

ALABAMA SCHOOL JOURNAL

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ALABAMA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
VOLUME 141, NUMBER 1 • FEBRUARY 2024

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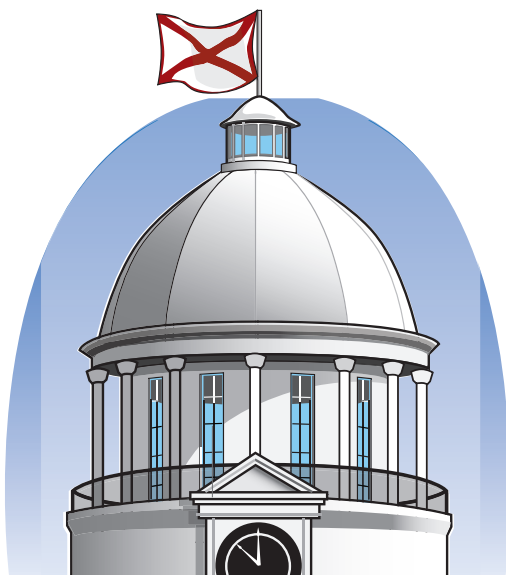
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AEA Prepares for the 2024 Legislative Session



2024 Legislative Session Begins February 6, 2024

The Alabama Legislature will convene on February 6, 2024 – and this session should prove to be another successful year for Alabama’s students and educators. What happens in the Statehouse always has a substantial impact on our schools, and AEA will be present every day that your legislators are there highlighting legislative priorities on behalf of educators and advocating for the recognition that you

deserve for your hard work and sacrifices.

During last year’s legislative session, AEA successfully secured a pay raise across the board for all public education employees, secured a \$ 15-an-hour minimum salary for all support professionals, made historic adjustments to the school nurse matrix, worked diligently to provide \$1,170 in Classroom Instructional Supply money for each teacher unit, and much more.

Each legislative session is defined not only by what we accomplish but also by what bills we stop or significantly change before final passage. AEA successfully defeated the school voucher bill known as the PRICE Act and made necessary improvements to the grocery tax bill that would have endangered the Education Trust Fund (ETF).

While last year’s legislative session was a great success, there is still much work to be done to continue to move public education forward in Alabama.

In addition to teachers, ESPs, postsecondary, administrators, and students, our education retirees are a vitally important part of AEA – and we advocate for all members of our organization. After no cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in the last 15 years, in addition to increased costs to their health insurance premiums, it is long overdue for our retirees to receive an adjustment to their income. Due to the continued growth in the ETF, money is available to give to retirees, and now is the time to prioritize this action, as many of our retirees are living at or below the federal poverty level despite their many years of dedicated public service. There is no time like the present to take care of the ones who have

spent years educating our children. AEA will advocate for the Alabama Legislature to use the excess funds collected in FY2024 to place a significant deposit into the Education Retiree Trust Fund (ERTF) that can be used to fund additional compensation for our retirees without creating an unfunded liability on the retirement system.

In addition to our advocacy for retirees, AEA will also be working toward pay raises for all employees, a minimum salary base of \$50,000 for teachers, air conditioning school buses statewide, compensation for student internships, and much more. Vouchers will also be a hot topic again this year, so stay tuned for details on potential legislation regarding school choice.

AEA has been and will continue to be your voice at the Statehouse. As always, your AEA lobby team will read each bill and will be present each day during session, working diligently to look out for your interests and the interests of public education in Alabama. Throughout this upcoming session, AEA will continuously update members on all legislative issues impacting education. The *Capital Pulse* will be sent to AEA members each Friday during the session and will provide a weekly summary of education issues making their way through the Alabama Legislature. To ensure you will receive the *Capital Pulse* newsletter, visit the member portal on our website, myAEA.org, to verify that your email address is correct or to update it if needed. To sign up for the *Capital Pulse* through text alerts, text AEA to 52886. Educators can also stay informed by following AEA on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and Instagram.

AEA Members Meet with Local Legislators to Discuss Education Issues

Over the last few months, AEA UniServ Directors and members across the state have held Legislative Contact Team (LCT) and round table meetings with members of the Alabama Legislature ahead of this year’s legislative session.

Members met with senators and representatives alike to discuss critical issues impacting education in their areas. These discussions centered around

education funding, policy, and upcoming legislation - allowing local officials to put names and faces behind our Association.

We thank all the Alabama Senators and Representatives who took time out of their busy schedules to attend these meetings with open minds and active participation. These discussions were crucial to helping our lawmakers understand what

you, as educators, want them to prioritize and work towards as they return to the Statehouse on February 6, 2024. As members, your advocacy is the secret to our success in each legislative session, and we are ready to get to work!



Sen. Clyde Chambliss (Prattville)



Sen. Rodger Smitherman (Birmingham)



House Speaker Nathaniel Ledbetter (Rainville)
Senate Maj. Leader Steve Livingston (Scottsboro)



Rep. Randy Wood (Anniston)



Sen. Donnie Chesteen (Geneva)



Rep. Thomas Jackson (Thomasville)

ALABAMA EDUCATION OPINIONS

AEA is strong because we work together



**AEA President
Dr. Susan
Williams Brown**

From storms and high winds to freezing cold fronts, Alabama is no stranger to extreme weather in the early months of the year, and 2024 has proven to be no different. As usual, we can count on our educators to rise up and do everything necessary to ensure the safety of our students. I applaud your dedication to providing a stable learning environment, both in person and virtually.

Across our great state, you continue to show positivity in your schools, classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, buses, and more. Education employees are doing what is best for our students. And the success of our students is a direct reflection of your dedication to them.

Despite the extreme weather we have been facing recently, we were delighted to continue our partnership with Alabama National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT) at the 2024 Alabama NBCT Network Conference in Birmingham. Currently, Alabama ranks 11th in the total number of NBCTs nationwide with 199 newly certified NBCTs and 261 maintenance of certificates (MOCs). It was an honor to celebrate the accomplishments of these outstanding educators. Congratulations to all NBCTs and their support systems.

The Alabama Legislative Session will begin on February 6th. In preparation, AEA has been hosting Legislative Contact Team (LCT) meetings with our members and their local legislators throughout the state,

discussing prominent issues that are of concern to our education employees. As the session continues, AEA will be present every day and will provide updates in our weekly publication, the *Capital Pulse*. AEA is the largest group in Alabama that serves as the voice for educators and your advocate during the legislative process. As an educator, you need to know what is going on at the Statehouse, and you need to know the names of those who represent you in the Legislature. You can find this information in the 2024 AEA Legislative Directory in this edition of the *Journal*. If you would like to stay connected, you can text AEA to 52886 so you can stay up to date with AEA at any time, any place.

During the legislative session, your active involvement can significantly shape the future of the education profession. Now, more than ever, we need your help contacting your elected leaders to let them know educators are involved as voting citizens of Alabama. If you like to write, you can send letters. If you prefer to call or text, contact them when they are in their home districts. In your communication, please share your stories and experiences with your legislators, your friends, and your family so they know how much you impact the lives of our students and our communities. Let your voice be heard so that your legislators can make decisions in the statehouse with your best interest in mind.

Remember, AEA is working for you and with you every step of the way. We are continuously communicating with our legislators about the issues and challenges you face while working to do your job for our students and our communities, but no one can tell your

story as well as you can. There is no AEA win without your support, and legislators have shared with us the impact of your advocacy. With your help, I am confident this will be yet another successful legislative session for Alabama's educators!

If no one has told you recently, thank you for all you have done and continue to do to keep our schools safe and productive. Continue to encourage your coworkers and invite them to become a member of AEA, the largest professional organization in our state. If they are already AEA members, encourage them to get involved in our advocacy work and attend our many upcoming professional development events.

I am proud to serve as your AEA President and proud of all education employees in Alabama! As we continue to grow in membership numbers, I also encourage you to grow professionally. The 2024 Educational Support Professional (ESP) Conference, the 2024 Association of Classroom Teachers (ACT) Division Conference, and the 2024 Professional Rights & Responsibilities (PR&R) Conference are scheduled during this semester. Please continue to check our social media pages and the myaea.org website for these and other upcoming professional learning opportunities offered by your AEA. Our most important goal is to support you, our members, in all you do to better yourselves and the education profession. Remember, you are the main ingredient in our recipe for success!

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Hours of Operation:

M-F - 8:15 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.

OUR POLICY

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Problems concerning delivery or addresses can be answered by calling toll free to 800.392.5839.

We encourage letters and opinion articles from members of AEA. All submissions must have your full name, mailing address, phone number, and local affiliation. Because of space limitations, we reserve the right to edit for length. Letters of less than 200 words are given preference for publication.

