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ABSTRACT

Under the direction and leadership of the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education and the Alabama Department of Education, Workforce 21 was created as a response to the lack of skilled workers necessary to fill high-skill, high-wage jobs of the 21st century. More than 600 Alabamians representing industry, labor, parents, students, government, and education participated in the Workforce 21 strategic planning process. Workforce 21 provides a clear direction for an effective, accountable system of workforce development and career-focused education in the state's public schools and two-year colleges. Stakeholders identified five "imperatives" and corresponding strategies for the strategic plan. The imperatives are the foundations for how Alabama will conduct career/technical education in its secondary and postsecondary institutions. These imperatives are to: (1) ensure that students attain the skills and knowledge they will need in the workplace and for continued learning; (2) expand options for students to achieve career and education goals; (3) anticipate and respond quickly to changes in the workplace and in society; (4) continuously improve the quality of programs and services; and (5) demonstrate accountability. Future initiatives of career/technical education will promote achievement of one or more of these imperatives. Because this is a long-range plan, action steps and outcomes will be identified annually. (JJL)

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# Work force

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## A Strategic Plan for Developing Alabama's Workforce

1999

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### Workforce 21 Partners

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Industry    Labor    Educators    Students    Parents    Community Organizations

Building Alabama's Workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

JC 990 352

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# Contents

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<b>Workforce 21 Description</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>The Workforce 21 Charge</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Responding to the Challenge: A Letter to the Citizens of Alabama</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Imperatives and Strategies for the 21st Century</b> .....	<b>5</b>
IMPERATIVE 1: Ensure that students attain the skills and knowledge they will need in the workplace and for continued learning. ....	6
IMPERATIVE 2: Expand options for students to achieve career and education goals. ....	7
IMPERATIVE 3: Anticipate and respond quickly to changes in the workplace and in society. ....	8
IMPERATIVE 4: Continuously improve the quality of programs and services. ....	9
IMPERATIVE 5: Demonstrate accountability. ....	10
<b>Appendix: A Solid Foundation for the Workforce 21 Strategic Plan</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Regional Meetings .....	13
Focus Groups .....	13
Position Papers .....	13
Forum 21 .....	15
Assumptions .....	18
Society .....	18
Government .....	18
Employment .....	19
Education .....	19
Leadership .....	20
<b>Glossary</b> .....	<b>21</b>

# Workforce 21

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- ✓ is education, business, industry, labor, parents, students, government, and community organizations **working together** to provide a strong, effective system of career/technical education in Alabama.
- ✓ promotes a **seamless system** of career/technical education.
- ✓ conveys the **focus and direction** of career/technical education in Alabama's public schools and two-year colleges.
- ✓ provides the foundation for **action and positive change**.
- ✓ demonstrates Alabama's **commitment** to a dynamic, accountable world-class career/technical education system.
- ✓ positions career/technical education as a significant **economic development tool** for Alabama.

***"Our nation will rise and fall based on the skills and knowledge of our workers. We can have all the natural resources, all the capital, and all the technology available at our fingertips, but if we don't have the people to make it work, we don't have a competitive advantage."***

Lester Thurow  
Economics Professor  
MIT

# The Workforce 21 Charge

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The 1990s witnessed a period of unprecedented economic growth in Alabama and in the nation. This growth is evidenced by industries such as Mercedes Benz and Boeing selecting Alabama as the site for state-of-the-art production facilities. Economic growth is further underscored by an unemployment rate currently below four percent, its lowest level in more than 20 years.

Despite the positive economic trends, Alabama is faced with major challenges. More than thirty percent of Alabama's adults do not have a high school diploma - the most basic credential for workforce entry. Yet employment in industry is predicted to increase by approximately 22 percent by the year 2005. Alabama's economy is expected to provide 400,000 new jobs by 2005, most of which will require education beyond the high school level or extensive training by the employer.

A concomitant challenge to Alabama is the lack of skilled workers necessary to fill high-skill, high-wage jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In a study by the Alabama Industry and Manufacturers Association, employers reported that the primary impediment to economic development in Alabama is the lack of a skilled workforce.

The charge of *Workforce 21* was to respond to the challenges facing Alabama's economy and education system. *Workforce 21* meets this charge by providing clear direction for an effective, accountable system of workforce development and career-focused education in the state's public schools and two-year colleges. Specific actions and positive change will result from the direction established in *Workforce 21*.

