

ALABAMA COMMISSION ON
HIGHER EDUCATION



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



ADVANCING HIGHER EDUCATION IN ALABAMA
ACCESSIBILITY. AFFORDABILITY. COORDINATION.



ALABAMA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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.

Responsibilities of the Commission include the following:

- Approves new units of instruction (This includes new institutions, mergers, branch campuses, colleges, schools, divisions and departments);
- Approves any new academic programs;
- Approves off-campus instruction;
- Facilitates planning for higher education;
- Reviews and makes recommendations concerning existing programs;
- Prepares a Consolidated Budget Recommendation to the Governor and Legislature;
- Collects and compiles information concerning higher education in the State;
- Administers student assistance programs;
- Conducts studies on higher education issues and makes recommendations to the institutions, the Legislature and the Governor concerning its findings;
- Provides a state-level framework for institutions to respond cooperatively and individually to the needs of the citizens of the State;
- Reviews institutional facilities masterplans and report to trustees and the Legislature;
- Maintains an electronic student unit record system to provide accountability on student progress;
- Provides oversight for the programmatic review of public and private institutions operating as foreign corporations in Alabama, in accordance with the statutory authority granted to the Commission; and
- Serves as the state portal for Alabama's participation in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).



Table of Contents

Meet Our Commissioners.....	4
Message from the Chair.....	6
Message from the Executive Director.....	7
Public Higher Education Map.....	8
Legislative Updates and ACHE Board Appointments.....	9
Institutional Finance.....	11
Academics.....	13
Special Initiatives.....	18
Support of Other Educational Activities.....	20
Statewide Programs of ACHE Budget	21
Building Human Capital: Strategic Plan 2018-2030 Update.....	24
Priority One: Improving Access.....	25
Priority Two: Enhancing Student Success.....	28
Priority Three: Enhancing STEM Progress.....	30
Priority Four: Developing Alabama’s Economy and Workforce.....	31
Priority Five: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency.....	32
ACHE In Action.....	33



ACHE COMMISSIONERS



AMY SHIPLEY PRICE, CHAIR
3RD DISTRICT
TERM: 09/01/2016 – 08/31/2025



STAN NELSON, VICE CHAIR
AT-LARGE
TERM: 08/07/2019 - 08/31/2027



ANN FORBES SIRMON
1ST DISTRICT
TERM: 09/01/2020 - 08/31/2029



HARRY HOBBS
5TH DISTRICT
TERM: 02/18/2025 – 08/31/2033



PAUL W. KENNEDY
4TH DISTRICT
TERM: 09/01/2020 - 08/31/2029



PAYNE MEADOWS
2ND DISTRICT
TERM: 09/01/2024 – 08/31/2033



ACHE COMMISSIONERS



DOUGLAS RAGLAND
6TH DISTRICT
TERM: 02/18/2025 – 08/31/2033



SHANE SPILLER
7TH DISTRICT
TERM: 02/21/2024 - 08/31/2029



ROD SCOTT
AT-LARGE
TERM: 08/07/2019 - 08/31/2028



JODI SINGLETON
AT-LARGE
TERM: 09/01/2021 - 08/31/2030



LARRY TURNER
AT-LARGE
TERM: 03/27/2019 - 08/31/2027



TERRY WELCH
AT-LARGE
TERM: 02/2/2024 - 02/20/2031
Resigned 04/09/2025



MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIR



AMY SHIPLEY PRICE

Since 1979, the Alabama Commission on Higher Education has been charged with the overall planning and coordination of higher education in the State of Alabama. This includes administering various student aid programs as well as performing designated regulatory functions. ACHE has a long history of advancing higher education and 2025 was certainly no exception.

During 2025, ACHE saw an increase of 19.6% in legislative funding. We are grateful to Governor Ivey and the legislature for their continued support for ACHE.

This increase is instrumental in our continued efforts to keep accessibility, affordability, and coordination for students and institutions as the top priority. One highlight of this year has been the development of our Pathways to Progress Initiative. This initiative seeks to align educational instruction and attainment with workforce demands in designated economic regions by providing scholarships and strategic advising. Related efforts, like the FAFSA Completion Initiative, further support this effort. The increase in FAFSA completion rates improves access to higher education for all Alabama students. Through the continued work of these initiatives, we can build stronger, resilient communities and create a lasting impact across Alabama.

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education is paving the way for sustained progress by aligning workforce and education priorities. It has been a privilege to serve as chair of the Commission this past year, and I am particularly grateful for the opportunity to represent District 3 over the last nine years. The future of ACHE is bright under the leadership of our current Commissioners, Dr. Purcell, and the ACHE team. I want to thank each of them for their dedication to higher education in Alabama.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It has been a strong year for higher education in Alabama. Enrollment at the state's public colleges and universities continued to rise, and both the Governor and the Legislature reaffirmed their commitment to student success by approving a fourth consecutive year of funding increases of six percent or more. In addition to sustained operational support, campuses also benefited from one-time appropriations to address deferred maintenance and critical facility needs.



DR. JIM PURCELL

Following last year's challenges with the rollout of the revised Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), we are pleased to report a 21% year-over-year increase in FAFSA completions. Alabama currently ranks 12th in the nation for overall completions, an achievement that reflects the resilience of our students, the dedication of our educators, and the strength of our statewide support systems.

This year also marked a major milestone for the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries (NAAL), as they celebrated their 40th anniversary. NAAL's primary mission is to foster communication and collaboration among its member libraries. The organization places a strong emphasis on the collective purchasing and sharing of collections, products, and services that support teaching, learning, and research across Alabama's institutions of higher education.

As we reflect on these achievements, we remain committed to building a stronger, more connected higher education system, one that prioritizes innovation and opportunity for all. Thank you for your continued support as we move forward in shaping Alabama's educational and economic future.



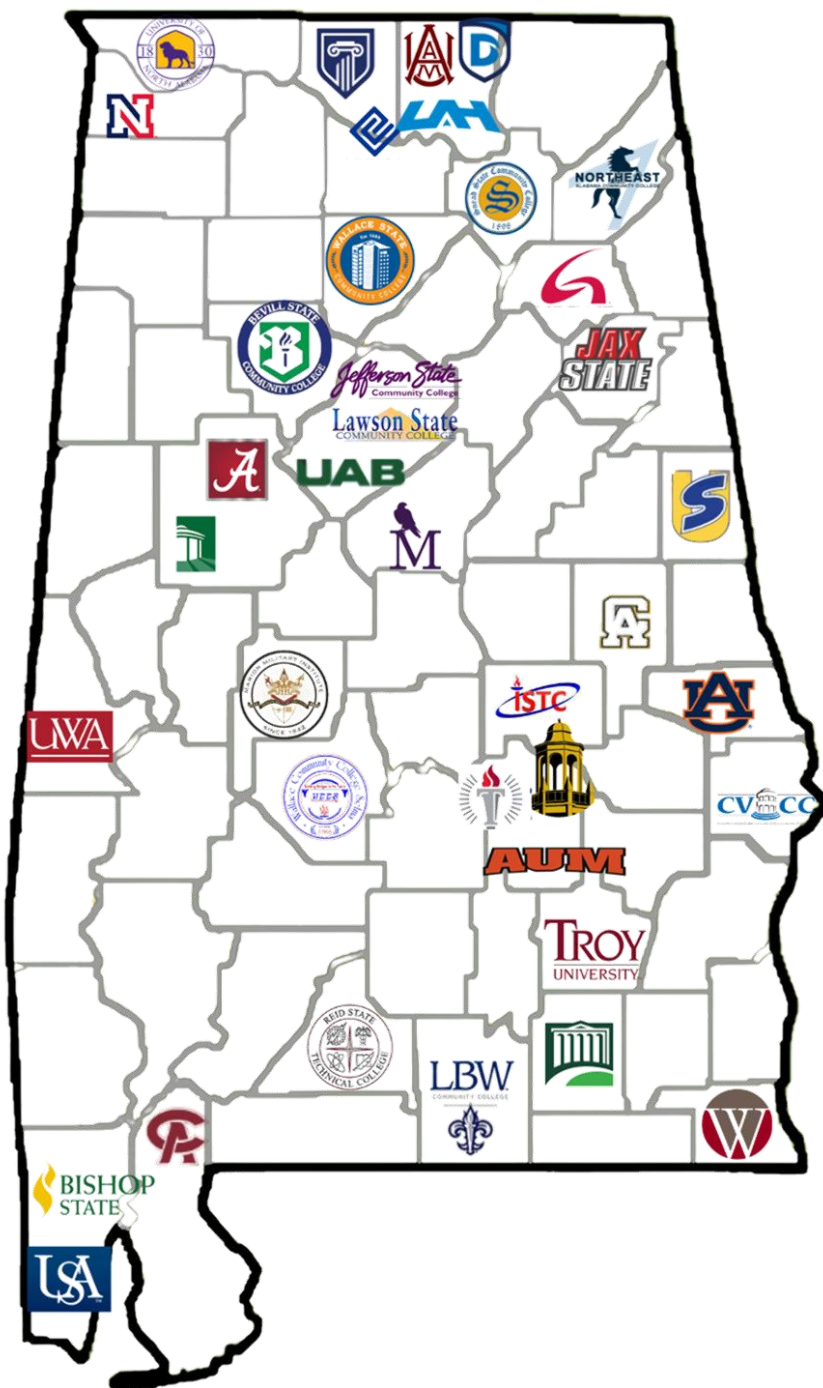
ALABAMA PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

4-Year Institutions

Alabama A&M University (AAM)
Alabama State University (ASU)
Athens State University (ATSU)
Auburn University (AU)
Auburn University at Montgomery (AUM)
Jacksonville State University (JSU)
Troy University (TROY)
University of Alabama (UA)
University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB)
University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH)
University of Montevallo (UM)
University of North Alabama (UNA)
University of South Alabama (USA)
University of West Alabama (UWA)

2-Year Institutions

Bevill State Community College (BEV)
Bishop State Community College (BIS)
Calhoun Community College (CAL)
Central Alabama Community College (CEN)
Chattahoochee Valley Community College (CVC)
Coastal Alabama Community College (CACC)
Drake State Community and Technical College (DRA)
Enterprise State Community College (ENT)
Gadsden State Community College (GAD)
Ingram State Technical College (ING)
Jefferson State Community College (JSC)
Lawson State Community College (LAW)
Lurleen B. Wallace Community College (LBW)
Marion Military Institute (MMI)
Northeast Alabama Community College (NEC)
Northwest Shoals Community College (NWS)
Reid State Technical College (REI)
Shelton State Community College (SHC)
Snead State Community College (SND)
Southern Union State Community College (SOU)
Trenholm State Community College (TRE)
Wallace Community College – Dothan (WSD)
Wallace State Community College – Hanceville (WSH)
Wallace State Community College - Selma (WSS)



LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Historic State Support for Public Education

The **2026 Education Trust Fund** bill was signed into law in May 2025 by Governor Ivey and saw and increase in appropriated funds for education in the state, totaling \$9.09 billion. This budget included one of the largest appropriations into Higher Education in Alabama history.

