



page 2



page 3



page 4



page 5

January 2013 · Issue I

ALABAMA EDUCATION NEWS

The electronic newsletter of the
Alabama State Department of Education

1854

From the Superintendent

Happy New Year and welcome back to the most rewarding profession in the world – teaching! It is at this time of year when many of you will thoughtfully craft a set of resolutions to guide your personal and professional lives for the coming year ... your "to do" list for the year. I too have always prepared this list of resolutions but this year I am approaching this annual process quite differently by crafting my "stop doing" list so I can focus on those things that are the most important. So what, you may ask, has this got to do with you?



As you are well aware we have been going through major changes in public education in Alabama all based on preparing our students for life beyond high school by equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to be college- and career-ready. We have asked you to focus

on a list of absolutes that regardless of the changes occurring around you are proven practices of effective teaching and learning and will yield positive results for your students no matter what "test" they are asked to take.

To ensure the attainment of that goal we have shifted our focus here at the department to one of a partner with local school systems in order to craft a customized and strategic plan of support to assist each of you in meeting your goals, and we are already seeing positive outcomes from this new working relationship.

Far too often when major changes are made we rarely stop to assess what we need to stop doing so we can focus on the main thing. In each and every presentation I have made over the past year to my fellow educators I have closed with a request to let me know of anything the ALSDE is requiring of you that adds no value to your efforts to improve student learning. Surprisingly, I have received very few responses, but I continue to

hear comments to the contrary. So here's your chance.

Between now and February 1, 2013, I am asking you to share with me those things that you consider a requirement from the ALSDE that adds no value to your work, and I commit to address each and every submission to you personally and in a broader sense where those concerns have direct impact on our entire public school system. So that I can personalize my responses, please e-mail me at tbice@alsde.edu and include your name and your school. I look forward to hearing from you!

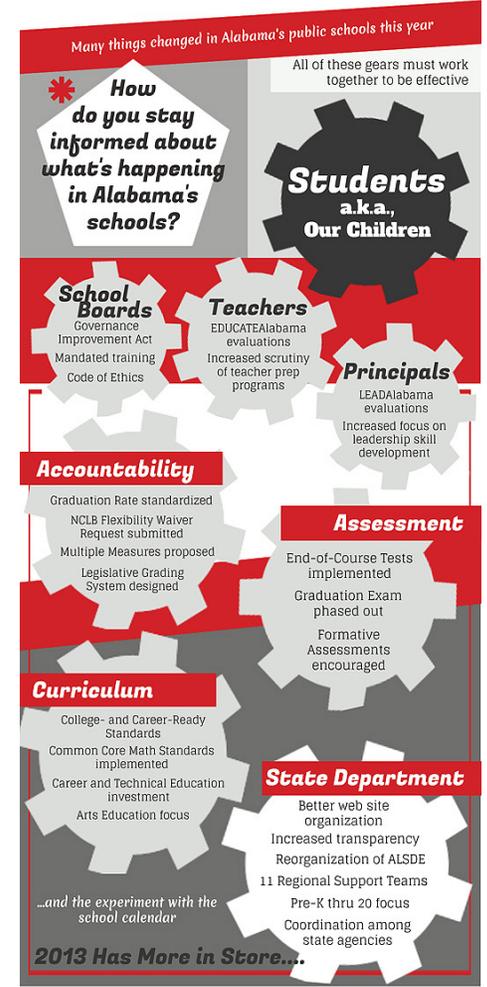
Follow the Alabama State Department of Education on Facebook and Twitter!



Friend or follow the Alabama Department of Education and get access to the most up-to-date information, press releases, event photos, videos, links, and much more! Links to all social media sites can also be found on our [webpage](#).



2012: Changes in Alabama's K-12 Public Schools



Educators Use Photography to Teach History and Geography

Deborah Jones-Kuykendall and Andrea L. Kohutek were chosen from over a thousand applicants to present at the 92nd National Council for the Social Studies Convention in Seattle, Washington.

The title of their presentation was "Opening Windows to the World While Looking Through a Lens." The purpose was to teach teachers from across the United States how to motivate students in all areas of the social studies using photography. They were afforded an opportunity to show off their sixth- and seventh-grade students' photographs.

