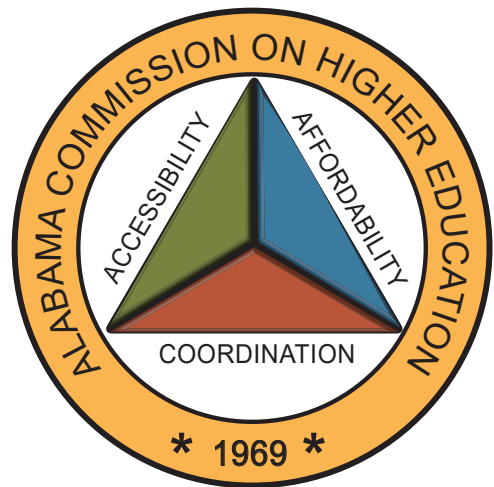


# 2020-2021 Annual Report



*Alabama Commission on Higher Education  
100 N. Union Street  
Montgomery, AL 36130  
(334) 242-1998*

*[ache.edu](http://ache.edu)*

# Mission Statement

---

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education, a statewide 12-member lay board appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House and confirmed by the Senate, is the state agency responsible for the overall statewide planning and coordination of higher education in Alabama, the administration of various student aid programs and the performance of designated regulatory functions. The Commission seeks to provide reasonable access to quality collegiate and university education for the citizens of Alabama. In meeting this commitment, the Commission facilitates informed decision making and policy formulation regarding wise stewardship of resources in response to the needs of students and the goals of institutions. The agency also provides a state-level framework for institutions to respond cooperatively and individually to the needs of the citizens of the state.



# Table of Contents

Executive Director’s Message .....	1
Chairman’s Message .....	2
Highlights .....	3
Academics .....	5
Institutional Finance and Facilities .....	11
Line Items.....	13
Building Human Capital .....	17
Priority One:    Improving Access.....	18
Priority Two:    Enhancing Student Success .....	24
Priority Three:  Enhancing STEM Programs.....	26
Priority Four:   Developing Alabama’s Economy and Workforce.....	27
Priority Five:   Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency .....	31

## Alabama Two-Year Public Institutions

## Community Colleges

## Bevill State

## Bishop State

Calhoun

## Central Alabama

## Chattahoochee Valley

## Coastal Alabama

Drake State Community and Technical College

## Enterprise State

## Gadsden State

Jefferson State

Lawson State

Lurleen B. Wallace

Marion Military Institute

## Northeast Alabama

## Northwest-Shoals

Shelton State

## Snead State

## Southern Union State

## Trenholm State

Wallace (Dothan)

Wallace State (Hanceville)

Wallace State (Selma)

## Technical Colleges

## Ingram State

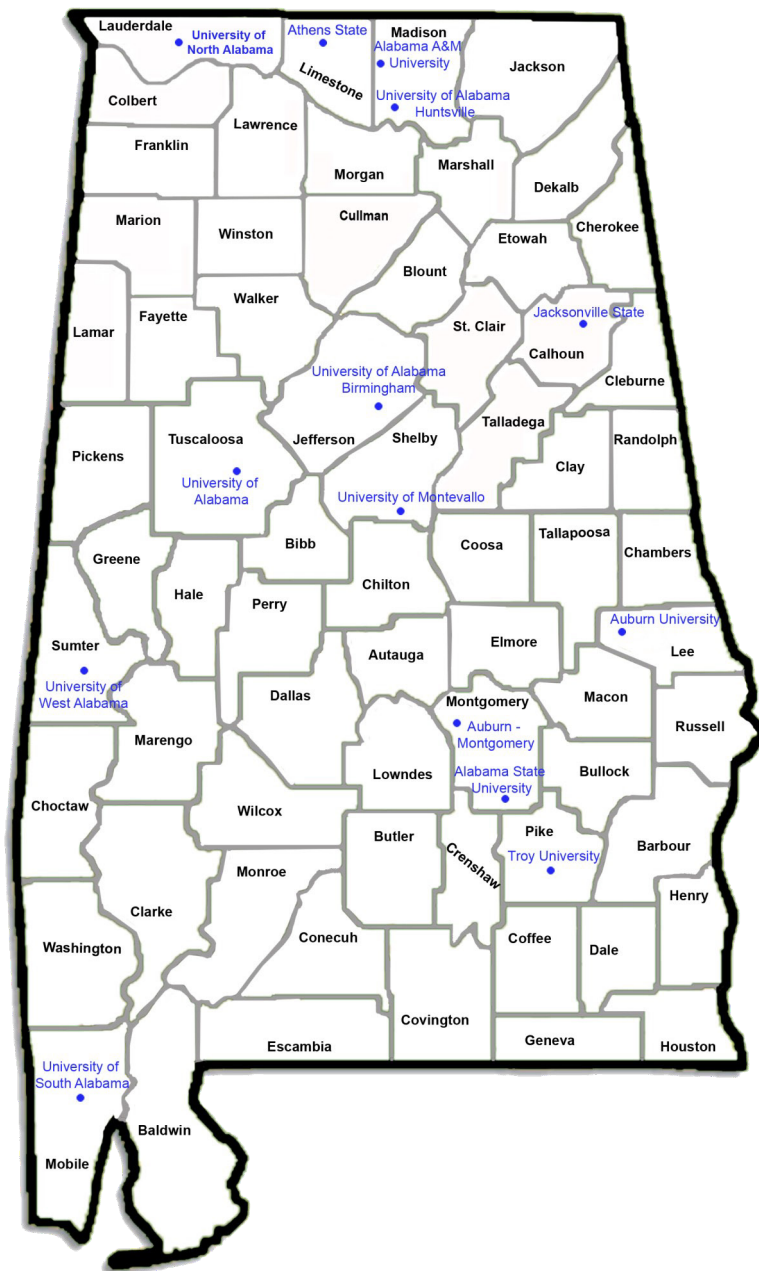
Reid State





# Alabama Four-Year Public Institutions

---



Alabama A&M University

Alabama State University

Athens State University

Auburn University

Auburn University at Montgomery

Jacksonville State University

Troy University

University of Alabama

University of Alabama at Birmingham

University of Alabama in Huntsville

University of Montevallo

University of North Alabama

University of South Alabama

University of West Alabama

# Commissioners

---



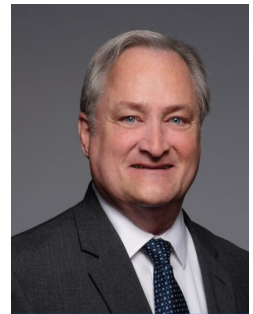
Charles Buntin  
Chairman  
2nd District



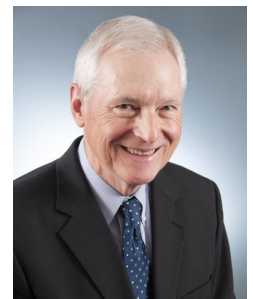
Norman Crow  
7th District



Timothy Gyan  
6th District



Paul W. Kennedy  
4th District



Stan Nelson  
At-Large



Amy Price  
3rd District

2

0

2

1

# Commissioners

---



Stan Pylant  
At-Large



Charles Sanders  
At-Large



Rod Scott  
At-Large



Ann Forbes Sirmon  
1st District



Larry Turner  
At-Large



Miranda Bouldin Frost  
Vice-Chairman  
5th District

2

0

2

1

# Letter from the Executive Director

For those of us that recreationally study military history and supply chain economics, we know how important maintaining our supply lines is to an initiative's success. Alabama is fortunate that we have had economic success in recent years. While recovery from the 2008 recession was tragic for many states, Alabama's economy was less impacted and by 2019 began to improve its economic situation. A Nov 9, 2019, [Washington Post](#) article highlighted how Alabama had surpassed other southern state economies that it had traditionally paralleled.

Alabama's recovery to the 2020-21 COVID-19 Pandemic also shows signs of economic resilience and even transcendence. Success creates future success. Many businesses have recently announced expansions in the state. Hyundai's new engine plant will be producing the first Hyundai truck. Toyota/Mazda will soon be opening a plant in the Huntsville area. Mobile is home to a major aerospace assembly facility for Airbus and military shipbuilding facility for Austal.

Earlier this year, Mercedes announced plans for additional engineers and other staff positions. SHIPT, a user-friendly app for shoppers, is looking to grow its workforce through IT and other technology jobs in Birmingham.

The success of these initiatives is dependent on the availability of skilled and credentialed workers for business expansion. It is dependent on developing, credentialing, and maintaining human capital, and assuring that the talent developed at Alabama's higher education institutions supports the state's workforce.

Lawmakers funded an initiative in the 2021 legislative session called Retain Alabama. The new program is aimed at addressing the fact that only about half of our bachelor degree graduates are found in Alabama's workforce five years after graduation. Less than half of those graduates are in the science, engineering, or technology fields. Retain Alabama targets bachelor's degree holders based on employment indicators that show two-thirds of the jobs in Alabama's economy will require education at that level.

Workforce opportunities are not the only goal of Retain Alabama. Current and future graduates must see the livability of Alabama from the geographic appeal to the affordability in raising a family. A recent survey of college students in Alabama ranked the state's citizenry as friendly, but less appreciative of persons from different backgrounds and lifestyles. As we all work together to move Alabama forward, the more likely university graduates will consider the Yellowhammer state for their future home.

Not only will Alabama's future growth depend on new residents, but former graduates will be needed to return home in support of a robust economy. The greatest demand will be in the high-need STEM areas. The partnerships between industry and education are continuing to make gains in moving Alabama forward in all areas.

As you read this report, I hope you will see the many positive accomplishments that have been made throughout the past year to improve educational services for the citizens of Alabama. The Commission remains committed to its coordination of educational opportunities at all levels which will ultimately translate into support for statewide economic development.



Dr. Jim Purcell

Knowing is not  
enough; we must  
apply.

Wishing is not  
enough; we must  
do.

*Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe*  
Author



Charles Buntin

# Chairman's Message

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education is continuing to forge ahead in its role as the coordinating board for Alabama's public two- and four-year higher education institutions. The statutory responsibilities have continued amidst the unforeseen challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic presented.

Spring semester 2020 took an abrupt turn for campuses when they were forced to transition to online instructional delivery. The Commission played a key role in disseminating information through the media and the website that related to individual institution's coronavirus policies.

In June, 2020, the Commission meetings transitioned from in-person to a Zoom format. Despite the change of direction, over 50 new academic programs were approved, three new commissioners were confirmed by the Alabama Senate, two ACHE legislative bills were enacted and a healthy education budget was passed by the legislature.

It is apparent that a variety of delivery systems is essential to prepare an educated citizenry and a competitive workforce for the present and future global economy. This is attainable through Alabama's higher education system of colleges and universities and their varying missions that will provide access and increased educational attainment.

The Commission will continue to facilitate informed decision-making and policy formulation regarding wise stewardship of resources in response to the needs of students and the goal of institutions.

As chairman of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, I am pleased to transmit to the Governor and to the Alabama Legislature the 2020-21 annual report.

An investment  
in knowledge  
pays  
the best  
interest.

*Benjamin Franklin*  
*Author*



2021

Public Education Funding in Alabama Hits Record High

Public education in Alabama received a record number of state dollars in the budget that began October 1<sup>st</sup>. The \$7.7 billion budget was passed during the midst of a worldwide pandemic. Alabama’s Education Trust Fund is made up of income and sales taxes which remained steady in an economy that proved to be resilient even in turbulent times. The Alabama Community College System received a 9% increase that equates to more than \$41 million over last year, while the public universities increased over \$89 million or 7%.

Good news for students looking for financial aid to reduce the cost of attending college. Two student



assistance programs administered by ACHE received increases. The need-based Alabama Student Assistance Program has seen increases totaling 151% since 2017. The Alabama Student Grant Program, designed for students attending participating private institutions in the state, also received additional funding.

Eligibility Requirements Increased

- AL Act 2021-425  
Police Officer’s and Firefighter’s Survivor Educational Assistance Program amended to include both natural and adopted children under 21-years-old
- AL Act 2021-389  
Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education Program (AMSTEP)
  - \* 2018 – Enacted as a student loan forgiveness program to address shortages of public high school math and science teachers
  - \* 2019 - Computer science teachers added
  - \* 2021 - AMSTEP expanded to include middle-level school teachers and individuals teaching in Alabama, but residing in another state



L to R - Governor Kay Ivey,  
ACHE Executive Director Jim Purcell,  
ACHE Chairman Charles Buntin  
at bill signing

Free Speech Reporting Requirements



AL Act 2019-396 requires public colleges and universities to “develop, adopt and enforce a policy on free expression.” Each institution’s annual compliance report was submitted to ACHE by September 1, 2021. Information covered the 12-month period prior to July 1, 2021.

<https://ache.edu/Freedom of Speech.aspx>

## New Commissioner Appointed in September 2021

Jody M. Singleton of Headland was appointed to serve as an at-large member of the Commission by Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth. His term ends August 31, 2030. Commissioner Singleton, a Certified Public Accountant, is the owner of an accounting firm in Headland, Alabama. He is a past president of the Headland Kiwanis Club and is a city councilman and mayor pro tem for the city of Headland.



Jody M. Singleton

## Retain Alabama



Keeping four-year graduates in Alabama to work post-graduation is an issue that will be addressed through an initiative called *Retain Alabama*. \$800,000 was added to ACHE's budget this year to work with institutions and businesses in promoting the job opportunities and livability of the state. Those graduates will be essential in filling jobs that are available in Alabama's future economy.

## Alabama Credential Registry

Not only will bachelor degrees be needed in the workplace, but credit and non-credit credentials will play an important role. Credential training is being offered by businesses, industry trade groups, and the state's colleges and universities. ACHE has been given a green light to develop the Alabama Credential Registry to catalog Alabama's workforce-oriented training opportunities.



