I believe that in order for positive working relationships to develop, we must understand the stories of those with whom we work and lead. To begin this dialogue, I share my leadership story and I look forward to hearing your stories as well. If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader. This quote by John Quincy Adams summarizes my belief about leadership.

I believe leaders are born with these qualities that begin emerging at a very young age. My experiences as a student and product of Chicago Public Schools propelled me early in life to my calling as a public school educator. Although I successfully maneuvered the public school system, many students were not as fortunate and did not achieve their civil right to an excellent education. I watched students join gangs, become teenaged parents, and become high school dropouts as I rode the city bus through multiple gang territories to get to my high school, 45 blocks from my home. Although I was never approached to join a gang, my oldest brother shares stories about having to fight in the lunchroom of his public high school to stay out of gangs.

I passed over 10 high schools to arrive at the school I attended. At the time I didn't recognize the misfortune of having to ride such a distance on public transportation to get to a quality urban high school. I would frequently ask myself, “Why weren’t all high schools worthy of my every student? Why couldn’t I attend a school that was within walking distance of my home?” These questions and the saddening national educational statistics regarding low graduation and high dropout rates tell the fate of many American students in our public education systems.

Books such as Savage Inequalities and Our America illustrate the urgency for transforming our public school systems. I believe that basic humanity and the future of our country is dependent upon rich, positive school experiences for all children. I have embraced my calling to be an urban school educator where I have worked as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, director, Chief Equity and Engagement Officer, Deputy Superintendent and now the Deputy State Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer for the Alabama State Department of Education. Throughout my journey, I have worked tirelessly to build teams of visionary leaders who have been committed to transforming education. It is our moral imperative as educators to create dynamic and successful educational systems that benefit every student whom we have the privilege to serve.

As leaders in education, we must ensure that we are the advocates for the children who lack a caring adult in their lives. We must become the voices of equity. This is not always easy as it causes you to be scrutinized. Educators have a voice and we must use it to make a difference. I am a living example of how teacher voice and building positive relationships can impact students for a lifetime.

Upon completion of my Student Teaching Practicum, I had the unique experience of teaching at the elementary school that I had attended. Nothing was more inspiring than the look on my favorite teacher’s face when she learned that I was now teaching. This teacher, Mrs. Barbara Patronik, remains an integral part of my life to this day. She has reached out to me throughout my career. In December she wrote me a letter congratulating me and reminding me of the awesome responsibility of my role as the Deputy State Superintendent. She and my parents helped me to formulate my core beliefs and values Honor, Integrity, Respect, and Ensuring an Equitable Education. These have served me well as I worked in school districts across the United States.

My team at the Alabama State Department of Education are courageous leaders committed to supporting all school districts across the state. We have the skills, talent, and grit to make Alabama schools among the strongest in the nation, the jewel of the south. As we do this work each day, we will remember that schools which successfully teach all students, have strong leadership and a climate of expectation that all students will learn. As we lead others, let’s always reflect on the words of Ron Edmonds:

“We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to do that. Whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven’t so far.”

– Ron Edmonds

Barbara J. Cooper, Ph.D.
Alabama State Department
Deputy State Superintendent
Chief Academic Officer
The Office of Student Learning (OSL) exists to support districts and schools in improving the learning for all students. OSL is comprised of Assessment, Instructional Services, Alabama Reading Initiative, Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative, and Regional Support. We are committed to working together to provide a seamless system of service to districts. If you have instructional or support questions, please contact the section Coordinator or Shanthia Washington at or 334.353-1608. Professional development or technical assistance requests for instructional or support matters may be submitted using a support request form HERE.

**Alabama Accountability Act of 2015 Failing Schools List**

Recently, the ALSDE released a list of schools considered to be failing schools as determined by the Alabama Accountability Act (AAA) 2015. The list of schools was determined by identifying the bottom 6% of public Alabama schools for the 2015-16 school year based on the state's standardized assessments (ACT Aspire and Alabama Alternate Assessment) in reading and math. Students are tested in reading and math in grades 3-8 and 10 with the ACT Aspire Assessment and the Alabama Alternate Assessment. In accordance with the AAA law, a revised list is determined annually.

Schools identified as AAA schools will receive support from the ALSDE to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. ALSDE staff will work collaboratively with districts and schools to develop Goal Action Plans based on collected data. Support will be provided based on the identified areas in the plan. A virtual meeting has been planned to orientate districts and schools to this process. In addition, a face-to-face meeting is currently being arranged to meet with superintendents and their designated staff during the month of February. Someone should be contacting you soon if they have not already.