This class meets every day and teaches ways to improve photography and software knowledge as well as discover the rich history of Mobile, the Golden Gulf Coast, and other places the students travel. They have become history hunters wherever they go!

Over one-half of the students' entries placed in the *Outdoor Alabama* Ecological Society's Photography Contest! Due to their students' accomplishments, both teachers were recipients of the first ever award of "Outstanding Photography Teachers" by this organization.

Ms. Kuykendall teaches United States history and Ms. Kohutek teaches geography and civics at Causey Middle School (Mobile County). Ms. Kuykendall was recently named Photographer of the Year by **Camera South**. Both will serve on the Board of Governors for Camera South for the 2013-2014 year.

STAY INFORMED

Stay informed so you can engage
* **Alabama School Connection**

www.alabamaschoolconnection.org

ALSchoolConnect
Piktochart



2013 Great Central U.S. ShakeOut

Join millions of people who will Drop, Cover, and Hold On at 10:15 a.m. on February 7, 2013, in the **2013 Great Central U.S. ShakeOut!**

Last year more than 12.5 million people were registered in ShakeOut drills worldwide.

Participating is a great way for your family or organization to be prepared to survive and recover quickly from big earthquakes. Visit <http://www.shakeout.org/centralus/> for more details!

eLearning Spring 2013 Schedule

All courses are entirely online, entirely free, and entirely available for registration in STIPD. Classes start **February 6th**. For complete information, contact Tom Dreiling, State Project Director, <http://elearning.alsde.edu> or 334-670-1884.

Spring Semester 2013 (Feb 6 - Mar 26 for 6-week courses)

21st Century Classroom

EDU4401 ~ Webquests and Hotlists
EDU4403 ~ Virtual Tours
EDU4404 ~ Learning Styles
EDU4405 ~ Best Web Ed Resources
EDU4421 ~ Data-Driven Decision Making
EDU4422 ~ Classroom Management in the 21st Century
EDU4432 ~ Digital Storytelling in the Classroom
EDU4437 ~ Visual Strategies to Improve Student Thinking
EDU4443 ~ Students With Significant Cognitive Disabilities
EDU4461 ~ Explore APTPlus - A Trove of Digital Resources
EDU4462 ~ Using Google Docs
EDU4464 ~ Using Moodle in the Classroom
EDU4465 ~ Wikis & Blogs & Podcasts
EDU4471 ~ Using Promethean Boards
EDU4472 ~ Using Smart Boards
EDU4499 ~ Teaching First ELLs
EDU6611 ~ Becoming Online FAC (10wks/55hrs)
EDU6631 ~ Teaching Students in Blended Classrooms

Elementary School

EDU1103 ~ Early Childhood Book Reading Practices
ELA2412 ~ Vocabulary in ES
MTH2581 ~ Numbers and Operations for K-2
MTH2512 ~ Complexities of Measurement
REA2451 ~ Reading First
SCI3671 ~ Physical Science for K-2
SCI2611 ~ Electricity and Circuits for 3-5

Middle/High School

CCTI202E ~ College, Career, Academic Planning (4wks/20hrs)
ELA3412 ~ Vocabulary in MS
HIS3712 ~ Media and History - Cold War
MTH3512 ~ Using Models to Teach Functions
REA3455 ~ Kids, Content, Comprehension
REA3475 ~ Reading Intervention for Struggling Readers
REA3485 ~ Developing Reading Power Thru Comprehension
SCI3673 ~ Physical Science for 6-8

School and District Leaders (can lead to PLU w/ additional work)

EDU5501 ~ Data-Driven School Reform
EDU5502 ~ Integrate Tech w/Curriculum
EDU5503 ~ Internet Safety for Schools
EDU5504 ~ Smart Budgeting for Technology - TCO
EDU5505 ~ Leading School in Web 2.0
EDU5506 ~ Developing Your PLN
EDU5507 ~ Special Students in Regular Classrooms
EDU5508 ~ Google Docs Administrator

George Hall Elementary Celebrates Intel Award With Junior Training Camp



Students, staff and faculty at George Hall Elementary school celebrated a special award on Nov. 30 as they received the Intel Schools of Distinction Award for Most Innovative Elementary

School for Mathematics in the Nation in September.