Act 2025-270 FY26 Operating Budget for Higher Education

Institution Type	Amount Received	Percentage Increase Over FY25
Two-Year	\$622,223,785	6.01%
Four-Year*	\$1,776,618,830	6.64%
Other Higher Education	\$158,228,445	9.66%
Total Higher Education	\$2,557,071,060	6.66%

Act 2025-268 Supplemental Funding for Higher Education

Alabama Center for the Arts	\$100,000
Marine Environmental Science Cons/Dauphin Island Sea Lab	\$7,000,000
Alabama A&M University	\$5,972,688
Alabama State University	\$4,180,844
University of Alabama System	\$54,287,475
Athens State University	\$3,772,700
Auburn University	\$26,067,000
Auburn University at Montgomery	\$3,262,202
Jacksonville State University	\$5,632,743
University of Montevallo	\$4,028,237
University of North Alabama	\$5,884,716
University of South Alabama	\$15,580,106
Troy University	\$6,312,751
University of West Alabama	\$4,058,290
Tuskegee University	\$3,950,000
Miles College	\$250,000
Alabama Community College System	\$55,811,836
Firefighters' Personnel Standards and Education Commission/Fire College	\$4,300,000

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education

Nature Discovery Center - Landtrust of North Alabama	\$ 1,000,000
North Alabama Agriplex	\$ 900,000
Pathways to Progress	\$ 500,000
Judge Horton Civil Justice Learning Center	\$ 1,700,000
Alabama Veterinary Hospital - Birmingham Zoo	\$ 1,200,000
Tennessee Riverline Program	\$ 175,000
Kingdom College	\$ 80,000
Selma University	\$ 75,000

**Supplemental funding in Alabama Higher Education refers to additional state-allocated resources beyond regular operating budgets. These funds support specific initiatives, capital projects, or emerging needs not covered by standard appropriations*



LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Act 2025-269 Advancement and Technology FY 2025 Supplemental Appropriation

Alabama Community College System	\$126,530,406
Alabama A & M University	\$7,901,761
Alabama State University	\$4,380,745
Alabama System, Univ of	\$80,045,407
Athens State University	\$4,378,421
Auburn University	\$37,876,092
Auburn University Montgomery	\$6,001,837
Jacksonville State University	\$13,743,270
Montevallo, University of	\$3,513,270
North Alabama, University of	\$13,202,648
South Alabama, University of	\$16,909,551
Troy University System	\$17,732,102
West Alabama, University of	\$8,677,840
Tuskegee University	\$1,231,650

The Advancement and Technology Fund is a state-appropriated fund established by the Alabama Legislature using Education Trust Fund (ETF) revenues. It provides public colleges and universities with dedicated resources for instructional technology, facility upgrades, and workforce development, aiming to enhance student success and institutional capacity.

ACHE Board Appointments

- Alabama Local Government Training Institute (ALGTI)
- Alabama STEM Council
- Alabama Terminal for Linking and Analyzing Statistics (ATLAS) on Career Pathways
- Alabama Virtual Library Advisory Council
- Alabama Workforce Council Committee on Credential Quality and Transparency
- Forever Wild Land Trust
- Health Care Workforce Task Force
- Joint Interim Study Commission on Responsible Technology Purchases
- Postsecondary Math Task Force
- Principal Mentoring and Leadership Committee



INSTITUTIONAL FINANCE

CONSOLIDATED BUDGET RECOMMENDATION

The Commission receives, evaluates, and coordinates budget requests for the public institutions of higher education in Alabama. ACHE conducts budget hearings to gather additional insight and justification for funding needs. 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 of 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 using 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				
Institutions	FY 2024-2025 Appropriation	FY 2025-2026 Budget Request	FY 2025-2026 Recommendation	FY 2025-2026 Appropriation
Alabama A & M University	\$57,304,433	\$71,859,831	\$61,242,443	\$61,115,089
Alabama State University	\$62,783,930	\$67,315,683	\$66,525,586	\$66,556,368
Alabama, Univ of - Main Campus	\$248,302,456	\$268,649,829	\$265,444,683	\$266,214,571
Alabama, Univ of - Birmingham	\$397,409,628	\$429,037,170	\$419,485,867	\$421,143,986
Alabama, Univ of - Huntsville	\$72,681,686	\$143,932,879	\$77,196,566	\$77,280,307
Athens State University	\$21,741,509	\$24,696,858	\$23,264,674	\$23,502,462
Auburn University	\$355,844,105	\$390,735,372	\$377,129,459	\$379,246,504
Auburn University Montgomery	\$33,112,856	\$35,752,691	\$35,178,559	\$34,989,116
Jacksonville State University	\$57,483,222	\$63,806,376	\$61,696,928	\$61,933,407
Montevallo, University of	\$30,730,750	\$33,633,825	\$32,453,002	\$33,018,738
North Alabama, University of	\$53,339,628	\$66,025,000	\$56,309,257	\$57,665,778
South Alabama, University of	\$161,458,465	\$181,904,311	\$171,243,355	\$171,209,511
Troy University System	\$82,021,926	\$104,075,000	\$85,929,812	\$87,931,064
West Alabama, University of	\$31,265,149	\$33,915,000	\$32,444,912	\$34,218,443
Total Public Senior Institutions	\$1,665,479,743	\$1,915,339,825	\$1,765,545,103	\$1,776,025,344
Public Two-Year Institutions*	\$457,974,345	\$486,311,163	\$484,884,732	\$485,311,163
Total All Public Institutions	\$2,123,454,088	\$2,401,650,988	\$2,250,429,835	\$2,261,336,507

*The Two-Year Institution line includes O&M for Public Two-Year Institutions, Marion Institute, and Prison Education.

Alabama's higher education institutions requested an increase of 13.1% for their 2025-26 budgets. The Commission approved a recommendation for an increase of 6%, totaling \$2,250,429,835 based upon the estimate of funds available for Higher Education. In Act 2025-270, the Legislature appropriated a total of \$2,261,336,507 from the Education Trust Fund (ETF) to these institutions, an increase of 6.5% above the previous year's budget.



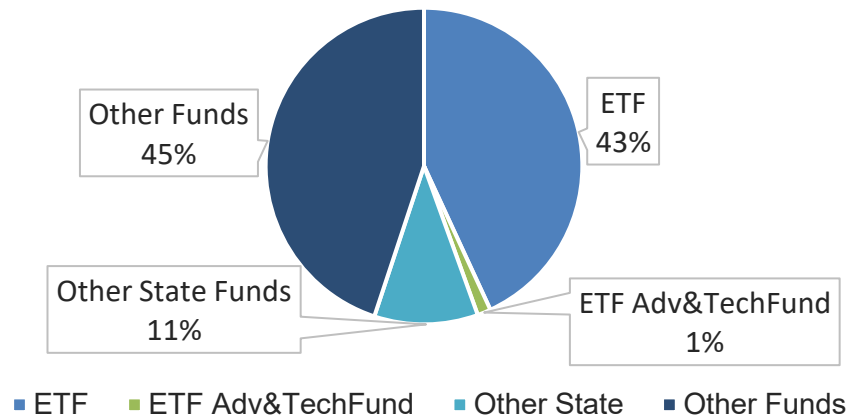
INSTITUTIONAL FINANCE

FACILITIES MASTER PLAN AND CAPITAL PROJECTS REQUESTS

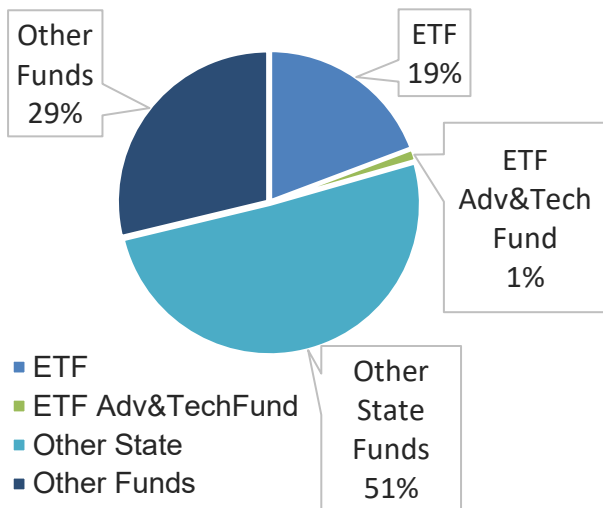
Each public two- and four-year institution submitted a Facilities Master Plan and Capital Projects Request to the Commission as required by statute. The Facilities Master Plan and Capital Budget Request report for the period covering FY 2026-30 was presented at the December 13, 2024, Commission meeting. The two- and four-year institutions project they will need over \$9.6 billion to fund capital projects during this five-year period. The charts below indicate a close to half of this funding will be requested from the Education Trust Fund.

SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR REQUESTED CAPITAL PROJECTS

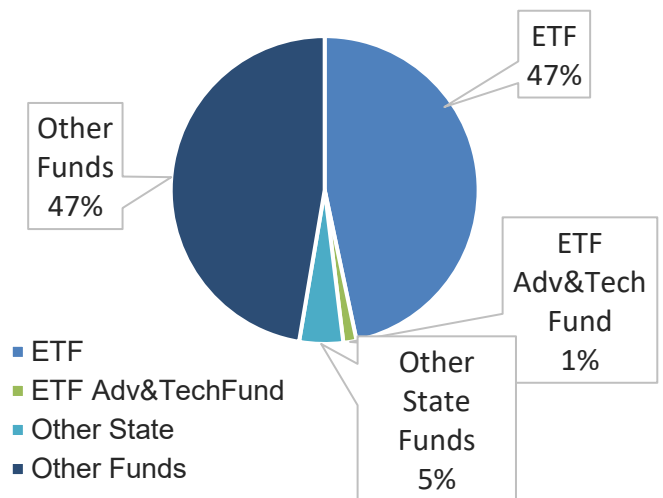
Total Two- and Four-Year Institutions



Two-Year Institutions



Four-Year Institutions



*Other State Funds – Direct Legislative appropriations, statewide, capital bond issues or any other funding not from the ETF.

