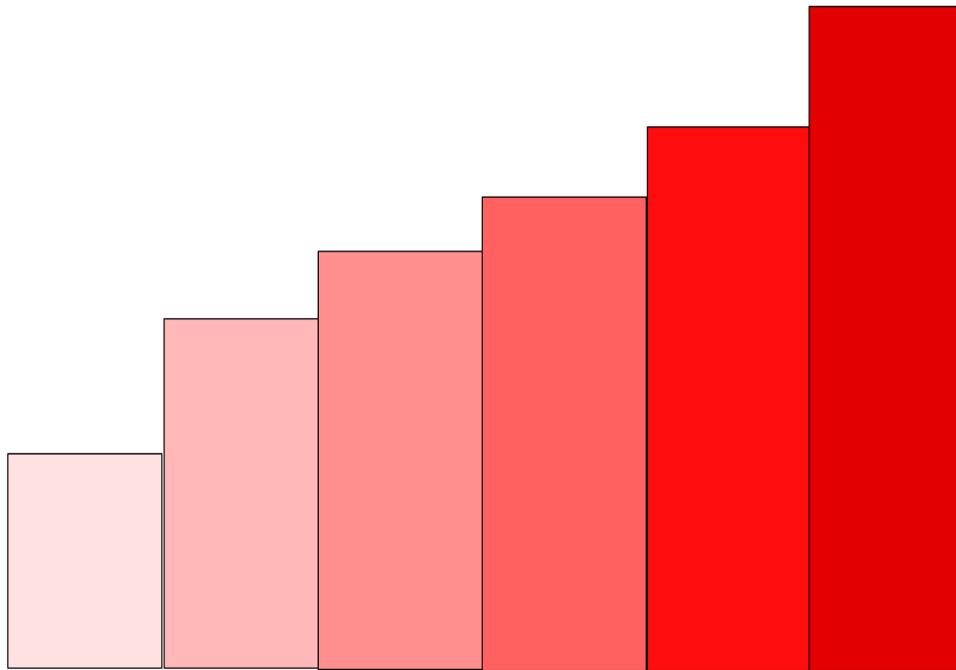


# Building Human Capital

## The Educational Path to Alabama's Economic Success



Alabama Commission on Higher Education Strategic Plan (2018-2030)

(Board Approved 12/8/2017)

**“We have enough people who tell it like it is—  
now we could use a few who tell it like it can be.”**

Robert Orben (born 1927)

## Table of Contents

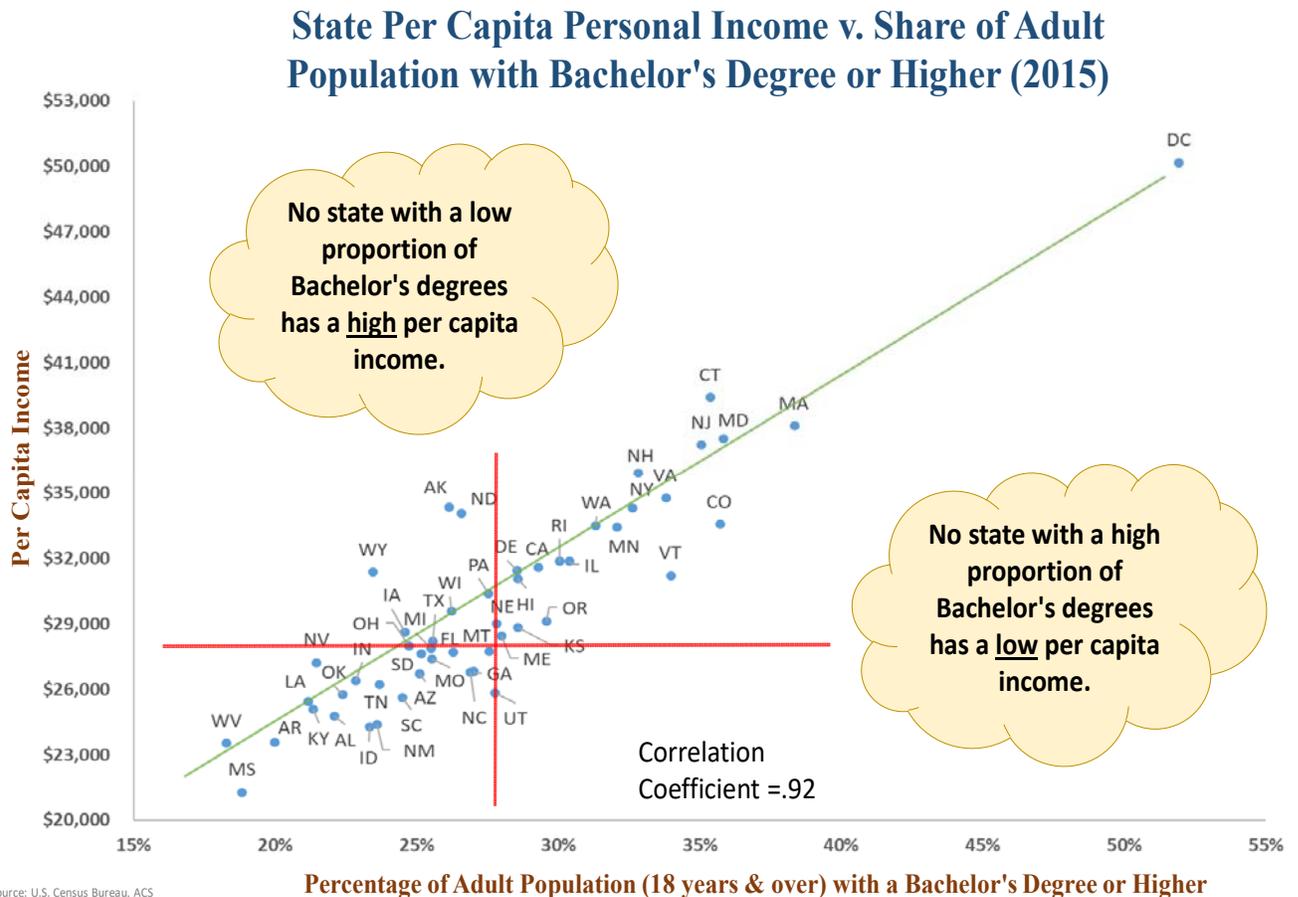
<b>I. Rationale for a Comprehensive Human Capital Plan</b>	
<b>I.1 Creating Sustainable Economies and How We Grow Them.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>I.2 Foundations for a Successful Outcome .....</b>	<b>10</b>
1. Location	
2. Focused Institutional Roles, Scope, and Missions	
3. Positive Reputations of Alabama’s Institutions	
4. Funding Education in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	
5. Jobs for Credentialed Citizens Are Available	
6. Opportunities Are Expanding Financial Aid	
7. Local Support	
8. Strong Work Ethic	
9. Accountability for Higher Education Institutions	
<b>II. Strategic Plan for Alabama’s Institutions of Higher Education.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Mission	
Values:	
Excellence	
Equity	
Investment	
Partnership	
Innovation	
Impact	
Vision	
<i>Priority 1: Improving Access.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Priority 2: Enhancing Student Success.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Priority 3: Enhancing STEM Programs .....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Priority 4: Developing Alabama’s Economy and Workforce .....</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Priority 5: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency .....</i>	<i>21</i>
<b>III. Fidelity of Implementation .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Appendix - Performance Measures for Priorities and Strategies .....</b>	<b>23</b>

# I. Rationale for a Comprehensive Human Capital Plan

## I.1 Creating Sustainable Economies and How We Grow Them

Economists have concluded that nearly all economic growth and prosperity for individuals, families, cities, states and countries are now driven by college-educated workers. Perhaps the best statistic is the correlation between a state's per capita income and adult educational attainment.

