



2019 Legislative Session Update

The 2019 Alabama Legislative Session was a very busy one, which included several bills championed by A+ Education Partnership and our programs, the Alabama Best Practices Center and A+ College Ready. We are very pleased with the results, and we believe you will be, too.

Passed: The Computer Science Education Bill (House Bill 216)

- Expands computer science (CS) courses to all Alabama K-12 public schools;
- Provides funding for professional development for K-12 CS teachers (provided by A+ College Ready);
- Provides multiple CS certification pathways for current teachers and CS experts to become certified to teach in our schools.

This legislation ensures Alabama's public schools are providing the computer science education students need to enter a changing workforce and makes Alabama a national leader in computer science education.

Passed: The Alabama Literacy Act (House Bill 388)

- Provides resources to teachers in reading instruction and requires proficiency-based promotion from third to fourth grade;
- Provides science-based reading instruction to teachers while in college; • Identifies and provides support for students with dyslexia and other needs.

North Carolina passed a similar law in 2012, causing their fourth grade reading scores on the National Assessment for Education Progress (NAEP) to rise from 24th in the nation to 19th in 2017. The results have been similar in Mississippi, which now ranks second in reading gains. With strong implementation, Alabama can see similar improvements and A+ will continue to support these efforts.

Passed: \$7.1 Billion Education Budget (Senate Bill 199)

- Includes 4% pay increase for all state education employees;
- Includes \$26.8 million increase to expand our voluntary First Class Pre-K program;
- Includes \$7.5 million increase for the Alabama Reading Initiative (see above);
- Includes \$1 million for the Computer Science Bill (see above);
- Includes an additional \$750,000 to A+ College Ready to provide a pilot program to raise rigor and improve outcomes in middle schools. It also covers the cost of AP exam fees for every low income student.

Stopped: The "Abolish Common Core" Bill (Senate Bill 119), which had many broad, unintended consequences, including:

- Lower academic standards in Alabama schools;
- Prohibit students in high school from taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses and earning career technical (CTE) credentials;
- Block schools from offering the ACT college entrance exam and ACT WorkKeys exam;
- Prohibit Alabama teachers from achieving National Board Certification.

This legislation was stopped, thanks to all of YOU who called and emailed your legislators and shared the message that this bill was bad for Alabama children. We are grateful for all of the support provided by educators, parents, and other concerned citizens.