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ATTENTION!

NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY (NEA-RA) REPORTING FORMS DUE APRIL 10, 2024.

Delegate reporting forms must be received at AEA Headquarters no later than April 10, 2024.

Local presidents should receive an email from NEA by the end of January for reporting of delegates to the 2024 NEA Representative Assembly.

If you have any questions or do not receive the email, contact Lauren Bethune at 1-800-392-5839 or email lauren.bethune@alaedu.org.

Let Your Voice Be Heard - AEA Elections 2024

The "A" in AEA stands for Alabama, meaning we look to you to guide our Association's decision-making process. Our leaders are our members, and our members select our leaders. As we enter AEA election season, let your voice be heard and help us shape the future of the Association by casting your vote.

The following positions are elected in AEA Regular Elections:

- Delegates to the AEA Delegate Assembly
- Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly
- Board members of the AEA
- Officers of AEA Divisions
- Board members of the Teachers' Retirement System/PEEHIP

In last month's edition of the *Journal* was our 2023-24 candidate guide.

There, you will find information on all candidates running to represent you at state and national conventions. Participating in AEA elections only takes a few minutes of your time and



is your opportunity to choose who is participating in conversations on your behalf.

AEA Regular Election materials and ballots were mailed to each individual

member's address on file with AEA on January 8, 2024. Individual packets include instructions, a ballot, and a postage-paid return envelope.

Your regular election ballot must be completed and mailed by February 16, 2024. To vote, simply complete the paper ballot, insert the completed ballot into the postage-paid envelope, and place it in your mailbox to return.

All election information and candidate information can be found at myAEA.org/elections. If you have not yet received your electronic ballot for the 2024 Regular Election, please email Courtney Pettway at courtney.pettway@alaedu.org with your name and email address. Once she receives your email, the ballot will be sent to the email address provided.

Let's Call It What It Is: *School Choice = Vouchers*



**AEA Executive Director
Amy Marlowe**

I hope that you had a restful and reinvigorating holiday break. By the time this issue of the *Journal* reaches you, we will be nearing the start of the 2024 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature. It promises to be as stressful and eventful as the past few sessions, as we expect forces from outside Alabama to make a major push to divert funds from our local schools to private hands.

As we prepare for the struggle ahead, we must be mindful of the language that the opponents of public education will use. It is a time-honored tradition in marketing and politics to use innocuous-sounding euphemisms to disguise bad things. It is a “courtesy call” when a telemarketer interrupts your dinner. Innocent civilians killed in war are “collateral damage.” The euphemism/marketing slogan/flat-out lie you will hear many times in the coming weeks, and need to be ready to counter immediately, is “school choice.”

If you listen to the claims of our detractors, you'd never realize that we already have school choice in Alabama. In fact, Alabama is already ranked between 15th and 18th in all national polls ranking the amount of school choice available to American students. Just imagine if Alabama was ranked 15th or 18th in educator pay!

Alabama parents have a myriad of options that are not available to other Americans when it comes to how they choose to educate their children. So, why are we having this debate? The answer is simple once you see beyond the smokescreen of the “school choice” language. This struggle is about nothing more than the age-old fight over vouchers. Once again, the vultures are circling to redirect public tax dollars to private pockets and private bank accounts. Let's call it what it is: SCHOOL CHOICE = VOUCHERS!

These people want to take money from your already underfunded local schools and give it to private schools for, in the overwhelming majority

of cases, children already attending those private schools. When Arkansas implemented its new voucher program this past year, 95% of the students who received the vouchers were already in private schools. A similar story played out in Florida.

In addition to a lack of financial accountability in these programs, there is usually a total lack of educational accountability. There are also no requirements to meet the rigid standards of the Alabama Literacy Act or the Alabama Numeracy Act. Simply put, these private schools and homeschool parents will get taxpayer funds intended to educate Alabama children with absolutely no strings attached.

In fact, Alabama is already ranked between 15th and 18th in all national polls ranking the amount of school choice available to American students. Just imagine if Alabama was ranked 15th or 18th in educator pay!

What the voucher crowd conveniently ignores is that we have already found a middle ground in Alabama. Under the Alabama Accountability Act, taxpayers can decide if they want to fund private school opportunities for students. There is some accountability in that law to ensure funds are used properly and are directed to students in actual need, not just parents looking for a handout to finance their lifestyle.

This session will give legislators a chance to prove AEA wrong. AEA said when the Alabama Accountability Act passed that it was just a gateway to

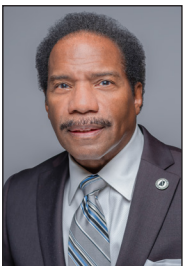
vouchers without oversight. If the Legislature holds the line and rejects zero-accountability private school welfare, it will mark a major milestone for community schools in Alabama.

The stakes could not be higher when it comes to defeating vouchers/school choice. Funding drained from our local schools means fewer math and reading coaches, cuts to extracurricular activities, loss of STEM programs, and, in extreme cases, reductions in force. Every dollar taken from the Education Trust Fund (ETF) for private schools is a dollar that could finance cost-of-living adjustments for Alabama educators to help you keep up with inflation. It also means there will be zero money available to recognize our education retirees - whom AEA has made its highest priority for the upcoming session because they are so greatly deserving.

Many of you have participated in our Legislative Contact Team (LCT) dinners and roundtables. I hope you continue making constant contact with your legislators. If you didn't have the opportunity, I hope that you will use the contact information for your legislators located on page seven of this issue of the *Journal* to reach out to them when the time comes. It is going to take a concerted effort by all of us who care about the future of public education in Alabama to fight off an onslaught of out-of-state money to siphon taxpayer funds into private hands.

Take the opportunity today to sign up for text alerts from AEA and follow us on our social media channels. Information on how to do that is available here in the *Journal* and on myaea.org. That way, you will have the most up-to-the-minute information on what's happening on Goat Hill. Also, to the extent you can, try to keep a personal leave day available in case we have to call for a day of action at the State House, as we successfully did last session when fighting for a \$15 per hour minimum salary for our ESPs. We will also have a thorough legislative analysis in every issue of the *Journal*. There are many dangers, toils, and snares ahead, but I'm confident, with all of us working together, AEA will carry through for Alabama schools – *we have no choice but to prevail!*

Pros and Cons of Being a “TEAMS” Player



**AEA Associate Executive Director
Theron Stokes**

As I have written in this space countless times, all public education employees are important and deserve to be paid far more than what they are currently. However, the Alabama Legislature focused on one group of public educators in 2021 when they passed the Teacher Excellence and Accountability for Mathematics and Science (TEAMS) Act. As the title denotes, TEAMS focuses on math and science teachers and allows them to make more money than their colleagues

because of what they teach and because of advanced certifications that they must either already have or earn while on a probationary TEAMS contract. I won't address the fairness of math and science teachers versus other teachers earning additional compensation because of their subject area. I will only address the pros and cons of choosing to sign up for TEAMS. If you have any questions about the program after reading this column, please reach out to your local UniServ Director so he or she can address your questions and help you decide if TEAMS is right for you.

The primary pro for signing up for TEAMS is the additional pay. The Legislature sought to recruit more math and science teachers and even people from the private sector to the teaching profession and felt the best way to do so would be to increase salaries for math and science teachers who sign up for TEAMS. However, one con is the trade off that this additional compensation requires TEAMS teachers to work additional contract days beyond the normal 9-month contract. These additional days are tied up in professional development and continuing education designed for TEAMS teachers. This could have the hidden impact of preventing TEAMS teachers from working in their rooms during the beginning of the school year when other non-TEAMS teachers are working in their rooms. Therefore, they will likely need to work in their rooms on their own time instead.

Another con is the big one: TEAMS teachers sign

contracts and waive their tenure. TEAMS teachers must give up their tenure to sign up for TEAMS positions and risk losing their jobs without any due process or reason being given for non-renewal. This means that veteran teachers with tenure could lose their jobs with their school systems if they sign up for TEAMS, and there is hardly anything they can do about it. There is an exception where TEAMS teachers can “float back” to their last tenured position if they try TEAMS and decide it isn't for them after one year. The only way they can do so is if they have made adequate progress towards earning an advanced degree. This means that TEAMS teachers who already have an advanced certification lose their tenure immediately and cannot float back. This also means that TEAMS teachers who elect to sign up for an advanced credential that only takes one year to get cannot float back because adequate progress after a year would be earning the credential. Therefore, the credential would be earned, and that teacher would be unable to float back. Should you wish to pursue a TEAMS contract and agree to earn an advanced credential, I urge you to go the National Board Certification route as it takes longer than a year.