Alabama ranks 46<sup>th</sup> in the nation in per capita income and 45<sup>th</sup> in the percentage of adults 25 and older with a bachelor's degree. Because of this strong correlation between education attainment and state wealth, Alabama, its counties, and its cities must invest in the most important aspect of its economic infrastructure: human capital.



A Milken Institute report found that increases in average level of postsecondary/higher education by one year, increases a community's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 17.4% and real wages per worker by 17.8%. Clifton (The Coming Jobs War, 2011) and Florida (The Great Reset, 2011) found that prospering communities are those with access to the following resources:

- Access to good schools, colleges, and universities
- Active regional economic development strategies (rather than statewide)
- Includes higher density of educated, skilled, and credentialed workers
- Local leadership committed to community

Successful regional/community economies are differentiated from those that are declining by the talents of its citizenry and its continued willingness to invest in human capital. Economies that are based on low-skill and low-wage jobs have become unstable, especially as technology successfully replaces workers. Since the late 1970's, technology and computers have enabled the mechanization of many processes in agriculture, transportation, warehousing, manufacturing, mining, and finance and office administration; thus reducing the need for workers in these trades.

The production of goods (as measured by GDP) has increased dramatically since the 1970's, yet household income has shown little improvement. Industries are investing in technology instead of hiring people. Those with skills and knowledge that can support the machinery of the modern economy are prospering. In 1970, 74% of the middle class had a high school diploma or less education. By 2007, only 39% of the middle class had a high school diploma or less education. Carnevale and Rose (The Undereducated American, 2011) found that jobs connected to agriculture, natural resources, and manufacturing changed drastically over the last generation. In 1967, nearly 80% of these industries employed persons with a high school diploma or less. A generation later (2007), nearly 60% of the employees in these industries are persons credentialed with an associate degree or higher. Alabamians were able to prosper as long as the state's

economy was based on an economy requiring few specialty skills. The world changed and Alabama's workforce must be trained for that new world.

Alabama's aging population and geographic concentrations of unskilled workers in specific communities should be of concern. Gallaway's study of the United States economy (The Impact of Transfer Payments on Economic Growth, 2002) revealed a statistically significant negative effect of income transfer payments on per capita economic growth. As more and more of the citizenry of a community receives their income from social security, pensions, and governmental transfer payments, the community becomes more

vulnerable to dramatic economic decline. Rural development advocates stress that when 40% of a community's income is from these non-work sources, the communities need to take aggressive action to adjust the fundamentals of their

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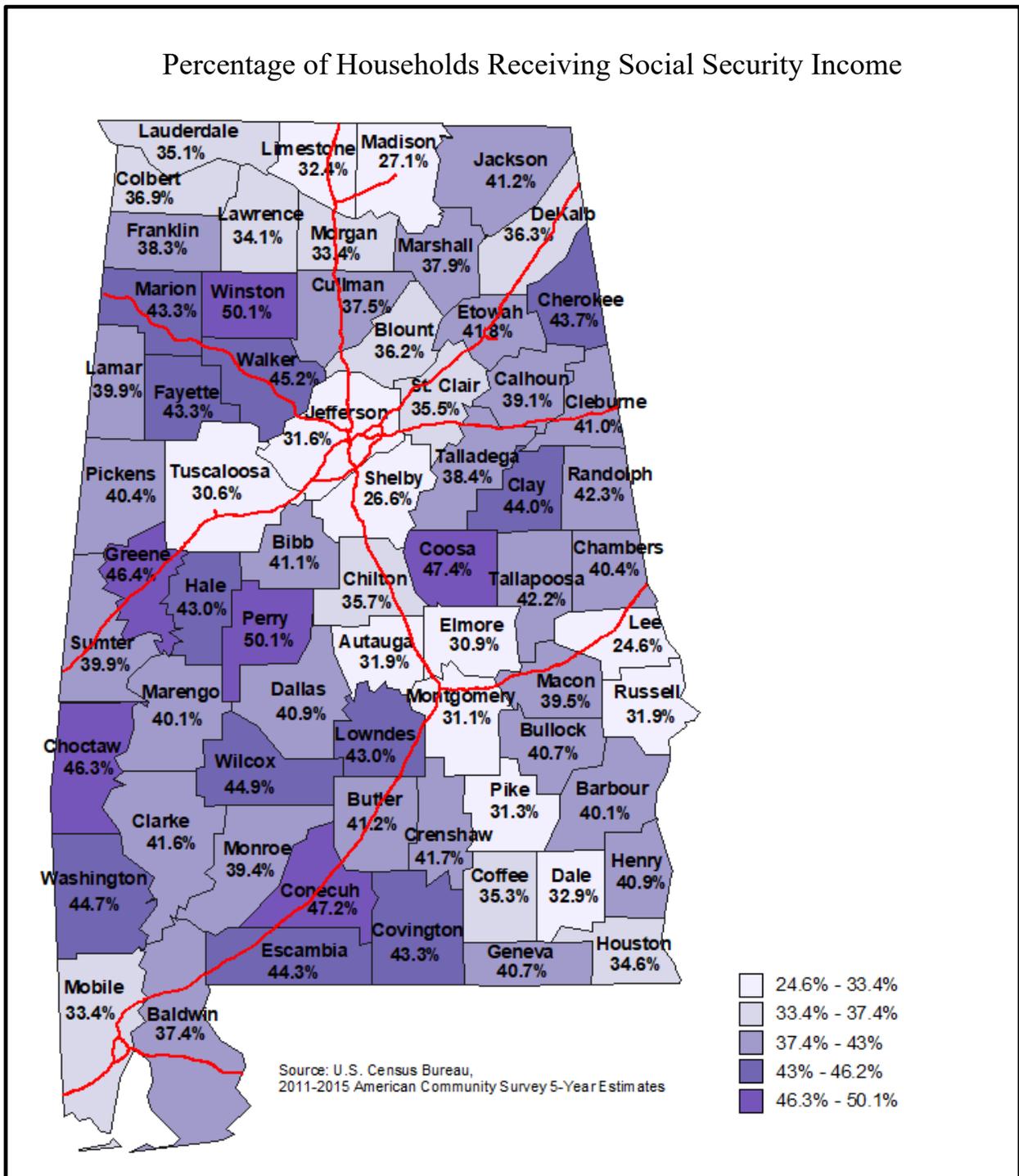
Successful regional/community economies are differentiated from those that are declining by the talents of its citizenry and its continued willingness to invest in human capital.