## Complete College Alabama

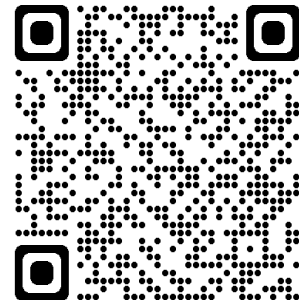


Two- and four-year institutional representatives met this summer to participate in a Complete College Alabama Game Changers Strategic Planning Conference. Alabama is a state member of the national alliance that advocates for increasing college completion rates and closing institutional performance gaps. ACHE has developed a Complete College Alabama link <https://ache.edu/InstEffectiveness.aspx> as an information resource for institutions.

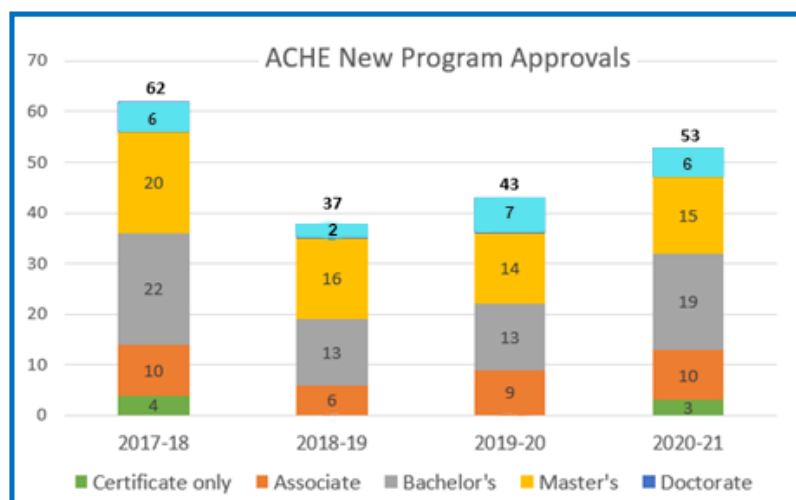
## Are You Ready For College?

Directory of Alabama Institutions  
(Visit QR Code)  
or

Email: [collegeinfo@ache.edu](mailto:collegeinfo@ache.edu)



## New Program Approvals 2020-21



In 2020-21, the Commission approved 53 new programs of study, up more than 20% from the prior year's total of 43. The greatest number of new programs came at the bachelor's (19) and master's (15) levels, which is in line with trends from prior years.

The top five areas in which new programs were approved appear in the adjacent table. Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences had the greatest number of new degree programs approved, followed by Education and Business, Marketing, and Related Fields. All three of these areas appeared on last year's list. New to the list were Visual and Performing Arts and Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies.

Top Five Areas for New Programs in 2020-21	# of New Progs
Health Professions and Clinical Sciences	10
Education	8
Business, Marketing, and Related	5
Visual and Performing Arts	5
Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies	4

### SPOTLIGHT ON INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS SUPPORTING ALABAMA'S CHEMICALS INDUSTRY

The chemicals industry is Alabama's second largest, with over \$2 billion in annual exports. There are more than 200 chemical companies in the state.

#### University of South Alabama, Ph.D. in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

In March 2021, the Commission approved an innovative Ph.D. program in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering offered through a partnership between the Colleges of Engineering, Arts and Sciences, and Medicine. The interdisciplinary curriculum is grounded in chemical engineering coursework and will allow students to specialize in one of the following four tracks: chemical engineering, environmental toxicology, medicinal chemistry, or applied chemistry/biochemistry. The principles learned through this program can be applied to a variety of technical areas, such as drug discovery, industrial chemistry, biological systems, and environmental engineering.



#### University of Alabama in Huntsville, Ph.D. in Chemistry

In June 2021, the Commission approved an innovative Ph.D. in Chemistry that is designed to meet industry needs for advanced professionals who can see products all the way from development to production. The degree includes three pathways: academic, entrepreneur, and executive. The academic path will provide students a traditional Ph.D. experience. The entrepreneur path will provide skills and training associated with small to medium enterprises and start-ups. The executive path is aimed at training for large industry and multinationals and includes a certified MBA. In this unique program, the chemistry research is integrated within the non-chemistry coursework, and curriculum is built on collaborations with UAH College of Business, the Invention to Innovation Center (I<sup>2</sup>C), the Propulsion Research Center, and the Alabama Space Grant Consortium.





## New Non-Degree Certificates

Between December 2020 and September 2021, Alabama's two- and four-year public institutions developed 102 new non-degree certificates, which is on par with last year's figure of 98 new non-degree programs. The community and technical colleges have been much more active in creating new certificates, with 76 this year, as compared with only 43 last year.

New Certificates	# Certs
Two-year	76
Four-year Undergraduate	11
Four-year Graduate	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>

The top five areas in which new certificates have been developed in 2020-21 are dominated by the technical programs being offered by the two-year programs (Construction, Engineering, and Mechanical). The majority of the Business and Health Professions areas are split between four-year graduate and two-year certificate programs.

Top Five Certificate Areas of Study	
Construction Trades	21
Engineering Technology	14
Business, Management, Marketing, and related	10
Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences	9
Mechanic and Repair Technologies	8

## Post-Implementation Reporting

When a new academic program is approved by the Commission, it is accompanied by a number of conditions that must be met within the post-implementation period, including average graduates per year (matching the state mandated viability minimums by program level), average new enrollments per year to sustain graduates, submission of a report on employment/education outcomes of graduates, and submission of an assessment of the program. Over the last couple of years, the Commission has begun to add post-implementation conditions for percentage of graduates earning professional licensure (only in fields where this applies), as well as maintenance of viability for existing academic programs (only when the new program is developed out of an existing course of study). Within the last few years, the Commission has shifted to approving a seven-year post-implementation period for new academic programs, which can accommodate any delays in implementation and allow the program to produce several cycles of graduates.

Between December 2020 and September 2021, a total of 28 programs submitted post-implementation reports or deletion requests. Of these, 14 programs (50%) met all post-implementation conditions. Five programs (18%) did not meet post-implementation conditions and were granted post-implementation extensions by the Commission. This is consistent with the last two years' reporting where 17-18% of the reported programs were granted extensions.

Program Report Status	2019-20	2020-21
Met	37	14
Not Met--Extension	9	5
Deletions	6	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>28</b>



### ALABAMA CREDENTIAL REGISTRY

The Alabama Credential Registry is a cross-sector initiative to create a comprehensive, statewide inventory of postsecondary credentials, with the goal of expanding the number, quality, and transparency of credential opportunities offered throughout Alabama. Since ACHE maintains information on all degrees, non-degree credentials, and short-term certificates offered by Alabama's public postsecondary institutions, ACHE staff have been working closely with the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation (GOEWT) and the Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP) to develop the process for registering credentials. Between summer 2020 and spring 2021, ACHE staff helped register over 1,300 credentials to the national CredentialFinder.org database, the majority of which are offered through the Alabama Community College System institutions. In September, the ACCCP launched the site [credentials.alabama.gov](https://credentials.alabama.gov), a new registry platform designed to help business and industry organizations register credentials they offer. Over the next few months, the ACCCP will begin to analyze the information in the registry to identify which credentials most closely align with the State's workforce and economic development needs.

Non-Resident Institutions (NRI)

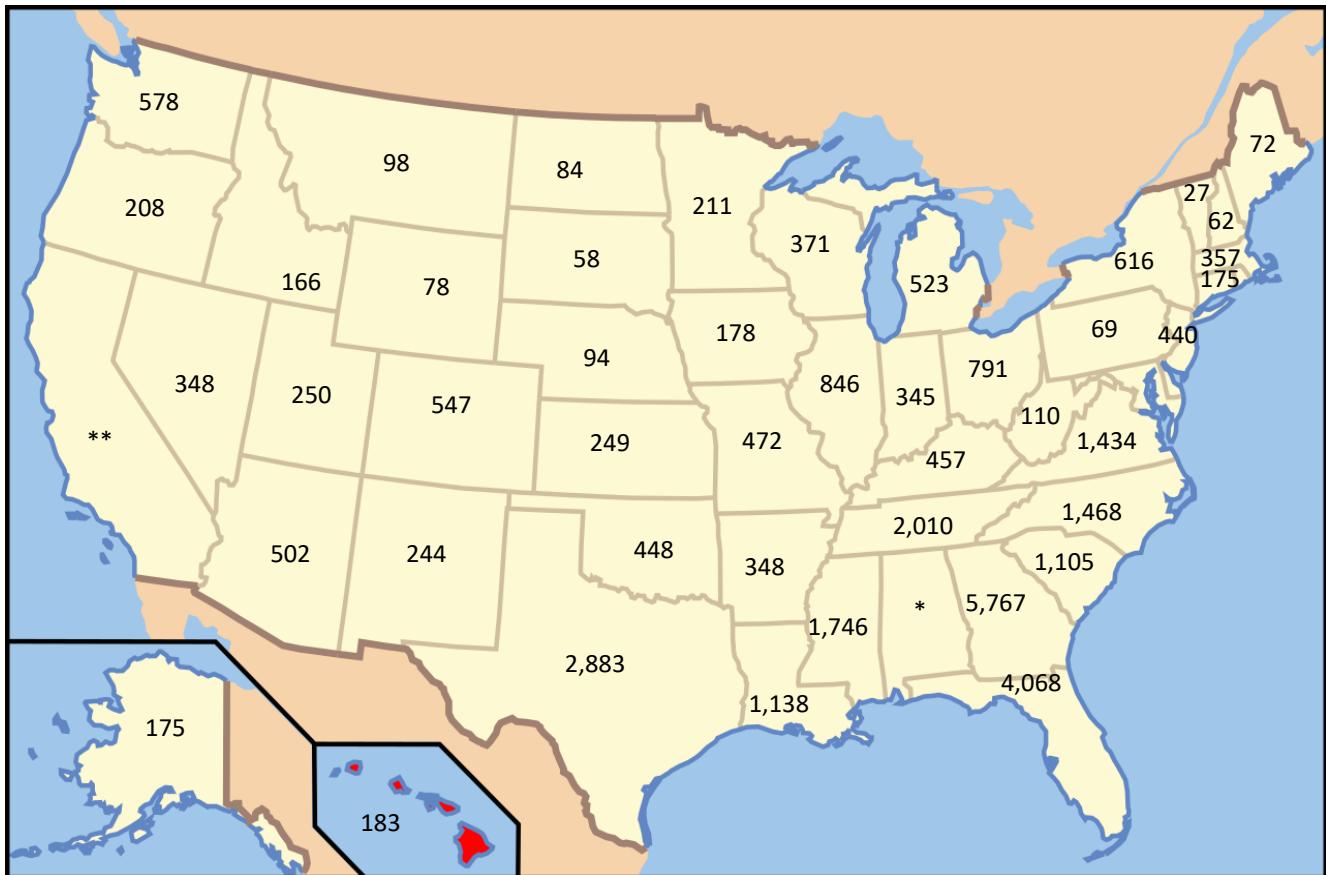
Out-of-state postsecondary institutions that offer college-level programs in Alabama are identified as Non-Resident Institutions (NRIs), and must be licensed or exempted by the Private School Licensure Division at the Alabama Community College System (ACCS). Licensing is based, in part, on ACHE programmatic approval or exemption from ACHE review. Alabama is the only state where jurisdiction over NRI licensure and programmatic review is administered by two separate state agencies. NRIs are exempt from ACHE programmatic review under certain conditions, with 152 currently exempt. Three non-exempt NRIs have received full programmatic review. A survey of 35 NRIs found more than 400 degree and 100 non-degree programs with more than 6,000 Alabama students enrolled in online, onsite, or blended classes.

National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA)

In 2015, the Alabama Legislature passed AL Act 2015-122 to establish the State Reciprocity Committee (SRC) as the body overseeing reciprocal education agreements with other states or national organizations, and in that same year, the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE), acting on behalf of the SRC, executed an agreement for Alabama to join NC-SARA. SARA, as it is commonly referred to, “...establishes comparable standards for interstate postsecondary distance education” among the states and territories. With SARA membership, Alabama effectively split its authorization process for non-Alabama institutions into two: those institutions “with a physical presence” in Alabama would continue to follow the existing process, while those institutions “without a physical presence,” namely those offering only distance education to Alabama residents, could follow the new process arising from Alabama’s participation in SARA, as long as that institution was a member of SARA through its home state. Those non-state institutions offering only online education who were not SARA members would follow the existing authorization process.

As the State Portal Entity (SPE) for Alabama, ACHE enrolls and renews institutions in the organization, communicates policies and procedures to institutional contacts, investigates student complaints, and so forth. In response to SARA requiring its members to abide by a new U.S. Department of Education requirement to provide professional licensure disclosure, ACHE’s staff has spent considerable time informing institutional contacts about it by posting information to the website, sending letters via email, and consulting contacts as SARA member institutions via telephone and webinars. As a result of the cost savings to members, which is estimated to be \$69,797 annually, membership in SARA continues to grow. Currently, it stands at 41 institutions. For 2020, SARA-participating institutions in Alabama reported enrolling 30,258 distance education students from other participating states. On the flip side, NC-SARA reported that 26,598 Alabama residents enrolled in distance education programs in SARA states outside Alabama.

**Number of Distance Education Students Enrolled in Alabama's SARA Institutions in 2019 (by Home State)**



Source: NC-SARA Data Dashboards ([Data Dashboards | NC-SARA](#))

In the fall of 2020, SARA institutions in Alabama had 36,125 incoming distance education students, and 26,598 distance education students in Alabama attended SARA institutions in other states and territories.

