



HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP 20 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

2018 Legislative Session Produces Largest Public Education Budget in a Decade

April 2018 HEP Newsletter

Supporters of Higher Education,

The 2018 Legislative Session ended four days early on March 29. Lawmakers met for 26 of the required 30 days before adjourning after passing a **\$6.6 billion education budget** that provides funding increases for pre-K, K-12, post secondary education and higher education. The Higher Education Partnership is grateful to Rep. Bill Poole and Sen. Arthur Orr for supporting higher education in the budget. It is always a pleasure to work in conjunction with budget chairmen who appreciate our universities. We will continue to work with them and other lawmakers to share the impact of higher education!

The Higher Education Partnership worked with our Council of University Governmental Affairs Representatives (CUGAR) this session to identify bills that impacted higher education. On behalf of our members, we requested and testified at public hearings, attended committee meetings and provided summary reports to CUGAR. As we have traditionally done, the Partnership was especially engaged with the education budget. Thank you to our university lobbyists and statewide advocates for your leadership on behalf of universities. I firmly believe that when we work together as a team, we make a better impact.

Now that the session has ended, our focus now turns to welcoming newly-elected campus leaders to our higher education advocacy team! During the next few weeks, I will be on campuses around the state meeting new student leaders and helping to connect them to our advocacy efforts. Our student leaders are essential to our efforts to make sure the voice of higher education is heard in Montgomery.

Finally, we must continue to remember students, faculty, staff and alumni at Jacksonville State University as they work to rebuild the campus following the March 19 tornado outbreak. We are inspired by all of the cooperative work that has been done so far, and we know more great things are to come. Our thoughts and prayers remain with JSU!

Gordon Stone, Executive Director

Alabama's Public Universities Change Lives--THEY ARE WORTH SUPPORTING!

HEP's 2017 Annual Report is Now Available

The 2017 Annual Report is hot off the presses! We presented a copy of it at our March board meeting and have posted a link on our [website](#).

In the issue, the Partnership celebrates 20 years of empowering higher education advocates and

communicating the message of the importance of Alabama's four-year public universities and takes a look back at all of the milestones of our organization. As we prepared the issue, we quickly realized the impact the Higher Education Partnership has had on the university experience. We are especially pleased with the thousands of students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends who have chosen to volunteer their time and effort to support our universities.

While it is impossible to share the full extent of the 20 years of advocacy, a few truly remarkable events include:

- The early efforts to prevent proration. The Partnership worked aggressively with statewide media to remind the state's policy makers that universities were being adversely impacted by budget cuts.
- The Supreme Court ruling on behalf of the Partnership to prevent the Siegelman Administration from cutting higher education at 18% and K-12 at 3% during proration.
- The achievements of 30 percent of the Education Trust Fund appropriation in the early days of the Riley Administration, and the ability to receive a supplemental appropriation after the huge recession hit in 2009.
- The multiple years of consecutive 2,000 plus person crowds coming to Montgomery for Higher Education Day.
- The growth and expansion of our student and alumni participation. These are illustrated in the expanded participation in both the summer conference and the Alumni Advocacy Banquet.



Issue in Focus

Teacher Preparation Report Card

Alabama State Department of Education (ASDE) Interim Superintendent Dr. Ed Richardson met with the Higher Education Partnership in March to discuss his plan for report cards for university Colleges of Education.

The State Board of Education approved a resolution on March 8 to allow ASDE to begin the process of evaluating teacher preparation courses. The report cards are part of the department's overall effort to improve student achievement in K-12 schools.

The first report card will not have a letter grade, but will include information on the approval and accreditation status of each college and university, productivity and performance on statewide required assessments and information acquired by surveying new teachers and their principals. Subsequent report cards will be developed after determining what metrics will be used to provide letter grades.

The stated schedule of issuing report cards is below.

- **May 2018**, a draft report will be presented to College of Education deans for review.
- **September 2018**, first report card will be publicly available.

Dr. Richardson is expected to meet with all education deans before the May draft report to discuss challenges and opportunities with the report cards. After the draft report is issued in May, education deans will have four months to rectify any issues in the report before it is made public.

As part of the Partnership's new plan of work, HEP will continue to monitor developments with teacher report cards and provide periodic updates. We will also be active in monitoring other committees and task forces formed to create policy that impacts our institutions. The Partnership continues to be a voice of awareness for our participants!

Save the Date: SLUAC Conference

August 8-10

We are making plans now for our upcoming STARS Leadership and University Advocates Conference this summer. We have an exciting slate of speakers and presenters to discuss leadership development, communication training, issues education and how to effectively advocate for higher education! Attendees will have an opportunity to meet with Alabama lawmakers during two panel sessions with House and Senate members.

Please make plans to join us August 8-10 in Destin for this exciting 2-day conference!

If you have any questions, please contact Mary Kathryn Fletcher at 334-832-9911 or by [email](#).



[More Conference Details](#)

Questions? Thoughts? Concerns?

Connect with Us!

Do you have a story idea or issue in focus we should include in an upcoming newsletter? Email partners@higheredpartners.org and let us know!