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economy or risk falling into an economic and social abyss. More than half of Alabama counties meet this 40% threshold. (see following map)

Alabama has a two-fold challenge. One is to optimize the success of communities that already are engaged in the modern economy with sustainable results. The other is to assist economically-challenged counties and communities in establishing a workable plan for new economic realities.

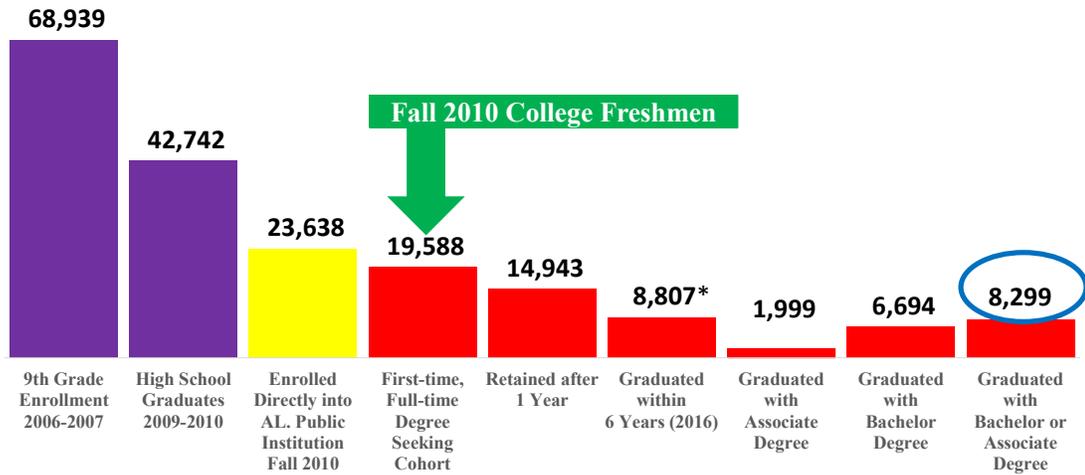
## Percentage of Households Receiving Social Security Income



Currently, Alabama’s human capital development system is not constructed in a manner that can address the needs of a modern economy. For example, only 12 out of 100 ninth graders earned an associate or baccalaureate degree from an Alabama public college or university within 10 years. Some students may have earned postsecondary degrees at private or out-of-state

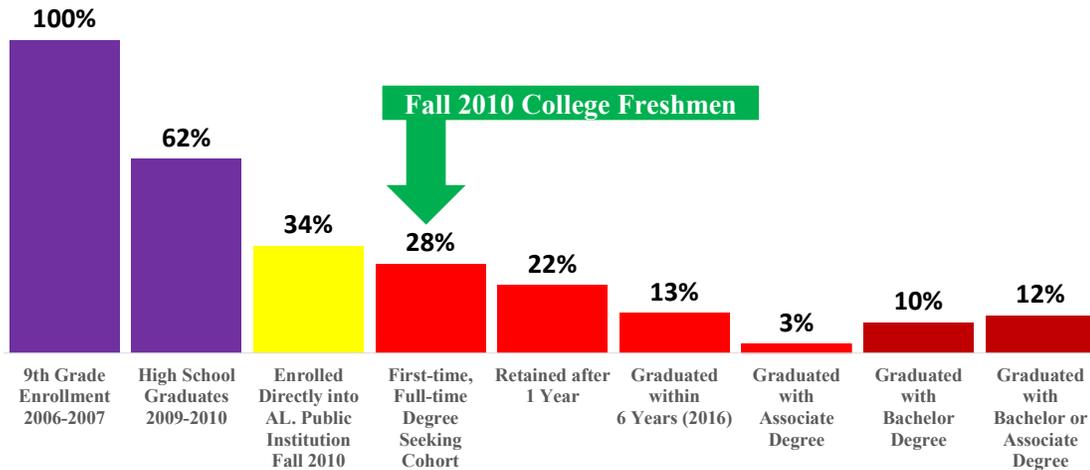
institutions; however, the fact remains that out of 68,939 ninth graders, only 8,299 earned credentials from Alabama higher education institutions. This is extremely problematic and must be addressed for Alabama's economy to thrive.

**2006-2007 Alabama 9th Grader's Progression into High School and Alabama Public Institutions**



\* The 8807 count is the number of degrees earned and includes duplicate degrees, whereas the 8,299 is the number of persons with at least an associate's.  
Alabama Statewide Student Database and Alabama State Dept. of Education

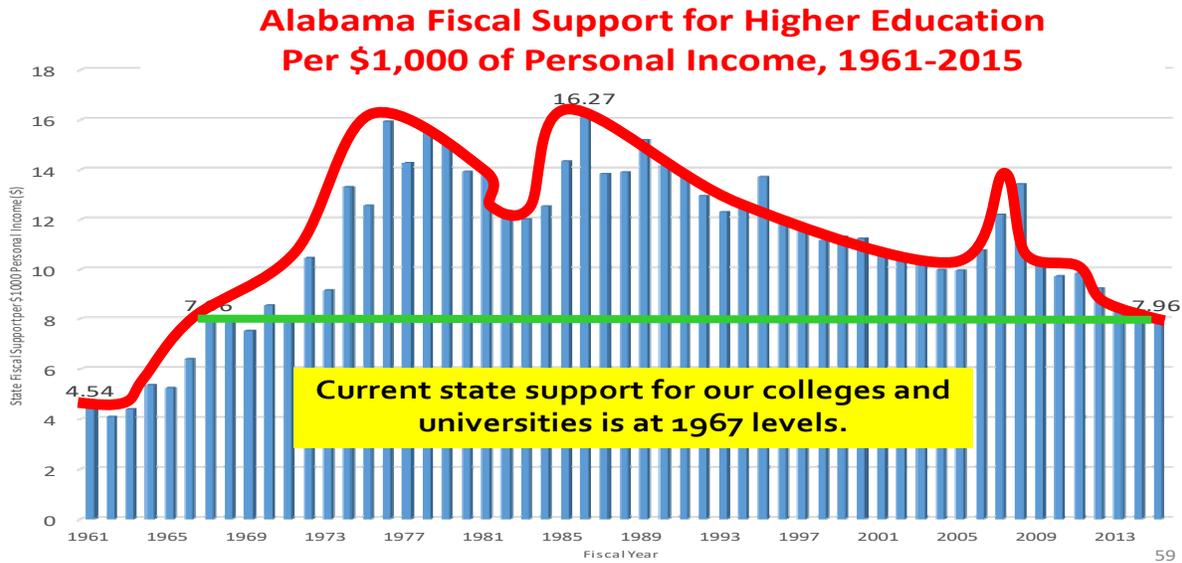
**2006-2007 Alabama 9th Grader's Progression into High School and Alabama Public Institutions**