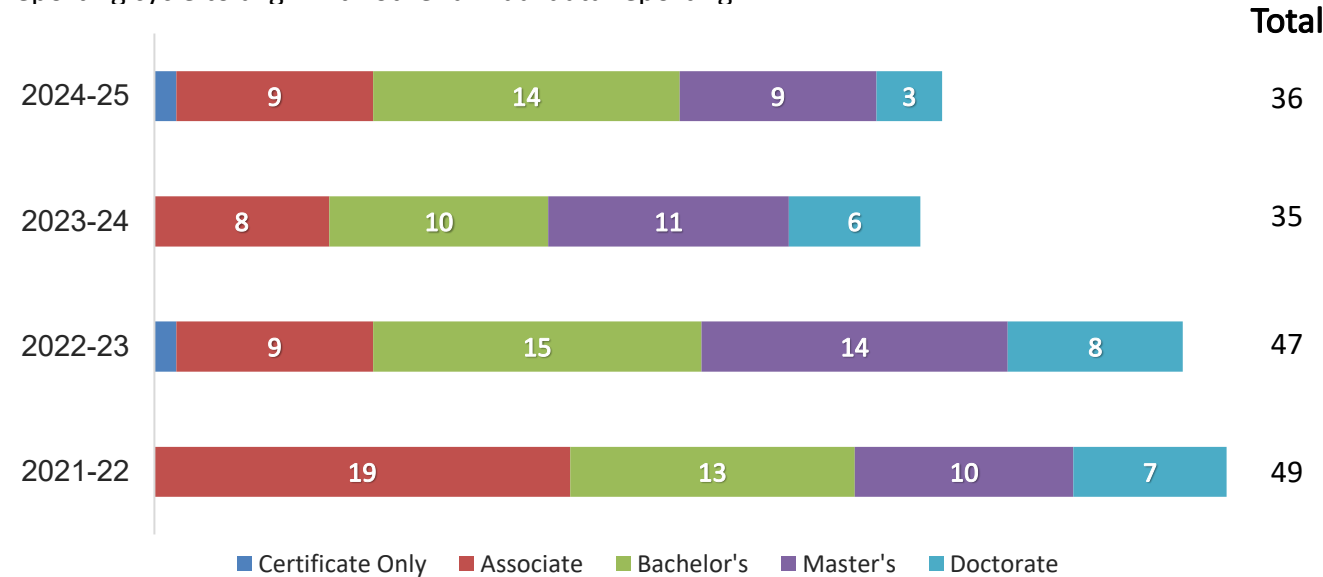
**Other Funds – All other potential sources of funding other than direct legislative appropriations.



ACADEMICS

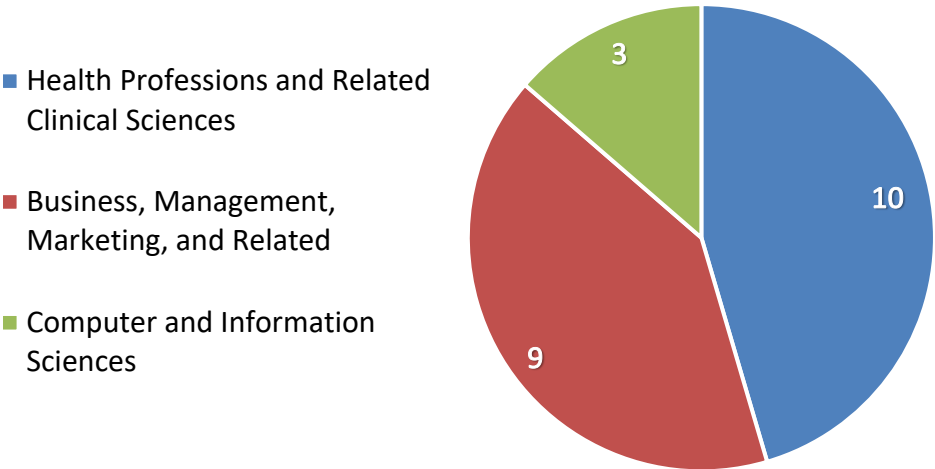
New Academic Program Approvals 2024-2025

Between September 2024 and June 2025, the Commission approved 36 new degree programs. Compared with previous cycles, the 2024-25 year had fewer graduate-level programs approved, including only three new doctoral programs. In the 2023-24 report, ACHE shifted the program reporting cycle to align with other annual data reporting.



Source: ACHE Program Inventory

Top New Program Areas of Study

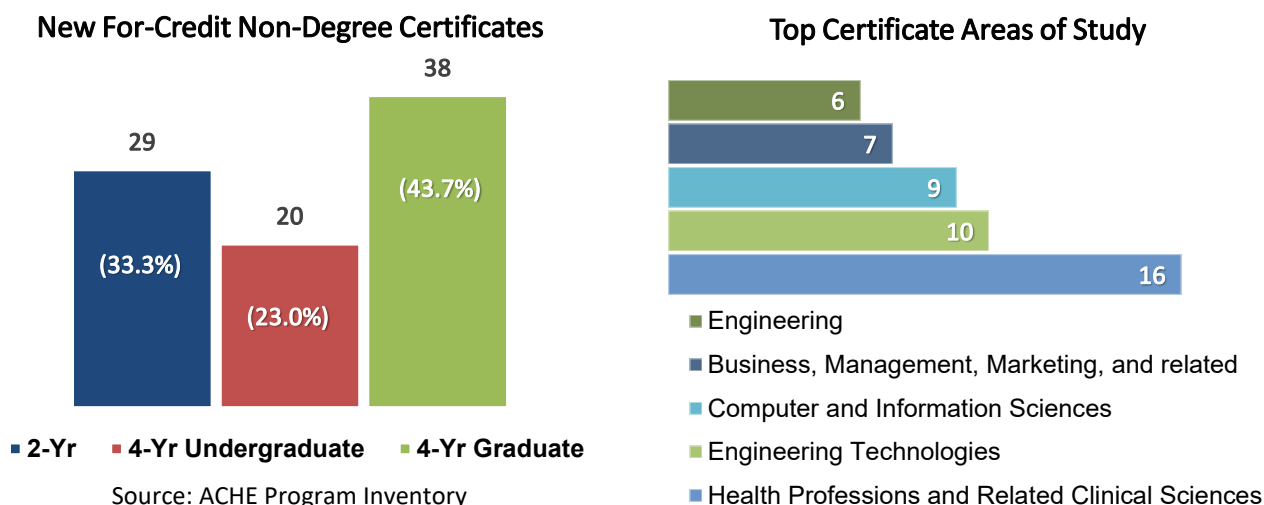


Source: ACHE Program Inventory



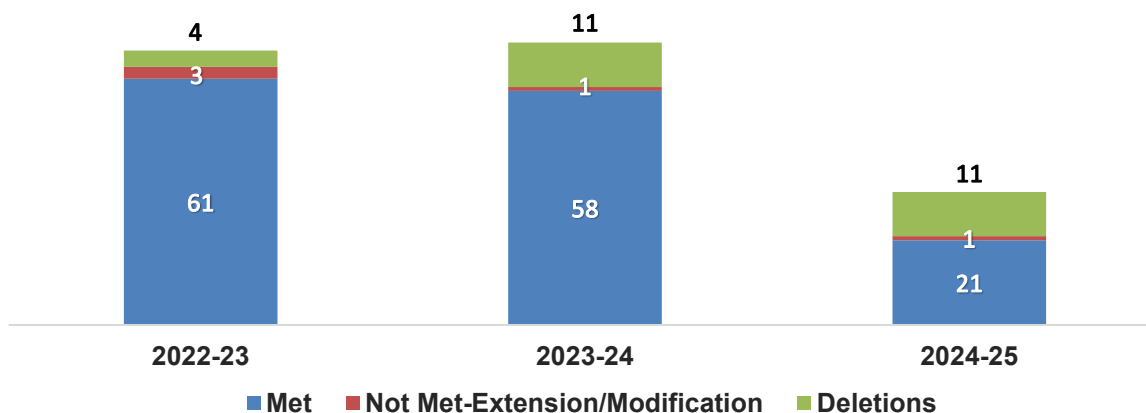
New For-Credit Non-Degree Certificates

Between September 2024 and June 2025, Alabama's 2- and 4-year public institutions developed 87 new non-degree certificates, including 29 short-term certificates at the community and technical college level and 58 undergraduate and graduate certificates at the university level. In this reporting period, degree completions in Health Professions and Computer and Information Sciences were awarded by both 2-year and 4-year institutions. All nine Business degrees, however, came from 4-year institutions. Most certificates in Health Professions, Business, and Computer and Information Sciences (24 out of 32) were also issued by 4-year institutions. In contrast, all certificates in Engineering Technologies were awarded by 2-year colleges.



Post-Implementation Reporting

Post-Implementation Reporting is a seven-year monitoring process for newly approved degree programs. Its purpose is to ensure programs meet required benchmarks for enrollment, graduation, and other performance measures. Programs that do not meet these conditions may be recommended for closure, unless the Commission approves corrective adjustments. During the 2022-2024 reporting period, most of the outstanding post-implementation reports were completed. The remaining reports, along with those due in 2024, were reviewed at the Commission's December 2024 and March 2025 meetings.



Source: ACHE Program Inventory



ACADEMICS

Non-Resident Institutions in Alabama

ACHE reviews programs for out-of-state institutions, known as Non-Resident Institutions (NRIs), seeking authorization to operate in Alabama through a private school license from the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) Private School Licensure Division. Most NRIs have a physical presence in the state, while some are online-only and fall outside NC-SARA coverage, particularly those based in California, which does not participate in NC-SARA.

Alabama is the only state where NRI licensure and programmatic review are managed by two separate agencies: ACCS (licensing) and ACHE (programmatic approval or exemption). Since the current review policy was adopted in 2019, ACHE has exempted 232 NRIs from programmatic review, including 12 in the past fiscal year from institutions headquartered in seven states.

Arizona	1	California	3	Florida	1
Michigan	2	Texas	3	Ohio	1
		Pennsylvania	1		

In addition, ACHE has approved three institutions located out-of-country not qualifying for exemptions following full programmatic review. Campuses of these three non-exempt institutions are in Cupecoy (Sint Maarten), Barbados (West Indies), and Basseterre, St Kitts (West Indies). Together, these 235 approved or exempted non-resident institutions offer programs in 22 of the 54 CIP categories.

For a current list of NRIs with ACHE programmatic approval or exemption from review, contact NRI@ache.edu. The ACHE NRI review process is available at https://www.ache.edu/wp-content/NRI/Prog_Review_Procedures.pdf. Information on Alabama NRI licensing is available at <https://www.accs.edu/about-accs/private-school-licensure/>.