**OFFICE OF STUDENT LEARNING**

**Instructional Services, Robin Nelson**

The ALSDE will be accepting submissions for the Annual State Superintendent's Visual Arts Exhibit in January 2017. The art work, ranging from kindergarten to twelfth grade, will be on display in the Old Supreme Court Library of the Alabama State Capitol from February 3–24, 2017. Artwork from seventh grade to twelfth grade will be judged in two different categories and a best of show will be chosen.

The Alabama Chess in Schools Initiative will soon be open to LEAs interested in applying for this opportunity. This pilot program, in partnership with the Alabama Chess Federation, is in its third year and offers training, support, classroom materials for instruction, and online licensing to schools. This program helps schools fold chess into math and other curriculum and also enhances critical thinking and problem solving skills.

The Alabama Arts Education Initiative Grants (AAEI) will be announced in late January or early February 2017. Grant requests were received from all parts of the state. A combined total of $1.45 million dollars was requested. Thanks to the Alabama Legislature line item for support of arts education, the Alabama State Department will be able to grant approximately 75 percent of the request to support arts education.

Since the 2017-2018 Alabama Technology Education Course of Study will be developed beginning in March 2017, a resolution to appoint the Technology State Course of Study Committee will be discussed by the Alabama State Board of Education on January 12, 2017.

The 2017 Alabama Arts and World Languages Courses of Study received wonderful reviews from the public. The Arts and World Languages Committee and Task Force will address the comments at their January 2017 meeting. These new courses of study will be discussed by the Alabama State Board of Education in March and on the board agenda for approval in April 2017.

The final 2016-2017 CCRS Professional Learning sessions will be held February 7-10, 2017 in 17 locations across the state. District teams made up of school principals and central office staff will join together to engage in learning more about Alabama's Science, English Language Arts, and Math standards. We will continue to focus on ways to increase rigorous instruction and learning in K-12 classrooms. Visit the CCRS Web site at for information about the 2016-2017 CCRS Professional Learning sessions.

The Alabama textbook review process begins this month with nomination of committee members from LEA Superintendents, Deans of Education and Arts and Science, and the Governor’s office. An Invitation to Bid was extended on January 17, 2017, to all publishers (vendors) for the subject areas of Arts Education and World Languages. Textbooks (instructional materials) are typically adopted on a 6 year rotation cycle after the adoption of a course of study and prior to the designated implementation time of the course of study, allowing adequate time for local textbook adoption. The textbook committee will review textbooks (instructional materials) based upon the most recent revision of a course of study. The State Textbook process is complete with the final adoption by the Alabama State Board of Education scheduled for January 2018.
The 2017-2018 update to the Subject and Personnel Course Codes were made available to LEAs as of January 11, 2017. Electronic copies of the course lists and of the course descriptions may be found on the Alabama State Department of Education Web site. A separate Course Additions, Revisions, and Deletions document lists the changes made to the 2017-2018 course codes. Please reference this document prior to selecting courses for the upcoming school year to assure that retired courses are not being used. Please contact Instructional Services at (334) 353-1191 for more information.

The 2016-2017 Advanced Placement Fee Reduction worksheet is available on the Alabama State Department of Education Web site. Students qualifying for free- and reduced-priced lunches may receive a reduction for Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate examinations for the 2017 test administration. Please contact Instructional Services at (334) 353-1191 for more information.

The Alabama State Teachers Association (ASTA) and the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), in conjunction with the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) will host a Leaders Learning: Implementing Instructional Materials in Science workshop for education leaders in Alabama responsible for K-12 science education. National science education experts will help educators understand what 3-Dimensional learning looks like in the K-12 classrooms. The workshop will be held February 10, 2017 from 8:30 am – 3:30 pm at the Gordon Persons Building Auditorium, Montgomery. Cost is $110 and includes curriculum materials and a one-year membership to the Alabama Science Teachers Association (ASTA). For more information or to register, visit HERE.

The 3rd Grade Cursive Writing Act (Act#2016-352) was signed on May 11, 2016 by Governor Robert Bentley. This Act puts into statute that instruction in handwriting shall include cursive writing so that students are able to create readable documents through legible cursive handwriting by the end of the third grade. The Act also requires each local board of education to certify on an annual basis, beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, that the applicable schools in the school district are meeting the cursive writing requirement. Curriculum and proficiency in cursive writing will be defined by each district. In order to certify to the State Board of Education that the cursive writing requirement has been met, each local board will use the link below and complete the form including the names of the applicable schools in their district along with the respective proficiency percentages in cursive writing. This form will be submitted on an annual basis by the end of June of each year, beginning with June 2017.