Alabama Statewide Student Database and Alabama State Dept. of Education

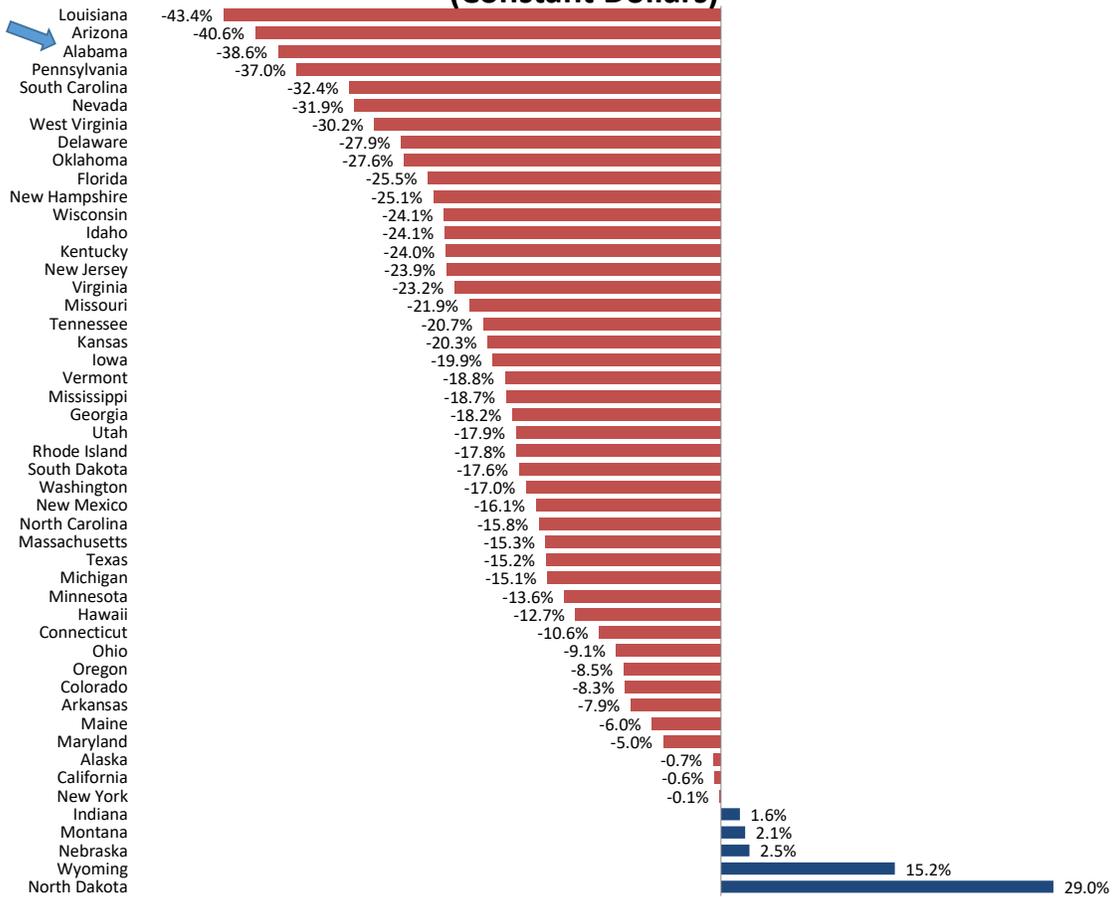
The steady decline in state support for higher education in Alabama has created a human capital system that is inadequate to support economic recovery. Current state commitment of

funding for higher education (proportional to personal income) is at a 50-year low. Alabama's public colleges and universities are being asked to produce a 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce on 1967 funding.



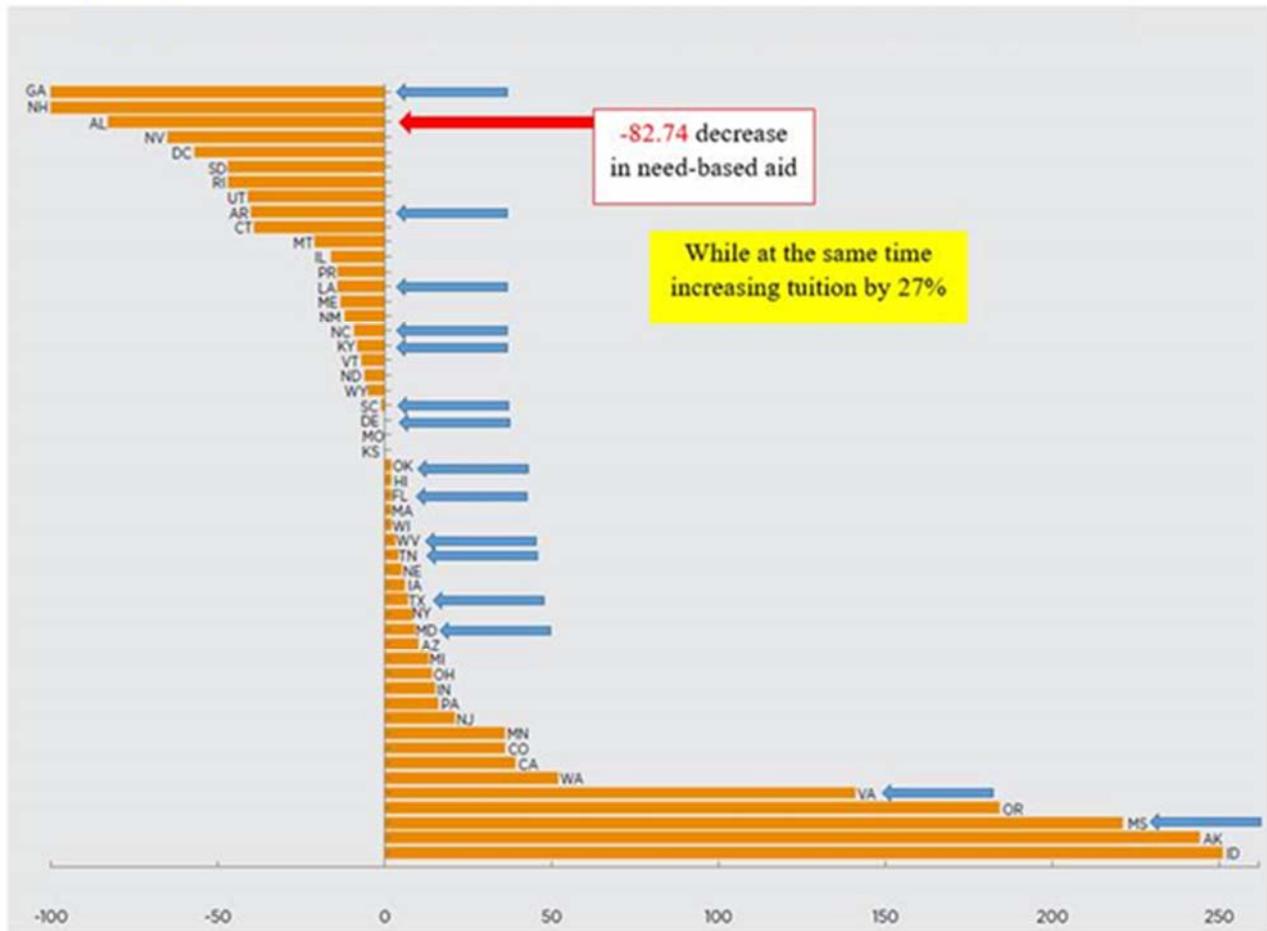
While funding for higher education has never been robust in Alabama, recent cuts in state support were some of the largest in the country and have further reduced the ability of the state's institutions to respond to the needs of the workforce and the state's economy. Higher education funding in Alabama was reduced 38.7% since 2008, with only Louisiana (43.4%) and Arizona (40.6%) experiencing greater cuts.

