

Alabama Education News

THE ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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ACT Aspire Information on Upcoming Assessment

As public education in Alabama is reformed with the implementation of higher standards, a new brand of student assessment will accompany as Alabama incorporates ACT Aspire.

In 2013, the State Board of Education [voted](#) to incorporate the [ACT Aspire](#) assessment into the plan for testing in Grades 3-8 after a year and a half of review by an appointed Assessment and Accountability Task Force.

ACT Aspire assesses content areas of reading and math in Grades 3-8. When aligned with other assessments such as [EXPLORE](#) (8th grade), [PLAN](#) (10th grade), [ACT](#) (11th grade), and [WorkKeys](#) (12th grade), ACT Aspire data will help to show a clear line of growth and trajectory towards the goal of college and career readiness after graduation.



Now, with the full suite of ACT assessments in place from elementary through the 12th grade, educators and administrators across the state have the tools necessary to chart a path for individual student improvement.

State Superintendent of Education Dr. Tommy Bice said the initial purpose for delving into the rich data that ACT Aspire and the related assessments provides is for one purpose only – to inform instruction. He said benchmarks can be established at a later date as ACT Aspire has the potential to totally redefine what assessment is and how is it used to benefit students' academic success.

ACT Aspire:

- Provides longitudinal assessment data for student growth modeling from elementary grades to high school.
- Is empirically linked to the College Readiness Benchmark scores used on the ACT so students can be monitored to determine if they are on track for college and career readiness.
- Is aligned to Alabama College and Career Ready Standards.
- Uses multiple question types, including technology-enhanced questions, to better assess student knowledge, improve test experiences, and provide more meaningful insights.
- Allows the ability to administer via computer or a pencil-and-paper.

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The Alabama College and Career Ready Standards of the Week!



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS—GRADE 11

WRITING/LANGUAGE

USE TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING THE INTERNET, TO PRODUCE, PUBLISH, AND UPDATE INDIVIDUAL OR SHARED WRITING PRODUCTS IN RESPONSE TO ON-GOING FEEDBACK, INCLUDING NEW ARGUMENTS OR INFORMATION. (W.11.2.4)

DEMONSTRATE COMMAND OF THE CONVENTIONS OF STANDARD ENGLISH CAPITALIZATION, PUNCTUATION, AND SPELLING WHEN WRITING. (L.11.3.6)

Conduct research and create a piece of writing for publication. Your student is working on a cross-curricular project among her English/language arts, social studies, and Career Technical Education Hospitality and Tourism classes. The assignment is to create and publish a brochure highlighting an American city's historical significance and its current appeal to tourists. Students are to use technology to research the city's past and present and create an advertisement in the form of a travel brochure. Students will work with peer editors to make revisions and prepare for publication. The brochures will be displayed in the travel section of the school library.

DO YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO THIS?

IF YOUR ANSWER IS YES, GET INVOLVED IN YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL AND SUPPORT ALABAMA'S COLLEGE- AND CAREER-READY STANDARDS SO ALL CHILDREN GRADUATE PREPARED FOR COLLEGE, WORK, AND ADULTHOOD IN THE 21ST CENTURY!

Standard of the Week

The Alabama College and Career Ready Standards of the Week are examples of the standards in use in our schools today. These are produced and promoted to show parents and community members how the standards relate to real life learning. Feel free to promote on your website, newsletter, and social media sites! [Here's the link](#) to all ACCRS images.

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- Follows the strict Data Use policy that governs all of the ACT assessments Alabama has adopted. Protecting student confidentiality will continue to be an ALSDE priority.

With the **ACT Aspire** platform, teachers and parents can work together to:

- Get detailed information about student progress toward specific learning standards
- Better tailor instruction and resources to help students make greater progress
- Obtain information about student readiness at an earlier grade
- Encourage students to work even harder toward attaining excellence and success in college and career readiness.

By moving to ACT Aspire, testing time is reduced from five days to four hours or less. Beginning April 28, 2014, over 370,000 students in grades 3-8 will be tested in Reading and Math. At no cost, districts also have the option to give Science, English, and Writing tests.

