

# Forging Strategic Alliances: State Plan for Alabama Higher Education 2009-2014



## VISION

Alabama's higher education system of colleges and universities, through their varying missions, will provide access and increased educational attainment to citizens of the state using a variety of delivery systems to prepare an educated citizenry and a competitive work force for the present and the future global economy.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan, Forging Strategic Alliances, is to set the agenda for postsecondary education for the next five years in collaboration with all interested constituencies. Research about the issues and challenges facing colleges and universities in the state was the basis for the underlying assumptions and principles of the state plan.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ◆ Meeting the postsecondary educational attainment needs of the increasingly diverse citizenry of Alabama is critical to the continued social and economic development of the state. The changing demographics of the state are included as an overarching priority that affects each of the higher education priorities included in the plan in some fundamental way.
- ◆ An equally important overarching priority for the plan is the premise that strategic alliances across education sectors and business and industry are necessary to address longstanding postsecondary educational attainment issues in the state.

## Priorities/Goals

◆ **Increase students' preparedness for college and career**

Goal 1- Increase graduation rates among two-year and four-year colleges and universities.

Goal 2- Decrease the percentage of students requiring remediation statewide by 20% by 2014.

◆ **Establish a PK-20 Council**

Goal 3- Establish a PK-20 Council to coordinate and advocate toward a fully integrated educational system with funding, assigned administrative responsibilities, and a commitment from the membership to sustain the work.

◆ **Increase graduates in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields**

Goal 4- Increase the number of students majoring in STEM fields.

Goal 5- Increase the number, preparation, and retention of K-12 teachers in STEM-related fields.

Goal 6- Advance programs that strengthen preparation of both students and teachers in STEM related fields.

◆ **Seek necessary financial resources for education in Alabama**

Goal 7- Manage higher education costs by identifying and sharing proven methods to improve efficiency.

Goal 8- Expand sources of higher education revenue including the expansion of state support for higher education.

◆ **Establish a Comprehensive Workforce Development Plan for Alabama**

Goal 9- Supplement the development of a flexible, unified workforce development system that addresses occupational skills in a range of industry sectors.

Goal 10- Address labor market demands and/or needs.

## Strategic Objectives

- Prepare students for college, once enrolled provide necessary resources
- Focus on academic & social transitions between high school & college.
- Establish PK-20 Council via Executive Order, Legislation, or other means.
- Recruit students.
- Enhance the preparation of entering students in STEM fields.
- Increase financial incentives for teachers in STEM fields
- Enhance alternative pathways to certification in STEM fields.
- Strengthen professional development opportunities for K-12 teachers.
- Create greater collaboration & coordination among various leaders in existing STEM related fields.
- Launch a media campaign to underscore the importance of STEM fields.
- Strengthen collaborative programs in research.
- Maintain statewide data on numbers of STEM graduates, STEM teachers & on various education programs designed to increase their numbers.
- Identify opportunities for collaboration in areas such as information technology, purchasing, energy conservation & other strategies to lower operational costs.
- Organize an academic best practices initiative to encourage institutions to share their successes in retention & student affairs, recognizing that improved retention results in more tuition revenue & improved outcomes.
- Pursue entrepreneurial initiatives to support institutions & economic development.
- Develop a common advertising strategy, "Study in Alabama".
- Collaborate to increase state support for higher education through increased funding
- Expand existing & potential workers' opportunities to acquire and/or update their career skills through educational & training pathways that meet occupational demands.
- Expand information access to unserved & underserved populations.
- Expand use of Dual Enrollment programs to train more people for the workforce.
- Align higher education programs with labor market information.
- Actively engage business & industry with higher education regarding workforce development needs & issues.

For additional information you can contact Alabama Commission on Higher Education at 334-242-1998 or visit the SPAC website at [www.highered.alabama.gov/spac](http://www.highered.alabama.gov/spac)