*Workforce 21* is the foundation for a career/technical education system that:

- ▶ Provides individuals with skills and knowledge needed for successful career entry and/or advancement
- ▶ Provides rigorous, relevant instructional programs for all students
- ▶ Responds quickly to the needs of students and of employers
- ▶ Strengthens teaching and learning
- ▶ Is accountable to the public

State and local actions resulting from *Workforce 21* will provide to individuals:

- ▶ Academic, technical, technological, and employability skills needed to enter and compete successfully in the current and future workplace
- ▶ Preparation necessary for continued learning and skill development
- ▶ Industry-recognized credentials

Measures of success of state and local initiatives will include:

- ▶ Academic, technical, technological, and employability skills attainment
- ▶ Enrollment, graduation, and program completion rates
- ▶ Rates at which students attain their goals for program enrollment
- ▶ Participation and completion of non-traditional students
- ▶ Student and employer satisfaction
- ▶ Placement in employment
- ▶ Continuing education rates
- ▶ Licensing and certification rates
- ▶ Extent to which program offerings meet market demand
- ▶ Industry certification of programs and instructors

***"The broad shoulders of this economy are actually in the brain power of its workers (who) are now expected to operate sophisticated technology, work in teams, and take responsibility for quality control."***

*James Houghton, Chair  
National Skills Standards Board*

# Responding to the Challenge

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## A Letter to the Citizens of Alabama

The world around us is changing at an ever-increasing pace - from technological changes in the workplace to changes in our social structure. These changes pose major challenges for career/technical education in our public schools and two-year colleges. *Workforce 21* is about meeting the challenges. *Workforce 21* is the commitment of the State Department of Education and the Department of Postsecondary Education to working together and being proactive in meeting the needs of students, workers, and employers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We are very proud of the *Workforce 21* strategic plan. The plan is based on trends impacting education and what Alabamians said they need and expect from a world-class career/technical education system. The plan was developed by education partners: industry, labor, parents, students, community organizations, government, and educators. *Workforce 21* is a partnership between secondary and postsecondary education that strengthens programs at both the high school and two-year college levels.

The State Department of Education and the Department of Postsecondary Education are committed to providing career/technical education programs of exceptional quality that position Alabama for future economic growth. We are committed to meeting the high expectations that Alabama citizens have for career/technical education.

*Workforce 21* provides direction for change and improvement in career/technical education. The strategic plan is a framework for state and local planning and for measuring progress. Guided by *Workforce 21*, our state's secondary and postsecondary institutions will be better able to provide programs and services that prepare Alabamians for successful careers and for continued learning.

We are pleased to present *Workforce 21* to the citizens of Alabama. We look forward to working with education partners in implementing this plan and providing career/technical education that meets the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Fred Gainous  
Chancellor  
Department of Postsecondary Education

Ed Richardson  
Superintendent of Education  
State Department of Education



# Imperatives and Strategies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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More than 600 Alabamians representing industry, labor, parents, students, government, and education participated in the *Workforce 21* strategic planning process through regional meetings, focus groups, and position papers. They expressed to the *Workforce 21* Steering Committee their desires for a world-class system of career/technical education and their expectations of education at the state and local levels. It was from stakeholders' input that five "imperatives" and corresponding strategies were identified for the strategic plan. Imperatives are directives essential to providing career/technical education that meets the future needs of employers and of students.

The imperatives are the foundation for how Alabama will conduct career/technical education in its secondary and postsecondary institutions. Future initiatives of career/technical education will promote achievement of one or more of these imperatives. The strategies listed below each imperative are examples of the steps that Alabama's schools and colleges have taken or will take to promote achievement of the imperatives. Specific actions relative to each strategy will be identified and implemented at the state and local levels.

*Workforce 21* guides the policies and practices of career/technical education statewide. *Workforce 21* establishes the context and direction for state and local planning and evaluation. School boards, advisory committees, and community organizations can use *Workforce 21* to guide local programming. Because this is a long-range plan, action steps and outcomes will be identified annually.