\*\*Note: California is the only state that is not a member of SARA.

## Southern Regional Education Board Programs

### Academic Common Market

The Academic Common Market (ACM) is a tuition-savings program for college students in the SREB's 15-member states who want to pursue degrees not offered by institutions in their home state. Students can enroll in out-of-state institutions that offer their degree program and pay the in-state tuition rate. Alabama residents who attended institutions out-of-state via the ACM had tuition savings in the amount of \$3,627,824 during the 2020-21 academic year. The average tuition savings per student for Alabama residents was \$15,179.

During academic year 2020-21, the ACM included 2,323 degree programs across the SREB states, with 166 institutions participating and 1,894 students approved for tuition savings. Additionally, 92 Alabama residents were certified to attend out-of-state institutions, while 219 out-of-state students were certified by their home state to attend Alabama institutions during academic year 2020-21.

During academic year 2020-21, 219 out-of-state residents enrolled at Alabama institutions through the ACM. A total of 92 students were certified to enroll in degree programs at out-of-state institutions through the ACM.

### 2020-21 ACM Enrollment at AL Institutions

State of Residence	Students attending Alabama IHE
Georgia	97
Kentucky	44
Mississippi	23
Louisiana	5
Tennessee	26
Other SREB States	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>219</b>

### 2020-21 Top 10 Degree Programs Attracting Out-of-State Students

1. Aerospace Engineering, BSAE	5. Immunology, BS	9. Industrial Distribution, BS
2. Biomedical Sciences, BS	6. Genetics and Genomic Sciences, BS	10. Medical Sociology, BS
3. Neuroscience, BS	7. Physician Assistant Studies, MS	
4. Biomedical Engineering, BS	8. Metallurgical Engineering, BSME	

### Doctoral Scholars Program

Since 1993, the SREB State Doctoral Scholars Program has supported minority students to help them earn a Ph.D. and begin a career at a college or university to diversify campus faculties. Students receive financial support. Current and former scholarship recipients are invited to participate in the Annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, a four-day professional development conference that has become the largest gathering of minority doctoral scholars in the country. The information below reflects Ph.D. scholars who have been funded by the state and/or by individual institutions.

#### Outcomes Since Beginning of Program

• Alabama scholars since 1993:	214
• Graduates since 1993:	149
• Graduates employed in higher education:	80%

#### Current Participation

• Alabama scholars funded in 2020-21:	12
• 2021 Institute participants from Alabama:	27

## STRENGTHENING THE EDUCATION PIPELINE

### Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Completion Project

Now in its sixth year, ACHE's FAFSA Completion Project continues to be a major resource for over 800 educators, representing 136 school systems and private schools. The ACHE web portal shows the progress of each student in the FAFSA application. This information will assist educators in working with students to complete the FAFSA that is necessary for the awarding of Pell Grants. Throughout the year, ACHE, and its partners at the Alabama State Department of Education and the non-profit Alabama Possible, provided virtual demonstrations of the portal to educators and administrators. Since the beginning of the summer when conferences and meetings returned to face-to-face, staff have spoken at some in-person events, such as the Alabama Education Technology Conference and the MEGA Conference hosted by the Alabama Department of Education. Since schools closed and students had to remote learn, the class of 2020 had 3.05% fewer completions than the class of 2019. FAFSA completion strongly correlates with college-going, and on April 8, 2021, the Alabama State Board of Education voted in favor of requiring graduating seniors to complete the FAFSA or formally opt-out.

### College Recruitment Opt-in Survey

The COVID pandemic disrupted the typical college recruitment season over 2020-21, since prospective students did not have access to in-person campus visits or college fairs. To assist institutions with recruiting students, ACHE launched an online survey for high school juniors and seniors, in which they could "opt-in" to share their interests with potential colleges and receive customized assistance from institutional contacts. Based on the feedback from the contacts, this service was an effective way of reaching over 3,000 students who could not meet in-person by recruiters and other staff members. ACHE plans to continue this service for the 2021-22 academic year.

### Open Educational Resources (OER) Initiative

To make college more attainable and affordable, ACHE launched the OER Initiative in 2017. These free educational online materials use a type of license that allows them to be easily shared and edited. Since the launch, ACHE and the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) have had two OER grant programs, which provided incentives for faculty to adopt or create resources. This year's program funded 22 faculty and staff members from two- and four-year institutions to complete Creative Commons (CC) Certificate Training. In this six-week course, grantees learned how to create and share their work openly, and they presented on the uses of OER to their campus colleagues. Additionally, resources created during the training program were to be posted on the State's central OER repository, called the Alabama OER Commons ([Alabama OER Commons](#) | [OER Commons](#)). As a result of this train-the-trainer program, the trainees are resident experts about CC licensing and can assist their fellow educators with resource creation.

## Institutional Finance and Facilities

### Consolidated Budget Recommendation

The Commission receives, evaluates, and coordinates budget requests for the public institutions of higher education in Alabama. A single consolidated budget report containing budget recommendations for separate appropriations to each of the institutions is presented annually to the Governor and Legislature. The recommendation by the Commission is based on, but not limited to, assessment of institutional requests, funding needs derived from standard techniques of objective measurement and need, and unit cost figures calculated through the use of comparative, verified data supplied by the institutions. The Consolidated Budget Recommendation also includes the Commission's recommendation for a variety of statewide programs and activities.

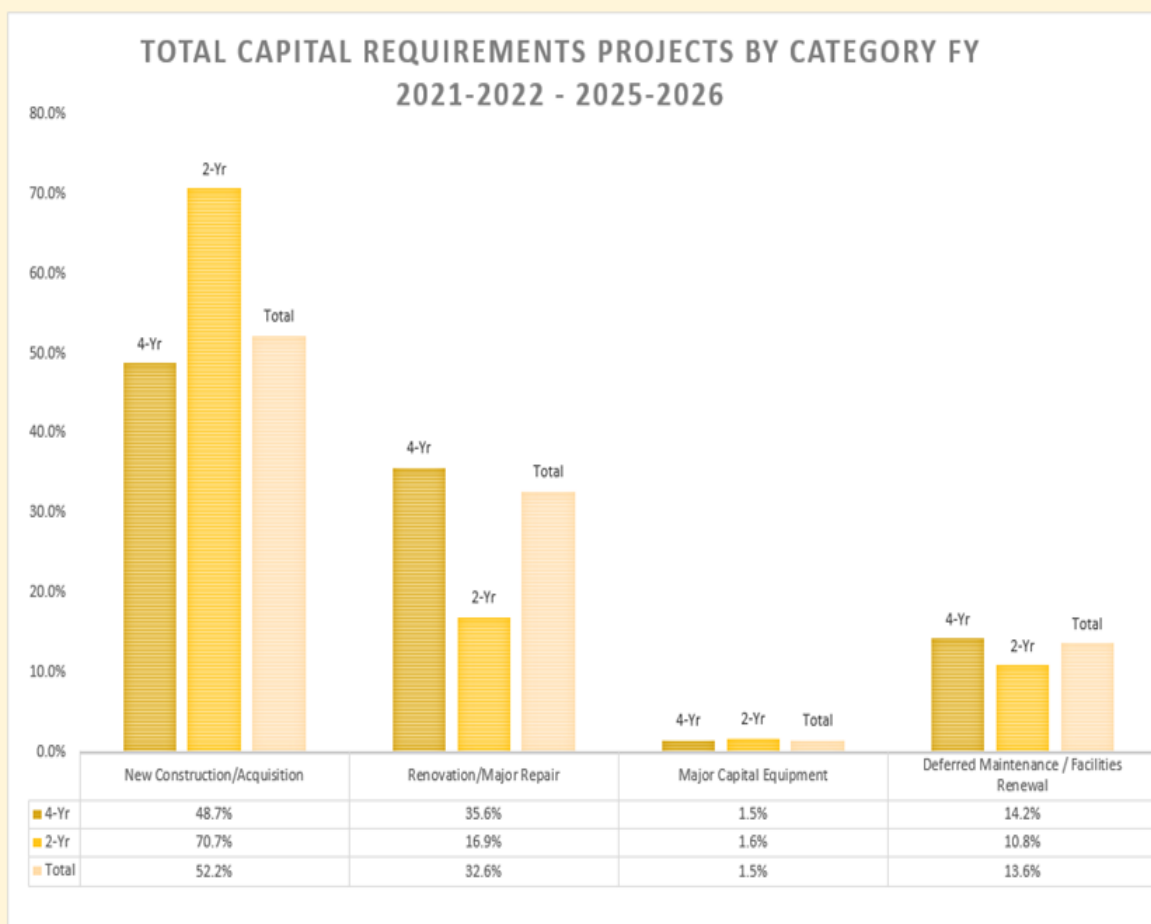
Alabama Public Higher Education Institutions		
INSTITUTION	FY 2021-2022 Recommendation	FY 2021-2022 Appropriation
Alabama A&M University	44,869,943	46,577,392
Alabama State University	50,916,508	52,461,244
Athens University	15,524,648	16,145,494
Auburn University	271,522,103	280,860,430
Auburn University Montgomery	26,911,716	27,560,194
Jacksonville State University	45,122,085	46,786,485
Troy University	59,832,889	61,877,662
University of Alabama	187,712,661	194,970,221
University of Alabama Birmingham	317,108,537	324,844,591
University of Alabama Huntsville	56,209,354	58,322,523
University of Montevallo	23,572,955	24,959,955
University of North Alabama	35,541,294	39,910,091
University of South Alabama	125,964,610	129,097,530
University of West Alabama	20,010,518	21,615,195
<b>Total Senior Institutions</b>	<b>1,280,819,821</b>	<b>1,325,989,007</b>
<b>Two Year Institutions</b>	<b>366,358,451</b>	<b>388,316,268</b>
<b>Total All Institutions</b>	<b>1,647,178,272</b>	<b>1,714,305,275</b>

At their December 11, 2020 meeting, the Commission approved a recommendation of \$1,647,178,272 for the FY 2021-2022 budget for Alabama's public institutions of higher education. This equated to an increase of approximately 3% above the previous year's budget. Because of availability of additional state revenue, Act 2021-342, the Legislature appropriated a total of \$1,714,305,275 from the Education Trust Fund to these institutions, an increase of over 5% above the previous year's budget.



## Facilities Master Plan and Capital Projects Requests

Each public two- and four-year institution submitted a Facilities Master Plan and Capital Projects Requests to the Commission as required by statute. The Facilities Master Plan and Capital Budget Requests report for the period covering FY 2021-26 was presented at the December 11, 2020, Commission meeting. A total of \$4,922,477,194 was requested by the two- and four-year public institutions to cover the projected capital projects for this five-year period. Included in the report is a summary table, showing the general obligation bonds that have been issued by the institutions. As of September 30, 2020, the institutions had \$4,356,154,958 in bonded indebtedness and paid \$621,608,481 in debt service on these bonds.



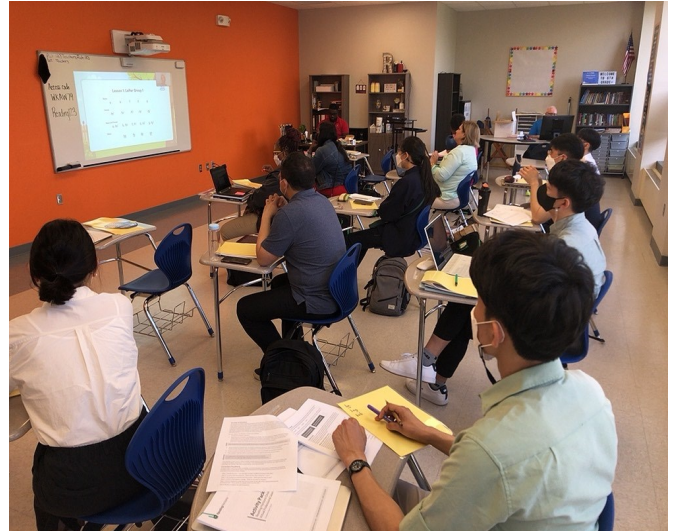
## FY 2020-21 Line Items

The Commission serves as the fiscal agent for several programs. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission and each individual organization is signed each year that outlines the responsibilities of both parties.

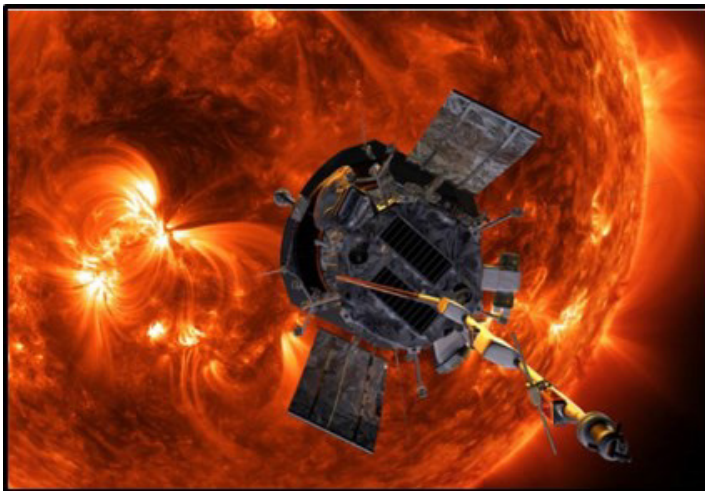
### Alabama-Korea Education and Economic Partnership (A-KEEP)

State Appropriation: \$100,000.00

Provides multicultural experiences and professional training through Alabama's education system and workforce programs. The Korean Language and Culture Program is available in schools throughout Montgomery County and Pike Road.