- The goal of the new assessment is for teachers and parents to *Know Where Your Kids Are*.
- ACT Aspire provides more information on student performance than ever before, and at a much earlier grade.
- The more information a teacher has the easier it is to provide the appropriate instruction.
- ACT Aspire can help to predict if students are on a path to be college and career ready.

One of the most important features of the new assessment is the specific kind of information that will be provided by the reports. The goal of the reports is to tell a story about the student, to show the student's individual progress, and to make the information easy to understand. Teachers, parents and students will meet to review reports and create informed instructional decisions.

The reports will answer:

- How did I/we do?
- What does it mean?
- What do we do next?

With pictures and graphs instead of just numbers, the reports are easy to use and understand for teachers, parents and students. The reports will help to show the progress of students – what they have mastered and what they work to achieve mastery in. There are many online resources for parents and students so they may familiarize themselves with the assessment.

To see [sample test questions](#) and learn more, [click here](#).

For educators, we will continue to offer a series of professional development trainings that have occurred around the state. [Visit the comprehensive website](#) where you will find a video webinar for teachers and parents to learn more about the assessment. The website also includes information on how best to prepare students, and, more importantly, how to use the assessment results to focus on specific areas of improvement.

For the schools that choose to administer the test on the computer, there are enhanced questions that show experiments and interactive type questions. This state-of-the-art, digitally-delivered system has the flexibility to allow schools to use a pencil and paper alternative, if that meets local needs. Many schools and systems are choosing to use the digital platform. ACT and ALSDE have visited many school systems to discuss any technical issues they may encounter. ALSDE offers technical support for all districts as well.

Teachers use the tools and reports for instruction at a classroom level, and parents are given reports to be informed of their child's progress. This is a new measurement for students. Our reading and math standards have become more challenging. Our expectations for students have become higher. First year scores may decline, stay the same, or improve.

We are excited about this move to a more relevant assessment for Alabama students, with the goals of Plan 2020 in mind. Parents and students deserve to understand where they stand, and teachers need the tools to help students achieve success as they prepare for college and careers.

For more information, [click](#) or contact [Communications](#) at 334-242-9950.



2014-2015 Teacher Of The Year Nominees

152 District Nominees for Alabama's 2014-2015 Teacher of the Year are listed below. Two educators in this list will be **Alabama's 2014-2015 Teacher of the Year** and **Alternate State Teacher of the Year!**