## **IMPERATIVE I: Ensure that students attain the skills and knowledge they will need in the workplace and for continued learning.**

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### **To achieve this imperative, Career/Technical Education will:**

- Provide instruction and activities that develop students'...
  - ✓ broad-based technical skills and occupation-specific skills.
  - ✓ academic skills.
  - ✓ computer skills and other technological competencies.
  - ✓ problem solving and analytical skills.
  - ✓ work ethics.
  - ✓ interpersonal skills.
  - ✓ understanding of business principles and economic concepts.
  - ✓ employability skills.
- Verify and document students' academic, technical, technological, and employability skills attainment.
- Integrate academic and technical curricula.
- Prepare students for continued education and skill development.
- Provide articulated secondary/postsecondary curricula.
- Provide work-site learning including cooperative education, mentorships, and apprenticeships.
- Base curricula and program offerings on industry-identified competencies and standards.

***“Young people will need to understand what qualities are expected of employees beyond the ability to do a task. This means that they will need life skills and a knowledge that learning is a lifetime pursuit. They must be prepared for the changes that will have to take place in the workplace as improved methods are developed. They will have to learn teamwork and interpersonal communication techniques, but they must also understand that reading, writing, and math are basic to understanding most tasks in the workplace.”***

*Powell Brewton, President  
Alabama Council on Career/Technical Education*

## **IMPERATIVE 2: Expand options for students to achieve career and education goals.**

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### **To achieve this imperative, Career/Technical Education will:**

- Promote students' understanding of career options, education requirements, and the nature of work.
- Minimize the physical segregation of career/technical education and academic education.
- Facilitate participation of non-traditional students, including the four-year college bound, in career/technical education.
- Provide program completers a credentials document that identifies skills attained.
- Identify and minimize barriers to participation in career/technical education.
- Change the name of workforce development and career-focused education from "vocational education" to "career/technical education".
- Implement career clusters, career majors, and career pathways at the secondary level.
- Develop awareness among students, parents, educators, and the general public of the career options, earnings potential, and education opportunities provided through career/technical education.
- Develop career magnet schools and career academies at the secondary level.
- Offer a career/technical endorsement and an advanced career/technical endorsement to the high school diploma options.
- Provide professional development activities to facilitate the career guidance process.

***"Career/technical education clearly should be positioned as a program for bright, energetic students with strong technical skills, the ability to solve problems creatively and the ability to learn new skills as needed. It must raise the level of both the academic and technical expertise demanded of our students....Giving students real-life applications for skills they might otherwise see as irrelevant to their future will give them a tangible reason for mastering the skills we know they need."***

*Robert A. Lane, President  
Alabama Association of School Boards*

### **IMPERATIVE 3: Anticipate and respond quickly to changes in the workplace and in society.**

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#### **To achieve this imperative, Career/Technical Education will:**

- Implement flexible, accommodating program delivery structures.
- Make readily available customized training programs for business and industry.
- Actively involve industry practitioners in designing and delivering programs and services.
- Provide programs and services to assist individuals transition from economic dependency to self sufficiency.
- Streamline administrative procedures and regulatory activities.
- Actively involve parents in the education process.
- Collaborate with other agencies and organizations to meet needs of communities and individuals.
- Implement collaborative secondary/postsecondary initiatives to reduce high school dropout rates.
- Provide programs and services that promote development of "life skills".

***"Education must be seen as a component to the constant process of retooling and preparing for the changes that are occurring more rapidly. More than ever, employees will need to hone the skills of intellectual adaptability. Employees must have a solid understanding of basic concepts in mathematics and science, and they must be able to integrate new information into existing models. Finally, they must be able to communicate effectively and understand enough about themselves and others to develop methods for team building and working toward common goals."***

*Charles Ray Nash  
The University of Alabama System*

## **IMPERATIVE 4: Continuously improve the quality of programs and services.**

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### **To achieve this imperative, Career/Technical Education will:**

- Ensure that instructional equipment and technology are current.
- Provide industry externships and other activities that promote instructional currency.
- Ensure that programs have active, effective advisory committees.
- Provide professional development activities based on needs identified by instructors and administrators.
- Ensure that instructors and programs meet industry certification or its equivalent if no certification is available.
- Collaborate with universities in the provision of teacher education programs.
- Work with state and local leaders to implement long-term strategies for adequately funding high quality programs and services.
- Provide leadership development activities for career/technical educators.