*Certified Korean STEM teachers trained during Summer Enrichment Program June to July 2021*

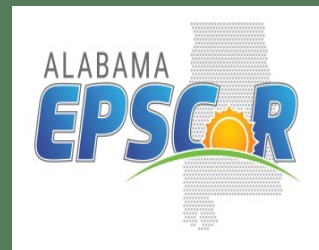


*NSF EPSCoR-funded Alabama plasma scientists are part of NASA's Parker Solar Probe studying the origins of the solar wind and the creation of space weather and energetic particles, which can destroy computer chips on vital satellite systems.*

### Alabama Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (ALEPSCoR)

State Appropriation: \$1,200,216.00

ALEPSCoR continues to be a strong contributor to Alabama's innovation-economy and tech-related industries via scientific and engineering research. Alabama's extensive plasma science research is gaining promising national leadership and new commercialization opportunities.





## Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee

State Appropriation:  
\$2,123,376.00

The 67 Soil and Water Conservation Districts conducted virtual and video presentations and provided materials and resources for teachers who were not able to be in the classrooms. The educational opportunities were expanded to outdoor activities in order to accommodate COVID-19 restrictions.



## Alabama's Conservation Programs

## Alabama Resource Conservation and Development Councils

State Appropriation:  
\$3,137,744.00

Funds are used to coordinate the activities of the nine regional councils and to promote resource conservation activities in Alabama and on the national level.



## National Computer Forensics Institute

State Appropriation: \$250,000.00

The Institute and the Office of Prosecution Services provide cybersecurity protection and awareness training to high school, college, financial, legal, government, and community groups.

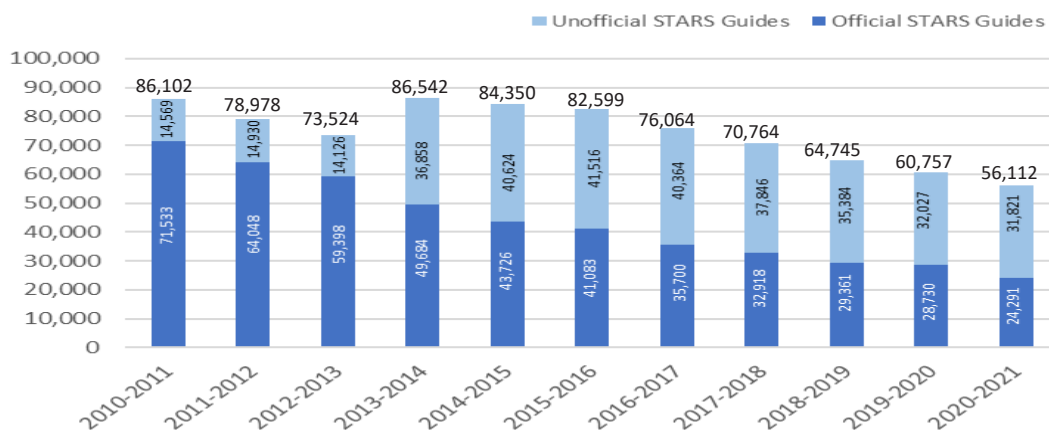


## Articulation and General Studies Committee/Statewide Transfer and Articulation Reporting System (AGSC/STARS)

State Appropriation: \$393,067.00

The STARS System allows public two-year students in Alabama to obtain a Transfer Guide/Agreement for the major of their choice. This guide/agreement, if used correctly, guides the student through their first two years of coursework, and prevents loss of credit hours upon transfer to the appropriate public four-year university in Alabama.

**STARS TOTAL TRANSFER GUIDES OBTAINED BY YEAR SINCE 2011**  
This chart represents usage by end-users since fall of 2011



## Alabama Trails Foundation

State Appropriation:  
\$195,000.00

Supports the geographic and social diversity of Alabama and is charged with advancing, developing, interconnecting, and supporting the use of Alabama trails for recreation.



Trails and Forests in Alabama

## Black Belt Initiative Alabama Forestry Foundation

State Appropriation:  
\$307,000.00

Math and science programs have been expanded to encourage STEM-related career opportunities in the Black Belt's forestry industry.



## Alabama Black Belt Adventures Association

State Appropriation: \$300,000.00



The first-ever Black Belt Birding Festival was held in Hale County. The Association partnered with the Alabama Audubon to sponsor the event that drew visitors from seven states to learn more about the eco-system, wildlife, and birds in the Black Belt region.

## Ability Sport Network

State Appropriation:  
\$60,000.00

Restrictions imposed by COVID-19 led to remote learning for elementary, middle, and secondary schools. New online and face-to-face student and coach training was developed in preparation for the 2021-2022 season. Access to a new outdoor basketball court was provided. Following COVID-19 guidelines, six online training sessions in adapted sport and three outside wheelchair basketball tournaments for coaches and volunteers were held.



## Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center (BBTCAC)

State Appropriation: \$260,000.00

Presented arts enrichment programs in schools throughout the Black Belt region. Assisted with training to residents for Internet sales and distribution of Gee's Bend Quilts, worked with local artists in the promotion of regional art and fine crafts.



## Alabama Agricultural Land-Grant Alliance (AALGA)

State Appropriation: \$5,616,283.00

Member universities are Alabama A&M University (Winfred Thomas Agricultural Research Station), Auburn University (Alabama Experimental Station), and Tuskegee University (George Washington Carver Agricultural Experimental Station). Agricultural research is conducted and the money is used for federal matching funds.

# AALGA

## Alabama Agricultural Land-Grant Alliance

### Alabama Forestry Commission Education Program

State Appropriation:  
\$200,000.00

Works with local Natural Resource Planning committees, agencies, and members of the local community to spread knowledge of forestry and wildlife management to better protect Alabama's forestland.



### International Motorsports Hall of Fame

State Appropriation:  
\$200,000.00

Visitors to the Hall of Fame Museum came from 47 states and five foreign countries during 2021. The exhibits displayed continue to provide educational information on Alabama's involvement in the automobile racing industry.



### Alabama Wing of the Civil Air Patrol

State Appropriation:  
\$100,000.00

Cadet programs, emergency, and aerospace services are the congressionally-charted missions of the Civil Air Patrol. During the pandemic, the Alabama Wing transported COVID-19 testing kits throughout the state.



### Alabama Recruit and Retain Minority Teachers Pilot Program

State Appropriation: \$700,000.00

Athens State University and Alabama A&M University are partnering for recruitment, training, and mentoring minority teacher candidates to become P-12 teachers in Alabama's public schools.



### Network of Alabama Academic Libraries (NAAL)

State Appropriation:  
\$303,428.00

NAAL coordinates cost-saving measures of its membership, along with sharing of academic resources. AlabamaMosaic, a digital repository of materials on Alabama's history, culture, place, and people, currently indexes 427 distinct collections that includes 410,983 digital objects from 52 institutions and organizations.



### Best and Brightest STEM Pilot Program

State Appropriation: \$270,000.00

Student loan debt up to \$15,000.00 over five years is repaid for individuals with STEM credentials to relocate and work in Marengo County or the city of Decatur.



### Alabama Humanities Foundation

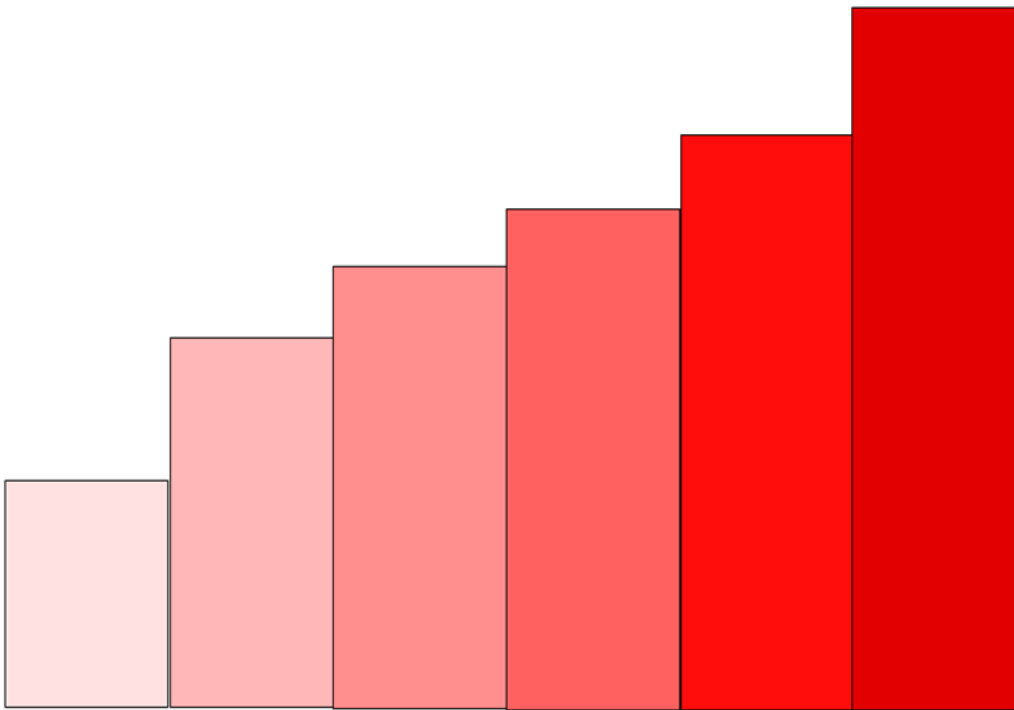
State Appropriation:  
\$100,000.00

Educational programs transitioned to virtual during the pandemic to continue teacher training workshops and Alabama History Day competition for middle and high school students.



**Update On  
Building Human Capital**  
**The Educational Path to  
Alabama’s Economic Success**

---

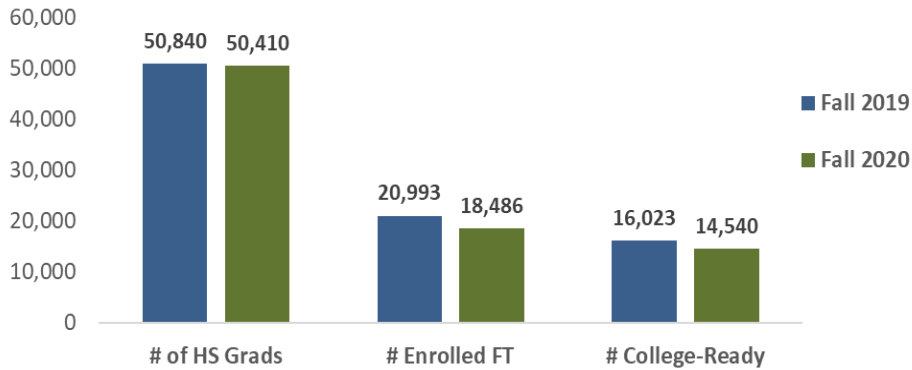


**Alabama Commission on Higher Education Strategic Plan (2018-2030)**  
(Board Approved 12/8/2017)

The plan’s twelve-year period will allow for an appropriate evaluation of the strategies identified in each of the five priorities. The following information provides an update on the FY 2020-21 activities.

## Priority One: Improving Access

### Number of Alabama College-Ready High School Students Enrolled Full-Time at Alabama's Public Colleges and Universities

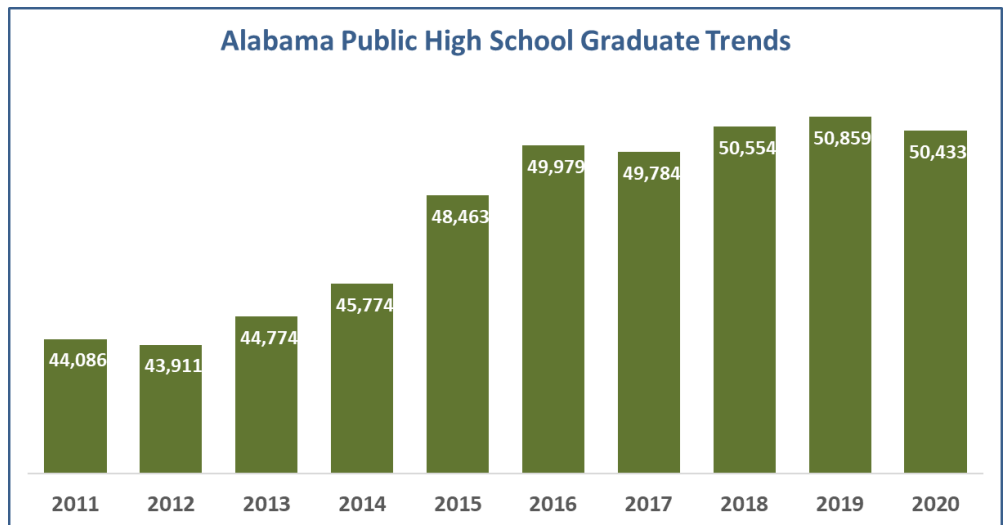


\*College-Ready students are those not requiring developmental education courses while in college. In Fall 2019, 76.3% of students enrolled full-time were college-ready, and that number increased in Fall 2020 to 78.7%.