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

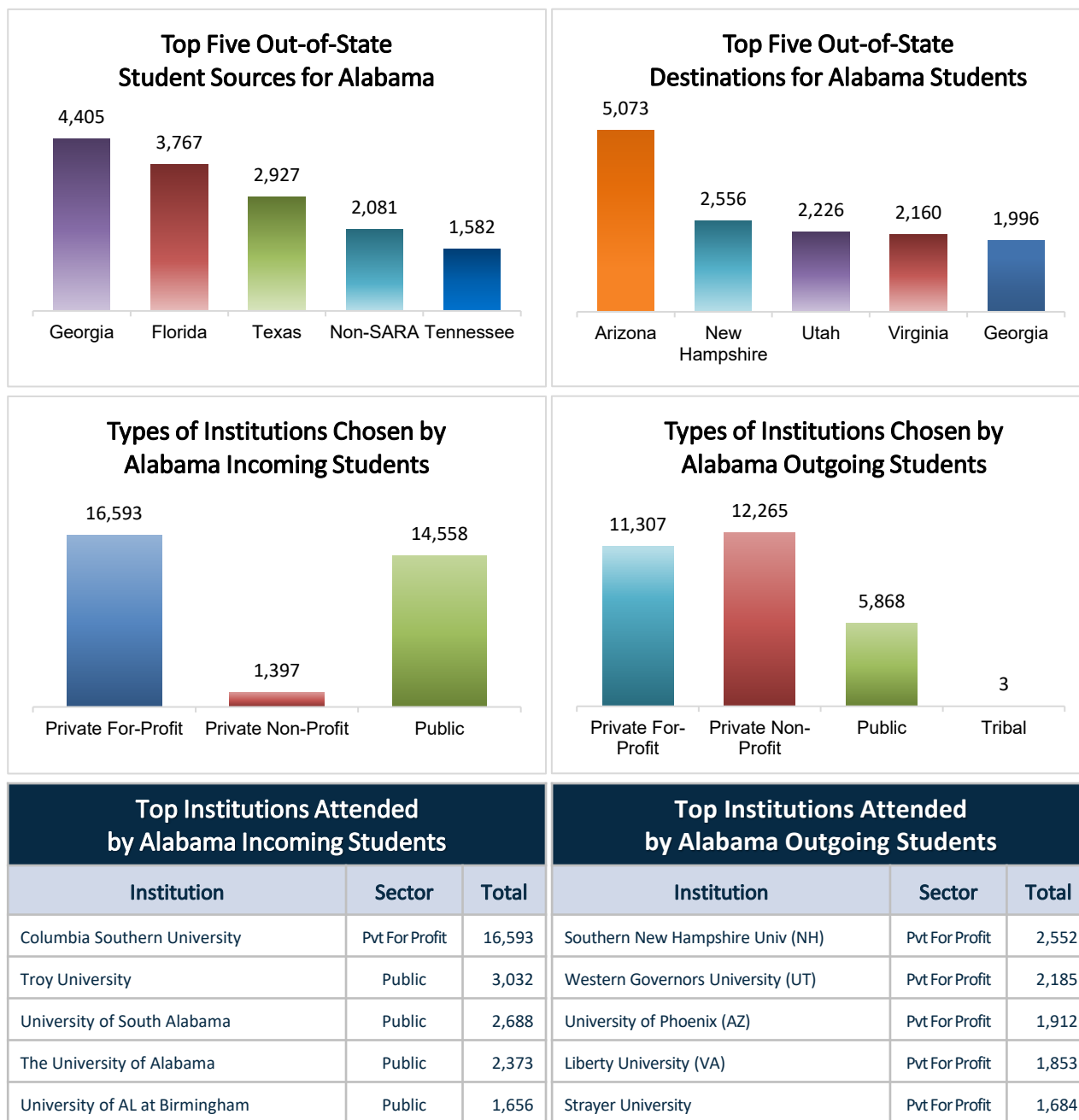
Since 2016, Alabama's State Reciprocity Committee has contracted with ACHE to be the State Portal Entity for NC-SARA. ACHE enrolls and renews institutions as members of NC-SARA (also referred to as SARA), communicates policies and procedures to institutional contacts, and investigates student complaints. As a result of having a uniform set of regulations and a uniform sliding payment scale across the nation, NC-SARA member institutions can streamline the process of becoming authorized to offer distance education programs in other NC-SARA states, saving at least \$69,797 per institution annually.

NC-SARA is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that helps students access educational opportunities and ensures efficient, consistent, and effective regulation of distance education programs. NC-SARA membership currently stands at 41 institutions including public, private, and proprietary institutions based in Alabama.



ACADEMICS

NC-SARA Data Dashboards



The most current available SARA data reports that Alabama's SARA-participating institutions enrolled 32,548 distance education students from other participating states and 29,450 Alabama residents enrolled in distance education programs in SARA states outside Alabama. Data can be found at <https://nc-sara.org/data-dashboards>.



ACADEMICS

Academic Common Market

The Academic Common Market (ACM) is a tuition-savings program comprised of fifteen (15) participating southern states that allow students to pursue uncommon academic programs not offered in their home state at in-state tuition rates. Alabama residents who attended out-of-state institutions via the ACM had tuition savings in the amount of \$1,208,318 during the 2024-25 academic year. The average tuition savings per student for Alabama residents was \$14,050. During academic year 2024-25, the ACM included 2,197-degree programs across the SREB states, with 168 institutions participating and 1,479 students approved for tuition savings. There was a total of 97 Alabama residents who were certified to attend out-of-state institutions, while 138 out-of-state students were certified by their home state to attend Alabama institutions during academic year 2024-25.

2024-25 ACM Enrollment at Alabama Institutions	
State of Residence	Students Attending Alabama IHEs
Georgia	46
Louisiana	30
Mississippi	22
Tennessee	25
Other SREB States	15
Total Count	138

2024-25 Top 10 Degree Programs Attracting Out-of-State Students	
1. Marine Science, BS	6. Audio Production, BS
2. Risk Management & Insurance, BS	7. Cardiovascular Technology, BS
3. Supply Chain Management, BS	8. Recording Industry, BS
4. Intelligence & Security Studies, BS	9. Southern Studies, BA
5. Aerospace, BS	10. Cancer Biology, BS

Doctoral Scholars Program

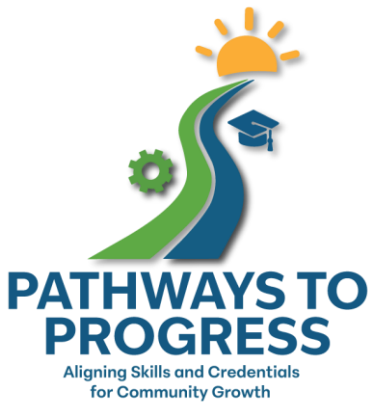
The SREB State Doctoral Scholars Program (DSP), since 1993, has supported underrepresented students in earning their Ph.D.s and pursuing academic careers to diversify college faculties. Scholars receive financial aid and are invited to the Annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, the nation's largest professional development conference for underrepresented doctoral scholars. The data below represents Ph.D. scholars who received funding from the state and/or individual institutions.

SREB DSP Outcomes 1993-Present		Alabama Institutions with Current Scholars	
Alabama Scholars	240	Alabama State University	
Graduates	163	Auburn University	
Employed Graduates	143	Tuskegee University	
Graduates Employed in Higher Education – 95%		University of Alabama	
FY24-25 Participation		University of Alabama at Birmingham	
Alabama Scholars Funded in 2023-24	17	University of South Alabama	



ACHE SPECIAL INITIATIVES

Pathways to Progress

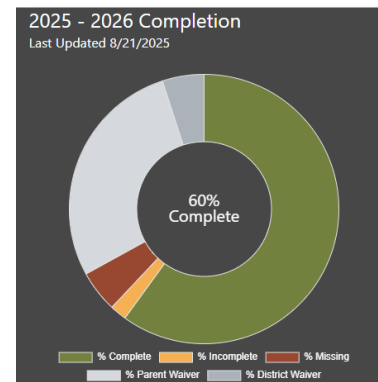


Pathways to Progress is an economic and workforce development initiative led by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) that strategically aligns educational attainment with workforce demands in designated economic regions. Using data tools like the Education Workforce Needs Index (EWNi) and the Economic Life Cycle Matrix, the initiative targets communities where increasing postsecondary credentials is expected to directly strengthen economic vitality.

The Pathways to Progress Initiative recognizes that strong regional economies will depend on an educated, skilled workforce. By addressing gaps in education, aligning training with local industry needs, and providing scholarships and strategic advising, the initiative aims to build resilient communities that can adapt and thrive, creating lasting economic prosperity across Alabama.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

In 2022, ACHE developed the FAFSA Completion Portal and implemented direct communications with high school seniors in Alabama to increase the state's FAFSA completion rate. As of mid-August 2025, Alabama ranked as 12th among the completion rates for the Class of 2025. ACHE also shares data with local educators to ensure students receive the necessary support to complete their applications promptly and successfully. Official data for each FAFSA award year is published in October. For further inquiry, go to <https://fafsa.ache.edu/Data/Summary>



Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Email Outreach Campaign

Building on this effort, ACHE launched its first round of targeted emails containing additional support resources for students, including access to state-based aid and planning tools. Future messages will be tailored to student responses, allowing for a more personalized and impactful outreach approach. During this FAFSA completion cycle, a total of 37,639 emails were sent to all Alabama seniors within the SAI range. These messages were not limited to high school students listed in the FAFSA portal.



STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education is committed to expanding access to postsecondary opportunities through targeted scholarship programs that support student success and strengthen the state's workforce.

ACHE administers several key scholarship and grant programs designed to assist students with financial need, encourage academic excellence, and promote enrollment in high-demand fields. These include:

- Alabama Athletic Trainer Loan Assistance Program (**ATLAP**) – This program assists licensed athletic trainers in **repaying their federal student loans** while serving in public K–12 schools and supports the state's efforts to recruit and retain these professionals, ensuring safer and healthier sports environments for Alabama's students.
- Alabama Student Assistance Program (**ASAP**) – A **need-based grant** providing critical support for students attending eligible public and private institutions.
- Alabama Student Grant Program (**ASGP**) – This program provides **non-need-based grant aid** for Alabama residents attending eligible private, nonprofit institutions in the state. Award amounts vary of **up to \$3,000 per year**, depending on fund availability.
- Alabama National Guard Educational Assistance Program (**ANGEAP**) – This program provides **tuition assistance** to active members of the Alabama National Guard who are enrolled in an accredited postsecondary institution within the state. It recognizes the dedication of our service members and helps them pursue higher education while serving.
- Alabama Math And Science Teacher Education Program (**AMSTEP**) – This program provides **loan repayment incentives** to Alabama certified teachers of mathematics or science who agree to teach in public schools in the state. It helps address critical teacher shortages in these high-demand subject areas.
- Police Officer's And Firefighter's Survivor's Educational Assistance Program (**POFSEAP**) – This program offers **tuition, fees, and instructional costs** for the **dependents** and **eligible spouses** of Alabama law enforcement officers and firefighters who have been killed in the line of duty. It serves as a small measure of support and gratitude for families who have made the ultimate sacrifice.
- (Re)Engage Alabama Grant Program – This initiative provides **scholarships** and **targeted support** to help adult learners return to college and complete their degrees. Many Alabamians have some college credit but no degree. (Re)Engage Alabama connects these students with resources, flexible pathways, and financial assistance to help them cross the finish line and enter the workforce better prepared.

For more information on these programs and how to apply, please visit [Grants | Scholarships | Alabama Commission on Higher Education](#).