ArcGIS Online U.S. School Competition 2017 for Middle and High School Geography and Science
The Alabama Geographic Alliance
Across the U.S., high school and middle school students are exploring their world and creating interesting map products with ArcGIS Online. ESRI now challenges students to create and share maps about something in their home states, working to be among the best in the school, state, and nation. The ArcGIS Online U.S. School Competition 2017 is open to high school (Gr.9-12) and middle school (Gr.4-8) students in the U.S. who can analyze, interpret, and present data via an ArcGIS Online presentation, web app, or story map. For more information please contact: Lisa Keys-Mathews, Ph. D., GISP, Coordinator, Alabama Geographic Alliance, Department of Geography, University of North Alabama (256) 765-4640.

Virtual Economics 4.5 and Stock Market Game: Math Behind the Market
Presented by the Alabama Council on Economic Education
This workshop is in cooperation with the Council for Economic Education, sponsored by The Robert R. Meyer Foundation, Wells Fargo, The Hill Crest Foundation, BBVA Compass, and the Mike & Gillian Goodrich Foundation. The workshop includes: free curriculum materials, $50 substitute reimbursement, no workshop registration fee, and lunch provided. All correlated to national and state standards. This workshop is ideal for Career Preparedness, Business, Career Technology, Family and Consumer Science, Economics, Social Studies, Math, and Gifted Program Teachers. Click for registration information.

Note: For Alabama College- and Career-Ready and STEM, the Stock Market Game is a problem based learning and real-world teaching tool that also helps educators implement STEM guidelines. Virtual Economics 4.5 training for each teacher includes a flash drive with over 70 economics and personal finance publications, 1400 lessons, and 50 Videos published by the Council for Economic Education. The curriculum is correlated to state and national standards. For additional information call (205) 726-4073, e-mail council@economicsouth.org or e-mail wandamcabee@economicsouth.org.

Each First Friday of the month, Library Media Specialists have the opportunity to participate in online professional development. The recorded sessions below are two of the most recent webinars- each with over 1,000 views each.

School libraries are designed to offer equity and availability to information and the creation of new knowledge. Makerspaces are an additional tool. Join Crystal Edgar and Brittany Howell from Enterprise City Schools as they share their elementary Makerspace experience. Also, view a great recording of Mallory Swinsick and Michelle Wilson sharing about their Makerspace at Helena High School.
OFFICE OF STUDENT LEARNING

Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI), Karen Porter

The Alabama Reading Initiative’s (ARI) regional staff continue to provide day-to-day support for reading specialists, teachers, and administrators in all Tier II schools across the state. Regional staff support Tier II reading specialists in deepening content knowledge of reading instruction, reading intervention, data analysis, and in supporting classroom teachers at the school level and in ARI Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

The ARI PLCs for reading specialists and principals in Tier II schools are designed to support the goal of increasing reading proficiency and student achievement by providing the knowledge and skills necessary for quality instruction. There are two remaining PLCs for 2016-17. The window for PLC #3 is January 23-27 and is February 20-24 for PLC #4. ARI Regional staff have communicated specific dates to school leaders and reading specialists for these last two sessions.

In the upcoming CCRS Quarterly Meeting #3 for district and school leaders, the ELA focus will be on examining the course of study standards for writing. Participants will look closely at the writing standards and then look for correlations among the ELA standards. Leaders will discuss how to increase writing instruction in every classroom, will delve deeper into the writing expectations for ACT Aspire, and consider support for teachers in self-evaluating classroom writing assignments and activities as evidence of rigorous instruction.

OFFICE OF STUDENT LEARNING

The AMSTI Science Update, Sandy Ledwell, Ed.D.

The AMSTI Science staff members at the ALSDE are busy in preparation for Summer Institute training that will begin, in some regions, the first week of June. In the K-8 grade band, specialists are adapting the training for 28 instructional units, and in the 9-12 grade band, staff members are working on labs for Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. In all grade bands, the materials delivered in the training are designed to deepen teacher content knowledge as well as provide grade appropriate lessons to be used with students in the classroom. In addition, brand new sessions on topics like formative assessment and student discourse are in the works.