- **Priority One:**  
**Strategy One –**  
Increase the number of high school students prepared for college

Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database

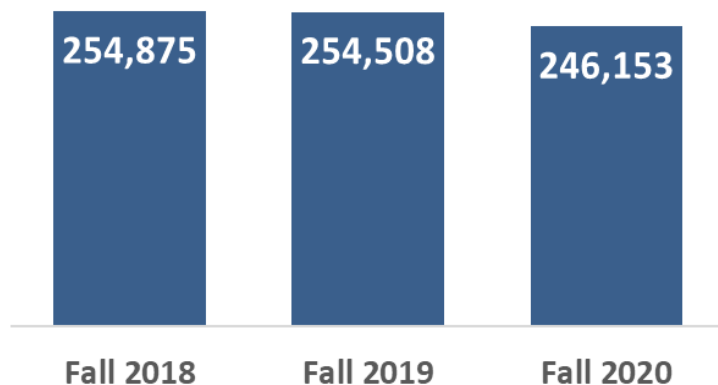
### Alabama Public High School Graduate Trends



- **Priority One:**  
**Strategy One –**  
Monitor Alabama public high school graduate trends

Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database & Alabama State Dept. of Education

## Alabama Public Institutions Total Enrollment

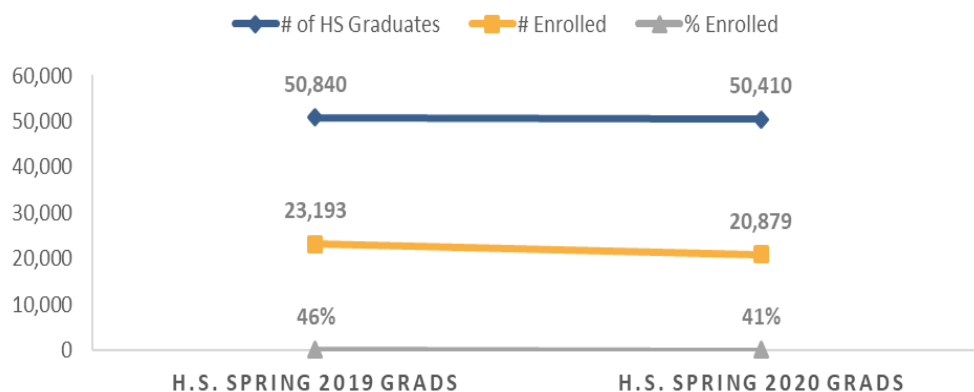


Over the past two years, the percentage of total Fall enrollment in AL public institutions decreased -3.4%.

- **Priority One:**  
**Strategy One –**  
Monitor the enrollment of Alabama higher education public institutions

Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLING IN ALABAMA PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

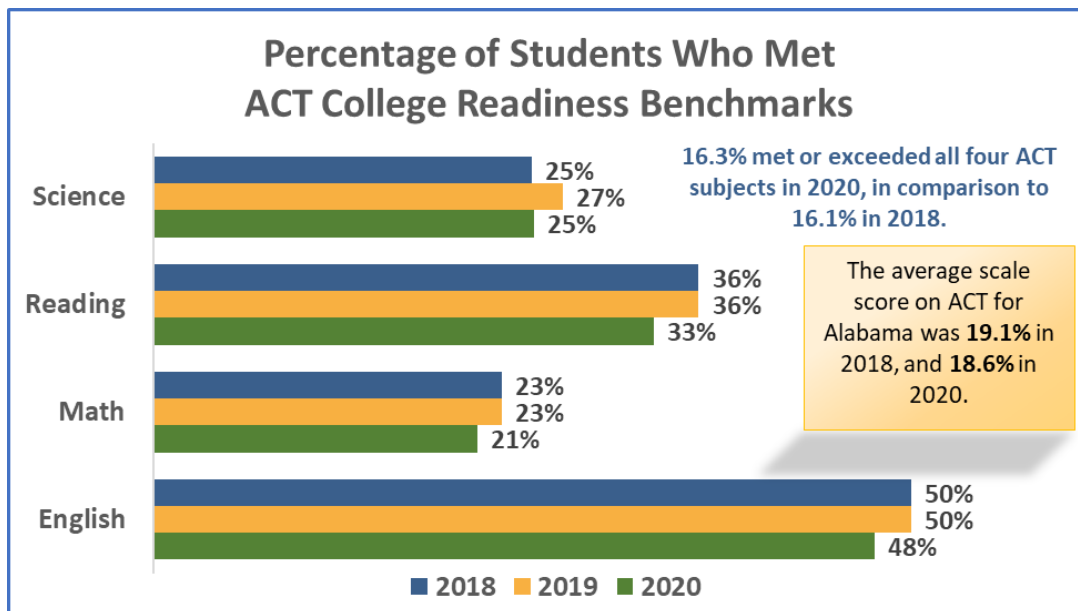


- **Priority One:**  
**Strategy Two –**  
Monitor the number of high school graduates enrolling in Alabama public institutions

Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database  
Alabama High School Feedback Reports



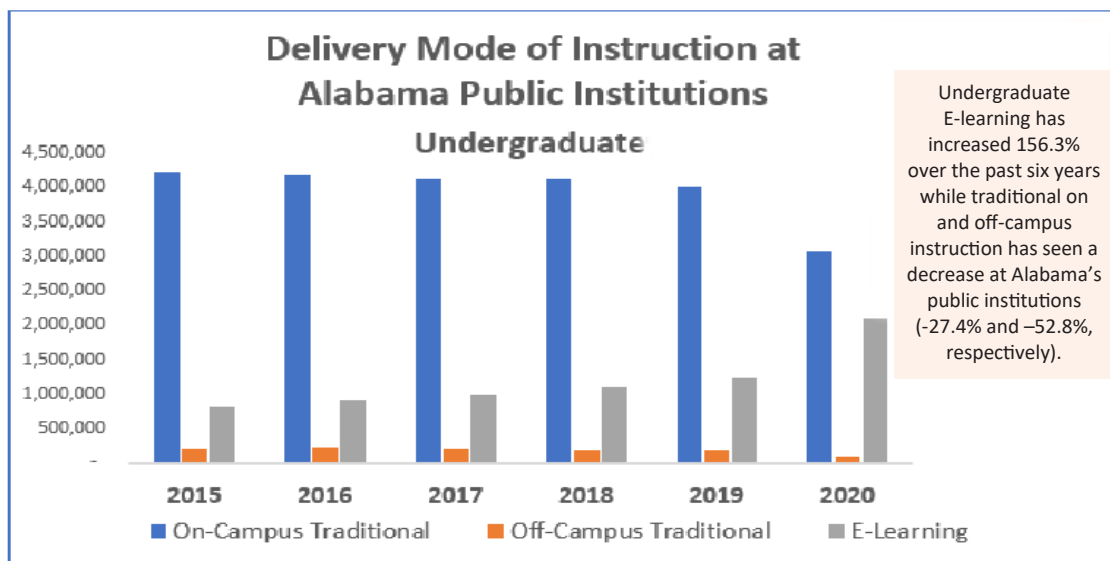
## Priority One: Improving Access



Source: Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA)

- **Priority One:**  
**Strategy Two –**  
Monitor ACT readiness benchmarks

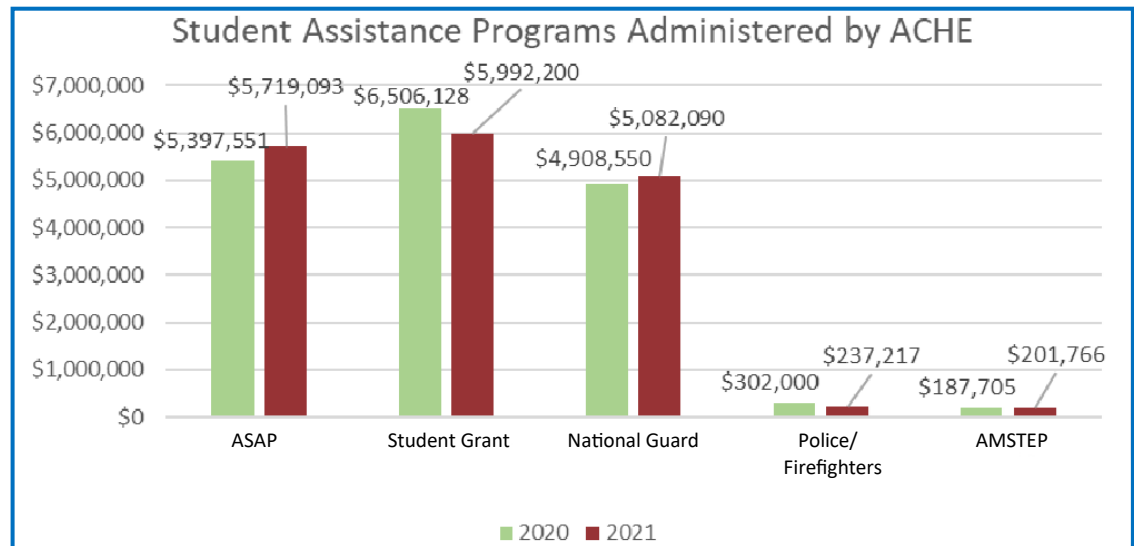
- **Priority One:**  
**Strategy Two –**  
Expand the delivery of coursework online



Source: Alabama Commission on Higher Education, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Instruction Type

## Priority One: Improving Access

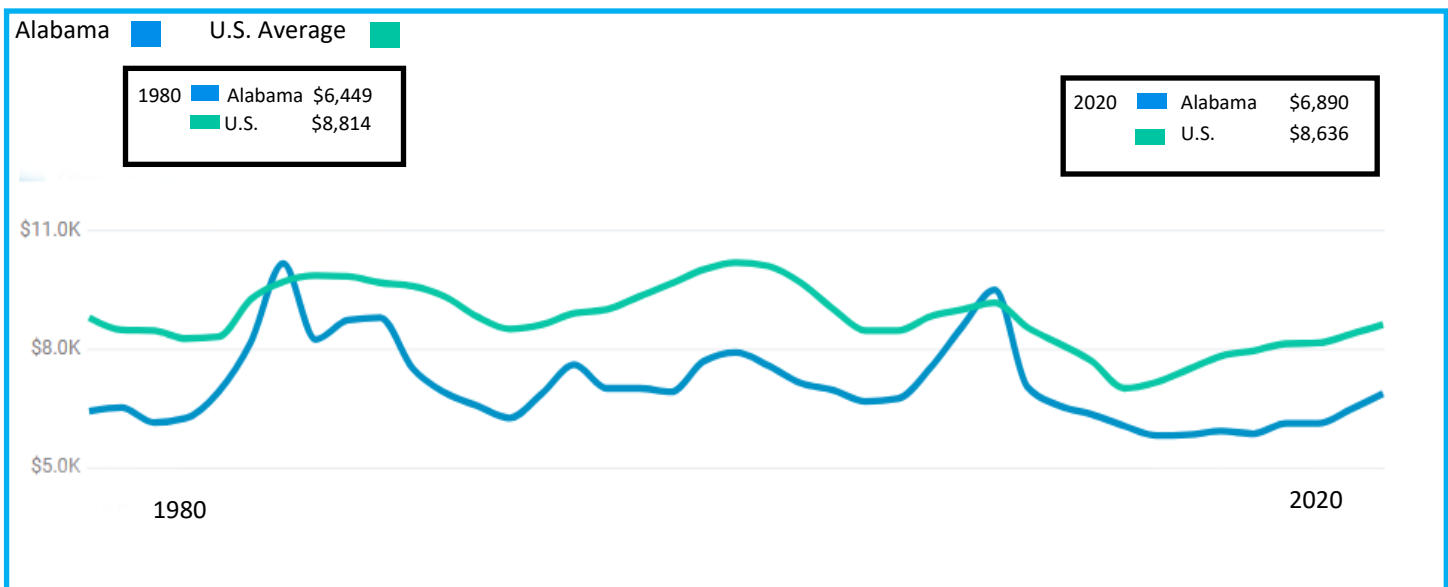
- **Priority One:**  
**Strategy Three –**  
Monitor state  
financial aid



Source: ACHE Actual Expenditures (2019-20 & 2020-21)

Higher education often faces the largest cuts of any budget category during economic recessions. As a result, state funding has changed over time. In most states, funding in 2020 remained below historic levels. However, in Alabama since 1980, this is not the case. Education appropriations per FTE (a measure of state and local support for public higher education, excluding research, agricultural extension programs, and medical education) in Alabama have increased 6.8% since 1980. In 2020, public institutions in Alabama had \$6,890 in education appropriations per FTE, approximately 80% of the U.S. average. General operating appropriations in Alabama have decreased 16.5% per FTE from \$7,465 in 2001 to \$6,235 in 2020.