George Hall held an official community celebration in recognition of this prestigious honor. Mrs. Martha Peek, Superintendent of the Mobile County Public School System, and Dr. Tommy Bice, State Superintendent of Education, joined keynote speaker New Orleans Saints Director of Youth Programs Jason Trosclair at the event.

New Orleans Saints representatives joined second through fifth-grade students and teachers, teaching them athletic skills while also imparting valuable life lessons, in an effort to help the young students stay physically fit and develop into leaders during their formative years. This opportunity was made possible by Hancock Bank, one of the sponsors of the New Orleans Saints.

In addition to the training camp session, associates from Hancock Bank taught financial literacy lessons to Pre-K, kindergarten, and first-grade students. Full story and more photos [HERE!](#)



2012 School Success Stories

George Hall Elementary in Mobile – a school once stuck in a low-achievement chasm – was recognized nationally for its innovation in math instruction, which has resulted in unprecedented student success. Receiving the “Intel Schools of Distinction” Award for Most Innovative Elementary School for Mathematics is just one of many remarkable achievements made by this school, which is very active in our Powerful Conversations Network (PCN) and Instructional Partner (IP) pilot.

Winterboro High School, also active in the PCN, has transformed from a low-performing school to one that engages students through interdisciplinary classes and real-life project-based learning. The changes have truly improved the entire culture of the school, reducing absences of students AND teachers and increasing the graduation rate significantly.

Childersburg High School, another PCN school, is focusing on college- and career-readiness by working hand-in-hand with local and regional businesses. The bi-weekly sessions on resume writing and job interviews are just a few aspects of this new, transformed curriculum. Through this public-private partnership, students clearly understand what knowledge and skills they need to be successful.

Piedmont City Schools continue to advance student achievement through the district’s bold, collaborative efforts in integrating technology, beating the odds of rural community challenges. The system serves on the influential Digital Promise “League of Innovative Schools,” leading the way to scale its success nationally. The powerful community partnerships formed by school leaders ensures that every K-12 student is equipped and engaged for successful 21st century learning. Providing each student with computers, assuring they have wireless Internet access anywhere in the city, and providing summer virtual learning programs have captured the interest of many, including districts across the country attempting to replicate these successes. “Participating in the Superintendent Leaders Network (SLN) has truly transformed my approach to leadership,” wrote Piedmont Superintendent Matt Akin regarding his involvement with the Alabama Best Practice Center.

Elmore County Schools are involved in every aspect of A+ Education Partnership programs and divisions, including A+ College Ready. This year the district surpassed national averages in Advanced Placement access and progress! Its superintendent, Dr. Jeff Langham (recently named Superintendent of the Year), credits the work of A+ College Ready for preparing its teachers well, and providing support and incentives to ensure success. One Elmore County high school recognized for its incredible AP progress was Stanhope Elmore in Millbrook, where the Governor and many state leaders gathered recently to celebrate the state’s AP success.

Courtesy of A+ Education Partnership



21st Century Schools

If a student from 1912 were to time travel to 2012, today’s world of smartphones, iPads, and interstate highways might seem bewildering, but he would likely feel right at home in most Alabama classrooms.

Little has changed over the last 100 years in how schools are organized and how teachers teach. Those educators who have embraced technology in innovative ways are still rare enough that they often make news when they shake things up.

So, what should schools look like in the Internet-enabled 21st Century world?

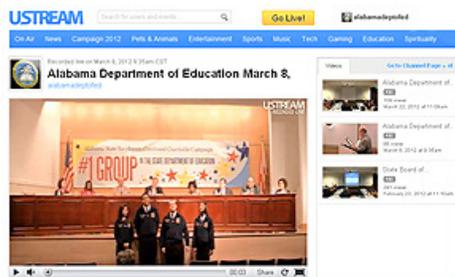
Recently, Public Impact, a North Carolina-based national education policy and consulting firm, launched its Opportunity Culture initiative to promote methods for redesigning schools and reforming policy to best meet the needs of their students and reward the best teachers—within budget.

The Website outlines new career paths for teachers and examines new ways to ensure all students receive instruction from excellent teachers. As the Website explains, “With an excellent teacher versus an average teacher, students make about an extra half-year of progress every year—closing achievement gaps fast, leaping ahead to become honors students, and surging forward like top international peers.”