***"Schools must create programs to improve students' qualifications and ability to apply academic skills to work-based learning situations. Schools must work with employers to develop a curriculum that integrates classroom training and related academic instruction with on-the-job training. Program curricula must include employability skills development. We must also rely more on using business and industry sites to train our students on state-of-the-art equipment."***

*Henry J. Hector, Executive Director  
Alabama Commission on Higher Education*

## **IMPERATIVE 5: Demonstrate accountability.**

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### **To achieve this imperative, Career/Technical Education will:**

- Publicly report program performance information.
- Guarantee students' skills upon completion of a postsecondary program.
- Implement rigorous performance measures and standards for programs and services.
- Monitor programs and services, and implement appropriate improvement measures.
- Collaborate with other agencies and organizations to avoid duplication.
- Implement an effective system of program completer/leaver follow-up.
- Discontinue funding ineffective programs and services.
- Share facilities and equipment between secondary and postsecondary programs and with industry to provide more effective and efficient instruction.

***"The Litmus Test is your answer: How well do the graduates perform?"***

*Jerry W. Spencer  
Alabama Bankers Association*

# **Workforce 21: Building Alabama's Workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

***To meet the needs of students and of employers, it is imperative that career/technical education***

- ✓ provide students the skills and knowledge needed in the workplace and for continued learning;
- ✓ expand options for students to achieve their career and education goals;
- ✓ anticipate and respond quickly to changes in the workplace and in society;
- ✓ continuously improve the quality of programs and services; and
- ✓ demonstrate accountability

***so that students will possess***

- ✓ academic, technical, technological, and employability skills needed to enter and to advance in the workplace;
- ✓ preparation necessary for successful careers and continued learning; and
- ✓ industry-recognized credentials.



***Continuous improvement practices will be based on measures of performance including***

- ✓ skills attainment;
- ✓ enrollment, graduation, and program completion rates;
- ✓ rates at which students achieve their goals for enrollment;
- ✓ participation and completion of non-traditional students;
- ✓ student and employer satisfaction;
- ✓ placement in employment;
- ✓ continuing education rates;
- ✓ licensing and certification rates;
- ✓ extent to which program offerings meet market demand; and
- ✓ industry certification of programs and instructors.

# Appendix

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## A Solid Foundation for the *Workforce 21* Strategic Plan

### Stakeholder Input

More than 600 people participated in the *Workforce 21* process through regional meetings and focus groups. Other stakeholders were represented through position papers submitted by organizations.

Four questions were addressed in the regional meetings, focus groups, and position papers:

1. What skills do students need to be successful employees in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
2. What role should career/technical education play in providing those skills?
3. How must career/technical education change to provide students those skills?
4. How can the image of career/technical education be improved?

Responses to these four questions provided a basis for the *Workforce 21* imperatives and strategies.

### Forum 21

Forum 21 is a group of key leaders from throughout the state who clarified the *Workforce 21* imperatives and strategies. Forum 21 members representing business, industry, labor, parents, students, government, community organizations, and education met at the Mercedes-Benz Institute in March and in June 1998.

### Assumptions About Future Trends

Underlying *Workforce 21* is research about workplace, political, demographic, and societal trends that impact education.

### Leadership

The *Workforce 21* Steering Committee provided visionary leadership for developing the strategic plan.



## **Regional Meetings**

More than 600 people attended eleven regional meetings during the summer of 1997. These meetings were an education/industry collaborative effort, and were sponsored by members of the Alabama Industry and Manufacturers Association. In breakout groups, meeting attendees identified strategies to ensure that students will have the skills needed for successful career entry and advancement.

Regional meetings were held in the following cities.

Fairfield  
Decatur  
Anniston  
Ozark  
Sylacauga  
Guntersville  
Prattville  
Auburn  
Tuscaloosa  
Mobile  
Haleyville

## **Focus Groups**

Focus groups were conducted at Bessemer State Technical College with representatives from the agriculture, health care, construction, transportation, and hospitality industries. Focus group participants addressed issues specific to their industries and identified strategies for the *Workforce 21* plan.

## **Position Papers**

Stakeholder groups submitted position papers expressing their members' desires for the *Workforce 21* plan contents. Position papers were solicited from the following groups.