### Per-Student Education Appropriations Over Time



Source: State Higher Education Finance

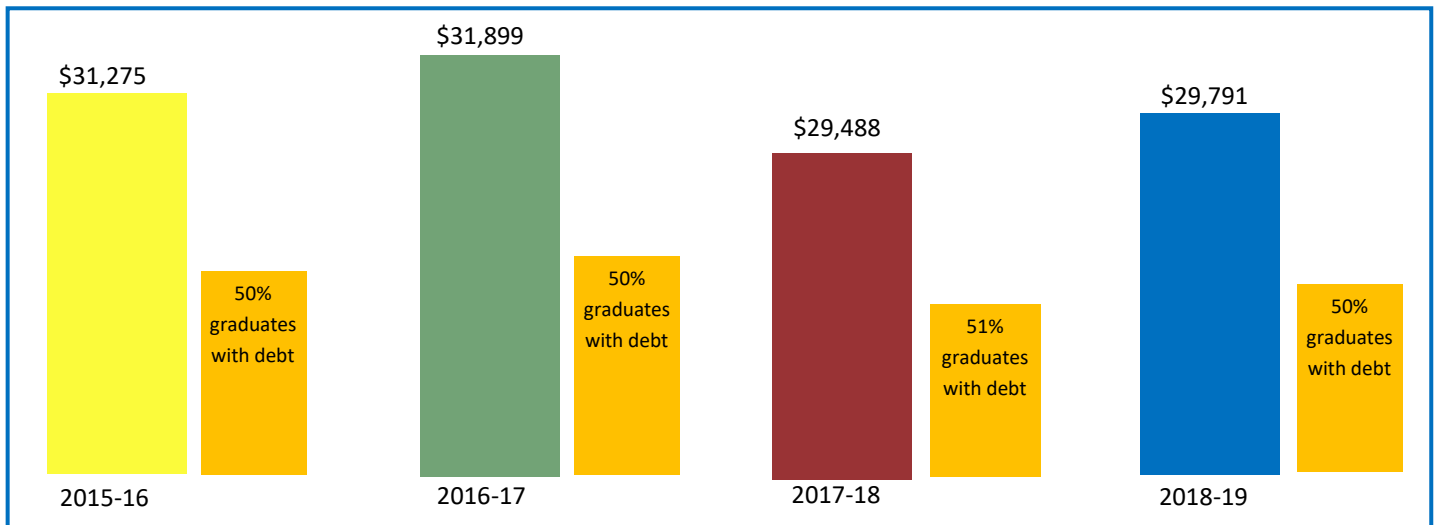
- **Priority One:**  
**Strategy Three –**  
Alabama's per-student education  
appropriations compared to the nation



## Priority One: Improving Access

As our economy becomes more reliant on a college-educated workforce, the cost to students remains a critical issue. Public colleges and universities educate three-quarters of all students in the country, with states collectively investing over \$12 billion a year to support more than 4.5 million students through financial aid programs. The federal government, higher education institutions, and states have key roles to play in reducing student reliance on debt. ACHE has taken proactive measures through funding from the legislature to create student loan forgiveness programs and to increase state financial aid.

### Percentage & Debt Amount for Graduates of Public Senior Institutions

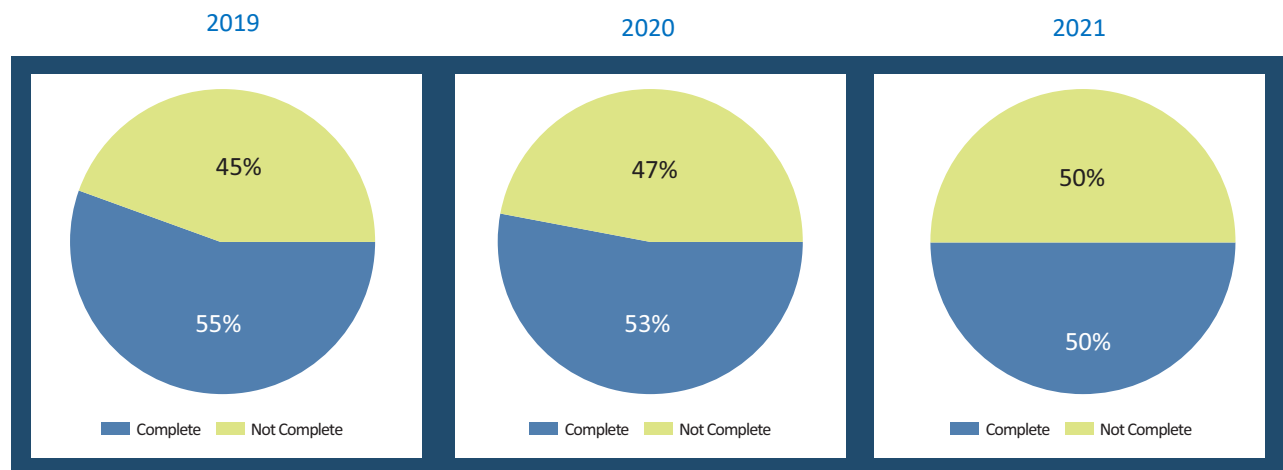


- **Priority One: Strategy Four – Monitor the debt incurred for college graduates**

Source: College InSight

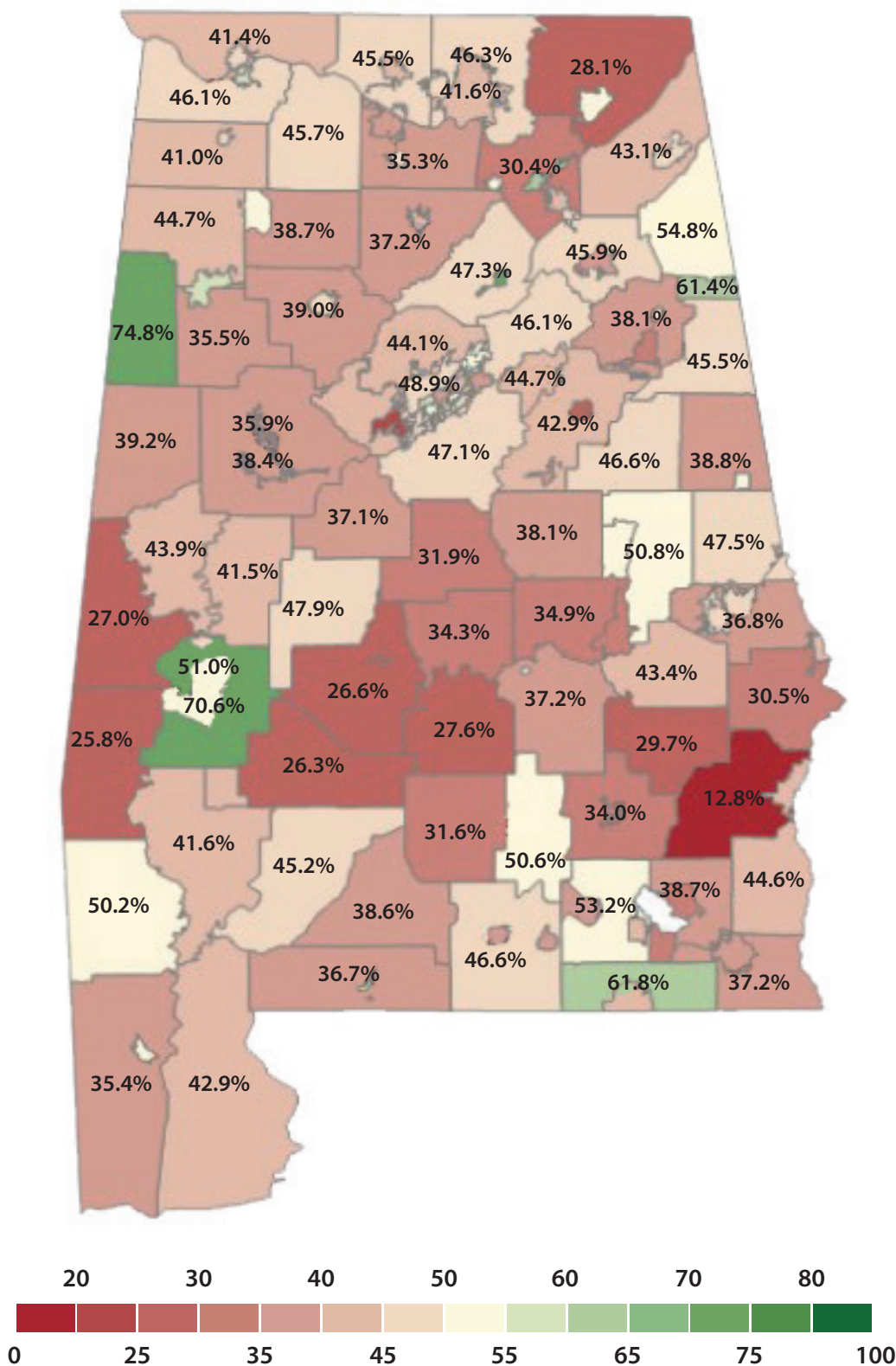
The Alabama Commission on Higher Education's FAFSA Completions Project provides an online tool for the secure matching and distribution of student-level data to increase FAFSA Completions. The purpose of the portal is to provide schools with important information on student progress in completing the FAFSA application. This allows for better target counseling and filing help. During the 2019-20 school year, more than half of Alabama high school seniors completed their FAFSA application despite schools going remote in March. This resulted in more than \$66 million in Pell Grants to Alabama students.

### FAFSA Completions Project



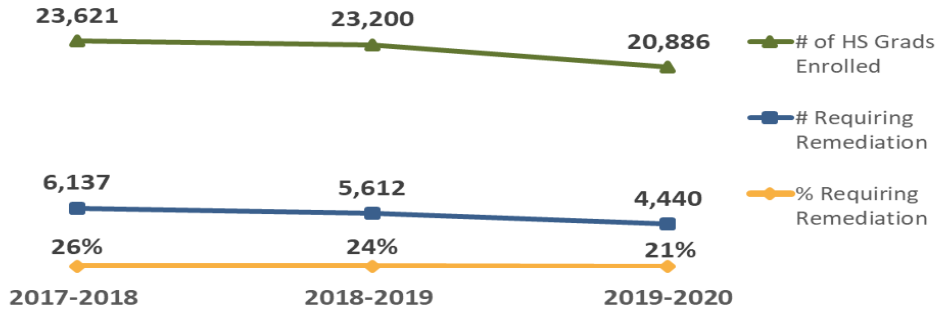
- **Priority One: Strategy Four – Reduce the cost of attending college through Pell Grants**

Public School District 2021-2022 Cycle  
FAFSA Completion Rates for Alabama



## Priority Two: Enhancing Student Success

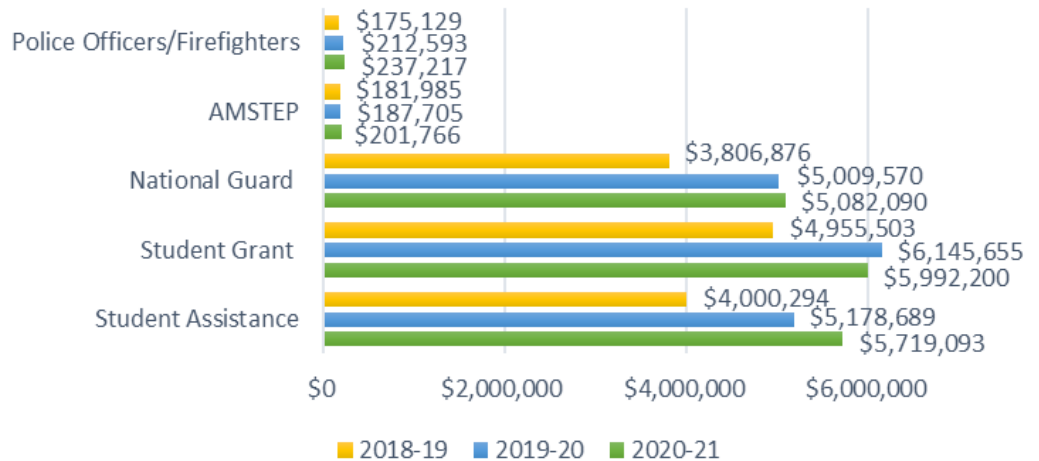
### Number and Percentage of Alabama High School Graduates Enrolled Requiring Remediation



- **Priority Two:**  
**Strategy Two –**  
Monitor remedial education

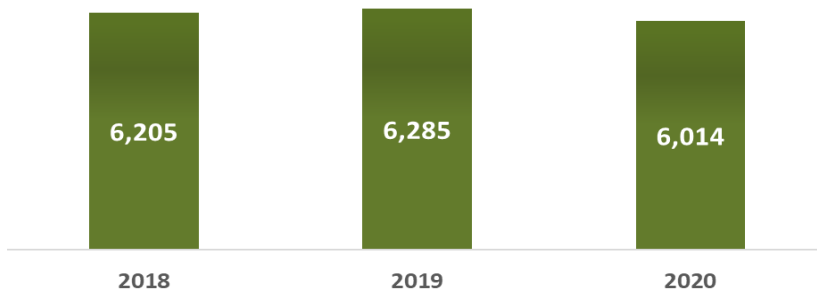
Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database, Alabama High School Feedback Report

### Three-Year Increase in Student Financial Aid Awarded



- **Priority Two:**  
**Strategy Three –**  
Monitor state grant aid per full-time equivalent undergraduate student

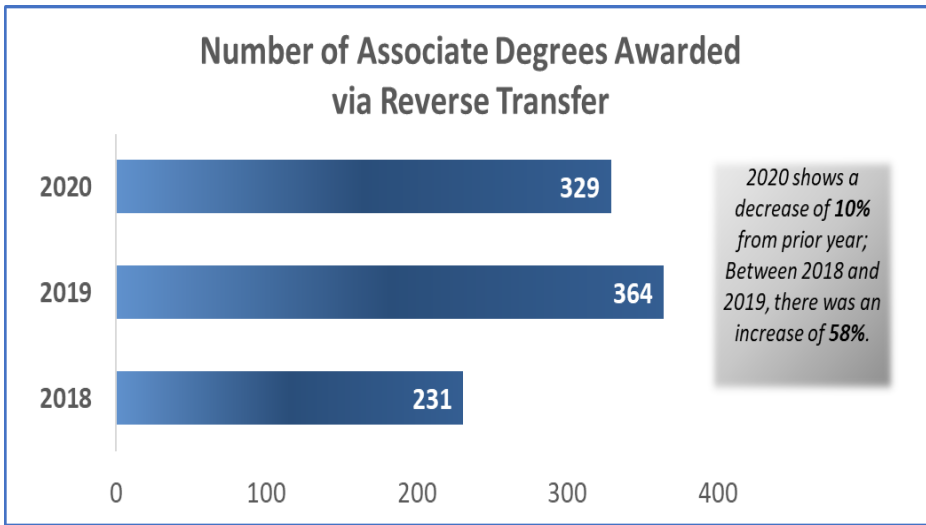
### Number of New Students Transferring from Alabama Public Community Colleges to Universities Fall Term