SUPPORT OF OTHER EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Alabama Soil and Water Conservation State Appropriation - \$3,023,376



ALABAMA
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION
COMMITTEE



Alabama Resource Conservation and Development Councils State Appropriation - \$8,962,744



Alabama Humanities Foundation State Appropriation - \$300,000

PHILOSOPHY
LITERATURE
ETHICS-HISTORY
JURISPRUDENCE
HISTORY OF THE ARTS
LANGUAGES
ALABAMA
HUMANITIES
FOUNDATION

ALABAMA HUMANITIES FOUNDATION

USS Alabama Battleship State Appropriation - \$1,550,000



National Computer Forensics Institute State Appropriation - \$650,000



Alabama HBCU CARES State Appropriation - \$650,000



Alabama Wing of Civil Air Patrol State Appropriation - \$155,000



Alabama Trails Commission State Appropriation - \$340,000

Alabama
Trails Commission

Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center (BBTCAC) State Appropriation - \$350,000



Alabama Recruit and Retain Minority Teachers Pilot Program State Appropriation - \$700,000



Alabama Forestry Foundation Black Belt Initiative State Appropriation - \$532,000



Alabama International Education and Economic Partnership (ALIEEP) State Appropriation - \$400,000



SUPPORT OF OTHER EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Alabama Forestry Commission Education Program
State Appropriation - \$200,000



International Motorsports Hall of Fame
State Appropriation - \$200,000



Alabama Black Belt Adventures
State Appropriation - \$475,000



Adaptive and Disability Sports Education
State Appropriation - \$60,000



Statewide Programs in ACHE Budget

**Alabama Agricultural
Land-Grant Alliance**
State Appropriation - \$5,006,831



**Alabama Established Program
to Stimulate Competitive Research**
State Appropriation - \$1,260,184



**Articulation & General Studies
Committee/Alabama Transfers**
State Appropriation - \$799,589



**Network of Alabama
Academic Libraries**
State Appropriation - \$384,076



NAAL

CELEBRATES 40 YEARS



The Network of Alabama Academic Libraries (NAAL) is a consortium of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education and all 26 public and private four-year colleges and universities in Alabama. Established in 1984 to reduce disparities between institutions offering graduate education, NAAL celebrated an exceptional 40 years of dedication, growth, and success this year. NAAL's mission has broadened to coordinate library resource sharing and enhance the education and research missions of all Alabama higher education. NAAL's Executive Council was chaired this year by Angie Moore, Library Director at Faulkner University.

On October 3rd, 2024, NAAL proudly celebrated an exceptional 40 years of collaboration, innovation, and shared resources that have strengthened library services across the state. The event was hosted by the University of Montevallo, held in the Anna Irvin Dining Hall with more than 60 librarians, higher education administrators, and other special guests in attendance. Speakers included Dr. Jim Purcell, Executive Director of ACHE, Dr. John W. Stewart III, President of the University of Montevallo, and Dr. Jim Vickery, former President of the University of Montevallo. Jessie Lynn®, an award-winning country music singer, and Tré Daniel, a student piano major, provided entertainment, and a special video presentation on "40 years of NAAL" was screened. John-Bauer Graham, Dean of Library Services at Jacksonville State University, served as the emcee for the event. An '80s theme with a display of 1980s library technology lightened the atmosphere and paid tribute to NAAL's origins.



2025 SHEEO Exceptional Leader Award

Dr. James E. Purcell, Executive Director of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE), was honored with the 2025 Exceptional Leader Award during the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) Annual Conference. The award, presented in July, recognizes a state higher education executive officer who has demonstrated exceptional leadership, a strong commitment to public service, and significant contributions to higher education at both the state and national levels.

With more than 30 years of service in public higher education, Dr. Purcell is the only individual to have served as the state higher education executive in four states - Arkansas, Louisiana, and Rhode Island - and now ACHE in Alabama.



He is the longest-serving director in higher education history and currently holds the distinction of being the nation's longest-serving SHEEO.

Since joining ACHE in 2017, Dr. Purcell has led transformative efforts across Alabama's higher education system, including tripling the state's investment in need-based financial aid and significantly increasing FAFSA completion rates among high school seniors.

During the conference, SHEEO President Dr. Robert Anderson praised Dr. Purcell's leadership, describing him as an innovative, collaborative, and student-centered policymaker whose vision has advanced both state and national priorities. Under Dr. Purcell's leadership, Alabama has launched several initiatives that are helping more students enter and complete postsecondary programs - *All in Alabama*, *(Re)Engage Alabama*, *Retain Alabama*, and *Recall Alabama*—as well as the newly established *Pathway to Progress*, a 2025 workforce-aligned credentialing and training initiative designed to meet the demands of Alabama's evolving economy.

"Congratulations to Alabama's own, Jim Purcell, on being awarded the 2025 SHEEO Exceptional Leader," said **Alabama Governor Kay Ivey**. "I applaud him for the work he has done for our state and public higher education. Here in Alabama, we have a variety of exceptional public colleges and universities that I am proud to continually support." **Amy Price, ACHE Board Chair**, said, "Congratulations to Dr. Purcell on this outstanding honor! We could not be more proud of the work he has done on behalf of ACHE in Alabama. Dr. Purcell has built bridges with higher education leaders across our state and has been an advocate for student success at all levels. His work on FAFSA completion rates, coupled with his work on expanding dual enrollment, has positively impacted the lives of many Alabamians."



BUILDING HUMAN CAPITAL STRATEGIC PLAN 2018 – 2030

The Commission shall be responsible for statewide long-range planning for postsecondary education in Alabama. Such planning shall be the result of continuous study, analysis, and evaluation. Plans will include the establishment of statewide objectives and priorities with methods and guidelines for achieving them (Alabama Code 16-5-6).

- 1** *Improving Access*
- 2** *Enhancing Student Success*
- 3** *Enhancing STEM Progress*
- 4** *Developing Alabama's Economy and Workforce*
- 5** *Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency*

Board Approved 12/8/2017

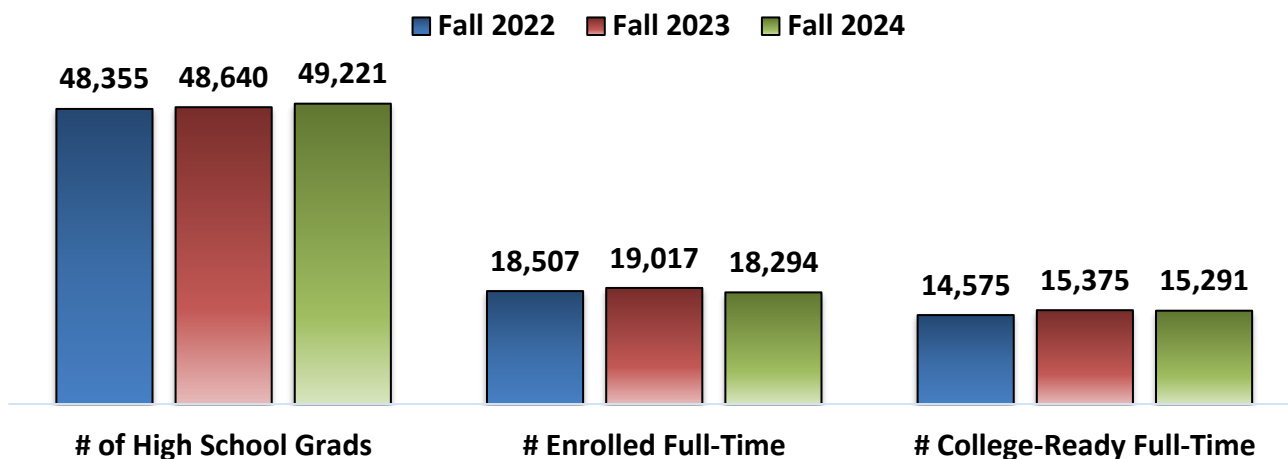
The Educational Path to Alabama's Economic Success



PRIORITY ONE: IMPROVING ACCESS

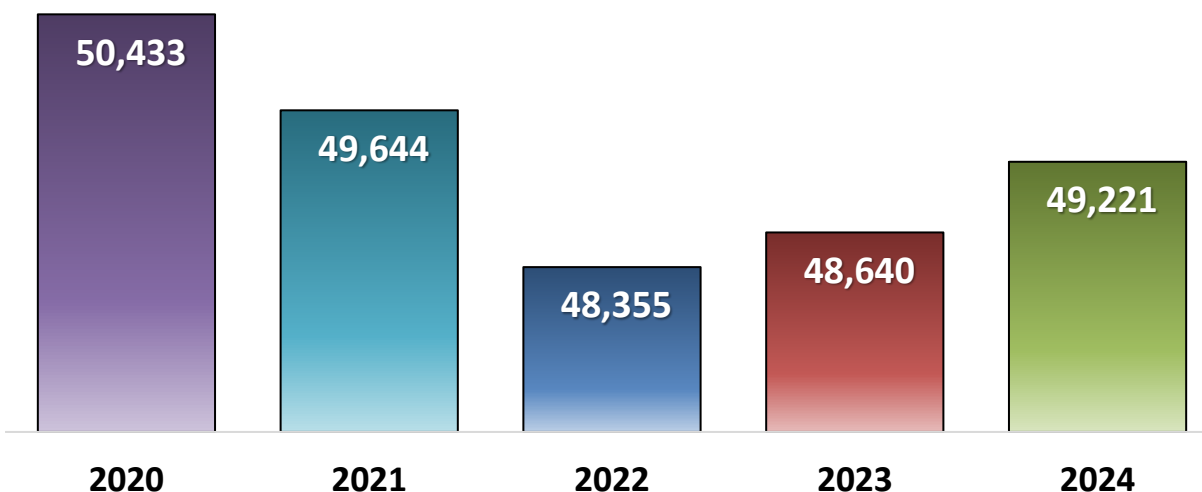
Strategy One: Increase the number of high school students prepared for college

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



Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database and Alabama State Department of Education
Note: College-Ready students are those not requiring developmental education courses while in college.