Name	District	System	School	Name	District	System	School
Katie M. Nettles	1	Baldwin County	Gulf Shores Elementary	Rebecca B. Soumeillan	5	Monroe County	Monroeville Elementary
Catherine G. Powell	1	Andalusia City	Andalusia Elementary	Regina Booth Catrett	5	Pike County	Pike County High
Donald Rucker	1	Butler County	Greenville Elementary	Rachel DeRamus Dudley	5	Montgomery County	Booker T. Washington Magnet High
DeAnna Stevens	1	Mobile County	Dawes Intermediate	Shelby Howe	5	Autauga County	Prattville High
Joy Crisler	1	Satsuma City	Satsuma High	David A. Lambert	5	Monroe County	J.F. Shields High
Derrick T. Hester	1	Saraland City	Saraland High	Clara Kennedy-McMillian	5	Clarke County	Wilson Hall Middle
Amanda Ballard Jones	1	Butler County	McKenzie High	Lorie Moorer	5	Washington County	Milrly High School
Susanne Mahone	1	Baldwin County	Daphne High	Robin M. Maroney	5	Thomasville City	Thomasville High
Julian R. Stewart	1	Mobile County	Alma Bryant High	Christina Wadsworth Bishop	6	Decatur City	Frances Nungester Elementary
Barbara A. Whately	1	Escambia County	Escambia County High	Laurie Brasher	6	Pell City	Williams Intermediate
Cindy Blount	2	Dothan City	Grandview Elementary	Margaret Leonard Cavannah	6	Albertville City	Big Spring Lake Kindergarten
Jessica Boutwell	2	Geneva County	Samson Elementary	Pamela C. Donahue	6	Arab City Schools	Arab Junior High
Colethea Davis	2	Russell County	Oliver Elementary	Ginger Mathews Freeman	6	St. Clair County	Moody Middle
Dana Ford	2	Tallapoosa County	Horseshoe Bend School	Julie Graves	6	Cherokee County	Centre Middle
Kelly Jo Hollingsworth	2	Auburn City	Cary Woods Elementary	Ronda Harris	6	Cullman County	Parkside School
Robin Horn	2	Opelika City	West Forest Intermediate	Marty Preston Hatley	6	Boaz City	Boaz Intermediate
Christy Brock-Johnson	2	Chambers County	Bob Harding Shawmut Elementary	Deborah Hill	6	Blount County	Locust Fork Elementary
Melanie H. Johnson	2	Phenix City	Lakewood Primary	Brian K. McRae	6	Anniston City	Tenth Street Elementary
Lori L. Lucien	2	Ozark City	Harry N. Lixon Elementary	Maureen Matson	6	Hartselle City	Barley Bridge Elementary
Christina Keel	2	Coffee County	Enterprise Early Education Center	Anita Moore	6	Cullman City	Cullman City Primary
Adrienne A. Maddox	2	Houston County	Rehobeth Elementary	Cindy Pair	6	Calhoun County	Pleasant Valley Elementary
Kamika Emill Morgan	2	Lee County	East Smiths Station Elementary	Leatha "Ann" Palmer	6	Jacksonville City	Kitty Stone Elementary
Catherine Watson	2	Coffee County	Dauphin Junior High	Lynn Thomas	6	Piedmont City	Piedmont Middle
Laurel Motley	2	Eufaula City	Eufaula Elementary	Tracie Turrentine	6	Morgan County	Eva School
Emily S. Nesiba	2	Henry County	Headland Elementary	Denise L. Woods	6	Guntersville City	Guntersville Elementary
Elizabeth Cook Antoine	2	Auburn City	Auburn High	Brandi Ashby	6	Morgan County	West Morgan High
Carolyn Doss	2	Chambers County	Valley High	Jennifer Butler Calahan	6	Cullman City	Cullman High
James E. Grimes Jr.	2	Elba City	Elba High	Debbie Cole	6	Boaz City	Boaz High
Lee Ann Heiser	2	Russell County	Russell County Middle	Tasha Flanigan	6	Cullman County	Cullman Area Career Center
Wendy Owen Mentz	2	Geneva County	Samson High	Christopher P. Holder	6	Anniston City	Anniston Middle
April Medlen	2	Ozark City	Carroll High	Jackie Kelley	6	Calhoun County	Wellborn High
Jessica B. O'Neal	2	Lee County	Beulah High	Lesley W. Ray	6	Cherokee County	Sand Rock School
Christopher D. Payne	2	Dothan City	Dothan High	Wanda K. Shipp	6	Arab City	Arab High
John A. Savage	2	Eufaula City	Eufaula High	LeShell Smith	6	Guntersville City	Guntersville High
Revonda L. Sutton	2	Phenix City	South Girard School	Holly Sutherland	6	St. Clair County	St. Clair County High
Justin E. Swasey	2	Henry County	Headland Middle	Seth Jamison Taylor	6	Jacksonville City	Jacksonville High
Tonya Simmons	2	Alexander City	Alexander City Middle	Natasha Borden Tidmore	6	Albertville City	Albertville Middle
Claudette W. Tennant	2	Opelika City	Opelika High	Heather Tucker	6	Decatur City	Austin High