Alabama Agribusiness Council	Alabama Air National Guard
Alabama Army National Guard	Alabama Association of Home Health Agencies
Alabama Association of Realtors	Alabama Association of Life Underwriters
Alabama Association of School Boards	Alabama Association of Regional Councils
Alabama Association of Assisted Living Facilities	Alabama Bankers Association
Alabama Beef Council	Alabama Cable Television Association
Alabama Cattlemen's Association	Alabama Cattlewomen's Association

Alabama Chemical Association	Alabama Chamber of Commerce
Alabama Chiropractic Association	Alabama Commission on Higher Education
Alabama Concrete Industries Association	Alabama Conference on Social Work
Alabama Dental Association	Associated Builders and Contractors
ALFA Insurance	Alabama Education Association
Alabama Financial Services Association	Alabama Forestry Association
Alabama Hospital Association	Alabama Hospitality Association
Alabama League of Municipalities	Alabama Industry and Manufacturers Assoc.
Alabama Masonry Institute	Alabama Manufactured Housing Association
Alabama Medical Association	Alabama Nursing Home Association
Ala. Orthopedics and Sports Medicine Assn.	Alabama Petroleum Council
Alabama Pharmacy Association	Ala. Petroleum Equipment Contractors Assn.
Alabama Retail Association	Alabama Poultry and Egg Association
Alabama Road Builders Association	Alabama Rural Electric Association
Ala. Society of Certified Public Accountants	Alabama State Nurses Association
Alabama Trucking Association	Alabama Textile Manufacturers Association
Alabama Vocational Association	Alabama Vending Association
Ala. Council on Career/Technical Education	Alabama Assoc. of Vocational Administrators
Alabama Women Work!	Alabama A&M University
Athens State University	Alabama State University
Auburn University at Montgomery	Auburn University
Jacksonville State University	University of Alabama
University of Alabama - Birmingham	University of Alabama - Huntsville
Troy State University	University of West Alabama
University of North Alabama	University of Montevallo
University of South Alabama	Association General Contractors
Homebuilders Association of Alabama	Alabama Concrete Industries Association
Ala. Council for School Admin. & Supervision	

## Forum 21

Forum 21 included key leaders representing industry, labor, parents, students, community organizations, government, and education. Forum members met in March and June 1998 at the Mercedes-Benz Institute to clarify the imperatives and strategies of *Workforce 21*. Forum 21 members play a vital supportive role in the implementation of the strategic plan and in the improvement of career/technical education in Alabama.

Dr. Tim Alford  
Enterprise Economic Development Corporation  
Enterprise, AL

Mr. Gerald Allen  
State Representative, District 62  
Tuscaloosa, AL

Ms. Becky Dunn Arnoff  
Russell Corporation  
Alexander City, AL

Dr. Michael Bailey  
Bessemer State Technical College  
Bessemer, AL

Mr. Tim Beasley  
Briggs & Stratton Corporation  
Auburn, AL

Mr. Powell Brewton  
Alabama Council on Career/Technical Education  
Dothan, AL

Ms. Carol Brown  
Business Council of Alabama  
Montgomery, AL

Dr. Phillip Browning  
Department of Rehabilitation and Special Education  
Auburn University

Mr. Bradley Byrne  
State Board of Education  
Mobile, AL

Dr. John Caylor  
Northeast Alabama Community College  
Rainsville, AL

Dr. Mary Jane Caylor  
State Board of Education  
Scottsboro, AL

Mr. Dennis Charlesworth  
Continental Eagle Corporation  
Prattville, AL

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Alabama PTA  
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Mr. Newstell Dowdell Jr.  
Birmingham Urban League  
Birmingham, AL

Dr. Pat Edwards  
Mercedes-Benz International, Inc.  
Tuscaloosa, AL

Mr. Dave Fannon  
Batchelor's Mechanical Contractors, Inc.  
Mobile, AL

Mr. Don Goetz  
City of Jasper  
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Dr. Ralph Green  
Madison County Chamber of Commerce  
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Dr. Ethel Hall  
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Fairfield, AL