A pro that may seem small is that TEAMS teachers actually get written contracts. Long gone are the days of teachers receiving written contracts. Most often only superintendents, principals, and other central office administration receive them. Under TEAMS, a system is required by law to provide a TEAMS teacher with a written contract.

The fact that the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) has not issued any guidelines on how they approve TEAMS teachers and courses that TEAMS teachers can teach is yet another con to signing up for this program. The act requires that TEAMS teachers primarily teach math and science courses. There is no definition of what “primarily” means and the definition of approved courses does not appear to be uniform. Therefore, if you teach computer science or any other elective math or science course, they may not approve you for teaching under a TEAMS contract.

Furthermore, there is no concrete information

from the ALSDE on who exactly qualifies to be a TEAMS teacher. TEAMS was passed in 2021 and became effective in May of that year. However, as of the date of this article, the ALSDE has not published any written guidelines or regulations for school systems to look to when selecting TEAMS teachers. Section three of the TEAMS Act states, “The department shall administer the program and may establish necessary procedures for the administration of the program. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules necessary to implement this act.” Even though the law requires them to establish these procedures and implement the program with written guidelines, they have not yet done so, and countless TEAMS teachers have lost their TEAMS contracts after beginning to work as TEAMS teachers for their school districts because of unspecified qualifications that the ALSDE used to deny the systems' requests to approve these TEAMS teachers. Therefore, many TEAMS teachers are at risk of losing their TEAMS contracts and jobs even though their school boards approved them and their contracts.

Another issue that has arisen is whether alternative schools can employ TEAMS teachers. Many school districts have hired TEAMS teachers to work with students in alternative schools, but the State Department of Education later denied their requests. Basically, these teachers were told that alternative schools and their students did not deserve TEAMS teachers with no legitimate reason given as to why.

I know I have mentioned more cons than pros at this point. Let me be clear that we at AEA are not anti-TEAMS. The problem is that the implementation of TEAMS has not been as smooth or matched what we were told it would be when the Legislature first brought it forth. Therefore, I urge all members to tread carefully when deciding whether or not to become a TEAMS teacher. It may be right for you but not for a co-worker. It just depends on your circumstances and specific situation. Again, please reach out to your local UniServ Director if you have any questions or concerns about TEAMS, and we will work to answer your questions or address your concerns.

THE AEA PROFESSIONAL

AEA helps recognize newest NBCTs at State Conference

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is an organization that offers teachers the ability to be certified at the professional level. On January 20, 2024, teachers from around the state had the opportunity to attend a ceremony and celebrate attaining that certification.

Becoming a National Board Certified Professional Teacher (NBCT) is no easy task. This process can take an extended amount of time to complete. Some candidates can take up to two years to complete the challenge set forth before them. These candidates can succeed and become certified professionals through hard work, determination, and support from mentors and colleagues.

The NBCT ceremony was held at Oak Mountain High School in Birmingham, Alabama. This ceremony was part of the overall conference held to help teachers understand the process of becoming nationally certified and enacting advanced teaching methods within their own teaching settings. Teachers attended small workshops that taught them how to advance their curriculum through planning, effective communication to students of every caliber, as well as the Five Core Propositions that describe what knowledge the teacher needs in order to have the most significant positive impact on student learning.

During the pinning ceremony, there were two recipients of the Julie Ramsey Scholarship for Maintenance of Certification. Rachel Goggins and Sarah Hines were both awarded these scholarships for their commitment and success in the realm of education.

AEA supports the mission of the NBPTS and all NBCTs and congratulates all who were part of this pinning ceremony. To help teachers achieve national board certification, AEA offers an NBCT Cohort for teachers to assist in navigating the certification process. You can register for NBCT Jump Start by visiting myAEA.org.



Top: (from left to right) Stephanie Lett, Atalla City Schools, Dr. Susan Williams Brown, AEA President, Dr. Pamela Fossett, AEA EPPP Manager, and Jacy Douglas, Morgan County Schools
Bottom Left: NBCT Monica Powell receives her pin from AEA President Dr. Susan Williams Brown
Bottom Right: NBCT Michelle Holloway, Mobile County Schools, poses with Dr. Brown after the ceremony.

2024 NBCT scholarship application is now available



Applications for the 2024 Alabama NBCT Scholarship are now available!

Educators working towards their National Board Certification can apply for scholarships in the form of funds credited to an account in their name with the National Board office.

In previous years, educators must have completed three successful years of teaching prior to beginning the National Board Certification process to be eligible for this scholarship. The criteria has now been

extended to Year 1 and Year 2 teachers. The policy change will open access to educators interested in the certification process by allowing them to begin the program before completing three years of teaching experience. This change will enable educators to begin the process earlier, but educators will still need to complete three successful years of teaching employment to become Board-certified.

The scholarship will pay for up to four components, up to \$1,900, with no retakes. You are still eligible if you have already submitted one or more components. However, the scholarship will only apply to those you still need to complete.

At least one component each year must be submitted, beginning next spring cycle. All four components must be submitted within three years. The scholarship only funds initial candidates, not

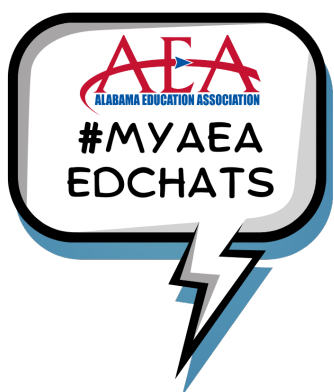
National Board Renewal.

Email and/or postal mail notification regarding your scholarship status will arrive before May 14. While awaiting notification of your scholarship application, you may begin working on any or all of the components. However, if you do not receive the scholarship, you will be responsible for the cost of submitting them.

The application deadline for this year's Alabama NBCT Scholarship is March 31, 2024. Scan the QR code for more information and to apply today or visit our website, myAEA.org.



Upcoming #myAEA edChats available for all members



Join the Association of Classroom Teachers (ACT) for #myAEA edChats on Twitter Tuesdays! Earn one (1) hour of Professional Development credit on PowerSchool while sharing ideas with other AEA members. This is a great way to interact with AEA members from all over the state. #myAEA edChats are live on Twitter from 4:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. See dates, topics, and moderators below!

February 6, 2024, Enhancing Your Instructional Skills Through Differentiation
 Follow: Katie Stuart @AEA_KatieS
 PowerSchool Section # 490872

March 5, 2024, May 7, 2024, Teaching Students With Learning Disabilities
 Follow: Katie Stuart @AEA_KatieS
 PowerSchool Section # 490873

April 9, 2024, Have students this year finally closed the gap from the Pandemic? What Do Educators Think?
 Follow: Dr. Tieshia Collins @DrTGCollins1
 PowerSchool Section # 487067

April 23, 2024, Computer Science
 Follow: Amy Fowler @FOWLER08
 PowerSchool Section # 487063

May 7, 2024, What to Wear? Let's Talk About Your School's Dress Code!
 Follow: Katie Stuart @AEA_KatieS
 PowerSchool Section # 490599

Please follow each of the moderators on Twitter and join in the conversation. Be sure to check the AEA website and social media for additional dates and topics. For more information, please contact Katie Stuart at katie.stuart@alaedu.org and Dr. Pamela Fossett at pamela.fossett@alaedu.org or follow them on Twitter at @AEA_KatieS and @aeaeppp.



2024 ESP Statewide Conference

February 16-18, 2024 | Auburn, Alabama



AEA Education Support Professionals Always

RUN FOR THE ROSES!

ESPs always run for the roses, and this year they will meet in Auburn, Alabama on February 16-18, 2024 for the 2024 ESP Statewide Conference! This engaging conference provides excellent professional learning opportunities unique to all education support professionals! Early bird registration is only \$45 for AEA members and \$250 for nonmembers. Your conference registration includes an ESP t-shirt and four meals.



**Country Music Singer
Chad Steed**

Keynote Speaker Chad Steed

One of the highlights of this year's conference is keynote speaker Chad Steed. Steed, a native of northeast Alabama, is no stranger to the world of education. After nearly a decade in the K-12 system, Steed left his work to pursue his dreams on the stages of Dollywood, Dolly Parton's award-winning theme park in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. While at Dollywood, Steed performed on numerous stages and showcased his ability to engage audiences with his electric personality. Interjecting comedy and music into each program, Steed creates unique and lasting presentations that never fail to engage and entertain audiences. Regardless of his topic, Steed has an innate ability to turn any story into a teaching opportunity that will inspire and motivate.

Steed's quick-wit, intelligence, humor, and boyish charm makes him relatable to any audience. Whether he's telling stories from his rocky years in college, sharing experiences from working in higher education, or reliving spotlight moments from stages around the country, Steed's high energy approach and natural charisma leaves crowds feeling energized and excited, bringing his southern charm and boyish excitement to every performance.