Ellen Anson	3	Hoover City	Hoover City	Brad Waguespack	6	Pell City	Pell City High
Scott Byrne	3	Shelby County	Wilsonville Elementary	Steven Jerome Ward	6	Hartselle City	Hartselle High
Yolanda Clemons	3	Sylacauga City	Pincrest Elementary	Mitsi Weems	6	Blount County	Cleveland High
Jana Hadley	3	Talladega City	Houston Elementary	Tyra Beaird	7	Jasper City	T.R. Simmons Elementary
Trisha Kam	3	Chilton County	Clanton Intermediate	Krista Bender	7	Vestavia Hills City	Vestavia Hills Elementary
Kathy Matthews	3	Alabaster City	Meadow View Elementary	Ann Marie Corgill	7	Mountain Brook City	Cherokee Bend Elementary
Taylor Ross	3	Gresham County	Gresham Elementary	JoAnne Draper	7	Lawrence County	Moulton Elementary
Kristy Ray Shaw	3	Elmore County	Wetumpka Elementary	Jennifer Sharp Herrmann	7	Muscle Shoals City	Howell Graves Preschool
Christie L. Taylor	3	Talladega County	Lincoln Elementary	Brandy McKay Unger	7	Fayette County	Fayette Elementary
Amelia Barton	3	Elmore County	Elmore County High	Kimberly Holder Williams	7	Florence City	Forest Hills School
Gay Y. Coley	3	Sylacauga City	Nichols-Lawson Middle	Frances S. Bulter	7	Fayette County	Fayette County High
Meredith DeFore	3	Vestavia Hills City	Pizitz Middle	Brea Colagross	7	Sheffield City	Sheffield Junior High
Jodie Ferguson	3	Shelby County	Oak Mountain Middle	Carrie Bosworth Jones	7	Trussville City	Hewitt Trussville High
Katie Mantel	3	Alabaster City	Thompson High	Suzanne Lindley	7	Florence City	Florence Freshman Center
Martha E. Parker	3	Homewood City	Homewood High	Holly Martin	7	Mountain Brook City	Mountain Brook High
Lori A. Reed	3	Talladega County	Childersburg High	Lisa Mellot	7	Jasper City	Maddox Middle
Michael Tatum	3	Talladega City	Talladega High	Kimberly M. Mitchell	7	Jefferson County	Shades Valley High
Craig R. Thompson	3	Hoover City	Spain Park High	Adam Rutledge	7	Sheffield City	L.E. Wilson Elementary
Lisa M. Burgess	4	Tuscaloosa County	Westwood Elementary	Kim Whitman Sartin	7	Haleyville City	Haleyville Elementary
Lucy J. Crim	4	Bibb County	West Blocton Elementary	Casey Tate	7	Lawrence County	East Lawrence High
Alicia Berry Jenné	4	Tuscaloosa County	Rock Quarry Elementary	Meletha Walker	7	Franklin County	Tharptown High
Antwarnikke Richardson-Lewis	4	Bessemer City	Charles F. Hard Elementary	Amy Willingham	7	Muscle Shoals City	Muscle Shoals Center for Technology
Stephanie Hardy Parker	4	Birmingham City	Glen Iris Elementary	Joan N. Comer	8	Madison City	Columbia Elementary
Jennifer Roby	4	Tarrant City	Tarrant Elementary	Emily Ford	8	Gadsden City	Ray Thompson Elementary
Kimberly M. Hill-Sample	4	Hale County	Greensboro Elementary	Shane Leopard	8	Athens City	Brookhill Elementary
Faith Whitlock	4	Homewood City	Hall-Kent Elementary	Holly Jones Moore	8	Limestone County	Blue Springs Elementary
John Mark Edwards	4	Birmingham City	John Herbert Phillips Academy	Kathy Patty	8	Jackson County	Bridgeport Elementary
Laren Hammonds	4	Tuscaloosa City	Rock Quarry Middle	Dorothy Strong	8	Madison County	Madison Cross Roads
Nefertiti Rutledge-LeBeaux	4	Bessemer City	Bessemer City High	Missy Walker	8	Huntsville City	Huntsville Middle
Glenn Ray Jr.	4	Hale County Schools	Hale County High	Tancie West	8	Etowah County	John S. Jones Elementary
Chasidy White	4	Tuscaloosa County	Brookwood Middle	Keith Anderson	8	Madison City	James Clemens High
Kim Garris	5	Washington County	Leroy High	Colonel Eli Ballard	8	Athens City	Athens High
Rochelle Dubelt McKenney	5	Pike County	Banks School, Primary Campus	Amy Bishop	8	Huntsville City	Huntsville High
Denise Nelson	5	Montgomery County	Wilson Elementary	Kenny Clevenger	8	Etowah County	Southside High
Sanique H. Rock	5	Macon County	Notasulga High	Donny "Matt" Dean	8	Madison County	Buckhorn High
Ursula B. Rozier	5	Clarke County	Jackson Intermediate	Carol Ross McCord	8	Gadsden City	Gadsden City High
Annette Scott	5	Perry County	Albert Turner Sr. Elementary	Michael Cavnar	8	Limestone County	East Limestone High
Marie Vickers Schmidt	5	Thomasville City	Thomasville Elementary	Jeremy T. Raper	8	Madison City	Bob Jones High