Presently, AMSTI staff members are facilitating 36 online courses. These courses are designed to provide teachers who have changed grade levels an opportunity to learn content and instructional materials for their new grade level. Five additional online courses are being offered to preservice teachers to introduce them to the topic of writing in science.

Coming soon: In just a few short weeks, the third CCRS Professional Learning Meeting for district leadership teams will occur in each region. Participants will take a final look for this school year at the topic of rigor in science, specifically narrowing in on questioning and the scientific and engineering practices as well as how instructional leaders can have conversations with teachers around these topics.

OFFICE OF STUDENT LEARNING

The AMSTI Math Update, Tod Beers

Math items and tasks for Grades 4 and 8 are available HERE. Why would an administrator/teacher be interested in items and tasks that were developed for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)? Answer: These items and tasks also reflect course of study standards at these grades and domains tested on the ACT Aspire. Each task can be used diagnostically with students to assess what further learning needs to take place prior to the state’s testing window. More to come. Current plans are to expand to Grades 3 and 7 so similar items and tasks are collected for use in the next school year.

What conversations in mathematics will take place during the CCRS Quarterly meetings in February? Answer: The main topic of discussion will be about teachers posing purposeful questions and making connections between rigor and questioning. Questioning “look fors” and collecting evidence as to the type and pattern of questioning in the classroom, as well as how questions are used to assess and advance student learning, will equip administrators in determining how effective this strategy is being implemented. Dialogue with peers will also focus on ways to support teachers as they plan and apply purposeful questioning.
Staff from the Student Assessment section are involved in providing training and guidance for System Test Coordinators, Building Test Coordinators, and Test Administrators for all state assessments. The following trainings have been or will be conducted to address the following:

- **ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs** – Annual face-to-face training was conducted on January 11th for all System Test Coordinators. Additional training on the Test Administrator Manual for Test Administrators and the District and School Test Coordinator Manual for System Test Coordinators and Building Test Coordinators will be provided via webinar on January 18th and January 20th.

- **Alabama Alternate Assessment (AAA)** – Annual face-to-face training was conducted on January 11th for all System Test Coordinators. Training for test administration will be conducted January 27th - February 23rd to all Special Education Coordinators and System Test Coordinators. Sample test items for Grades 3-8, and 10 for Reading, Math, and Science have been posted to the Alabama State Department of Education Web site.

- **ACT Aspire** – Annual face-to-face training was conducted on January 11th for all System Test Coordinators. Representatives from ACT Aspire were on hand to provide additional support and respond to questions. Training specific to test administration will be conducted February 28th, March 2nd, 7th, and 8th.

- **ACT with Writing** – Annual face-to-face training was conducted on January 11th for all System Test Coordinators. Representatives from ACT were on hand to provide additional support and respond to questions. Training specific to test administration will be conducted February 28th, March 2nd, 7th, and 8th.

- **ACT WorkKeys** – Annual face-to-face training was conducted on January 11th for all System Test Coordinators.

- **National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)** – System Test Coordinators were updated on January 11th on the pre-assessment activities for selected schools. Communication is ongoing with these schools to ensure a smooth transition to assessment day.

Additionally, System Test Coordinators have been provided information for ACT Online Prep, test security procedures, and monitoring guidelines.

An additional day of training was provided for new System Test Coordinators on January 12, 2017. This training included an in-depth presentation of the Alabama Student Assessment Program.
OFFICE OF LEARNING SUPPORT
Special Education Services, Crystal Richardson

Special Education Services staff work daily with other sections at the ALSDE to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are included in discussions regarding Charter Schools, Virtual Schools, Certification of Teachers, access to general curriculum, etc.

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP), required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) met on January 18, 2017. Staff from Midfield City and Rutledge Middle School presented information on their work as part of our State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Public comments were taken from 1:00 – 2:00. The meeting concluded at 2:30. You may contact Special Education Services for more information at (334) 242-8114.

The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) will hold its Spring Conference February 27-28, 2017 at Ross Bridge in Hoover, Alabama. Novice Coordinators will meet on Wednesday, March 1, 2017. The presentations at the Spring CASE Conference concentrate on program information. This year, the following topics are on the agenda: SES Updates, Virtual Schools, Adapted P.E., ESY, Related Services, Evaluations in the area of Autism and Dyslexia, etc.

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) will meet on Wednesday, March 1, 2017, at Ross Bridge in Hoover, Alabama.