During this year's conference, attendees will hear from Steed about his experience as a former ESP and inside the world of academics. They will also be entertained and serenaded with original songs in his soulful, gospel, country music style.

ESP Alabama Derby Reception



The Kentucky Derby is coming to Sweet Home Alabama! Wear your Sunday best and don some seersucker and sunhats for the ESP Alabama Derby Reception on Friday, February 16. You don't want to miss this grand affair as we welcome ESPs from across the state in our very own Run for the Roses. The attire for the reception is derby style. Entrance into the Alabama Derby Reception is included with your conference registration.

Conference Sessions Include:

- 2024 Legislative Updates for ESPs
- Toxic Stress to Self Care
- Laws that affect ESPs (ADA, On the Job Injury, etc.)
- What You Need to Know About PEEHIP
- ParaPROs
- Safe Schools for ESPs
- Life as a Bus Driver
- Whose Job It Is
- Pay Check Parties
- Do You Know All of Your BENEFITS as an AEA/ESP Member
- What's in My Custodian's Closet
- News That You Can Use on Social Media
- Membership Recruitment - Why I'm An ESP!!
- And many more!

ESP Legislative Panel

On Sunday, February 18, hear from AEA staff as they discuss our legislative priorities for the 2024 Legislative Session and how it pertains to all ESPs.

ESP Conference Housing Information

The ESP Conference host hotel, The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center, is currently at-capacity. To reserve a room in one of our overflow hotels, please visit aotourism.com/stay and book directly from there.

Conference Meals

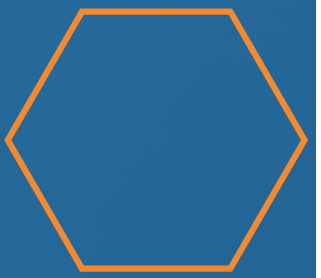
Conference registration includes four (4) full meals. Dinner will be provided Friday, February 16, 2024 at the reception. Breakfast and lunch will be provided on Saturday, February 17, 2024. Breakfast will also be provided on Sunday, February 18, 2024. If you are bringing guests and would like them to eat the meals provided for conference participants, each guest, including children, must be registered for the conference. A conference name badge must be worn at all meal functions.

**CONFERENCE FEES ARE
NON-REFUNDABLE.**

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- 35 Senate Members:
 - 27 Republicans
 - 8 Democrats
 - President Pro Tempore: Greg Reed (R)
 - Senate Majority Leader: Steve Livingston (R)
 - Senate Minority Leader: Bobby Singleton (D)



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State of Alabama

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Sen. Greg Reed (R)



MAJORITY LEADER
Sen. Steve Livingston (R)



MINORITY LEADER
Sen. Bobby Singleton (D)

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SPEAKER PRO TEM
Rep. Chris Pringle (R)



MAJORITY LEADER
Rep. Scott Stadthagen (R)



MINORITY LEADER
Rep. Anthony Daniels (D)

HOUSE FAST FACTS:

- 105 House Members: 75 Republicans
28 Democrats
2 Vacancies
- Speaker: Nathaniel Ledbetter (R)
- Speaker Pro-Tempore: Chris Pringle (R)
- Majority Leader: Scott Stadthagen (R)
- Minority Leader: Anthony Daniels (D)