“TWIRLing” takes a new twist in Thomasville City Schools by: Carolyn Drinkard

Tried and tested strategies offer pathway to teach both content and literacy standards in all content areas

“TWIRLing” is not a trending dance craze but a newly developed instructional design that has swirled into the secondary classrooms in the Thomasville City School District. The term “TWIRL” is not new to educators familiar with the Alabama Reading Initiative. So what’s the new “TWIRL” in Thomasville? It’s reaching into some tried and tested methodologies for ways to inform current curricular demands. Middle and high school teachers develop content-specific lessons incorporating Makes Sense Strategies (MSS) and Strategic Teaching Strategies that engage students through daily TWIRLing (Talking, Writing, Investigating, Reading and Listening) activities.

Why the new TWIRL? Alabama’s College- and Career-Ready Standards (CCRS) have changed the way teachers prepare for and deliver literacy and math instruction. Also, the new standards include reading anchor standards that must be taught in all content areas. These reading anchor standards address the three key shifts in literacy that provide learning equity by giving all students access to complex text and teaching them skills to comprehend unfamiliar complex text beyond high school:

- 1. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction and informational texts.**
- 2. Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.**
- 3. Providing regular practice with complex text and its academic language in response.**

“These shifts provide skills by which students learn content,” explained Dr. Christopher Blair, former Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology for Thomasville City Schools. “In turn, our middle and high school teachers recognized that they needed a more thorough understanding of the reading anchor standards. They also wanted additional training in the skills necessary to make the instructional shifts that the

standards require. Each teacher understood that the standards are skills the student learns and applies, but the shifts are classroom pedagogical changes that the teacher has to make. Our teachers quickly asked for more training to learn how to make the key literacy shifts systemic and automatic during instructional time.”

With this in mind, Dr. Blair and Mrs.

Nicole Knight, Thomasville City Schools Reading Coach, created the new instructional design for teachers in Grades 5-12. The design is all about reviving best practices for increasing student engagement and implementing literacy across all content areas. The new TWIRL gives teachers targeted, in-depth, job-embedded training while providing many more strategies to engage students, increase rigor, and meet Alabama’s

College- and Career-Ready Standards for English Language Arts.

TWIRL training is divided into four stages: Strategy Training, Shared Lesson Planning, Shared Teaching, and Classroom Implementation.

Strategy Training

All teachers are provided with Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) reading strategy training through a PD session on strategic teaching and MSS, taught by Dr. Blair and Mrs. Knight. Teachers learn that when they create lesson plans that have students engaged in talking, writing, investigating, reading and listening daily, many of the CCRS literacy standards are met while they are also addressing the content-area standards. This phase of training gives teachers the opportunity to observe a

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Dr. Christopher Blair, former Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology for Thomasville City Schools and Mrs. Nicole Reid, Reading Specialist, designed the new TWIRL program for Thomasville City Schools.