Among the resources is [this two-pager](#) explaining different career paths that schools might implement to make teachers more effective. This work is similar to recommendations made by the Alabama Governor’s Commission on Teaching Quality that were reported in 2008. That work creating career paths for teachers has never been implemented in the state, but it is referenced in the [State Board of Education’s Plan 2020](#).

Source: A+ Education Partnership

State Board of Education Meetings on Ustream.tv!



See your State Board of Education in action – Online at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/alabama-department-of-education>. See LIVE video every second and fourth Thursday of the month or watch the archived videos anytime you want (different days in July, November, and December).

ALABAMA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

- President – Gov. Robert Bentley
District 1 – Randy McKinney
District 2 – Betty Peters
District 3 – Stephanie Bell, Vice President
District 4 – Yvette M. Richardson
District 5 – Ella B. Bell, President Pro Tem
District 6 – Charles Elliott
District 7 – Gary Warren
District 8 – Mary Scott Hunter

State Superintendent of Education and Secretary and Executive Officer – Thomas R. Bice

AEN EDITORIAL STAFF

Managing Editor: Dr. Michael O. Sibley
Contributing Editors: Ed Crenshaw | Malissa Valdes, APR
Graphic Artists: Mary Nell Shaw | Charles V. Creel

Contact **Alabama Education News**
334-242-9950 (p) · 334-353-4682 (f)
aen@alsde.edu (e) · www.alsde.edu (w)

Alabama Education News
P.O. Box 302101
Montgomery, AL 36130-2101

Alabama Education News (USPS #387-290) is published bi-monthly by the Alabama State Department of Education, P.O. Box 302101, Montgomery, AL 36130-2101. This publication, authorized by Section 16-2-4 of the Code of Alabama, as recompiled in 1975, is a public service of the Alabama Department of Education designed to inform citizens and educators about programs and goals of public education in Alabama.

No person shall be denied employment, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity on the basis of disability, gender, race, religion, national origin, color, age or genetics.

Ref: Sec. 1983, Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C.; Title VI and VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Sec. 504; Age Discrimination in Employment Act; The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008; Equal Pay Act of 1963; Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972; Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008; Title IX Coordinator, P.O. Box 302101, Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2101 or call (334) 242-8165.

Shelby County Schools Recognized for Speaking Up

Shelby County was chosen as part of the Top Five out of 200 schools and districts across the country as they were recognized for incorporating feedback from their students as they develop strategic plans, make budgeting decisions, enhance their curriculum and determine professional development needs. Project Tomorrow®, a national education nonprofit, announced this year's Speak Up 200, a collection of the top K-12 schools in the country that encourage and involve authentic student, parent and educator ideas and views in education planning and decision-making.

The schools were selected for this national distinction from the 30,000 schools nationwide that have participated in the annual Speak Up surveys, conducted by Project Tomorrow, since 2003. The Speak Up National Research Project collects K-12 student, parent and educator viewpoints on technology, 21st century education and student aspirations through an annual online survey process and shares that data with national, state and local policymakers to improve education for all children.

The schools selected for the 2012 Speak Up 200 represent a broad range of educational institutions in rural, suburban and urban communities. The complete list of Speak Up 200 recognized schools are highlighted on the Project Tomorrow Website, which includes schools from all over Alabama at http://www.tomorrow.org/speakup/speakup_200.html.

Based upon total participation and demonstrated commitment to engaging their stakeholders in local decisions on education issues, five school districts were recognized for special distinctions:

Top Five school districts (based on high level of participation in Speak Up):

- **Shelby County School District (Alabama)**
- Klein Independent School District (Texas)
- Frisco Independent School District (Texas)
- Alief Independent School District (Texas)
- Weslaco Independent School District (Texas)

Project Tomorrow will promote the schools' distinction to the Congressional representative and state Governor of each Speak Up 200 school to demonstrate the power of educational innovation at the local level. The schools will also receive a unique Speak Up 200 logo to include on their school and district Websites.

Some sample questions on the survey include:

- How often can you bring technology from school to your home to use it to work on assignments, do research, work on class projects, talk with your teachers or your peers or take an online course?
- During a typical school day, what type of access do you have to computers in your class?
- How do you learn technology applications like how to use digital technology, create presentations, safely use the Internet or develop Websites?