## Change in Educational Appropriations per FTE by State, 2008-2016 (Constant Dollars)



Such drastic cuts have further exacerbated affordability and access to Alabama public higher education as community college and university boards across the state increased tuition and fees to somewhat ameliorate the impact of reduced state support. Since 2011, tuition increased 27%, while state need-based aid was cut 83%. In addition, the state’s cost of guaranteed/entitlement scholarships, such as those for disabled/killed-in-action military and their qualifying dependents, police officers, etc., have increased as a result of tuition increases.

Five-Year Percent Change in Need-Based State Grant and Scholarship Programs, 2011-2015



Source: <https://www.hamisafoundation.org/files/resources/need-based-financial-aid.pdf>

The state’s elected officials are aware of the importance of education in developing Alabama’s economy. This awareness must lead to a greater financial commitment. Alabama’s economic recovery requires a focus on building human capital. At the end of WWII, the United States made a bold decision to invest in the future of its economy by providing \$1.9 billion annually to the education of returning war veterans. This commitment to human capital helped enable the WWII generation to become the “greatest generation.” Alabama’s greatest generation may be knocking on the schoolhouse door waiting for the opportunity to propel Alabama into the global economy.

## **I.2 Foundations for a Successful Outcome**

Certain aspects of Alabama's current higher education system can serve as the basis for moving forward in building human capital. We must be dedicated in sustaining the positive aspects of public higher education, while improving practices and processes that are less successful and progressive.

### **1. Location**

Alabamians have relatively easy driving access to the state's community colleges and universities, with 96% living within 40 miles-of a community college and 73% living within 40 miles of a university. In addition to classroom settings, the delivery of educational programs offered by most public institutions in Alabama has expanded access through online/ asynchronous learning.

### **2. Focused Institutional Roles, Scopes, and Missions**

Alabama's public colleges and universities, with few exceptions, have resisted unnecessary academic program duplication. Many institutions collaborate to offer some programs beyond their established service areas when a specific need is identified. In today's credential and skill-based economy, additional opportunities for institutional collaboration and necessary duplication of high-demand programs will need to be increased. The business mantra of being "close to customer and speed to market" must be applied to decision-making processes regarding academic program approval and the expansion of programs.

### **3. Positive Reputations of Alabama's Institutions**

Many of Alabama's higher education institutions have received national recognition for their level of academic program quality, research capabilities, and leadership. These accolades



## 5. Jobs for Credentialed Citizens Are Available

Automation and robotics have displaced unskilled workers; however, jobs are being created for those with the skillsets to support the technology. To assure Alabama's communities prosper, high school students will need to be prepared for college or additional education/training. Commitment by the state's colleges and universities to support their service area schools can help reduce the more than 30% of Alabama's public high school graduates who enrolled in an Alabama public college or university needing remediation. Such an effort will enable students to succeed at the collegiate level and help more Alabama counties produce an adequate number of credentialed citizens to attract and expand businesses and industries.

## 6. Opportunities for Expanding Financial Aid

Student aid is often a determining factor in continuing education beyond high school. While there has been a reduction of state appropriations for need-based aid, any investment above current levels will have a major impact that could result in the reduction of the average student debt burden. In 2014, graduates from an Alabama public four-year research university averaged \$22,179, more student debt than either the SREB or the national average.

	Alabama, 2008	Alabama, 2014	SREB Average, 2014	U.S. Average, 2014
Public Four-Year Category 1	\$14,102	\$22,179	\$21,883	\$21,598
Public Four-Year Category 2	\$15,711	\$24,944	\$22,622	\$20,574

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, College Scorecard. U.S. Department of Education, 2014 and 2015. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Instructional Activity Data Files 2009-2015 and Directory Files 2008-2014

*Public Four-Year Category 1*  
*University of Alabama System Institutions and Auburn University*

*Public Four-Year Category 2*  
*Remaining Four-Year Institutions*

## 7. Local Support

Alabama has several communities who have invested in their students by establishing scholarships. This local support will be beneficial in creating a credentialed workforce that attracts business and industry.

## 8. Strong Work Ethic

Alabamians are known for their work ethic and state leaders have been successful in highlighting this characteristic when recruiting international corporations to invest in Alabama. Along with a strong work ethic, these workers must now have the requisite academic credentials and soft skills suitable for the modern economy. In today's workforce, individuals are hired on their requisite credentials; however, they will often be evaluated on their people skills as well. These soft skills are essential for workplace communication and collaboration. In the modern economy, successful careers will be possible for those that continuously seek to update their credentials and skills.

## 9. Accountability for Higher Education

Efforts by the Alabama Community College System to design a more outcomes-based funding formula for their institutions will help optimize student success and assure that Alabama's businesses and industries have an appropriately credentialed workforce to compete in the current economy. The 2008 recession and the resulting reduction of state support for higher education forced the state's colleges and universities to right-size their budgets and operations to fit available resources. The default measure for institutional success was fiscal survival. Such a fiscally strained environment was not conducive to creating or expanding costly STEM and vocational programs, which are vital in today's economy.

With the state's economy improving and state support for higher education stabilizing, institutions are more thoughtfully seeking to address the needs for business and industry and improving student outcomes. State fiscal support for higher education over the last decade did not align with institutional enrollment growth or decline; did not support or reward institutions for addressing the economic needs of the state; nor support innovation in an environment of great social and economic change.