“TWIRLing” takes a new twist in Thomasville City Schools

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recorded high-quality lesson and then analyze how the standards are being met through teacher-facilitated instruction. Teachers are also given the opportunity to see strategic-based lessons in action and



Regional Alabama Reading Initiative Coach, Phillip Marino, works with Livia Coleman on strategies to be used to incorporate literacy standards into her Career Tech curriculum.

learn how to use strategies in their own classrooms. In addition to ARI strategies, the training also contains professional development in MSS and access to the Makes Sense Strategies Toolkit. The MSS toolkit is a collection of high-yielding graphic organizers that were created by Dr. Edwin Ellis of The University of Alabama. Organized by content and purpose, the colorful Makes Sense Graphic Organizers are formatted for use on interactive whiteboards. These graphic organizers help to get students engaged through the visual organization of the material being taught; consequently, students TWIRL. The graphic organizers also provide students with a strategy to help them think more deeply about the content being taught. [Click HERE](#) for more.

Shared Planning

When the TWIRL training first began, teachers from each department were trained in TWIRL and selected to plan with regional and local Alabama Reading

Initiative Reading coaches. After training, implementation, practice, and feedback, these teachers became the “experts,” ready to plan with other teachers in their department. Once each teacher has completed the strategy training, he/she then begins to plan with another teacher who is an “expert” in TWIRL to plan and co-teach a content-area specific CCRS lesson, using both the strategic instruction strategies and MSS that they have learned. During the lesson-planning stage, teachers use essential planning questions and the EQuip (Tri-State) Rubric to guide effectiveness. For more information on CCRS lesson planning using essential questions and rubrics, [click HERE](#).

Shared Teaching

Once teachers have prepared their lessons, they choose a date to teach a lesson with the support of their “expert” teacher. Teachers are then given the opportunity to reflect upon their lessons and make revisions, if necessary, before using that lesson in their classrooms. The “expert” teacher provides feedback by spotlighting positive aspects of the lesson and giving constructive criticism for improvement. This support and encouragement are crucial to helping teachers become more comfortable and skilled in using new techniques. Some teachers may need more work with the “expert” to gain the confidence and experience needed for classroom implementation. Others are able to move on to the next phase.

Classroom Implementation

Teachers continue to plan the same way, implementing TWIRL into their classrooms daily. Administrators observe these classrooms for evidence of TWIRL. Once administrators believe the teacher is confident, they can assign that teacher to train another department member. Thus, a new “expert” begins to help co-workers until all teachers have gone through the training.

The new program has produced some very positive results for both teachers and students. “I think the goal of most teachers is to plan fun, engaging lessons,” explained Stephanie Nobles, an 8th grade history teacher at Thomasville Middle School. “When I hear students ask, ‘Are we TWIRLing again today?’ or say, ‘Yea, we’re TWIRLing again today,’ I know I have reached that goal.”

Teachers see more student engagement and enthusiasm emerging from this focus. “TWIRL forces students to be involved in their own learning, and not just be spectators watching a show,” added Katherine Pitts, a Thomasville High School Math teacher.

“The excitement of observing teachers as facilitators of learning and students engaged in a productive struggle centered on complex text and rigorous content and literacy standards makes the entire TWIRL process worthwhile,” stated Dr. Blair.

Teachers at Thomasville City Schools are currently in the process of completing the third round of TWIRL training. For more information on this program, call 334-636-4499.

TWIRL forces students to be involved in their own learning, and not just spectators watching a show.

2014 ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign

The main goal of **Plan 2020** is for all students to leave high school prepared for college and career. ACT assessments help to show the trajectory of a student's learning and can be used for instructional guidance and customization of teaching.

For the second year, ACT has launched a College and Career Readiness Campaign to celebrate achievement and create awareness around the goal of college and career readiness for all.

This year, ALSDE has submitted state nominees for all four categories:

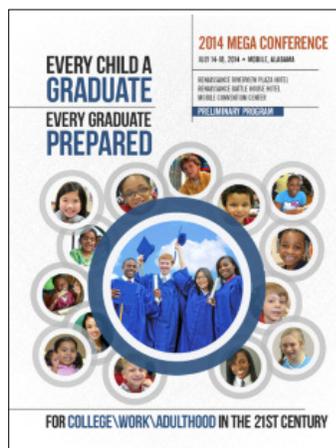
- Student Readiness Award – Jared Crawford, Section High School, Jackson County Schools
- College and Career Transition Award – Spain Park High School, Hoover City Schools
- Career Preparedness Award – Shelton State Community College
- Workplace Success Award – Rheem Manufacturing, Inc.