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800 DR JOSEPH LOWER BLVD STE D, HUNTSVILLE, AL 35801 District: 256-714-6376 State House: 334-261-0514 reprigsbydistrict25@gmail.com	412-A GUNTER AVE GUNTERSVILLE, AL 35976 District: 256-582-0619 State House: 334-261-0438 brock.colvin@alhouse.gov	11 S UNION ST MONTGOMERY, AL 36130 State House: 334-261-0539	PO BOX 7184 RAINBOW CITY, AL 35906 District: 256-312-3128 State House: 334-261-0490 mack.butler@alhouse.gov	PO BOX 2671 GADSDEN, AL 35903 State House: 334-261-0432 mark.gidley@alhouse.gov	442 CHESTNUT ST GADSDEN, AL 35901 District: 334-501-7133 State House: 334-261-0546 info@craiglipscomb.com
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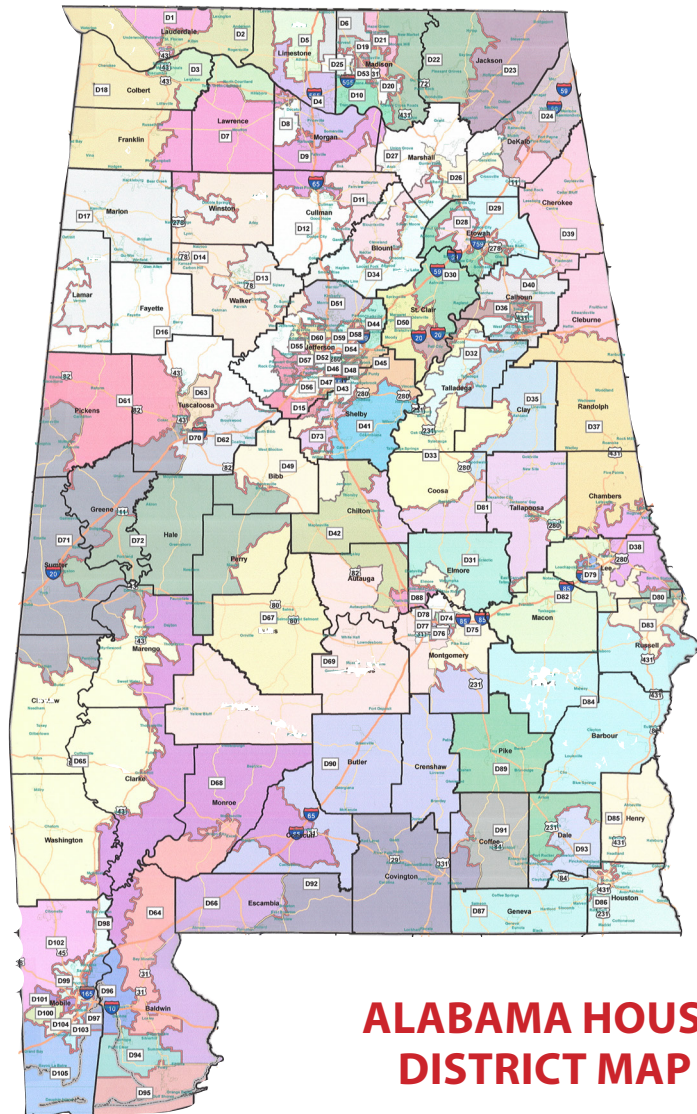
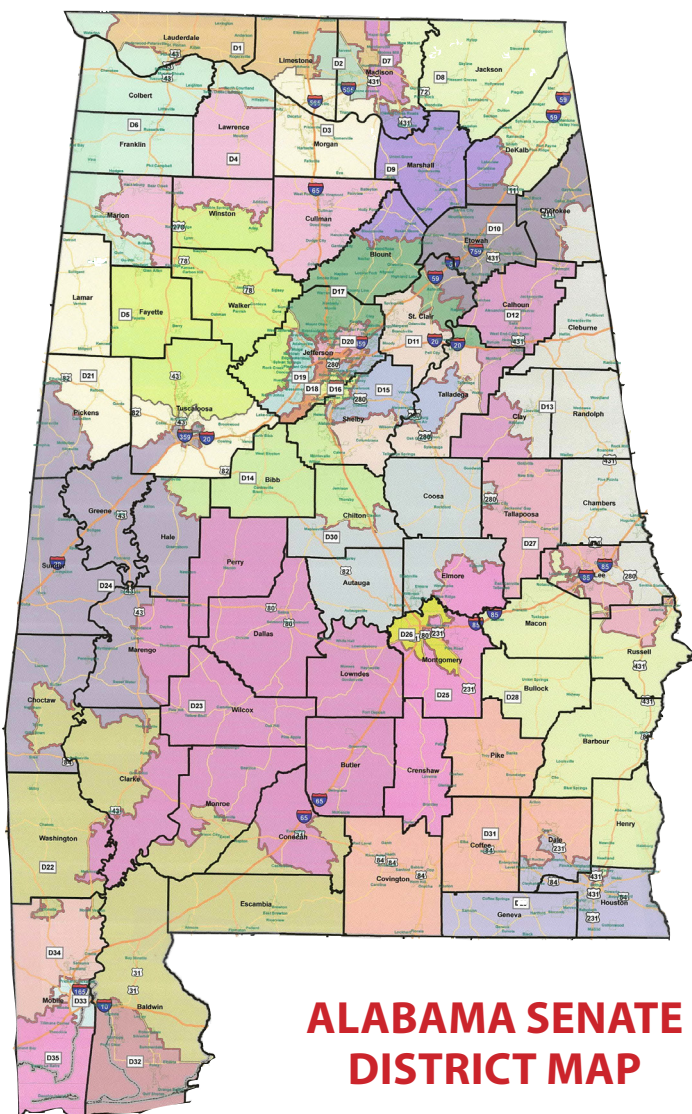
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DISTRICT 55	DISTRICT 56	DISTRICT 57	DISTRICT 58	DISTRICT 59	DISTRICT 60
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DISTRICT 67	DISTRICT 68	DISTRICT 69	DISTRICT 70	DISTRICT 71	DISTRICT 72
REPRESENTATIVE (D) PRINCE CHESTNUT	REPRESENTATIVE (D) THOMAS JACKSON	REPRESENTATIVE (D) KELVIN LAWRENCE	REPRESENTATIVE (D) CHRIS ENGLAND	REPRESENTATIVE (D) ARTIS "AJ" MCCAMPBELL	REPRESENTATIVE (D) CURTIS TRAVIS
<i>Dallas • Perry</i>	<i>Clarke • Conecuh • Marengo Monroe • Perry • Wilcox</i>	<i>Autauga • Lowndes Montgomery • Wilcox</i>	<i>Tuscaloosa</i>	<i>Marengo • Pickens • Sumter Tuscaloosa</i>	<i>Bibb • Greene • Hale Tuscaloosa</i>
PO BOX 628 SELMA, AL 36702 District: 334-874-2569 State House: 334-261-0598 chestnut4house@gmail.com	PO BOX 636 THOMASVILLE, AL 36784 District: 334-222-0111 State House: 334-261-0437 jthomase68@gmail.com	PO BOX 1010 HAYNEVILLE, AL 36040 District: 334-638-6397 State House: 334-261-0536 kelvinj73@gmail.com kelvin.lawrence@alhouse.gov	2201 UNIVERSITY BLVD TUSCALOOSA, AL 35401 District: 205-248-5140 State House: 334-261-0503 cjengland1@gmail.com	PO BOX 487 DEMOPOLIS, AL 36732 State House: 334-261-0547 acmc1@bellsouth.net	620 HAYMARKET LN TUSCALOOSA, AL 35405 District: 334-349-9183 State House: 334-261-0559 cltravis620@charter.net
DISTRICT 73	DISTRICT 74	DISTRICT 75	DISTRICT 76	DISTRICT 77	DISTRICT 78
REPRESENTATIVE (R) KENNETH PASCHAL	REPRESENTATIVE (D) PHILLIP ENSLER	REPRESENTATIVE (R) REED INGRAM	REPRESENTATIVE (D) PATRICE MCCLAMMY	REPRESENTATIVE (D) TASHINA MORRIS	REPRESENTATIVE (D) KENYATTÉ HASSELL
<i>Shelby</i>	<i>Montgomery</i>	<i>Elmore • Montgomery</i>	<i>Montgomery</i>	<i>Montgomery</i>	<i>Montgomery</i>
1134 COUNTY SERVICES DR PELHAM, AL 35124 District: 205-626-9458 State House: 334-261-0469 paschalk357@gmail.com kenneth.paschal@alhouse.gov	PO BOX 20185 MONTGOMERY, AL 36120 District: 334-235-9814 State House: 334-261-0569 phillip.ensler@gmail.com	85 MERIWETHER RD PIKE ROAD, AL 36064 State House: 334-261-0507 reedingram75@gmail.com	530 S UNION ST MONTGOMERY, AL 36125 District: 334-414-7345 State House: 334-261-0580 patrice.mcclammy@alhouse.gov	1320 JORDAN ST MONTGOMERY, AL 36108 District: 256-328-1653 State House: 334-261-0597 tashinamorris1@yahoo.com	1200 HUGH ST MONTGOMERY, AL 36108 District: 334-834-8494 State House: 334-261-0506 ken.hassell@alhouse.gov
DISTRICT 79	DISTRICT 80	DISTRICT 81	DISTRICT 82	DISTRICT 83	DISTRICT 84
REPRESENTATIVE (R) JOE LOVVORN	REPRESENTATIVE (R) CHRIS BLACKSHEAR	REPRESENTATIVE (R) ED OLIVER	REPRESENTATIVE (D) PEBBLIN W. WARREN	REPRESENTATIVE (D) JEREMY GRAY	REPRESENTATIVE (D) BERRY FORTE
<i>Lee</i>	<i>Lee • Russell</i>	<i>Lee • Tallapoosa</i>	<i>Lee • Macon</i>	<i>Lee • Russell</i>	<i>Barbour • Bullock • Russell</i>
515 OGLETREE RD AUBURN, AL 36830 State House: 334-261-0540 joe.lovvorn@alhouse.gov	PO BOX 1178 SMITHS STATION, AL 36877 District: 706-464-8941 State House: 334-261-0428 chris.blackshear@alhouse.gov	PO BOX 277 DADEVILLE, AL 36853 State House: 334-261-0471 edward.oliver@alhouse.gov	PO BOX 1328 TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE, AL 36087-0870 District: 334-727-9127 State House: 334-261-0541 tiger9127@bellsouth.net	PO BOX 1834 OPELIKA, AL 36804-7334 District: 256-247-5059 State House: 334-261-9505 jeremy.gray@alhouse.gov	620 DAVIS LN EUFAULA, AL 36027 State House: 334-261-0566 berry.forte@alhouse.gov

DISTRICT 85	DISTRICT 86	DISTRICT 87	DISTRICT 88	DISTRICT 89	DISTRICT 90
REPRESENTATIVE (R) RICK REHM	REPRESENTATIVE (R) PAUL W. LEE	REPRESENTATIVE (R) JEFF SORRELLS	REPRESENTATIVE (R) JERRY STARNES	REPRESENTATIVE (R) MARCUS PARAMORE	REPRESENTATIVE (R) CHRIS SELLS
Henry • Houston	Houston	Geneva • Houston	Autauga • Elmore	Dale • Pike	Butler • Coffee • Conecuh Crenshaw • Montgomery
2115 CECILY ST DOTHAN, AL 36303 District: 334-797-7770 rrehm46@gmail.com	304 ASHBOROUGH CIR, STE 1 DOTHAN, AL 36301 District: 334-792-9682 State House: 334-261-0488 pleed86@gmail.com	101 3RD AVE HARTFORD, AL 36344 District: 205-620-6610 State House: 334-261-0542 jeffs@fnbhartford.com	1695 WINDSTONE WAY PRATTVILLE, AL 36066 District: 334-549-0782 State House: 334-261-0499 jerry.starnes@alhouse.gov	PO BOX 211 TROY, AL 36081 District: 334-546-1242 State House: 334-261-0593 marcusforhouse@gmail.com	271 NORTH MT ZION RD GREENVILLE, AL 36037 State House: 334-261-0568 repcells@gmail.com
DISTRICT 91	DISTRICT 92	DISTRICT 93	DISTRICT 94	DISTRICT 95	DISTRICT 96
REPRESENTATIVE (R) RHETT MARQUES	REPRESENTATIVE (R) MATTHEW HAMMETT	REPRESENTATIVE (R) STEVE CLOUSE	REPRESENTATIVE (R) JENNIFER FIDLER	REPRESENTATIVE (R) FRANCES HOLK-JONES	REPRESENTATIVE (R) MATT SIMPSON
Coffee	Coffee • Covington • Escambia	Dale • Houston	Baldwin	Baldwin	Baldwin
1161 GENEVA HWY ENTERPRISE, AL 36330 District: 334-289-5664 State House: 334-261-0473 rnett.marques@alhouse.gov	24901 COUNTY ROAD 62 DOZIER, AL 36028 District: 334-496-3649 State House: 334-261-0421 matthew.hammett@alhouse.gov	PO BOX 818 OZARK, AL 36361 District: 334-774-7384 State House: 334-261-0488 steve.clouse@alhouse.gov	1100 FAIRHOPE AVE FAIRHOPE, AL 36532 District: 251-620-9384 State House: 334-261-0409 jennifer.fidler@alhouse.gov	315 E LAUREL AVE, STE 101 FOLEY, AL 36535 District: 251-620-7470 State House: 334-261-0523 frances.holk-jones@alhouse.gov	109 TOMRICK CIR DAPHNE, AL 36526 District: 251-990-4615 State House: 334-261-0424 MattSimpsonAL96@gmail.com
DISTRICT 97	DISTRICT 98	DISTRICT 99	DISTRICT 100	DISTRICT 101	DISTRICT 102
REPRESENTATIVE (D) ADLINE CLARKE	REPRESENTATIVE (D) NAPOLEON BRACY, JR.	REPRESENTATIVE (D) SAM JONES	REPRESENTATIVE (R) MARK SHIREY	REPRESENTATIVE (R) CHRIS PRINGLE	REPRESENTATIVE (R) SHANE STRINGER
Mobile	Mobile	Mobile	Mobile	Mobile	Baldwin • Mobile
PO BOX 40758 MOBILE, AL 36640 District: 251-208-5481 State House: 334-261-0549 adline.clarke@alhouse.gov	3651 CELESTE OAKS DR SARALAND, AL 36571 District: 251-327-2794 State House: 334-261-0556 napoleon@napoleonbracy.com	1 SOUTHERN WAY MOBILE, AL 36619 District: 251-479-8683 State House: 334-261-0963 SLJones@ballhealth.com	312-T SCHILLINGER RD BOX 301 MOBILE, AL 36608 State House: 334-261-0563 mark.shirey@alhouse.gov	4 PRINCESS ANNE RD MOBILE, AL 36608-1929 State House: 334-261-0489 chris.pringle@alhouse.gov	104 S LAWRENCE ST MOBILE, AL 36602 District: 251-208-5480 State House: 334-261-0594 shane.stringer@alhouse.gov
DISTRICT 103	DISTRICT 104	DISTRICT 105			
REPRESENTATIVE (D) BARBARA DRUMMOND	REPRESENTATIVE (R) MARGIE WILCOX	REPRESENTATIVE (R) CHIP BROWN			
Mobile	Mobile	Mobile			
1266 HORTON DR MOBILE, AL 36605 District: 251-208-5481 State House: 334-261-0564 drummondbarbara@att.net	104 S LAWRENCE ST MOBILE, AL 36602 District: 251-476-7711 State House: 334-261-0577 margie.wilcox@alhouse.gov	104 S LAWRENCE ST MOBILE, AL 36602 State House: 334-261-0447 chip.brown@alhouse.gov			