Ms. Melinda Hankins  
Alabama Women Work!  
Bay Minette, AL

Mr. Buddy Hardwich  
Lowder Construction Company, Inc.  
Montgomery, AL

Mr. Paul Haughton Q Glass Reform, AL	Mr. Ron Moon Bessemer State Technical College Bessemer, AL
Mr. George Helms Reliable Products, Inc. Geneva, AL	Mr. Milt Mulder Alabama Council on Career/Technical Education Tallassee, AL
Mr. Anthony G. Henry Alabama Council on Career/Technical Education Birmingham, AL	Mr. Ollie W. Nabors Task Force for Effectiveness Planning in Postsecondary Education Gadsden, AL
Mr. Thomas M. Hobbs Alabama Power Company Verbena, AL	Ms. Sharon Padgett Pleasant Valley High School Jacksonville, AL
Ms. Billie Sue Hulsey Jefferson State Community College Birmingham, AL	Ms. Becky Pierce Alabama Vocational Association Clanton, AL
Ms. Elaine Jackson Birmingham Urban League Birmingham, AL	Ms. Sandra Ray State Board of Education Tuscaloosa, AL
Mr. Cassius Johnson National President, Phi Theta Kappa Bevill State Community College Sumiton, AL	Mr. Guy Robbins Alabama Power Company Jasper, AL
Dr. Jim Jolly Shelton State Community College Tuscaloosa, AL	Ms. Sally Rodgers Alabama AFL-CIO Birmingham, AL
Ms. Carol Laughlin State Department of Education Montgomery, AL	Mr. Bob Russell Ala. Industrial Development Training Institute Montgomery, AL
Dr. Micky Maddox Athens State College Athens, AL	Dr. Ron Russell State Department of Education Montgomery, AL
Ms. Trish McLaney State Finance Department Montgomery, AL	Mr. Joel Sanders State Department of Human Resources Montgomery, AL
Mr. Billy McQueen Homebuilders Association of Alabama Montgomery, AL	Mr. Toby Seay Juvenile Probation Officer Geneva, AL
Mr. Gary Mitchell The Meta Company, Inc. Sylacauga, AL	Mr. John L. Sharp Kimberly-Clark Corporation Mobile, AL
Senator Hinton Mitchem Alabama State Senate Albertville, AL	Mr. Ira Silberman Alabama Development Office Montgomery, AL

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Mr. Woody Smith  
Alabama Council on Career/Technical Education  
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Mr. Lamar Sorrells  
National Federation of Independent Businesses  
Montgomery, AL

Mr. John Speights  
Shelton State Community College  
Tuscaloosa, AL

Mr. Rufus Taylor  
Chrysler Corporation  
Huntsville, AL

Mr. Mike Tidwell  
Alfa Farmers Federation  
Montgomery, AL

Dr. Britt Turner  
Alabama Council on Career/Technical Education  
Tuscaloosa, AL

Mr. Warner Veih  
Bruderer, Inc.  
Huntsville, AL

Ms. Linda Waide  
Alabama Women Work!  
Muscle Shoals, AL

Dr. Laura Ward  
American Vocational Association  
Alexandria, VA

Ms. Sandra Whitehead  
Alabama Department of Travel and Tourism  
Montgomery, AL

Mr. Don Williams  
Simcala, Inc.  
Mt. Meigs, AL

Ms. Kim Williams  
Calhoun County Area Vocational Center  
Jacksonville, AL

Mr. Jimmy Woods  
Madison County Career Academy  
Huntsville, AL

Ms. Mary Wyatt  
Jefferson County Board of Education  
Birmingham, AL

Guest Presenters: Ms. Annette Waters, Assistant Director  
The Center for Business and Economic Research  
University of Alabama

Mr. Kenneth Voytek, Chief Economist and Director of Economic Research  
National Alliance of Business  
Washington, DC

## **Assumptions**

Following are assumptions about trends and events that will impact Alabama's career/technical education system. These assumptions are grounded in current literature and research. The *Workforce 21* strategic plan addresses the implications of these assumptions and provides a means of creating a positive future.

### Society

- The globalization of the economy will require individuals to have a greater knowledge of the world and the credentials to move across domestic and international boundaries.
- There will continue to be a greater proportional growth among minorities and immigrants in the United States and in the workplace.
- Transportation in rural areas will continue to be a barrier for many adults to enroll in education programs.
- The workforce of the future will become increasingly diverse with increased percentages of minorities, women, and older adults.
- The workplace of the future will be more flexible in order for it to reflect the demands of work and the family on the worker.
- Approximately 25 percent of high school graduates will complete a four-year degree, and there will be increased enrollment in two-year colleges.
- Approximately 80 percent of the total population will complete high school in the United States. The completion rates for minority students will be somewhat lower.
- The nation will continue to witness high numbers of children in poverty, increased rates of violence, and less family involvement in children's education.
- The nation will continue to experience high levels of adult illiteracy, with 40 to 50 percent of the unemployed functionally illiterate.
- The percentage in the population who have special needs that will require accommodation in the education system will continue to increase.
- Limited natural resources and environmental concerns will continue to affect all of society.
- The disparity between socioeconomic strata will continue to increase.

### Government

- The intent to decrease the size and regulatory role of the federal government will result in a shift of responsibilities to state and local governments.
- Formal and informal pressures to reduce the size of education budgets will continue to be prevalent.
- Consolidation and integration of governmental programs will increase.