The Alabama Transition Conference XXVII will be held in Auburn, Alabama on March 6-7, 2017. Please SAVE THE DATE for the annual MEGA Conference scheduled for July 10-14, 2017, in Mobile, Alabama.

The ALSDE/SES has posted a Request for Proposal (RFP) seeking IEP Team meeting facilitators. Please stay tuned as we hope to have IEP Team facilitators to assist your staff in the near future.

The ALSDE is providing Public Notice of Destruction of Records, maintained by the ALSDE for Mediations, State Complaints and Due Process Hearing requests from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011. These records are scheduled for destruction on February 17, 2017.

OFFICE OF LEARNING SUPPORT
Federal Programs, Edmund Moore

As the population of English Learners (ELs) increases in Alabama schools, so do concerns about the needs of these students in K-12 classrooms. Although language issues are important to consider in all classrooms, issues of language acquisition are crucial for students who are new to schools in the United States. To meet this growing need, School Assistance Meetings for Understanding English Learners (SAMUEL) are sponsored by the Federal Programs Title III/EL workgroup and their State English as Second Language (ESL) Coaches. State ESL Coaches are master practitioners borrowed for short periods from LEAs around the state.

SAMUEL professional development trainings emphasize effective instructional practices for teaching ELs that go beyond “good teaching.” The training expands what educators know about regular classroom practices by specifically addressing the language demands of students who are developing skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in a new language. Administrators, EL teachers, content teachers, EL paraprofessionals, and central office personnel are invited to attend SAMUEL trainings.

In the fall of 2016, eleven SAMUEL training sessions were conducted at the following six locations: Tuscaloosa, Alabaster, Florence, Guntersville, Andalusia, and Opelika. One hundred and twelve out of 136 districts (83%) participated in these first SAMUEL sessions for the 2016-2017 school year. Out of 1196 participants, 402 attended the administrative session receiving updates and instructional practices on Family Engagement and EL Walk-Throughs. Five hundred and thirty attended the K-5 sessions, and 264 attended the 6-12 sessions receiving effective instructional practices for addressing the language demands when teaching science to ELs. Participants also received information on Family Engagement.

In February and March of 2017, another eleven SAMUEL training sessions will be conducted with a focus on supporting the academic and social needs of students new to U.S. schools called “newcomers.” Participants will be offered training on how to implement high-quality instruction strategies for language acquisition. The Federal Programs Title III/EL workgroup also conducts EL Regional Meetings to provide educational personnel updated information concerning effective instructional practices addressing ELs and their families.

Contact: Mr. Edmund Moore, Federal Programs Coordinator or Cyndi Hill Townley, Program Administrator; Michele Lee, ESL Education Specialist (334) 242-8199.
To help ensure that every child is taught by a well-prepared teacher, every school is led by a well-prepared and effective leader, and every school system is led by a well-prepared and visionary instructional leader, the Office of Teaching and Leading coordinates the efforts of the education community to ensure that prospective educators are prepared to begin and continue eligibility for employment in Alabama schools and school systems. Standards adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education (ALSBE) are the basis for reviewing educator preparation programs. A variety of certificate approaches are provided and efforts are made to issue and renew certificates in compliance with ALSBE standards. Assistance is provided to teachers and other educators who are seeking employment and to school systems in need of personnel. Assistance is facilitated for teachers seeking certification from the National Board for Professional Teacher Standards.

Office of Teaching and Leading

Dr. Jayne Meyer, Director

Office of Teaching and Leading

Educator Certification, Shavon Cummings

Online Renewal

Educator Certification is very excited that our On-Line Renewal (OLR) System will be opening soon! OLR is a way for an Authorized User to renew certificates for employed educators in their school system. During OLR 2016, approximately 7500 Professional Educator Certificates and 998 Professional Leadership Certificates were renewed through this process. Thank you for your help in making OLR 2016 a success!

For an Authorized User to be able to access OLR, that person must have the role in the Education Directory of “On-Line Renewal.” In anticipation of the opening of OLR 2017, there are a few things that Authorized Users may want to begin doing now:

• Gathering the Declaration of Citizenship or National Status (Supplement IMG) forms for any teachers and/or administrators whose certificates will be expiring on June 30, 2017. Supplement IMG may be found HERE (click Miscellaneous Documents Citizenship or National Status).
• Determining the method that the teachers and administrators will be using to continue their certificates. It is not too early to begin gathering documentation of experience and/or professional development for those holding educator certificates and PLUs for those holding leadership certificates. Educators who are using college coursework will need to request an official transcript. Continuation requirements may be found HERE.
• Sending name change information to your assigned Certification Specialist.
• Asking your Certification Specialist any questions that you may have concerning OLR. We will provide training for new Authorized Users, once OLR is opened.