## II. Strategic Plan for Alabama's Institutions of Higher Education

### Mission

The mission of higher education in Alabama is to provide reasonable access to quality collegiate and university education for the citizens of Alabama; while employing the wise stewardship of resources, in order to meet the needs of the students, the goals of the institutions and the requirements of the State of Alabama.

### Values

**Excellence** is the cornerstone of higher education. Students must gain the knowledge and skills to excel in their lives and work, faculty must continue to excel in pedagogy and research, so that they can be the knowledge drivers of our state. Other goals should not compromise excellence in academic standards.

**Equity** focuses on eliminating disparities around higher education access, affordability, and attainment. This is especially important for underserved and underrepresented populations, whose opportunities have historically been limited by factors including race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, and family educational background.

**Investment** means committing financial, institutional, and community resources to transforming our public system of higher education so that it becomes a more accessible and affordable pathway for our citizens and a greater economic driver for our state.

**Partnership** requires coordinated and collaborative efforts by all stakeholders to improve higher education in Alabama.

**Innovation** drives creative new programs and products, fuels business and industry, and leads the way to new solutions for society's most pressing issues.

**Impact** describes the purpose behind the endeavors undertaken in higher education. Individual and collective contributions, such as teaching, learning, research, and service, promote the greater good at the local, national, and global levels.

## **Vision**

- Alabama's metropolitan areas will have diverse and booming economies
- Cities throughout the state will have a highly-skilled and credentialed workforce
- The American Dream will be a reality for those willing to pursue it
- Citizens will pursue workforce and educational credentials throughout their lifetime
- State leaders will support activities that prepare the citizenry for the changes in the economy
- Colleges and universities will be stewards of their communities and leverage their resources toward student success
- Each generation of Alabamians will be thankful for how the previous generation prepared the way for future success

## ***Priorities***

*Priority 1: Improving Access*

*Priority 2: Enhancing Student Success*

*Priority 3: Enhancing STEM Programs*

*Priority 4: Developing Alabama's Economy and Workforce*

*Priority 5: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency*

## *Priorities and Strategies*

Success in achieving the mission, values, and vision for improving Alabama's human capital development system is dependent on focusing efforts on specific priorities and strategies. Listed below are the priorities and key strategies. Metrics for determining the impact of these strategies, as they are implemented, are articulated in Appendix A.

### ***Priority 1: Improving Access***

After years of lagging behind other states, Alabama is beginning an economic revival. In order to sustain that momentum, all ages of Alabamians must be equipped with the essential skills needed to succeed in the modern economy. Today's job market demands postsecondary credentials, competency in math, science, writing, and verbal skills. Adequate financial support is crucial for students who enroll in our colleges/universities seeking to earn an industry credential and/or a degree.

#### **Strategies:**

1. Increase the Number of High School Students Prepared for College in the Institution's Service Area
  - a. Explore the feasibility of assessing high school juniors with a nationally normed college assessment that can be used for placement
  - b. Actively work with service area junior and high schools in curriculum development and support, including providing developmental education opportunities for students in high school and prior to college enrollment
  - c. Increase standards for entry into teacher education programs and licensure to assure teachers have the subject knowledge needed to improve student outcomes.
  
2. Increase Access to College and University Offerings
  - a. Work with service area high schools to reduce "summer melt" – the failure of high school seniors admitted to a college who fail to enroll in any college the subsequent fall
  - b. Expand marketing to include non-traditional students
  - c. Expand the delivery of coursework online, in the evenings, weekends, and at off-campus locations in under-served areas of the state.
  
3. Increase the Number of Students Receiving Financial Aid
  - a. Assist service area high schools to increase the number of high school seniors who fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  - b. Develop a dedicated webpage listing all of the state's financial aid opportunities
  - c. Review and revise institutional financial aid strategies so that more students receive a "meaningful" aid package
  - d. Work with communities, institutions, and foundations to enhance support for students attending college, especially for students in degree programs in high demand in Alabama's economy and adults returning to college

- e. Increase state funded need-based aid and possibly provide state tax credits to working adult learners (ages 25-60) attending college for their first associate or bachelor's degree while employed (working more than 20 hours a week).
4. Reduce the Cost of Attending College
- a. Expand the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) in lieu of expensive textbooks
  - b. Sequence courses to assure that students can graduate in less time
  - c. Develop additional cohort programs
  - d. Expand interim-term, off-schedule, summer and on-line course offerings for 'bottleneck' courses
  - e. Expand concurrent and dual enrollment opportunities in high schools in the institution's service area
  - f. Set statewide cut scores for Advanced Placement courses
  - g. Initiate discussion on strategies to slow the rate of tuition and fee increases
  - h. Utilize summer terms to expedite graduation in specific programs.

***Priority 2: Enhancing Student Success***

A postsecondary credential supports a better quality of life, higher lifetime earnings, stronger community engagement, and greater personal growth and fulfillment. Alabama has committed to the goal of improving statewide attainment to 65% by 2025; it is important to meet this ambitious goal without compromising our commitment to excellence. According to data recently published by the Lumina Foundation, 37.1% of the state's working-age adults (25-64) have an associate degree or higher. This figure is significantly lower for populations of color - African Americans (25.3%) and Latinos (19.3%). Time is of the essence in addressing these disparities and improving our overall attainment rate.

**Strategies:**

1. Rethink Developmental Education
  - a. Initiate discussions on the establishment of a statewide definition of college ready, including determining statewide developmental placement cut scores
  - b. Explore the feasibility of assessing high school juniors with a nationally normed college assessment that can be used for placement
  - c. Reset placement strategies for entering freshmen. Enroll developmental education students in a college credit math or English course and a co-requisite developmental education course designed to supplement their learning.
  
2. Improve Retention and Persistence
  - a. Provide additional student support for remedial math, freshman math, English composition, and other courses that create academic difficulties for a disproportionate number of freshmen- and sophomore-level students
  - b. Identify courses (annually) with a disproportionate level of Ws and Fs and determine ways in which to improve student learning, such as revising instructional methods and adding co-requisite requirements