### Employment

- Rapidly changing job markets and evolving requirements of new technologies will require individuals to have broad-based, transferable skills to update their occupational knowledge and skill base in order for them to remain competitive in the workforce.
- Lucrative jobs will exist only for those who have advanced education and training.
- More new jobs will be created by small businesses which cannot offer in-house training programs.
- Among the three classifications of jobs – professional, skills, and unskilled – professional jobs will continue to employ 20 percent of the workforce, employment in skill jobs will increase to 65 percent of the workforce, and employment in unskilled jobs will fall to 15 percent.
- Automation and computers will eliminate some jobs and create others requiring higher levels of academic, occupational, technological, and employability skills.
- The changing workplace will require employers and employees who have increased skills in interpersonal relationships, communications, conflict management, problem solving, critical thinking, adaptation to change, and teamwork.
- Process improvement and productivity will increasingly be emphasized.
- Temporary and permanent part-time employment will increase.

### Education

- Business and industry will continue to increase pressure for schools to adopt industry-based standards and for programs to become industry certified.
- Technology will play a greater role in the education process.
- The needs of the community will become a more dominant factor in the design and implementation of education programs.
- State, local, and private agencies will play a greater role in training by offering internships, apprenticeships, pre-employment training, and adult education.
- Alliances and articulations among elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education programs will continue to increase.
- Businesses/industry/labor, state and local agencies, and the community at large will become increasingly involved in educational reform efforts.
- Education will place greater attention on learner achievement and indicators of program quality.
- Public, urban education will be comprised of students who are increasingly poor and members of a minority.
- Increasing numbers of teachers and administrators will leave the profession due to retirement and other factors.

## Leadership

The *Workforce 21* Steering Committee provided visionary leadership for developing the strategic plan.

Dr. Matthew Hughes, Co-Chair  
Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education

Dr. George Martin, Co-Chair  
Alabama Department of Education

Mr. Ed Castile  
Alabama Industrial Development Training Institute

Mr. Ted Craven  
Walker County Center of Technology

Dr. Vicki Hawsey  
Reid State Technical College

Mr. Jim Kendrick  
Alabama Department of Education

Mr. Barry Mask  
Alabama Industry and Manufacturers Association

Ms. Trish Perry  
Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education

Ms. Phyllis Wesley  
Alabama Industrial Development Training Institute

Special appreciation is expressed to Dr. Joanna Kister, Ohio Director of Vocational and Adult Education, for granting the *Workforce 21* Steering Committee permission to use selected components of *Ohio's Future at Work: Beyond 2000* in developing this strategic plan.



# Glossary

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## **Academic skills**

Those skills, including communications, mathematics, science, and literacy proficiencies, necessary for career success and continued learning.

## **Apprenticeship**

Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training registered comprehensive training program in an occupation. The related technical instruction and workplace experience are achieved through a training coalition of management, labor, and education.

## **Articulated curriculum**

Curriculum sequence such as between grade levels, between career/technical and academic education or between secondary and postsecondary education that consists of interrelated components to accelerate education outcomes and to minimize duplication. Implementing articulated curricula promotes a “seamless” education system.

## **Career academies**

Career-focused education delivery systems operating within a school (a “school-within-a-school” concept) in which a group of students is taught by a team of teachers (typically three academic teachers and one career/technical education teacher) for a period of two or three years. The integrated academic/technical curriculum focuses on a particular occupational or career area.

## **Career clusters**

Broad groupings of career majors with similar characteristics. The following clusters have been tentatively identified for Alabama’s secondary schools: Environment and Natural Resources; Health and Human Services; Arts, Humanities and Communication; Engineering, Manufacturing, Construction and Business.

## **Career-focused education**

Educational programming in which curriculum content and learning experiences clearly connect to the world of work.

## **Career magnet school**

School in which all curricula focus on a specific career cluster or a set of clusters.

## **Career majors**

Grouping of similar occupations within a cluster.

## **Career pathway**

Program of study that includes academic and technical courses aimed at achieving the identified education and career goals of students.

## **Cooperative education**

Education delivery system that provides specific occupational skills through paid employment under a written cooperative arrangement between a school and an employer.

**Credentials document**

Formal document that identifies the academic, technical, technological, and employability skills a student has attained.

**Employability skills**

Personal development and leadership abilities essential for seeking and securing employment, increased productivity, economic self sufficiency, and career flexibility.

