Aligning K-12, Higher Education, CTE, and Workforce Pathways
Alabama: Continuous Learning System, Aligned and Competency-Based

Nick Moore, Governor’s Office of Education and Workforce Transformation
• Alabama is committed to meeting the Alabama postsecondary attainment goal of adding 500,000 credential holders to the workforce and raising Alabama’s labor force participation rate to the national average by 2025 through human capital development.

• Using the combined 2020 WIOA plan and the Alabama Career Pathways Model, Alabama is working to establish a wage premium for individuals who presently are unable to enter the labor force due to barriers such as benefits cliffs.

• The career pathway model will provide a feedback loop between employers and employees through competency-based career pathways. A currency of credentials of value will also facilitate progressive wage increases; upward mobility within a firm; and transferability of skills within; and between, industry sectors.

• The WIOA performance indicators have been updated to ensure that the public workforce system is responsible for meeting the needs of all the Alabamians with barriers to education and workforce training in each of Alabama’s seven workforce regions.
The Alabama Committee on Credentialing and Career Pathways (ACCCP), a public-private entity, was codified by Act 2019-506. Act 2019-506 passed in the Legislature unanimously during the 2019 session and was signed into law by Governor Ivey on June 10, 2019.

The ACCCP is tasked with a two-fold mission: (1) to identify Alabama’s regional and statewide in-demand occupations and (2) to identify competency models, career pathways, and credentials of value linked to those in-demand occupations using labor market information.

The ACCCP also includes 16 Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) that are each composed of seven gubernatorially-appointed members who are members of business and industry.
# The Five-Star Rubric for Identifying In-Demand Occupations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria I</th>
<th>Criteria II</th>
<th>Criteria III</th>
<th>Criteria IV</th>
<th>Criteria V</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupation must earn at least 70 percent of the median regional wage</td>
<td>Occupation shows positive projected growth over the coming decade</td>
<td>Occupation is projected to have a minimum of 15 openings a year</td>
<td>Occupation median wage exceeds the current lower living standard income level (LLSIL) 70%</td>
<td>Occupation requires a postsecondary degree, certificate, or credential for initial employment</td>
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- Occupations will be evaluated against the Five-Star Rubric for Identifying In-Demand Occupations to qualify for each of the seven regional lists of in-demand occupations.
- Occupations must possess all of Criteria I-III and one or both of Criteria IV and V to qualify for a regional list.
- Occupations that qualify for at least three regional lists will qualify for the statewide list of in-demand occupations.
Mission Two: Survey of Employer Competencies, Competency Models, and Career Pathways

- The Governor’s Survey of Employer Competencies is conducted annually to extend the reach of the TACs by surveying all employers in each of the 16 industry sectors on the in-demand occupations and credentials of value at their firm.

- The inaugural Survey of Employer Competencies was conducted statewide between June 15 and July 3, 2020.

- Between July 13 and August 24, 2020, the TACs developed competency models using the results of the Governor’s Survey of Employer Competencies results and a competency dictionary.

- Between August 24 and September 18, 2020, the TACs, completed career pathways and lattices by stacking approved competency models.
Alabama’s Two-Pronged Career Pathways Model

**Youth Prong**
(Secondary CTE, Post-Secondary CTE, and WIOA programs align to provide career pathways for in-school youth)

**Adult Prong**
(Co-enrollment in Adult Basic Education, Post-Secondary CTE, and WIOA programs provides career pathways for adult learners and non-traditional students)

Stackable Credentials mapped to AA/AS → AA/AAS → BA/BS

Credential Attainment, Work-Based Learning, and Dual Enrollment

Progression across a competency-based career pathway provides multiple points of entry and exit between education and the workforce.