Prepare to engage with legislators during the legislative session

We need your voice to be heard by Alabama legislators. Your unique stories, experiences and situations are critical as lawmakers consider policies that will impact Alabama. If you don't know who your legislators are take a look at the Alabama House and Senate District Maps below.

These maps can also be found at myAEA.org and you can type in your address to find your legislators, too. Together, we can provide a strong voice for public education in Montgomery.



Celebrate *SHORT* the Squirrel's birthday with reading



Join the festivities as *SHORT* the Squirrel, Alabama's literary mascot, gears up for a spectacular 4th birthday celebration! The virtual event promises a day filled with fun, laughter, and engaging learning experiences for students all across Alabama.

The virtual party will be released to registered participants on February 22, 2024. Filmed at Landmark Park, Alabama's Agricultural Museum in Dothan, *SHORT*'s "Four on the Farm" party will celebrate the launch of *SHORT* Grows Great Readers. The booklet will be available for all grades, and registered kindergarten classes will receive complimentary copies.

The event will blend entertainment with educational value, featuring interactive games and exciting surprises highlighting the state's rich agricultural history while captivating and inspiring young minds.

The event is free, but pre-registration is required.

Teachers can secure a spot for their classes online. After registering, a link will be sent to access the virtual party and the corresponding curriculum, making it easy for teachers to seamlessly integrate the experience into their lesson plans.

SHORT the Squirrel is a nonprofit reading initiative founded in 2020 to cultivate a love for reading and ignite the imaginations of Alabama's youngest citizens through literacy-rich, community-oriented, and enjoyable content. *SHORT* makes appearances at elementary schools all across the state to help children explore their surroundings and enjoy reading while on the go. *SHORT* is committed to creating vibrant, engaging narratives that not only entertain but also foster a sense of community, curiosity, and joy.

To learn more about *SHORT* the Squirrel and register for *SHORT*'s "Four on the Farm" virtual event, visit www.shortthesquirrel.com.

Save the Date

2024 AEA PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES CONFERENCE

APRIL 26-27, 2024

Huntsville, Alabama

Collateral
EDUCATOR SERVICES

Reminder

Don't forget to file your Wellness Benefit forms!

Qualifying Plans:
Cancer
Critical Illness
Accident

Visit www.servingeducators.com or Call 866.322.2244

Members in need of sick leave

BALDWIN COUNTY

Lindsay Schell, a paraprofessional at Elberta High School, is in need of donated sick days to care for her daughter who recently had hip surgery. To donate days, contact Davida Bankston at dbankston@bcbe.org.

BIRMINGHAM CITY

Angela Lake, a teacher in Birmingham City Schools, is in need of sick days due to treatment for an autoimmune disease. To donate days, contact Della Nicholas at dmatthews@bhm.k12.al.us.

CONECUH COUNTY

Jo Ann Dees, an administrative assistant to special education at Conecuh County Central Office, is in need of donated sick days to recover from back surgery. To donate days, contact Anita Deason at 251.578.1752.

DEKALB COUNTY

April Phillips, a school nurse at DeKalb County Technology Center, is in need of donated sick days due to caring for her husband who has stage four cancer. To donate days, contact Crystal Williams at clwilliams@dekalbk12.org or 256.638.6921.

MUSCLE SHOALS CITY

Marcus Hill, a custodian at Webster Elementary, is in need of donated sick days due to a recent diagnosis of cancer. To donate days, contact Wimberly Springer at wspringer@mscs.k12.al.us.

WALKER COUNTY

Heath Baker, a bus driver with Walker County Schools, has to undergo surgery and is in need of donated sick days. To donate days, contact Steve Rowe at 205.387.0555.

If you are in need of sick leave, please go to myAEA.org to fill out a sick leave request form or contact your UniServ Director.

Please make certain you provide the name and contact information of the Central Office staff who handles sick leave donations in your school system.

Interested in serving? Apply for an AEA Commission position today!

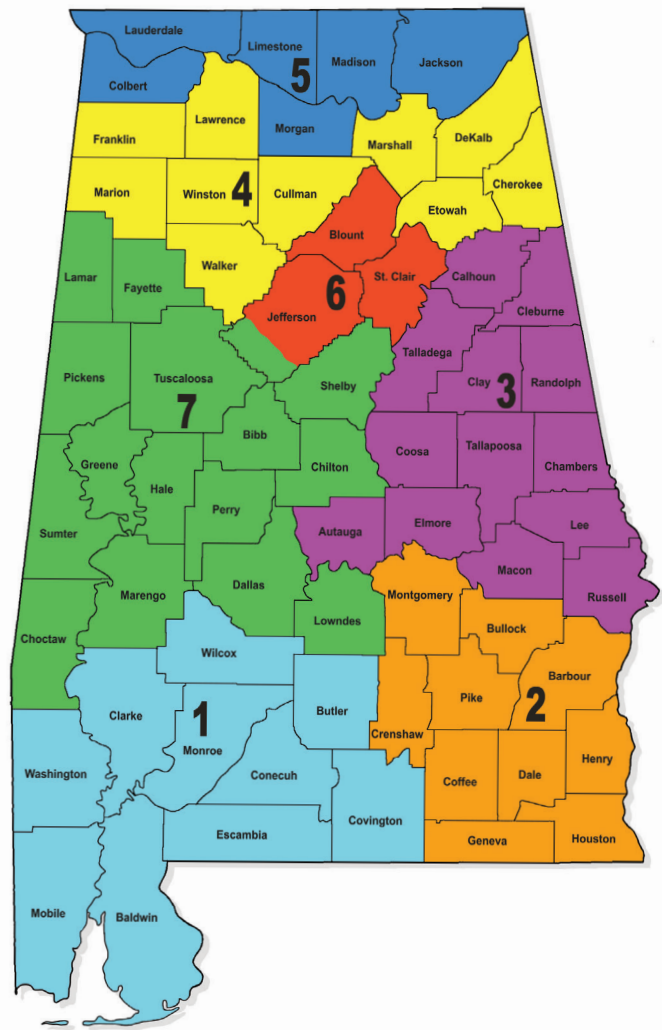
AEA is seeking members who are interested in becoming more active in Association work at the state level by volunteering to serve on one of seven standing commissions. These commissions serve a variety of functions within the Association, including generating and submitting resolutions for consideration by the Delegate Assembly.