Alabama Public High School Graduate Trends



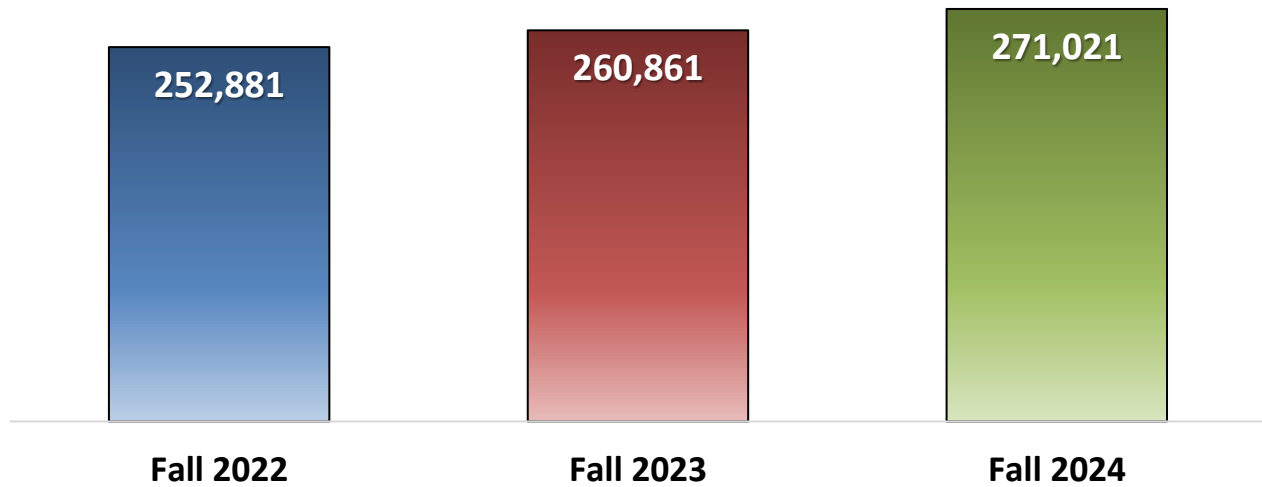
Source: Alabama State Department of Education



PRIORITY ONE: IMPROVING ACCESS

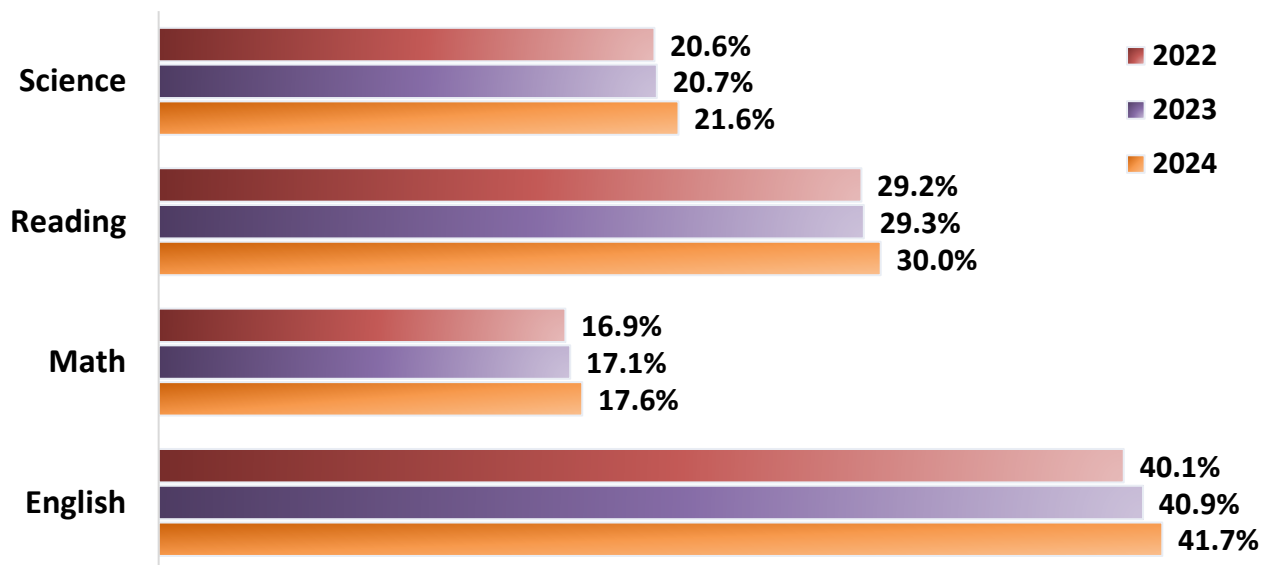
Strategy One: Increase the number of high school students prepared for college

Alabama Public Institutions Total Enrollment



Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database

Percentage of Students Who Met ACT College Readiness Benchmarks



Source: Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA)



PRIORITY ONE: IMPROVING ACCESS

Strategy One: Increase the number of high school students prepared for college

Alabama Student Assistance Program (ASAP)	
Report Year	Funding Allocations
2025	\$9,207,875
2024	\$8,728,582
2023	\$8,820,657
2022	\$7,049,369
2021	\$5,719,093

A need-based grant providing critical support for students attending eligible public and private institution.

Alabama Student Grant Program (ASGP)	
Report Year	Funding Allocations
2025	\$9,946,495
2024	\$8,346,325
2023	\$8,218,869
2022	\$7,695,285
2021	\$5,992,200

Provides non-need-based grant aid for Alabama residents attending eligible private, nonprofit institutions in the state.

Alabama National Guard Educational Assistance Program (ANGEAP)	
Report Year	Funding Allocations
2025	\$6,628,804
2024	\$6,365,556
2023	\$5,979,575
2022	\$5,644,245
2021	\$5,082,090

Provides tuition assistance to active members of the Alabama National Guard who are enrolled in an accredited postsecondary institution within the state.

(Re)Engage Alabama Grant Program	
Report Year	Funding Allocations
2025	\$158,375*
* Plus \$125,000 earmarked toward completion	
2024	\$100,750

Provides scholarships and targeted support to help adult learners return to college and complete their degrees; implemented January 2024.

Police Officer's & Firefighter's Survivors Educational Assistance Program (POFSEAP)	
Report Year	Funding Allocations
2025	\$231,662
2024	\$243,317
2023	\$244,408
2022	\$256,063
2021	\$237,217

Offers tuition, fees, and instructional costs for the dependents and eligible spouses of Alabama law enforcement officers and firefighters who have been killed in the line of duty.

Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education Program (AMSTEP)	
Report Year	Funding Allocations
2025	\$234,819
2024	\$271,716
2023	\$239,047
2022	\$310,415
2021	\$201,766

Provides loan repayment incentives to Alabama certified teachers of mathematics or science who agree to teach in public schools in the state.

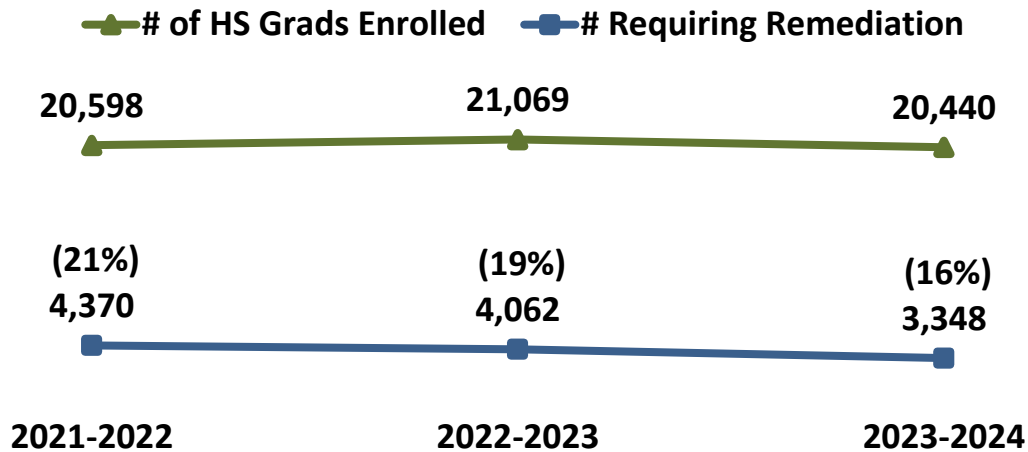
Note: All data collected as of August 2025



PRIORITY TWO: ENHANCING STUDENT SUCCESS

Strategy One: Rethink developmental education

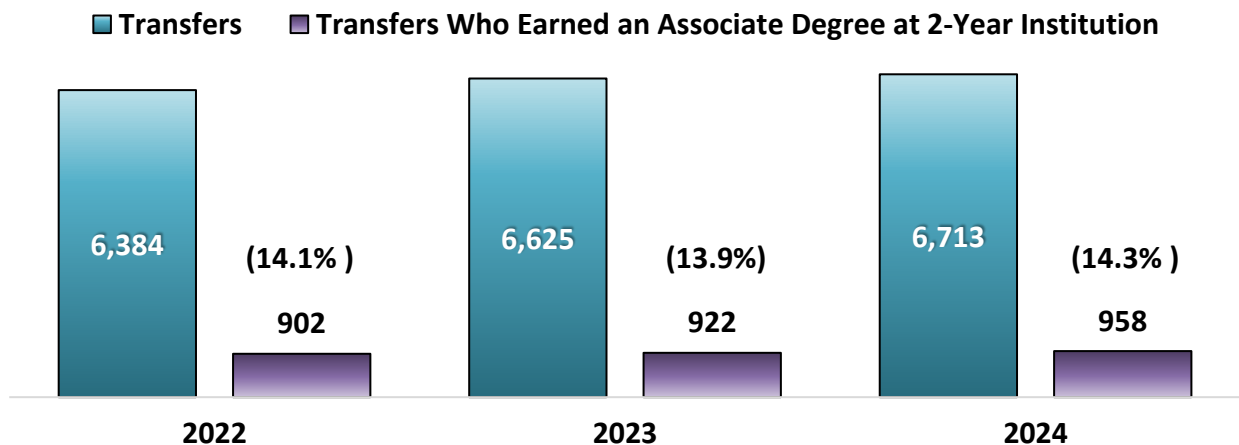
Number and Percentage of Alabama High School Graduates Enrolled Requiring Remediation



Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database and Alabama State Department of Education

Strategy Four: Promote the seamless transfer of students

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



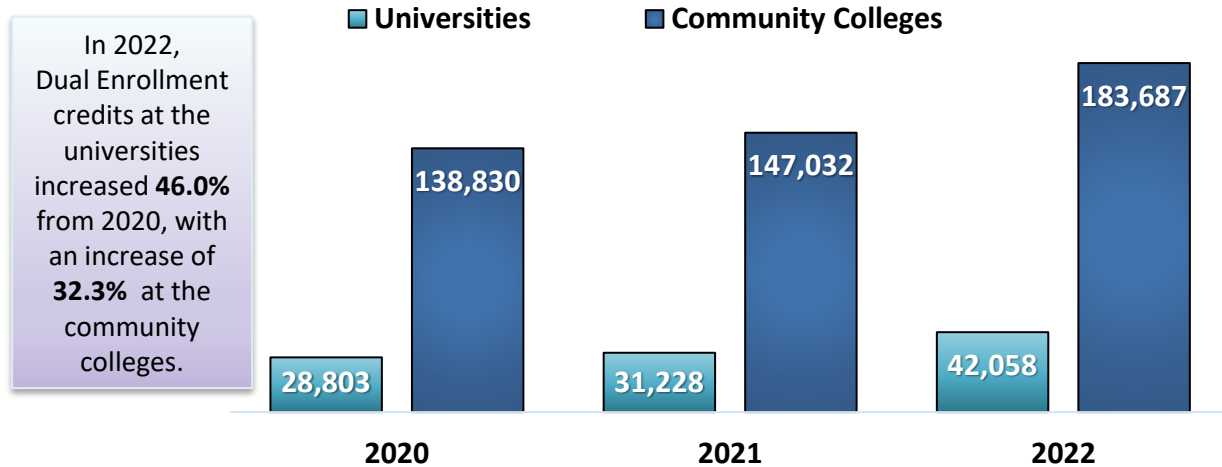
Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database Transfer Migration Report