**Externship**

Experience that provides educators structured learning opportunities in the private or public sector to gain experience, update skills, assess curriculum needs, or gain insight that can enhance the use of workplace applications in the classroom.

**Imperative**

As used in this document, an imperative is a directive essential to providing effective career/technical education that meets the needs of students and of employers.

**Interpersonal skills**

Skills needed to effectively work with and communicate with other people (e.g., team working skills).

**Life skills**

Practical skills needed in the management of household and family responsibilities.

**Mentorship**

Learning experience in which one individual serves in a close teacher/advisor relationship with another individual.

**Non-traditional students**

Students from segments of the population that have traditionally been under-represented in career/technical education. These groups may include females under-represented in traditionally male enrollment dominated programs (e.g., automotive technology), minorities, and four-year college bound students.

**School-within-a-school**

Instruction delivery arrangement in which a group of students remains with the same teachers throughout the students' tenure at the school.

**Technical skills**

Skills required to perform specific job tasks.

**Technological skills**

Skills related to the understanding and use of current and emerging technologies.

**Work-site learning**

Planned educational experiences occurring at a work site (includes cooperative education, internships, and apprenticeships).

**Workforce development**

Educational activity or program that provides individuals skills needed for entry-level employment or that allows individuals to upgrade their workplace skills.

# STATE OF ALABAMA



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*Page 23*

## MAJOR INITIATIVES IN CAREER/TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Over the next several years, the Department of Postsecondary Education will focus on five major initiatives designed to:

- implement the *Workforce 21* strategic plan;
- implement the 2000-2005 State Plan for Career/Technical Education; and
- position The Alabama College System to more effectively carry out its role in the state's workforce and economic development efforts.

Following are the major initiatives and components of each. These activities are in various stages of development and implementation.

### Competency Assessment and Documentation

- ✓ ACT Work Keys and Work Habits assessments
- ✓ Technical competency assessments
- ✓ Individualized instruction based on assessment results
- ✓ ACS Credentialing Document

### Program Delivery Alternatives

- ✓ Mentorships
- ✓ Apprenticeships
- ✓ Performance-based education
- ✓ Cooperative education
- ✓ Distance education
- ✓ Weekend programs
- ✓ Shared facilities

### Industry Alignment

- ✓ Program industry accreditation/approval
- ✓ Instructor and student industry licensure/certification
- ✓ Curricula revisions
- ✓ Industry input at state and college levels

### Comprehensive Professional Development

- ✓ Instructor leadership and networking through division organization
- ✓ Focused professional development to address major initiatives
- ✓ Industry-provided technical updates
- ✓ Focused sessions at state conferences
- ✓ Leadership training
- ✓ New Instructor Orientation Program

### Measurement, Planning, and Reporting

- ✓ Integrated state data collection system
- ✓ College and state performance reports
- ✓ College and state action plans
- ✓ Annual progress report to state legislature and State Board
- ✓ Annual progress reports through regional public meetings

## Potential Benefits to Stakeholders

### College Faculty

- ✓ Industry respect
- ✓ Recognition for accomplishment
- ✓ Opportunities for personal and program improvement
- ✓ Opportunities for state-wide leadership
- ✓ Networking among colleagues

### College Administrators

- ✓ Potential funding increase
- ✓ Community recognition of quality programs
- ✓ Demonstrated action to improve programs and meet industry needs
- ✓ Improved faculty performance

### Employers

- ✓ Better prepared workforce
- ✓ Better information regarding potential employees
- ✓ Less turnover through skill upgrades
- ✓ Access to cost effective, responsive, high quality training

### Students

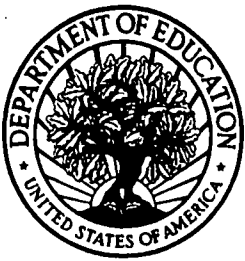
- ✓ Access to high quality, inexpensive career/technical education
- ✓ Access to training for skill upgrades and career advancement
- ✓ Increased earnings for enhanced skills
- ✓ Pride from earning industry credential

### Alabama Citizens

- ✓ Industry recruitment tool
- ✓ Improved services through increased state revenues
- ✓ Increased state pride through better educated citizenry
- ✓ Effective use of tax money

### Secondary Education

- ✓ Improved secondary/postsecondary articulation
- ✓ More options for secondary program completers
- ✓ Recruitment tool through enhanced postsecondary opportunities
- ✓ Uniform, seamless data collection system



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