AEA standing commissions include:

- Budget Commission
- Legislative Commission
- Education Policy and Professional Practice (EPPP) Commission
- Professional Rights and Responsibilities (PR&R) Commission
- Policies and Procedures Commission
- Resolutions Commission
- Public Relations Commission

Terms begin on July 15, 2024, and appointees will serve a three-year term, unless filling an unexpired term. One third of each commission rotates off each year. Vacancies on commissions must be filled by AEA Board District, AEA Divisions, gender, and race.

Participation on more than one commission at any given time is prohibited. A commission member shall not be reappointed to the same commission for a second consecutive term. The following commissions normally meet only once a year: Legislative Commission, EPPP Commission, Budget Commission, Public Relations Commission. The PR&R, Policies and Procedures, and



Resolutions Commissions may meet several times during a year as needed.

Please complete your recommendation form online at the AEA website or use the form provided here and return it to the Office of the President

by March 31, 2024.

If you need additional information, please contact AEA President Susan Brown's office at 800-392-5839.

Board District #:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	_____
Ethnic:	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	<input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	_____				
Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Active	<input type="checkbox"/> ESP	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired	_____				
Choice:	_____							

Please circle/check or write in selection above

The AEA President is seeking recommendations of members for appointments to AEA Commissions. Local leaders may make recommendations or members may submit their own name. All members are eligible unless currently serving on a commission. Attendance at commission meetings is required.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AEA COMMISSION

Due in Montgomery: March 31, 2024

Return completed form to:

Attn: AEA Commissions, President's Office
P.O. Box 4177 Montgomery, AL, 361030-4177

It is important that all sections of this form be completed.

Name _____ AEA Membership # (available from mailing label of ASJ) _____

Home Address (Street) _____ City/ST _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____

Home Email _____ School System _____

Current Membership Status: Please check /circle all that apply

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| Teacher: | Administrator: | ESP: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> K-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> K-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary | <input type="checkbox"/> Jr. High | <input type="checkbox"/> Bus Driver |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instructor, Vocational/Tech | <input type="checkbox"/> Sr. High | <input type="checkbox"/> Lunchroom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retired | <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired | <input type="checkbox"/> Aide |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Secretary |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Commission Choices: Please indicate 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Rights & Responsibilities (PR&R) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education Policy and Professional Practice (EPP&P) | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative | <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Policies & Procedures | <input type="checkbox"/> Any Commission |

Have you served on an AEA Commission or Committee previously? Yes No *If your response is **yes**, please list:*

Statement of Association Activities:

Submitted by _____ Current Association Position (if applicable) _____

Become a Leader in Your Local Association

Apply for the Emerging Leaders School or BELL Team

Emerging Leaders School Applications

The Alabama Education Association will offer its thirty-third version of the Emerging Leaders School in conjunction with the 2024 AEA Leadership Conference to be held June 12-15 in Huntsville. The Emerging Leaders School will start a day earlier—June 11. Application forms must be received at the AEA Headquarters by 4:45 p.m., Friday, April 26, 2024.

Again, this year, the school will be open to individuals who are members of the AEA and who have not held a local, state, or national office (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, member of local executive committees, board of directors) and who have not attended a state or local Emerging Leaders School.

The purpose of the school is to introduce potential leaders to the Association and provide experiences and training to prepare them for future leadership roles in the AEA, NEA and their local affiliates. The program is also designed to discover leadership talent and help potential leaders become involved in upgrading the organization at the local, state, and

national levels.

The AEA will provide grants to selected potential leaders to assist them in paying conference expenses. Each grant will provide a participant with a non-smoking hotel room at the conference to be shared with another Emerging Leader (if a participant prefers a single room, the participant must remit to AEA one half the cost of a single room with their completed contract); an allowance up to a total of \$85.00 for meals not provided at the conference and all materials. Travel is on your own. A registration fee of \$50.00 will be required for those who are accepted into the school. This fee will be reimbursed if the participant attends and completes the three days of training. Do not send the fee prior to receiving written notification of acceptance into the school.

Members who meet the eligibility requirements will be notified by mail that they have been selected for this school and will be asked to complete contracts which will clearly describe their responsibilities during and after their training, including their long-term commitment to involvement in the United Education Profession.

The selection process will provide for equitable representation

from the various constituencies within the AEA. If all other factors are equal, participants will be selected on a first come, first-serve basis according to the date applications are received at the AEA.

AEA will provide up to 25 scholarships for the school. State leaders, local presidents, and AEA UniServ Directors are encouraged to identify potential leaders and to encourage them to apply for one of these scholarships. The application form must be submitted by the individual applying for the scholarship.

Any questions about the application process may be directed to Tina Collins at 1-800-392-5839, or tinac@alaedu.org.

AEA BELL Team Applications

Would you like your local association to be more effective in recruiting and engaging members? Would you like your local to be able to really make a difference in solving the problems that face your members each day?

Well, AEA feels the same way! The BELL Team program will utilize a new approach to building a strong leadership team for each local that

participates. This special training will be highly interactive and will involve team members in gaining new knowledge and working for three days to put together a strategic plan that will build a more effective local to meet the needs of its members.

To be accepted to this special training during the AEA Leadership Conference (June 12 - 15, 2024) in Huntsville, a local must be willing to send a team of four to six local association leaders (example: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, executive board members, association reps). From the teams that apply, AEA will select up to five teams to participate in this special training. If your local is selected and participates, AEA will pay room and tax for up to two rooms for two nights. AEA will waive the usual Leadership Conference registration fee for each member of the team that is selected and participates.

Any questions about the application process may be directed to Tina Collins at 1-800-392-5839 or tinc@alaedu.org.

If you are interested in having your local participate, please visit our website to apply.




ORDER YOUR 23-24 AEA PRESIDENT'S PIN TODAY! **VISIT MYAEA.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

LEADERSHIP THAT YOU MAY CALL UPON

VOTE

TISLAM D. ELLIS

NEA DIRECTOR




SPARK A CHANGE IN TOMORROW BY VOTING TODAY

She's No Myth

Vote for Lesa Smith

NEA Director Position 1

- ESP State Board
- Local President
- Emerging Leaders
- Bell Team
- State Delegate
- NEA Delegate
- UD 34 Vice President
- Legislative Contact Team



256.605.5404
lesa5862@yahoo.com
FaceBook: Lesa Smith NEA Director Position 1



Presents...

An Empowering Leadership Conference for Educational Leaders



Ryan Leak
Speaker, Executive Coach,
Wall Street Journal Best-Selling Author



John C. Maxwell
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Marcus Buckingham
Best-Selling Author, Global Researcher & Strengths Revolutionist

LIVE2LEAD

Simulcast Guests

Wednesday, February 14, 2024
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
True Divine Baptist Church
4601 Troy Highway
Montgomery, AL

Facilitated by Tasha McDonald,
Owner - Maximized Growth, LLC

Registration
Deadline: 2/12/24



FREE for AEA members who hold
Instructional Leadership Certification

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www.clasleaders.org

Register today for the statewide ACT Division Conference



Join the AEA Association of Classroom Teachers (ACT) Division for its statewide professional learning conference on March 8-9, 2024. It will be held at the Hotel at Auburn University & Dixon Conference Center in Auburn, Alabama. This conference will feature dynamic speakers and engaging, interactive breakout sessions. Session topics include but are not limited to: Discipline of Students with IEPs; Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools for Education; Literacy and Numeracy; TEAMS-approved content; and more!

There will also be a specialized Legislators in the Classroom Training of Trainers for NBCTs

and teacher leaders. In this training, members will learn effective strategies and communication skills to obtain resources and support for their classrooms.

Members will receive clock hours toward Continuing Education Units (CEU) and also have an opportunity to begin a Professional Learning Unit (PLU) study.

Registration is open at myaea.org. The ACT Conference registration fee is \$25 for AEA members and \$250 for non-members. Conference registration fees are non-refundable.

For more information, contact Dr. Pamela Fossett at pamela.fossett@alaedu.org.

Pike County Schools receives \$879,801 grant for career-connected schools



PIKE COUNTY SCHOOLS

Pike County Schools recently received a \$879,801 grant to assist with career-connected schools – becoming one of only 19 new grant awards totaling \$25 million through the first-ever Perkins Innovation and Modernization, Career Connected High Schools (CCHS) grant program.

This investment, issued by the U.S. Department of Education (Department), builds the capacity of

education and workforce systems to partner with businesses and industries to develop new high-quality career-connected high school programs for more students. Grantees will leverage four evidence-based strategies, or “keys,” to help students unlock career success, including providing postsecondary education and career guidance, increasing access to dual or concurrent enrollment programs,

increasing work-based learning opportunities, and providing industry-recognized credentials.

“It’s time to invest in career-connected learning that will better prepare our young people for exciting careers and family-sustaining jobs in today’s most in-demand fields,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. “We can transform the American high school experience and raise the bar for student engagement, achievement, and career-readiness in this country by providing all students with access to dual enrollment classes, work-based learning, industry credentials, and comprehensive career advising.”