- **Priority Two:**  
**Strategy Four –**  
Promote the seamless transfer of students from community colleges to four-year institutions

Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database  
Transfer Migration Report

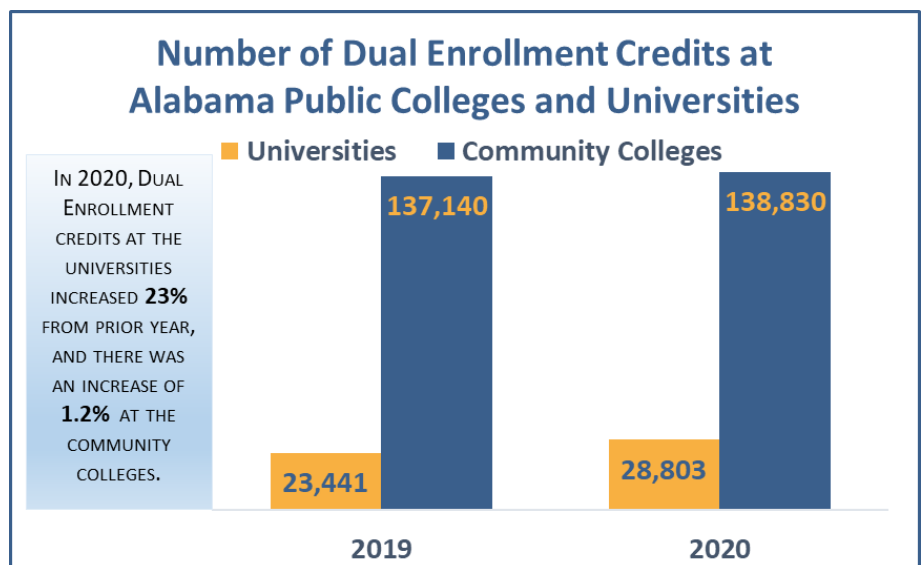
## Priority Two: Enhancing Student Success



- **Priority Two: Strategy Four –**  
Facilitate the use of Reverse Transfer

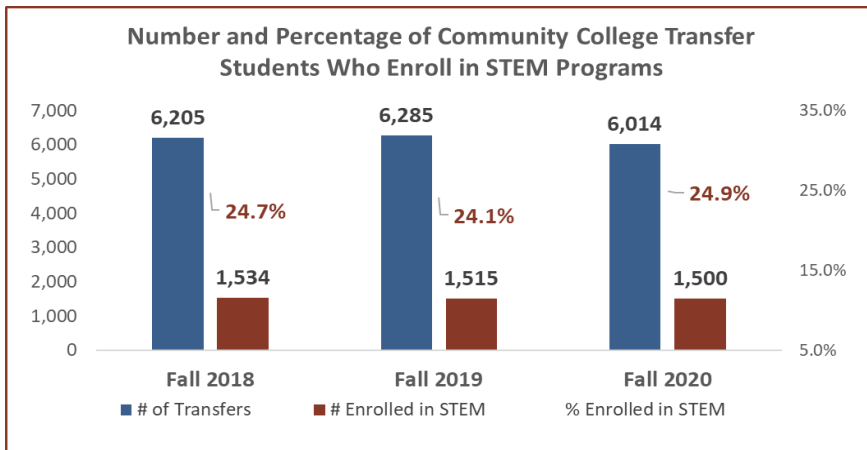
Source: Alabama Community College System  
Reverse Transfer File

- **Priority Two: Strategy Five –**  
Increase the use of dual enrollment



Source: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)  
Data Exchange Survey

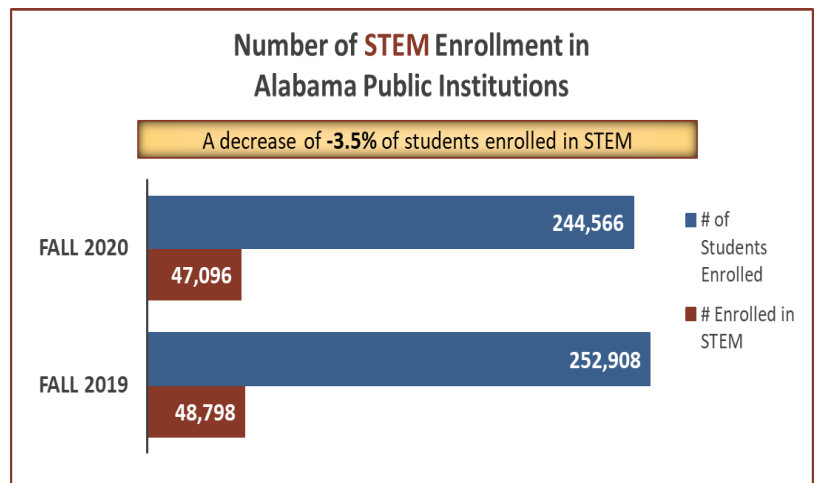
## Priority Three: Enhancing STEM Programs



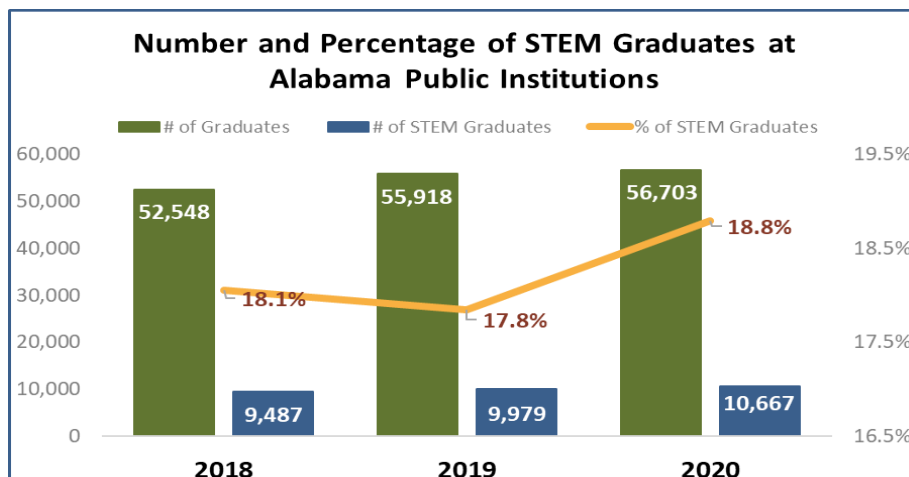
Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database

- Priority Three:**  
**Strategy One –**  
 Monitor the number of STEM students who transfer from community colleges to four-year institutions

- Priority Three:**  
**Strategy Two –**  
 Monitor the number of STEM enrollments



Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database



Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database

- Priority Three:**  
**Strategy Three -**  
 Monitor the number of STEM graduates (all degree levels)

## Priority Four: Developing Alabama's Economy and Workforce

Alabama's public institutions awarded over 27,000 baccalaureate degrees in 2020. Those college graduates are needed in Alabama to help build the state's economy by working for large companies and small businesses while living and contributing to local communities. But, Alabama has a retention problem. Forbes has ranked Alabama the nation's third worst at retaining its college graduates. Although two out of three in-state students are in the workforce one year after graduation, the retention of recent Alabama graduates is low compared to other states.

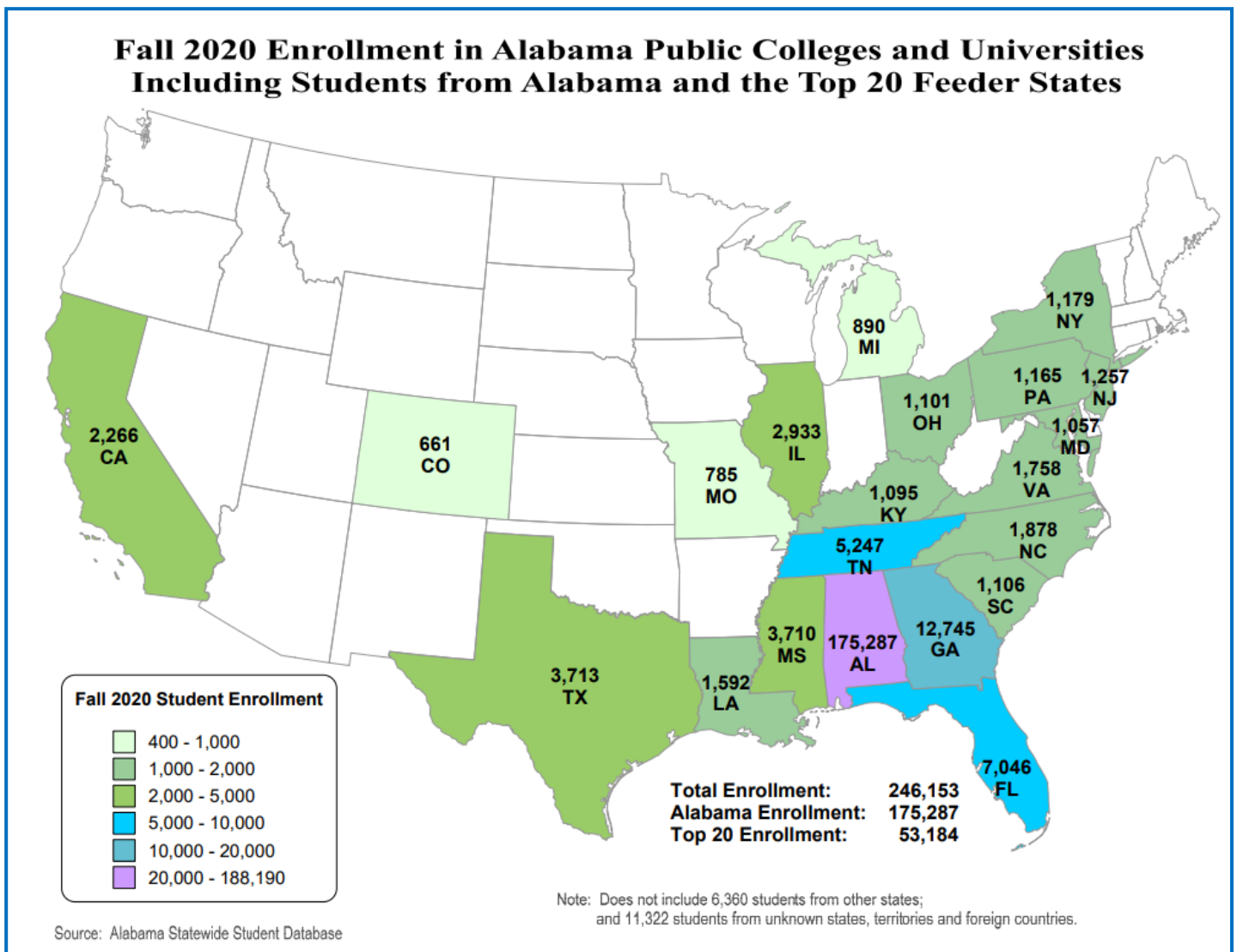
Source: *The Wall Street Journal*

*Forbes Magazine*

*StrategyWise Innovation & Entrepreneurship Report for EDPA*

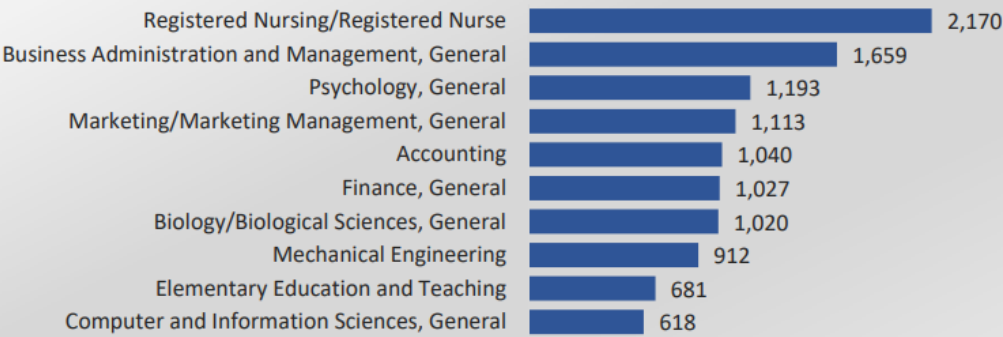
To increase student awareness of careers in the state, the legislature appropriated funds in the 2021 annual session for an initiative called Retain Alabama. ACHE is working with the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama to convince these students to stay and work in Alabama following graduation.

Approximately 20% of out-of-state students remain in Alabama one year after graduation. Other states are sending students to Alabama, but how many choose to remain to live and work here following graduation?



