



STATE OF ALABAMA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education

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Alabama  
State Board  
of Education

**Alabama State Department of Education Announces Commitment to  
Tackle Student Chronic Absenteeism**

*“Dr. Eric Mackey pledges to engage state agencies, local districts, and partners  
in concerted effort to reduce chronic absenteeism”*

Governor Kay Ivey  
President

**Montgomery, AL** – State Superintendent, Dr. Eric Mackey, and other top education leaders from across the nation have come together in an innovative partnership.

Jackie Zeigler  
District I

The primary goal is to cut chronic school absence nationwide by 50%, over the next five years. Our state is partnering with other communities in this bipartisan initiative, to take a firm and unyielding stance on this urgent issue – See the full [list of states here](#).

Tracie West  
District II

Chronic absenteeism or missing more than 10% of school days for any reason, spiked during the Covid-19 pandemic, and rates remain elevated across the nation. It has a negative impact on student academic achievement and development.

Stephanie Bell  
District III

Nationally, 14.7 million students missed enough school to be considered chronically absent during the 2021-22 school year. While it is experienced by students in all demographic categories, chronic absence sometimes disproportionately affects children from low-income families and communities of color. It sometimes creates attendance gaps, which exacerbate achievement in local schools.

Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D.  
District IV

“As we begin a new school year our administration is proud to announce our commitment to reduce student chronic absenteeism in Alabama by 50% in five years. Our administration has been working hard to ensure all students have access to a high-quality education, feel a sense of belonging at school and receive the supports they need to attend school regularly and achieve,” said Dr. Mackey.

Marie Manning  
District VI  
President Pro Tem

Belinda McRae  
District VII

Alabama had a 17.9% rate of chronic absenteeism based on the latest state report card for 2022-2023. Alabama has been working diligently to address the rates of absenteeism which resulted in Alabama has the lowest percentage of chronic absenteeism in the United States according to recent data.

Wayne Reynolds, Ed.D.  
District VIII

“While we’ve made progress, there’s still much to be done. Through our collective efforts with families and community partners, we will continue to promote educational environments where every child has the opportunity to succeed. We will work to make chronic absenteeism a challenge of the past and to ensure that every student is present, engaged, and on the path to a bright future,” said Dr. Melissa Shields, Assistant State Superintendent, Office of Student Learning.

Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.  
Secretary and  
Executive Officer

–more–

*Commitment to Tackle Student Chronic Absenteeism*

“Improving student attendance matters to all of us, not just those with school-age children,” Dr. Mackey said. “When more students graduate, on time, our communities and our economy are stronger. We have more people who are prepared for the workplace, and more engaged in our state’s civic life.

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