Low-Skill Jobs  |  Middle-Skill Jobs  |  Semi-Skill Jobs  |  Advanced-Skill Jobs

Outcomes
- Delivers career pathways for traditional and non-traditional learners in all 16 career clusters and 79 career pathways.
- Facilitates the braiding of CTE and WIOA funds to ensure all Alabamians have the support needed to complete a career pathway.
- Facilitates the alignment of CTE and WIOA performance indicators.
- Provides a targeted approach for reaching the state’s education attainment and labor force participation goals.
- Fosters the development of a “credential currency” based on stackable credentials, which will provide participants with multiple entrance and exit points between education and workforce programs without losing credit.
- Provides a transparent and intentional process for overcoming benefits cliffs when coupled with a continuum of supportive services.
- Promotes work-based learning as a catalyst for operationalizing the two-prong career pathways model.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. The TAC will classify the underlying credential referenced in the application as either:</th>
<th>6. Earned after a minimum number of hours of instruction time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Required by law;   b. Mandated by industry;   c. Preferred by industry</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The TAC will determine whether the credential is:</td>
<td>7. Stackable in a sequence of aligned competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Required to obtain a job;   b. Part of a stackable sequence; or   c. Complementary, but not directly aligned, to an occupation or career pathway</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Accredited or recognized by a statewide or national industry-recognized accrediting body</td>
<td>8. Valuable as determined by leading to at least a twenty 20% wage premium over a high school diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Credential is aligned to an occupation on a regional or statewide list of in-demand occupations</td>
<td>9. Traceable and trackable by the ATLAS on Career Pathways</td>
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<td>5. Achievable by students in a secondary and/or the postsecondary level of study</td>
<td>10. Portable across or within an industry sector</td>
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Alabama’s Credential Registry

• The Alabama Credential Registry launched on July 1, 2020, and the open registration period for the 2020-2021 will close on November 1, 2020.

• Credential and degree providers will register credentials to the Alabama Credential Registry through the Alabama Commission on Higher Education portal.

• After being registered by the credential provider to the registry, credential info will be vetted by the appropriate Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) against the ACCCP’s non-degree quality assurance standards and sent to the ACCCP for approval.

• The first Compendia of Valuable Credentials will be released on December 21, 2020.
On September 25, 2020, Alabama was awarded a three-year, $17.8 million Reimagine Workforce Preparation grant to implement the Alabama Workforce Stabilization Program (AWSP), which will provide short-term educational and training programs to help Alabamians who have been displaced by COVID-19 transition into new fields.

Alabama’s RWP grant award will fund the implementation and scaling of industry-sector-based education and training programs in five areas: (1) advanced manufacturing; (2) healthcare; (3) information technology; (4) transportation, distribution, and logistics; and (5) construction.

The AWSP participants will receive wrap-around services through the Human Capital Development Fund to offset costs associated with transportation, childcare, housing, and equipment costs.

The AWSP will serve 2,648 participants per year, for a total of 7,944 total participants served over three years.
Alabama College and Career Exploration Tool (ACCET)

The ACCET will provide all Alabamians with access to:

- Link to the FAFSA Application
- Universal Needs Assessment for SNAP and TANF Enrollment
- Adult and In-School Remediation
- Digital Resume
- Career Exploration and Discovery for Youth and Adults
- Link to the Alabama Works! Job Portal
- Integrated Learning Record
- Prior Learning Assessments
- Integrated WIOA Case Management System
- Return On Investment Estimate Tool
- Benefit Cliff and Self-Sufficiency Tool
- Transfer Articulation Portals
- Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)
- Link to the Credential Registry
• The Atlanta Fed has partnered with the State of Alabama to create the Dashboard for Alabamians to Visualize Income Determinations (DAVID).

• DAVID is designed to help people navigate benefit cliffs by visualizing how their incomes will increase over time as they move toward self-sufficiency.

• DAVID will also help us implement a no-wrong-door approach to the workforce development system by helping individuals overcome benefits cliffs by identifying a continuum of services for consumers of the public workforce system.

• Throughout the summer of 2020, the State of Alabama and the Atlanta Fed partnered to conduct a usability survey and trainings on how to use DAVID for state workforce development staff and education and human service providers.

• A competency-based training course and assessment are under development for future use by public workforce system staff as part of the cross-training process to ensure that benefit cliff abatement is central to Alabama’s strategy for helping people achieve self-sufficiency.