Priority Four: Developing Alabama’s Economy and Workforce

2019-2020 Top 10 Completions by Major for Baccalaureate Degrees  
Alabama Public Institutions



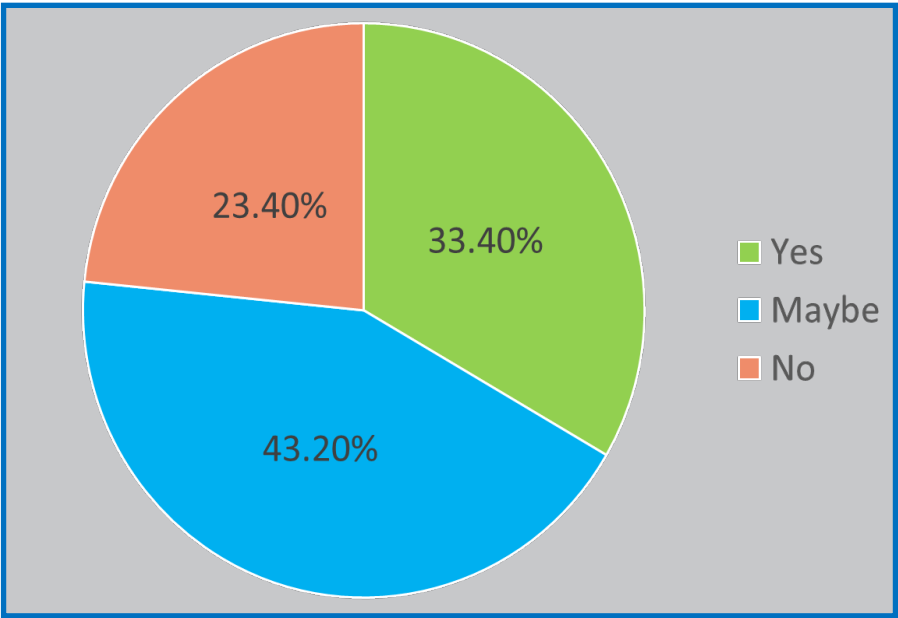
Number of baccalaureate degrees completed at all Alabama public institutions was 27,452

Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database

- **Priority Four Strategy One –**  
Monitor Alabama’s employment based on degree levels

Of the sophomore, junior, and senior college students that responded to the survey, 43% indicated “maybe” when asked if they would stay in Alabama after graduation.

Target Audience for the Retain Alabama Initiative.



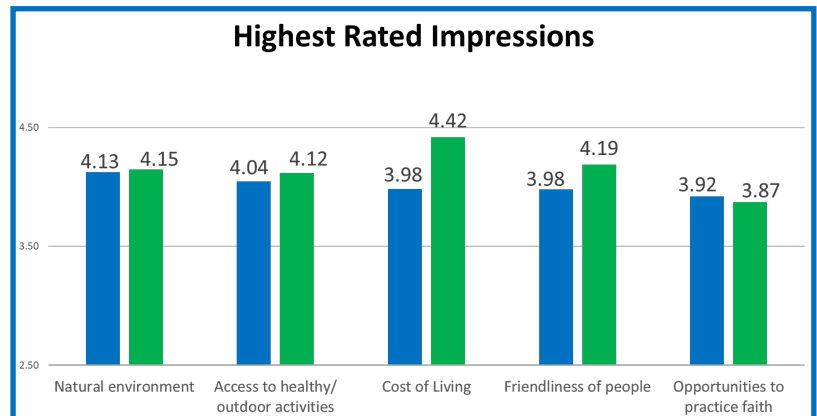
## Priority Four: Developing Alabama's Economy and Workforce

### Impression & Importance Items

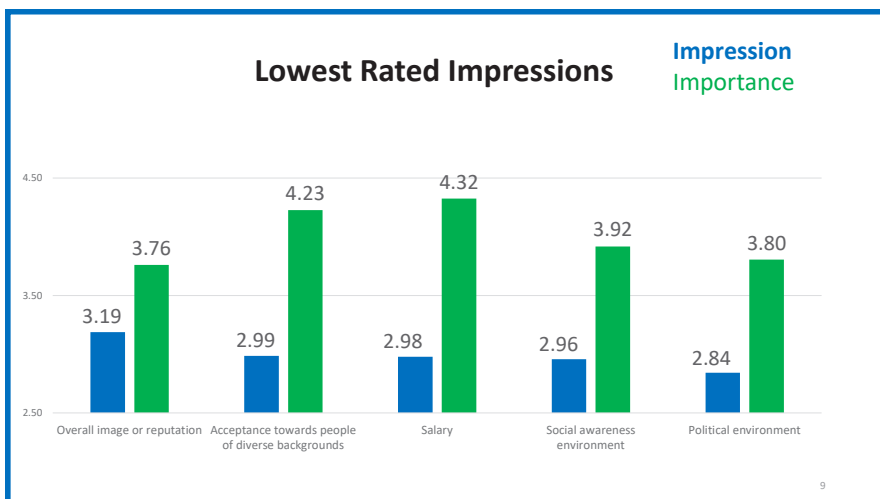
OVERALL	Alabama as a place to live	CAREER	Job opportunities
	Alabama as a place to work		Salary
	Overall image or reputation		Employer-provided benefits
COMMUNITY	Friendliness of the people		Potential for career advancement
	Acceptance towards people of diverse backgrounds		Opportunities to continue education
	Opportunities to practice my faith	ENTERTAINMENT	Variety of dining options
	Proximity to family		Access to cultural events/concerts
SOCIAL & ECONOMIC	Public safety		Access to sporting events (local/college/pro)
	Social awareness environment		Access to healthy/outdoor activities
	Political environment		The state's natural environment
	Cost of living		Weather/temperate climate

- **Priority Four:**  
**Strategy Two –**  
Identify what graduates are looking for when considering staying in Alabama

Students who were surveyed said that job opportunities, cost of living, potential for career advancement and salary were most important to them when deciding where to live and work after graduation.



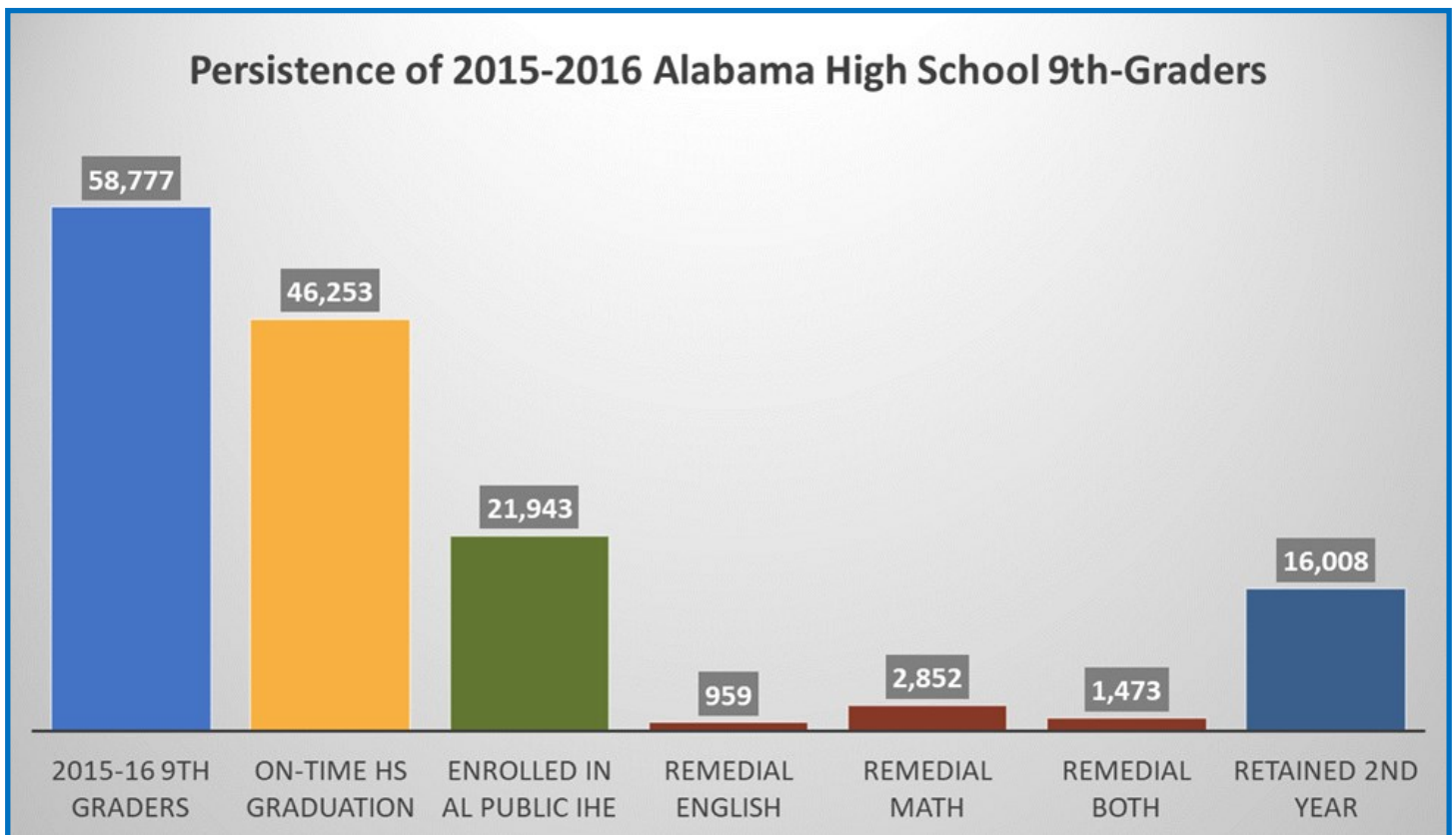
The lowest rated impressions were Alabama's political environment, social awareness environment, salaries and acceptance towards people of diverse backgrounds.





## Priority Four: Developing Alabama's Economy and Workforce

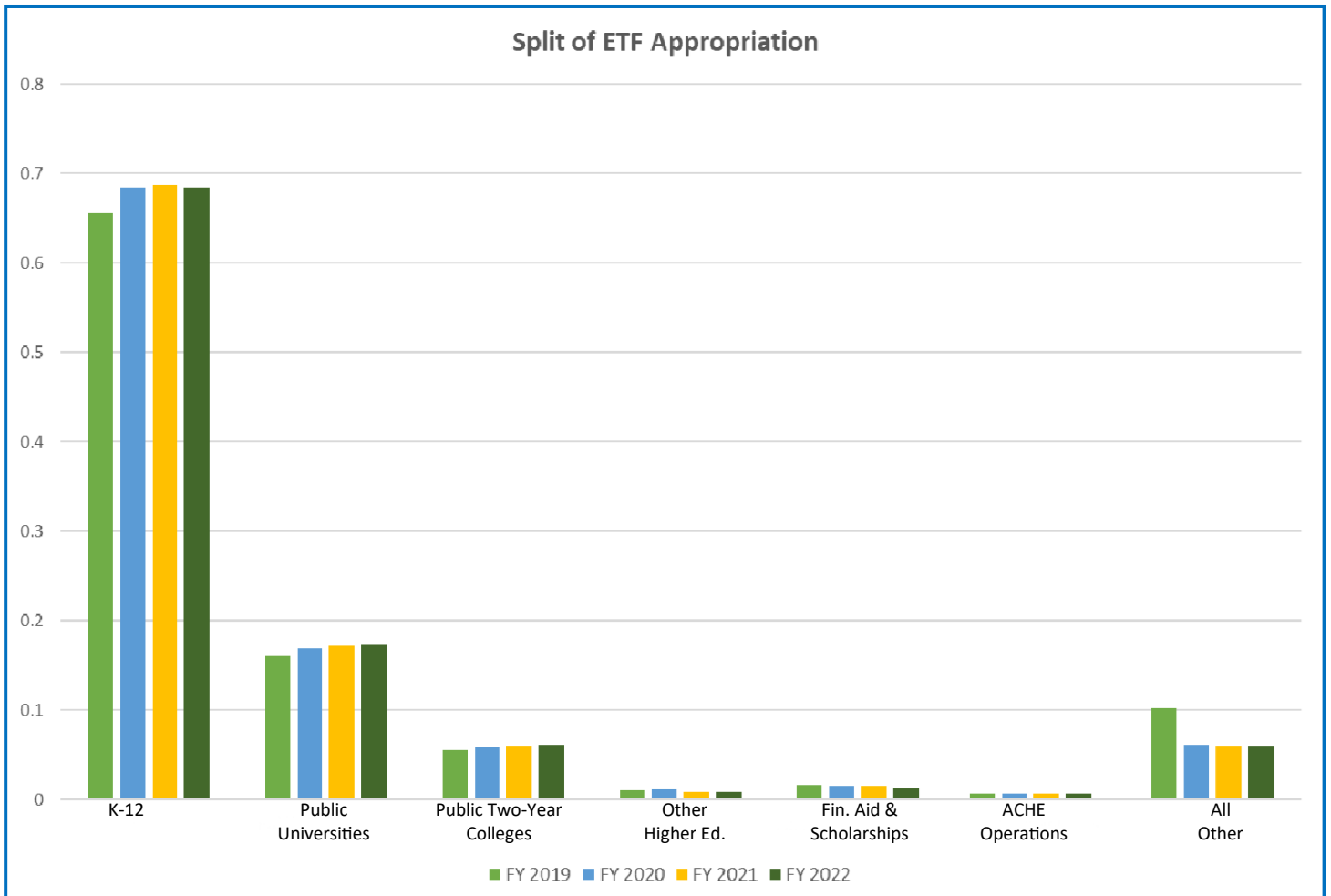
It is imperative that educational attainment goals begin prior to entering higher education. The chart below shows the total number of ninth grade enrollees in public school in 2015-2016 and tracks those who continued into higher education and remained after their first year.



Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database & Alabama State Dept. of Education

- **Priority Four:**  
**Strategy Two –**  
Monitor Alabama's potential workforce growth based on high school students enrolling in public higher education institutions

## Priority Five: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency



- Priority Five:**  
**Strategy One and Two –**  
 Monitor allocations from Education Trust Fund  
 to entities receiving financial support

The Commission continued to fulfill statutory requirements and responsibilities during the coronavirus pandemic. The information contained in this state plan shows the increasing support for student attainment and economic commitment for Alabama. ACHE remains committed to working with all of our institutions of higher education to ensure a brighter future for all Alabamians.

Please visit our website for additional information on the duties and responsibilities of the Commission.

[ache.edu](https://ache.edu)

## Notes



**ACHE**

*seeks to provide reasonable access to  
quality collegiate and university education  
for the citizens of Alabama...*

\* 1969 \*