PRIORITY TWO: ENHANCING STUDENT SUCCESS

Strategy Four: Promote the seamless transfer of students

Number of Dual Enrollment Credit Hours at Alabama Public Colleges and Universities

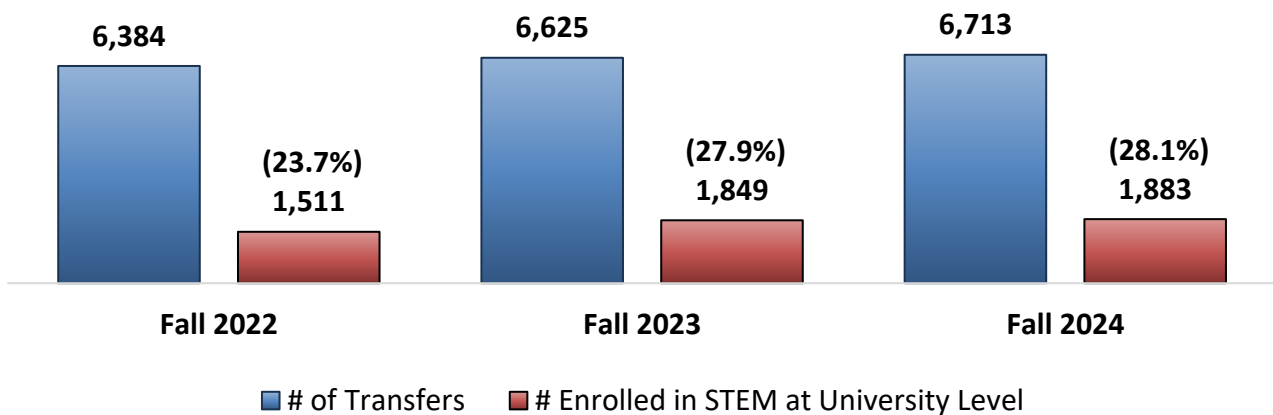


Source: Alabama Commission on Higher Education, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Data Exchange

PRIORITY THREE: ENHANCING STEM PROGRESS

Strategy Two: Increase in the number of community college transfer students who enroll in STEM programs.

Number and Percentage of Community College Transfer Students Who Enroll in STEM Programs



Note: The Department of Homeland Security STEM Degree Program list is used.

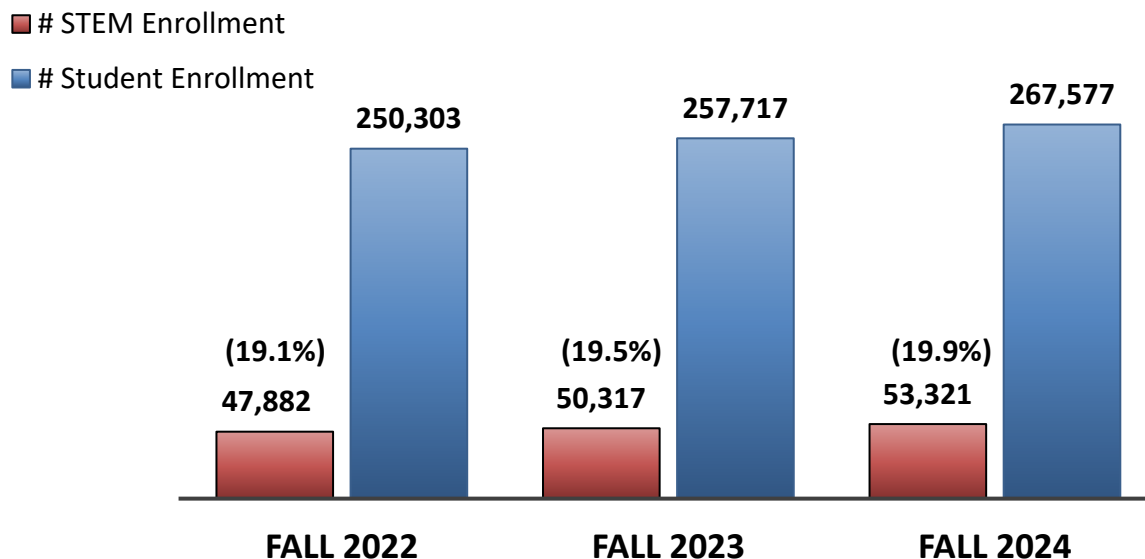
Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database



PRIORITY THREE: ENHANCING STEM PROGRESS

Strategy Three: Increase support of STEM students by increasing STEM enrollment

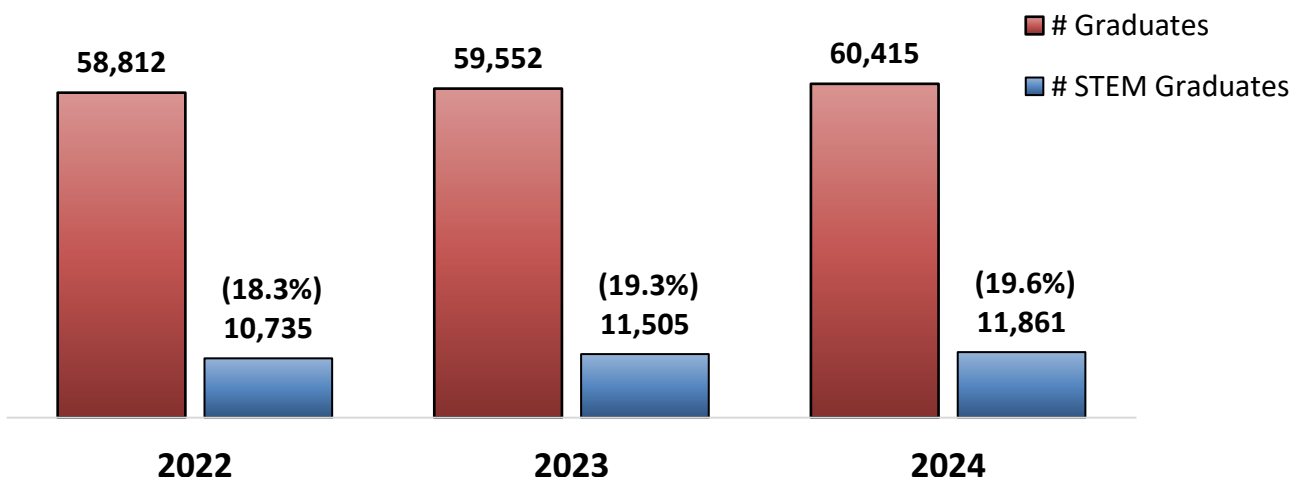
Number of STEM Enrollment in Alabama Public Institutions



Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database.

Note: These numbers represent an unduplicated headcount.

Number and Percentage of STEM Graduates at Alabama Public Institutions



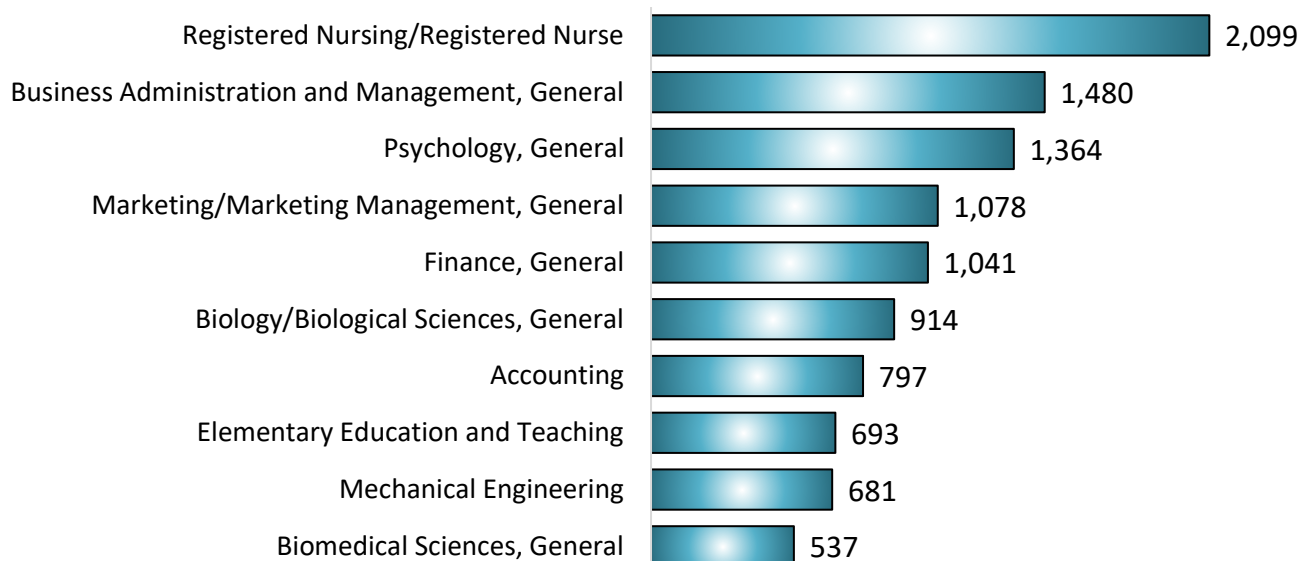
Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database.

Note: These numbers represent an unduplicated headcount.

