Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE)

About the ALSDE

The ALSDE offices and sections included in this summary are providing preliminary guidance and responses to questions related to public charter schools and Act 2015-3 specific to ALSDE roles and responsibilities. This summary does not attempt to address all ALSDE offices and sections that may provide public charter school guidance and support in the future. ALSDE information will be updated as the department’s roles and responsibilities evolve specific to Alabama public charter schools. Please send questions to pcs@alsde.edu.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communication Section uses a plan of aggressive communications to increase awareness and understanding of the Alabama State Board of Education's high academic standards, goals and initiatives, and policies; publishes Alabama Education News; directs news media relations; coordinates various teacher and school recognition programs; and conducts public information efforts.

GENERAL COUNSEL

General Counsel (OGC) represents and provides legal advice to the Alabama State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Education, and the Alabama State Department of Education. The OGC handles all litigation and administrative matters involving the Department, the State Board, and the State Superintendent. The attorneys within the office also serve as a resource to board counsel for local Alabama school systems as needed when issues of potential statewide impact arise.

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The Office of Administrative and Financial Services - Supporting Programs, Child Nutrition Programs, is responsible for the management and supervision of all aspects of the state Child Nutrition Programs in both school nutrition and preschool nutrition settings.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Office of Administrative and Financial Services, Financial Management, is responsible for all accounting activities for the Alabama State Department of Education, including budgeting and budgetary control; compliance with state and federal laws, regulations, and policies; all fiscal transactions; departmental payrolls; financial and technical assistance to local education agencies (LEAs); and coordination with auditors from the State Examiners of Public Accounts and federal agencies regarding audits of state and federal programs.
PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

The Office of Administrative and Financial Services - Supporting Programs, Pupil Transportation, is responsible for the management of a statewide comprehensive student transportation program and the statewide Driver Education and Traffic Safety Education Program.

SCHOOL ARCHITECT

In addition to many other responsibilities, the Office of Administrative and Financial Services - Supporting Programs, School Architect, is responsible for maintaining a complete inventory of all school facilities as provided by local education agencies. This includes the publishing of unused facilities on the Alabama State Department of Education website and updating the information at least once a year by May 1.

OFFICE OF CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Office of Career Technical Education/Workforce Development is responsible for facilitating career and technical education programming at the state and federal level in all local education agencies and in selected institutionalized environments. The staff assists in the delivery of state-of-the-art, articulated career and technical and academic education. The Office supports the goals of the Alabama State Board of Education.

OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

The Office of Teaching and Learning, Educator Effectiveness, promotes and supports the effective preparation, development, and improvement of Alabama's teachers and instructional leaders to insure that through effective professional practice, all students graduate college- and/or career-ready.

LEARNING SUPPORT

The major responsibilities of the Office of Teaching and Learning - Learning Support, Federal Programs, are to administer all federally funded education programs and to provide technical assistance to local education agencies and schools.

The Office of Teaching and Learning - Learning Support, Prevention and Support Services, focuses its attention on assisting school systems and schools with alcohol and drug prevention, attendance, bullying prevention, character education and positive behavior supports, discipline, dropout prevention, graduation rate, guidance and counseling services, health services and school nursing, and school safety.

Through leadership and service, the vision of the Office of Teaching and Learning - Learning Support, Special Education Services, is to foster positive educational outcomes for all students with special needs.

STUDENT LEARNING

The Office of Teaching and Learning - Student Learning, Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) is a statewide K-12 initiative committed to supporting the development of high-quality instruction that will prepare all
students with the literacy skills needed to meet or exceed grade-level standards. The goal of the ARI is to significantly improve reading instruction and ultimately achieve 100% literacy among public school students.

The Office of Teaching and Learning - Student Learning, Alabama Science, Math, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) Section of the Alabama State Department of Education seeks to improve math and science teaching statewide. Its mission is to provide all students in Grades K-12 with the knowledge and skills needed for success in the workforce and/or postsecondary studies (college and career ready).

The Office Teaching and Learning - Student Learning, Instructional Services, is responsible for assisting schools with the framework/systems/supports that are need to provide effective instruction.

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The Office of Teaching and Learning - Student Learning, Student Assessment, is responsible for the coordination, development, and implementation of the state testing program. Its goal is to improve academic achievement for all Alabama students. This goal is accomplished by providing administrators, educators, parents, and the community with tools and information about student performance in the context of college- and career-readiness.

TEACHING AND LEADING

The Office of Teaching and Learning - Teaching and Leading, Educator Certification, is responsible for ensuring that academic requirements for certification approaches are met, background clearance requirements for professional and support staff are satisfied, and that all test requirements are met for issuance of certificates. This office also grants highly qualified teacher (HQT) status based on federal guidelines and provides information on acceptable professional development.

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY AND DATA

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Office of Technology and Data, Accountability, works with Alabama’s districts/schools and sections in the department to provide information regarding Alabama’s Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Accountability Model, Alabama’s ESEA Flexibility Waiver, Alabama’s PLAN 2020 Accountability Model (A-F Law), and information that assists districts in making effective decisions to best suit the needs of individual students.

E-RATE

The Office of Technology and Data, E-Rate, provides support, assistance, and consultation services to assist local school systems with a variety of educational technology needs, including the Schools and Libraries program, also known as the E-Rate program, and the Alabama K-12 Joint Purchasing (Information Technology) Program supporting local school/system technology infrastructures.

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

The mission of the Office of Technology and Data, Educational Technology, is to use technology as a tool to prepare today’s student to become a productive, contributing citizen of tomorrow. The office serves and supports LEAs as a contact in school system technology planning; implements the Alabama
Technology Plan for K-12 Education; leads the ACCESS Distance Learning program; and coordinates the Alabama Educational Technology Conference.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

In addition to many other responsibilities, the Office of Technology and Data, Information Systems, is responsible for all network security; data privacy; programming; technical production control; and application development operations within the Alabama State Department of Education. Primary responsibilities include network security, database management, software development, technical support, data management and analysis, functional analysis, and project management.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The Office of Technology and Data, Research & Development, is responsible for utilizing data to examine how current initiatives and educational practices advocated by the Alabama State Department of Education and/or local education agencies impact students' academic and social development. This section is also responsible for delivery of data and analytics necessary to ensure informed decision-making regarding future efforts.