- c. Develop mechanisms to track student academic progress, which includes the early warning processes and intervention strategies for students found to be floundering
  - d. Identify the other sources of difficulties beyond coursework of at-risk students and develop support mechanisms that are needed to increase their likelihood of success.
3. Redesign Financial Aid
    - a. Utilize financial incentives for rising sophomore or junior scholarships to keep students in school and on track to graduate
    - b. Communicate with returning students about scholarship and financial aid renewal requirements
    - c. Monitor returning student aid packages so that their aid is “meaningful” in terms of impacting student retention and graduation rates
    - d. Increase aid packages that cover multiple years and do not require an annual application.
  4. Promote the Seamless Transfer of Students
    - a. Expand the STARS system to include public four-year-to-four-year transfers
    - b. Establish transfer associate degrees requiring the receiving institution to accept all 60 hours for transfer so that the student is not required to take additional lower level courses, except those included in the major field of study
    - c. Review community college general education course offerings to determine if some courses should be eliminated because they are not readily transferable nor aligned with a terminal degree curriculum
    - d. Develop common course objectives and outcomes for courses of similar names
    - e. Facilitate the use of Reverse Transfer by developing robust reverse transfer initiatives, which includes the reduction of residency requirements
    - f. Increase the number of articulation agreements between community colleges and institutions for particular majors, i.e., LPN to RN to DNP.
  5. Expand Alternative Pathways to Expedite Obtaining a Postsecondary Credential
    - a. Increase the use of Dual Enrollment
    - b. Promote the availability of Advanced Placement courses and develop uniform standards of acceptance throughout the state
    - c. Develop a competency-based learning initiative
    - d. Award college credit for industry credentials.
  6. Increase the Use of Experiential Learning
    - a. Expand using internships, practicums, and field experiences as a component of academic degrees
    - b. Expand using prior learning assessments to award college credit and identify business and industry training for which college credit can be awarded
    - c. Expand opportunities for students to participate in community service events as a part of their college experience
    - d. Increase opportunities for students to be awarded industry credentials as a part of their coursework

- e. Develop apprenticeship programs with accompanying business/industry tax credits
- f. Expand opportunities for undergraduates to participate in research.

***Priority 3: Enhancing STEM Programs***

A key factor in economic growth is the ability of persons to create, build, and maintain complex things. The more individuals with Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) skills, the greater the ability to move the economy forward.

**Strategies:**

1. Increase the Number and Quality of Secondary Teachers in Math and Science
  - a. Provide scholarships to college juniors and seniors preparing for teaching careers in secondary math and science
  - b. Increase the Praxis II pass score requirements for teachers to teach secondary math and science
  - c. Review the success of College of Education graduates on Praxis II math and science assessment and revise (if needed) the specific math and science courses that students should be taking to improve their Praxis II results
  - d. Develop educational tracks for existing students to take courses required to sit for STEM licensure exams
  - e. Strengthen collaborative efforts with programs such as AMSTI, A+ College Ready Program, Science in Motion and Engineering Academies
  - f. Increase financial incentives for teachers in STEM fields
  - g. Enhance alternative pathways to certification in STEM fields by developing a mechanism to certify professionals retired from STEM fields
  - h. Strengthen professional development for K-12 STEM teachers
  - i. Develop a Master's degree option for elementary and middle school teachers with a focus on STEM education
  - j. Strengthen programs such as Team Math and Science in Motion.
  
2. Increase the Number of Community College Transfer Students into Four-Year STEM Programs
  - a. Earmark scholarships for Applied Associate (AA) and Applied Science (AS) graduates entering STEM programs at the state's public universities
  - b. Develop clear articulation agreements for STEM students transferring from community colleges in the universities' service area.
  
3. Increase Support of STEM Students
  - a. Earmark scholarships for juniors and seniors entering STEM programs at the state's public universities
  - b. Expand academic support for students majoring in STEM fields.

#### ***Priority 4: Developing Alabama's Economy and Workforce***

A major focus on the needs of business and industry is an essential element of Alabama's economic recovery. Although trailing other states, Alabama does have bright spots in specific areas; the state's public colleges and universities must support and actively participate in economic and workforce development activities.

1. Increase Each Higher Education Institution's Role as a Steward of the Communities in Their Service Area
  - a. Cultivate alliances with local communities and organizations
  - b. Collaborate with local communities and existing business and industry on efforts to expand economic growth and increase job opportunities
  - c. Work with foundation and community leaders to provide scholarships to local residents as a way of growing the region's economy
  - d. Work with non-profit and community action groups to identify ways in which college and university expertise and volunteer student labor can be used to address local issues.
  
2. Identify the Workforce Needs of the State and Region and Address Them
  - a. Develop an annual "human capital development fund" to be utilized at the state's colleges and universities to address critical workforce needs and to expand high-demand high-wage programs of study
  - b. Identify the workforce needs of the state and within the service areas of the colleges and universities and expand programs in high demand for state and regional businesses
  - c. Direct state incumbent worker training resources (as appropriate) to community colleges and universities to address workforce needs
  - d. Collaborate with colleges and universities to deliver needed educational services in underserved areas of the state
  - e. Expand existing and potential workers' opportunities to acquire and/or update their career skills through educational and training pathways that meet occupational demands
  - f. Expand the use of Dual Enrollment programs to train more people for the workforce including increasing the number of high school career and technical students enrolled in community colleges
  - g. Align higher education programs with labor market information
  - h. Study the migration pattern of graduates of four-year Alabama colleges and universities
  - i. Actively engage business and industry with colleges and universities regarding workforce development needs and issues
  - j. Strengthen partnerships with advisory groups from business and industry to support workforce development.

### ***Priority 5: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency***

The modern economy requires organizations to be more responsive to issues and concerns. The higher education system must finally make the paradigm shift to being more effective and efficient. In addition, changes in how and from whom colleges and universities are funded also compel organizational change at the college, system and coordinating board.

*Please note that Priority 2 (Enhancing Student Success) identifies ways to efficiently matriculate students, while this section seeks to improve operational efficiencies.*

Strategies:

#### 1. Optimize Institutional Performance

- a. Review (annually) academic program degree production and viability
- b. Consolidate and/or eliminate less productive academic programs
- c. Develop meta majors (clusters of academic majors with related content and disciplinary focus) rather than stand-alone majors
- d. Encourage institutions to annually review mission and internally redirect five percent (5%) of funds toward mission critical priorities as a part of the annual budgeting process
- e. Diversify revenue streams of the college or university
- f. Explore ways of buying via collaborative institutional consortiums
- g. Address facility maintenance and revitalization and technology investments as an integral part of the annual budget and catalog deferred maintenance needs of the campuses
- h. Review campus organizational entities and structures in order to consolidate or eliminate campus activities that are not mission critical and/or costly.

#### 2. Optimize Coordinating Board and System Performance

- a. Review existing policies and procedures and streamline where possible
- b. Explore possible reduction time allotted for decisions on program approval and review by ACHE
- c. Align new program viability standards to existing program standards
- d. Eliminate bureaucratic redundancy by consolidating private institution licensure (ACCS activity) with private institution academic program review (ACHE activity). Require the program to be funded solely on application and renewal fees
- e. Develop institutional budgets using a funding formula that redirects funds based on credit hour production and program costs, rather than incremental increases not tied to enrollment or program costs
- f. Develop a performance funding allocation that can be used to reward institutional performance
- g. Expand research and information services by ACHE for campus managers
- h. Create a dedicated website where students can apply for all available state scholarships
- i. Offer professional development opportunities that would be beneficial to the state's colleges and universities
- j. Monitor funding, budgeting and staffing patterns of peer institutions.