The grant is part of the Department’s Raise the Bar: Unlocking Career Success initiative, aimed at helping young Americans access good-paying

jobs created by the Investing in America Initiative through seeding and scaling promising models of innovation. The CCHS grant program is the first in the Department’s history intended to build capacity and coordination among secondary and postsecondary education, workforce development systems, and other community partners to expand access to career-connected high school programs for more students, with a focus on increasing access to high-quality pathways for underserved students.

The Department received more than 160 eligible applications from 43 states and the District of Columbia, requesting more than \$850 million to implement comprehensive career-connected learning projects.

Cintas announces 11th annual Custodian of the Year contest



In the past few years, the role of school custodians has never been more important. To honor their hard work and dedication, Cintas Corporation launches its 10th annual Cintas Custodian of the Year contest, which honors standout school custodians. Submit nominations at custodianoftheyear.com through February 12.

“Custodians are the force behind a clean, safe and welcoming space for students to learn and succeed,” said Christiny Betsch, Marketing Manager, Cintas. “For the last 10 years, we’ve had the honor of celebrating one-of-a-kind custodians with remarkable stories. We’re ecstatic to honor custodians once again

in our 11th year of this contest.”

Cintas will award \$10,000 to the winning custodian and \$5,000 in Cintas and Rubbermaid products and services to the winner’s school. On top of that, the winner’s school will receive a complete facility assessment and Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) Advanced by GBAC certification from ISSA, The Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association, valued at \$20,000. The other nine finalists will receive \$1,000 each from Cintas, a cleaning supply package from Rubbermaid and complimentary tuition to one ISSA Cleaning Management Institute (CMI) virtual training event, valued at \$1,500. The Top 3 finalists will also receive an all-expense-paid trip for two to the ISSA Show North America in Las Vegas in November where they’ll be celebrated for their accomplishments.

“It’s important to show appreciation to school custodians for the important work they do in establishing healthy learning environments,” said John Barrett, Executive Director, ISSA. “ISSA is proud to take part in this contest and looks forward to celebrating outstanding custodians across the U.S.”

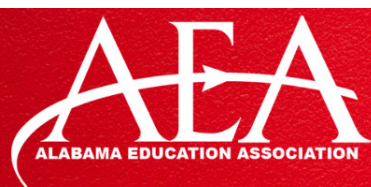
Last year, Cintas Corporation awarded Richard “Mr. Rich” Toomey of Kelly Mill Elementary in Cumming, Ga. as the 2023 Cintas Custodian of the Year. To celebrate Mr. Rich, students, family and staff

honored him with a surprise ceremony, complete with a confetti cannon line and balloon arch as well as endless cheering and high-fives.

The Cintas Custodian of the Year contest is open to all elementary, middle, high school, college and university custodians who have worked at their school for at least two years. Nominations must be 500 words or less on why the nominee is deserving of the award and submitted by February 9. Cintas will announce the top 10 finalists on March 5. The public can vote for their favorite custodian through April 12, and the finalist with the most votes will be crowned Custodian of the Year in the spring.

Rubbermaid Commercial Products’ Sr. Vice President Sales and Marketing, Robert Posthauer, added: “Custodians are the ones behind the scenes who ensure school facilities are welcoming learning environments. Without them, schools, universities, and colleges wouldn’t be able to function properly. We’re delighted to again partner with Cintas as they celebrate the 10th Custodian of the Year awards to cherished school custodians.”

For more information about the Cintas Custodian of the Year contest, contact Brianna Fitzpatrick at bfitzpatrick@mulberry.com.



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Stay up to date with the latest news and updates from AEA – from anywhere!



Join the Black Male Educator Learning Lab cohort



AEA
ALABAMA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

BLACK MALE EDUCATOR
Learning Lab

RECRUITMENT • MENTORSHIP • RETENTION

Participation Requirements:
Black Male Educator
Current AEA Member
Alabama Public School Educator
Commitment to Complete the Entire Course

SIGN UP TODAY AT MYAEA.ORG!
For more information, contact:
Dr. Pamela Fossett at pamela.fossett@alaedu.org

AEA is partnering with the NEA Center for Great Public Schools to bring you this professional development opportunity centered around recruitment, mentorship, and retention of Black males as members of AEA and the education profession. This learning lab's mission is to help recruit and retain Black male educators in Alabama's public schools. This virtual learning opportunity will offer continuous mentorship with effective teaching strategies, a professional growth plan of action, scholarship opportunities, social and emotional development, and guidelines on becoming active in your local and state education association. This engaging and fun learning experience will provide Black males with the support they need to be successful.

In order to participate, you must be a Black male, a current AEA member, and an Alabama public school educator, and you must show a commitment to complete the course.

Meetings will be held virtually at 6:00 p.m. on February 21, March 20, and April 24, 2024. For more information, visit myaea.org or contact Dr. Willie Shelby at willieshelby@gmail.com or Dr. Pamela Fossett at pamela.fossett@alaedu.org. We hope you will join us for this series of learning and fellowship!

The Education Policy and Professional Practice (EPPP) Department invites you to join the Black Male Educators Learning Lab (BMELL) for mentorship, coaching, support, and networking! BMELL is open to all Black male AEA members who work in Alabama public schools. Professional development credit will be awarded to all members who participate in each virtual learning lab session.

AERA offers \$2,000 scholarships to active AEA members

The Alabama Education Retirees Foundation, Inc. (AERF) is offering a helping hand to active AEA members seeking to further their education.

Each year, 10 \$2,000 scholarships are awarded to AEA members in good standing in each of AERA's 10 districts. Certified and non-certified public education employees who are employed in a state public school system (K-12) or state postsecondary institution are eligible to apply.

If you have been a resident of the state of Alabama for at least 12 months, haven't received an Alabama Education Retirees Foundation Scholarship Award within the last five years, and demonstrate both excellence and initiative in your field, you are eligible to apply for one of this year's \$2,000 scholarships.

The program allows scholarship recipients to receive training in areas of counseling, mathematics, science, computer education, library media, special education, English as a second language, or other specialized areas where a proven need exists that will result in a direct benefit to students, fellow educators, or the instructional program. Recipients may advance their training at the graduate level or specialized at the undergraduate level.

The Alabama Education Retirees Association, Inc. (AERA) founded the AERF with a commitment to support educators and support personnel in Alabama's public schools and institutions as they

continue to be lifelong learners. Since its official incorporation in 1989, the Foundation has awarded over 200 scholarships.

AERA is the retired division of AEA and is comprised of 76 local units, including five active higher education units, that are divided into 10 districts. AERA is currently the third largest state retiree group in NEA-Retired.

In addition to financial support from state membership and local units, the Foundation actively seeks contributions to continue awarding scholarships to Alabama's deserving educators. You can have the name of a loved one or friend included on the "Hall of Fame" wall in the AERA state office in Montgomery for a contribution of \$100 or more. To learn more, you can contact the state office at 1-800-537-6867

The application must be completed and received by mail or hand-delivered to the Alabama Education Retirees Association, Inc. by 4:00 p.m. on March 12, 2024, or faxed or emailed to info@aerainc.org by 11:59 p.m. on March 12, 2024. For more information, visit aerainc.org.



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Retiring in 2024?

CONVERT YOUR ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP TO RETIRED STATUS **NOW**
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Are you concerned about a secure retirement?

In a recent edition of *The Advisor*, Dr. David Bronner explains why AERA/AEA membership is critical when it comes to your pension program:

"To help you stay abreast of legislation affecting your benefits, I strongly encourage you to join a retiree organization, such as the Alabama Education Retirees Association (AERA) for education retirees. No one knows about the future; however, your membership in these organizations will help make the difference."

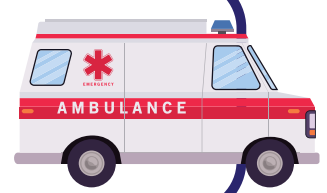
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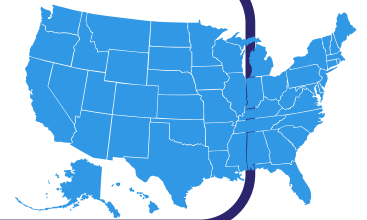


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Void where prohibited by law. *If a member has a high deductible health plan that is compatible with a health savings account, benefits will become available under the MASA membership for expenses incurred for medical care (as defined under Internal Revenue Code section 213(d)) once a member satisfies the statutory minimum deductible under Internal Revenue Code section 223(c) for high deductible health plan coverage that is compatible with a health savings account.