ALSDE has submitted the nominations to ACT and they will soon choose a national winner from all states' submissions for each category. On April 9, Nominees will be honored with a luncheon before, and a resolution at, the Alabama State Board of Education meeting.

Upcoming Summer Conferences

CLICK BELOW for a preliminary program of two upcoming conferences!



2014 Legislative Session Tracking

The 2014 Legislative Session is wrapping up, but many bills and budgets have yet to be completed. [View all bills related to Education.](#)

Advanc-Ed Culture and Climate Survey – Available Now!

As part of the **Alabama State Department of Education's Plan 2020** and our continuing efforts to provide useful tools to schools and systems, we are pleased to announce the immediate availability of two new surveys aimed at gauging the health of your schools' culture and climate.

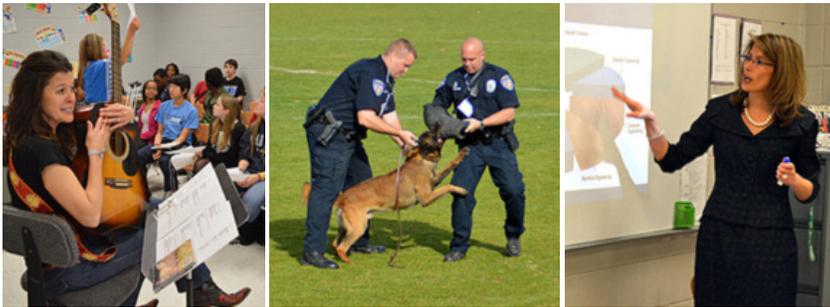
The Culture and Climate surveys were designed as part of the ALSDE's mission to support LEAs in their data based decision making and policy formulation. The Culture and Climate Surveys are not mandatory. These surveys are provided at no cost to participating LEAs and or schools.

Both survey instruments, a student survey and a teacher/faculty survey, are accessible on the AdvancEd platform and can be administered in the same manner as other surveys found on that site.

ALSDE invites teachers and students statewide to complete the applicable surveys. Data gleaned from their administration should help all of us develop a more holistic assessment of the strengths and challenges that we face in our schools.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the School Culture and Climate surveys, please contact Patience Oranika at poranika@alsde.edu or Logan Searcy at lsearcy@alsde.edu or (334) 242-9742.

Madison City's Liberty Middle School Has Annual Career Day



Liberty Middle School students in Madison got a hands-on introduction to the job Friday, March 21 at Liberty's annual Career Day.

The schoolwide event featured dozens of speakers representing a wide variety of career fields who shared insights on their work and the education and training needed to get that job.

Students pre-selected three career orientations and were assigned to breakout sessions with that presenter. Professions ran the gamut: pharmaceutical, K-9 handler, NASA archivist/historian, meteorologist, military, radiation therapist, restaurant manager, construction/sheet metal working, orthodontist, veterinarian, soil researcher, police/fire, attorney, rocket scientist, athletic trainer – even a songwriter/performer.

Teachers throughout the school and school parents helped line up many of the speakers. The Career Day event is a way for middle school students to begin thinking about various career options to help guide their education decisions in high school.

The photos above show local singer-songwriter Christina Lynn, Madison K-9 officers J. Scroggin and P. Hamilton with K-9 "Rico," and Lockheed Martin employee Jennifer Deang talking about radar security.

UAB Announces Fifth Statewide High School Programming Contest

On May 17, 2014, the UAB Computer & Information Science Department will host its fifth state-wide programming contest for high school students. Dr. Alan Sprague, Professor of CIS invites teachers to encourage their talented students in all high schools throughout the state to participate in this competition. In the contest, students will be asked to demonstrate their programming skills and problem solving abilities by attempting to solve several programming problems within a three-hour period.

Awards and recognition will be given in both individual and team categories. All participants will receive a participation certificate.

For more information contact [Dr. Alan Sprague](#), Professor, CIS.

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