end the long history in American education (and Alabama) of segments acting independently and at cross purposes from one another."