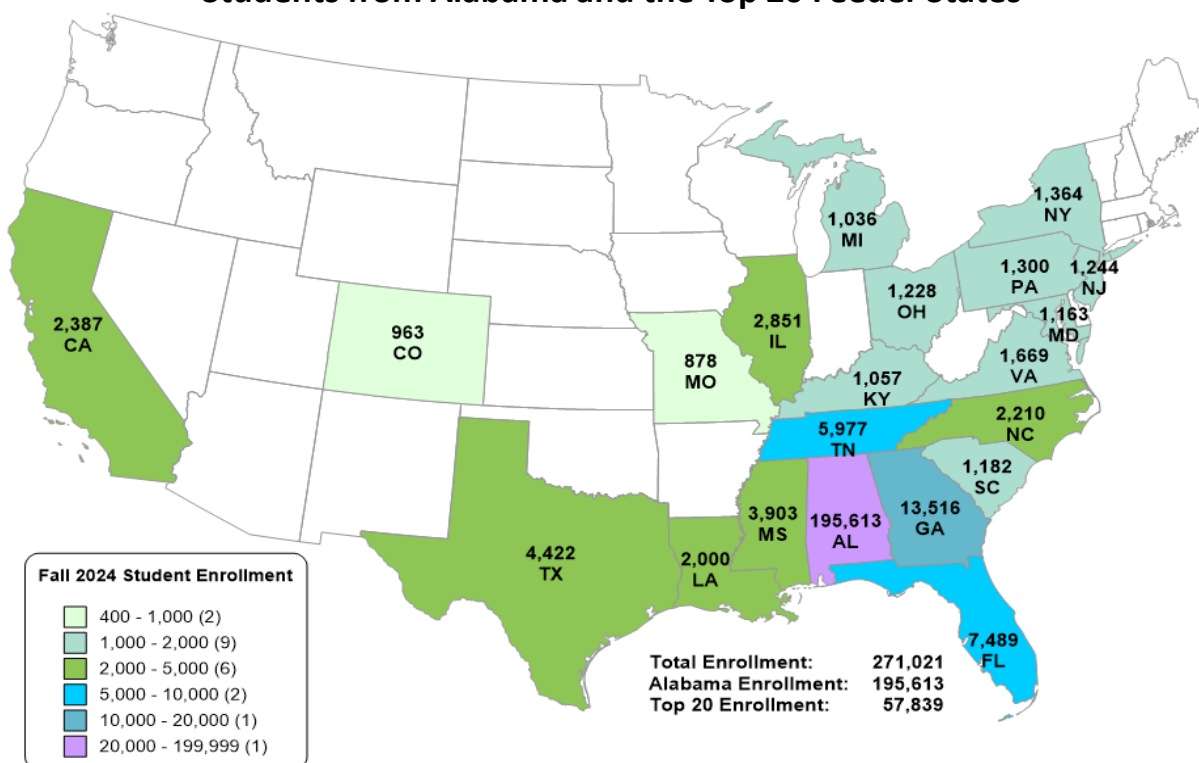


PRIORITY FOUR: DEVELOPING ALABAMA'S ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE

2023-2024 Top 10 Completions by Major for Baccalaureate Degrees



Fall 2024 Enrollment in Alabama Public Colleges and Universities Including Students from Alabama and the Top 20 Feeder States



Source: Alabama Statewide Student Database

Note: Data does not include 7,058 students from other states and does not include 10,511 students from unknown states, territories, and foreign countries.

Percent of students enrolled from Alabama – 72%;
Percent of students enrolled from Georgia, the top feeder state – 5%

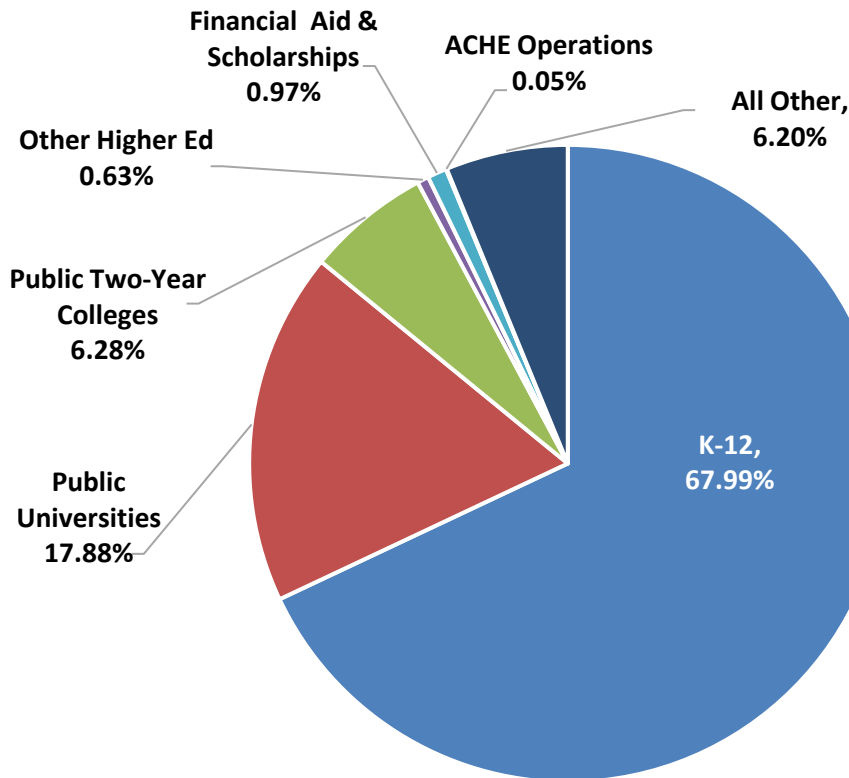


PRIORITY FIVE: ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

Strategy One: Optimize institutional performance

Alabama Education Trust Fund (ETF) Appropriations				
	Split of ETF Appropriation	Percentage of ETF Split	Split of ETF Appropriation	Percentage of ETF Split
Sectors	FY24-25	FY24-25	FY25-26	FY25-26
K-12	\$6,363,394,077	68.07%	\$6,737,754,832	67.99%
Public Universities	\$1,665,479,743	17.82%	\$1,771,923,830	17.88%
Public Two-Year Colleges	\$586,946,967	6.28%	\$622,223,785	6.28%
Other Higher Ed	\$55,143,912	0.59%	\$62,002,206	0.63%
Financial Aid & Scholarships	\$84,551,121	0.90%	\$96,451,091	0.97%
ACHE Operations	\$4,446,209	0.05%	\$4,470,148	0.05%
All Other	\$588,544,140	6.30%	\$614,590,647	6.20%
Total	\$9,348,506,169	100%	\$9,909,416,539	100%

Percentage of ETF Appropriation for Education FY 2025-26





ACHE IN ACTION



A Message from Executive Director Dr. Jim Purcell

Welcome to the first issue of the ACHE Impact Newsletter! This publication marks an exciting step forward in our mission to keep stakeholders, partners, and the public informed about the vital work being done across Alabama's higher education landscape.

At the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, we are dedicated to fostering a collaborative and innovative environment where students can thrive, institutions can grow, and our state can prosper. ACHE Impact will serve as a platform to highlight initiatives, share success stories, and provide updates on policy and progress that impact the future of education and workforce development in Alabama.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to strengthen postsecondary education and build a brighter future for all Alabamians.

Campus Snapshots

Celebrating Accomplishments Across Alabama's
Each quarterly newsletter will spotlight 3 of our state's outstanding 4-year institutions and 6 exceptional 2-year institutions on a rotational schedule



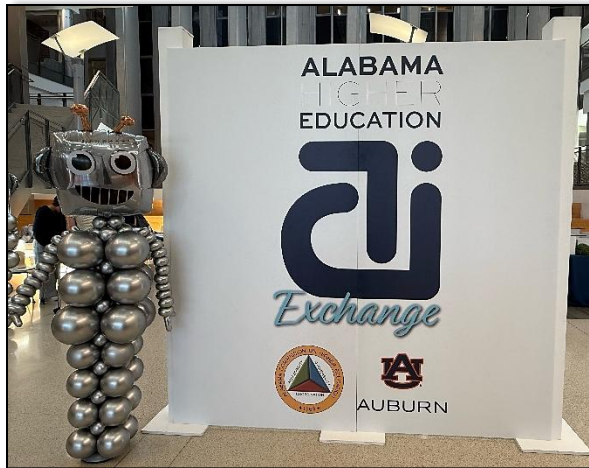
The Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) is proud to launch the **ACHE Impact Newsletter**, a quarterly publication designed to inform, engage, and connect stakeholders across Alabama's higher education landscape. Each issue delivers timely updates on statewide initiatives, policy developments, research trends, and strategic goals that shape the future of higher education in Alabama.

Our goal is to highlight the work being done in collaboration with institutions, community partners, and state leaders to promote student success, economic growth, and workforce readiness. The newsletter also features data-driven insights, success stories from campuses, and opportunities to get involved with key projects and programs.

Whether you're a policymaker, educator, student, or community advocate, the **ACHE Impact Newsletter** is your go-to resource for staying informed and inspired by the progress happening across the state.

Stay connected. Stay informed. See the impact.

ACHE IN ACTION



In **October 2024**, the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, in collaboration with Auburn University, convened the *Alabama Higher Education AI Exchange*. This two-day event brought together faculty, researchers, and leaders from across the state to explore AI's role in higher education through tracks on Research, Teaching & Learning, and Operations. Sessions, workshops, and networking opportunities focused on advancing AI literacy and collaboration across Alabama institutions.

In **April 25, 2025**, Dr. Jim Purcell, Executive Director of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, delivered inspiring opening remarks during the presidential inauguration ceremony of Dr. Catherine Wehlburg at Athens State University. His address underscored the importance of transformative leadership in higher education and celebrated Dr. Wehlburg's commitment to academic excellence, student success, and institutional innovation.



On **May 9, 2025**, ACHE Research Fellows Dr. Jessie Lynn Nichols and Dr. Deana Goodwine earned their doctoral degrees from Auburn University. Dr. Nichols explored Career Pathways of Agriculture Students: An Introspective Look Through a 40-Year Lens, and Dr. Goodwine examined Factors Affecting Completion of Employer-Driven Competency-Based Education and Skills-Based Learning Programs.

On **June 13, 2025**, the Alabama Commission on Higher Education took its quarterly meeting on the road, convening at the University of South Alabama in Mobile. This off-site session provided an opportunity to engage directly with institutional leaders, highlight regional initiatives, and reaffirm ACHE's commitment to advancing education and opportunity across the state.



ACHE IN ACTION



On **July 15, 2025**, Dr. Jim Purcell, Executive Director of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, was honored with the 2025 SHEEO Exceptional Leader Award. Presented at SHEEO's annual conference, the award recognizes visionary leadership and enduring impact in higher education policy and practice. Dr. Purcell shared remarks during the event, reflecting on this tremendous accomplishment and reaffirming Alabama's commitment to student success, equity, and innovation across the higher education landscape.

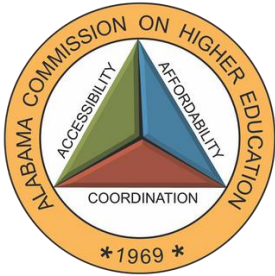
On **July 18, 2025**, representatives from the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, including Commissioner Jody M. Singleton, joined Kingdom College leadership and community stakeholders to celebrate recent legislative support alongside state leaders. The gathering highlighted ongoing collaboration to strengthen access and opportunity through Alabama's growing independent college sector.



On **July 22, 2025**, representatives from the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, including Commissioner Shane Spiller, joined Selma University leadership and community stakeholders to commemorate supplemental funding received this year from the Alabama Legislature. The event highlighted the importance of public investment in institutional revitalization and student success.


On **August 5, 2025**, ACHE staff visited The University of West Alabama for engaging discussions centered on data integrity, higher education policy, and collaborative strategies to strengthen student and institutional outcomes. The visit reflected UWA's ongoing commitment to academic excellence, innovation, and student success. ACHE extends its gratitude to UWA for their warm hospitality and continued partnership in advancing Alabama's higher education landscape.





ALABAMA COMMISSION ON
HIGHER EDUCATION

CONTACT US

 (334) 242-1998

 info@ache.edu

 www.ache.edu

**ALABAMA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION
100 NORTH UNION STREET
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36104**