### **III. Fidelity of Implementation**

Alabama's future is dependent on its ability to develop human capital. In order for the state to take advantage of this transition point in the world's economy, immediate action must be taken on the proposed plan. Imagining how the future can be built is a crucial first step in the process; but it is the implementation of these initiatives that will make Alabama an economic success story.

**Appendix**  
**Performance Measures for Priorities and Strategies**

*Priority 1. Improving Access*

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
1. Increase the number of high school students prepared for college in the institution's service area	Increases in the number and percentages of Alabama full-time students that are college ready (those not requiring developmental education courses while in college)	ACT – The Condition of College and Career Readiness; ACT-Profile Report by State;
	Increase in the number of students addressing developmental education requirements while in high school	Alabama State Department of Education
	Increase in the alignment of institutional placement scores and the state definition for college ready	Statewide definition of college readiness to be developed.
2. Increase access to college and university offerings	Increase in enrollment	ACHE Statewide Student Database; IPEDS
	Increase in the percentage of high school graduates enrolling in college the next fall term	ACHE – High School Feedback Reports
	Reduction in college ready students not directly enrolling in college	Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama-PARCA
	Increase in distance education, evening, and weekend course enrollment	Survey to identify course offerings, enrollment, and mode of instruction
3. Increase the number of students receiving financial aid	Increase in FAFSA form completions and federal aid received	USDOE: Federal Student Aid
	Increase in state-level need-based and merit-based financial aid	USDOE: Federal Student Aid
	Increase in community-based sponsorships of resident students	ACHE Survey
	Increase in the financial aid dollars awarded to adults over age 25	NCES; U.S. Department of Education
4. Reduce the cost of attending college	Reduction in institutional operation costs, possibly through a statewide consortium of institutions for on-line courses	Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)
	Improvement in Alabama's relative position to other states on student financial aid and student loan indebtedness	CollegeInSight; NCES
	Initiate discussion on strategies to slow the rate of tuition and fee increases	ACHE Annual Tuition & Fee Reports
	Reduced level of book costs by the increase in the use of Open Educational Resources	ACHE survey of campuses

***Priority 2. Enhancing Student Success***

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
1. Rethink Developmental Education	1. Establishment of a statewide definition of college ready including determining statewide developmental placement cut scores	A statewide definition of college ready will be developed
	2. A concordance table of various assessments for determining placement will be developed	ACHE
	3. Identification of a nationally normed college assessment that can be used for placement for high school students	College Board; ACT
	4. Fewer students will require remediation	ACHE Statewide Student Database
	5. More students will participate in co-requisite remediation	Complete College America (CCA)
2. Improve Retention and Persistence	1. At-risk students will be retained and will graduate at a higher rate, i.e., Pell Grant recipients, developmental education students, and minorities	NCES
	2. More institutions will develop early warning systems that identify at-risk students	NCES
	3. Grades in courses with a disproportionate level of Ws and Fs will improve after course revisions	ACHE campus survey of early warning indicators
	4. Reduction in the average time to graduate from the institutions	IPEDS; CCA
3. Redesign Financial Aid	1. Increase in student aid for returning students	U.S. Department of Education; SHEEO
4. Promote the seamless transfer of students	1. Additional students will transfer from community colleges to universities	ACCS – Seamless Transfer; STARS; AAICU 2-to-4 Transfer Program
	2. Reduction in the number of credit hours a transfer student earns above 120 hours at graduation	Complete College America (CCA)
	3. A fully transferable associate degree will be developed and accepted at all public universities	ACHE; ACCS; STARS
	4. Increase in the number of common course objectives and outcomes for courses of similar names	ACHE
	5. Increase in the number of associate degrees awarded via reverse transfer	ACCS

5. Expand alternative pathways to expedite obtaining a postsecondary credential	1. Increase in dual enrollment credits awarded	ACHE
	2. Increase in the number of courses credited via Advanced Placement assessment	Alabama School Connection; The College Board; A+ College Ready
	3. Increase in college credit awarded for industry credentials	ALSDE. ACCS
	4. Increase in industry credentials being awarded as a part of coursework.	ALSDE Career and Technical Education/Workforce
6. Increase the use of Experiential Learning	1. Increase in undergraduates participating in research	Institution Campus Survey
	2. Increase in students participating in community service events	Institution Campus Survey
	3. Increase in undergraduates experiencing internships, practicums, apprenticeships, and field experiences as a component of academic degrees	National Association of Colleges and Employers

***Priority 3: Enhancing STEM Programs***

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
1. Increase the number and quality of secondary teachers in math and science	1. Increase in the number of teachers certified in STEM secondary education fields	AMSTI; Alabama State Department of Education
	2. Reduction in the vacant secondary education STEM teacher positions	Alabama STEM Education; AL Mathematics, Science, Technology & Engineering Coalition (AMSTEC)
2. Increase the number of community college transfer students into four-year STEM programs	1. Increase in the number of community college transfer students who enroll in STEM programs	ACHE Statewide Student Database  ACT – The Condition of STEM 2015 (Alabama)
3. Increase support of STEM students	1. Increase in the scholarship funds for STEM secondary education students	State legislation
	2. Increase in the scholarship funds for STEM majors, including community college transfer students	State legislation
	3. Increase in the number and percentage of STEM graduates	ACHE Statewide Student Database
	4. Increase in the number of STEM majors	ACHE Statewide Student Database

	5. Increase in the funding for academic support for students majoring in STEM fields.	State legislation
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***Priority 4: Developing Alabama’s Economy and Workforce***

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
1. Increase each higher education institution’s role as a steward of the community in their service area	1. Increase in campus activities with communities, organizations and businesses within their service area and the state	Campus Survey
	2. Increase in targeted funding assigned to the state’s public colleges and universities to address workforce needs	State legislation
2. Identify the workforce needs of the state and region and address them	1. Increase in the percentage of graduates who remain and become employed in the state, number of graduates working in jobs for which they were trained/educated, wage data and production of credentials in high demand and high wage jobs	AL Department of Labor; US Bureau of Labor Statistics
	2. Reduction in worker shortages, both regionally and statewide	AL Department of Labor; ACHE

***Priority 5: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency***

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
1. Optimize institutional performance	1. Institutions are funded comparable to the national and regional average	SHEEO
	2. Institutional outcomes are comparable to their institutional peers	US Department of Education IPEDS
2. Optimize coordinating board and system performance	1. Reduced time for academic program approval and renewal for public and private colleges and universities	ACHE
	2. Increased managerial resources for campuses using state higher education data	ACHE
	3. Additional funding for human capital development	State legislation
	4. Increase in student applications for state scholarships	ACHE; Southeast Alabama Community Foundation