You will receive correspondence from our Section when OLR 2017 is open.

Compensation for Earned Advanced Degrees

As you know, Mr. Sentance’s memorandum of October 11, 2016, addressed the provision of Act #2016-198 regarding compensation for an earned advanced degree for those individuals who earned initial graduate credit toward an advanced degree prior to July 1, 2017. A memorandum advising of additional provisions of the Act for those individuals who earn initial graduate credit toward an advanced degree on or after July 1, 2017, is in the process of being finalized and should be forwarded to you soon. Questions or comments about the Act may be submitted to the Department.
Alabama teachers who hold certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and who are employed in Alabama public schools are entitled to receive an annual stipend of $5,000. At the beginning of each school year, State Department of Education staff verify the location of each NBPTS-certified teacher and then disburse stipend funds to the employing local school system. The funds are usually transmitted in November. Teachers who have questions about receipt of their NBPTS stipends should contact the chief school financial officer for their school system.

During Fiscal Year 2017, limited funds will be available through Alabama’s Regional Inservice Centers (RIC) to assist Alabama teachers who wish to earn certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Interested teachers should contact their RIC director immediately.
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.

• New Teacher Mentoring – There are currently 2,035 new teachers & mentors for this school year. Logan Searcy has conducted four trainings earlier in the year. We are collecting data from local districts regarding meeting logs, agendas, and administering surveys to new teachers that will be shared with Dr. Meyer as feedback for the 27 colleges/universities preparing teachers.

• National Blue Ribbon Schools – We will be submitting the five finalists (Alabama gets five National Blue Ribbon “spots”) to the United States Department of Education that represent our selections for this year’s National Blue Ribbon Schools. Telena Madison has been working diligently with Information Services to gather all the data necessary.

• Alabama Council for Leadership Development (ACLD) – The ACLD approves professional studies submitted by various educational professional learning providers so that Professional Learning Units (PLUs) may be awarded to anyone with an Alabama instructional leadership certification. To date, the ACLD has approved over 500 professional study applications as ACLD approved or as some call them “state-approved” professional studies. The ACLD consists of a committee of practitioners from K-12 and a representative from higher education. The next meeting of the ACLD is January 24th. Telena Madison coordinates the meetings, agendas, online submissions, and notifications issued by the ACLD.

• Principal Candidate Semester Residency Grant ($500,000 yearly allocation from legislators to fund semester-long paid residencies for teachers completing an instructional leadership program). The “residency” is a collaborative exercise between the employing school system of the teacher, the university issuing the instructional leadership degree, and the candidate/teacher. Each resident must apply for the experience and the applications are rated by external experts using a rubric. We currently have 12 residents representing the University of Alabama, Jacksonville State University, the University of South Alabama, the University of West Alabama, and the University of Montevallo. Telena Madison oversees the administrator of this process and review of the candidates during their residency.

• EDUCATE/LEAD Alabama is our teacher/leader professional learning platform. We have mid-year data from both platforms now available on the EDUCATE/LEAD Alabama portion of our website. These mid-year reports represent the usage of these programs to this point in the school year. Chris McDuffie and Dr. Alison Grizzle have been working with the Alabama Supercomputer Authority to upgrade the format and design of our platforms to match the new Educator Effectiveness process (Teaching Effectiveness and Leadership Effectiveness). This will provide a new user-friendly interface for the 46,000 teachers and 3,500 leaders that use this site. Chris McDuffie has primary responsibility for the maintenance, operation, and monitoring of these online systems.

• Educator Effectiveness developments: Dr. Alison Grizzle has been leading the team of Dr. Kisha Tolbert-Simmons, Raphaella Archie, and Stephanie Dillard-McClain working directly with LEAs to develop and implement a system-wide plan for teacher/leader professional growth and learning. This team of four has led over 65 districts through the creation of an individualized teacher evaluation process that aligns to each district’s individual goals. In the Educator Effectiveness process, districts have worked to customize observation processes that align to their strategic plans, professional learning, Alabama Quality Teaching Standards, and state content standards. Districts have developed plans that create a shared understanding between teachers and administrators around understanding of overall effectiveness in teaching practice including areas of classroom teaching, teacher collaboration, teacher engagement, overall professionalism, and student learning.