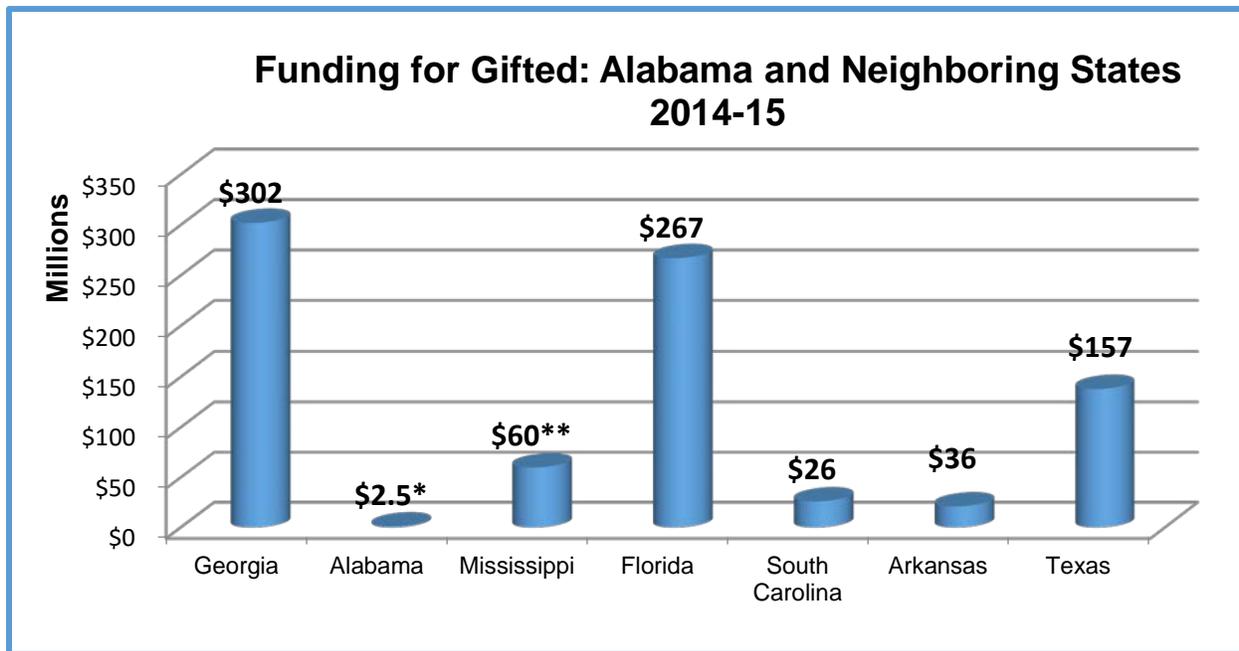


Collaboration to Support Gifted Education in Alabama

| University Programs | Alabama State Department of Education | Alabama Association for Gifted Children |
|---|---|---|
| Provide programs to certify gifted specialists at the Master's and Education Specialist levels. | Assigns two gifted education specialists to oversee and maintain compliance with the AAC in gifted programs statewide. | Maintains a professional organization for gifted specialists, school administrators, and parents of gifted children. |
| Collaborate with ALSDE in determining the direction of gifted education in Alabama. | Requires all LEAs to submit LEA Plans for Gifted Education which are aligned to AAC standards. | Establishes regional networks of gifted specialists within the state. |
| Work with school systems through consultation and collaboration to improve gifted education in gifted and general education programs. | Establishes statewide standards for LEA Plans for Gifted Education and Acceleration Procedures. | Sponsors a statewide annual conference with opportunities for teacher training and exposure to national leaders in the field of gifted education. |
| Engage in research on all aspects of gifted education, including meeting the needs of gifted learners, best practices in curriculum and instruction, and affective needs of the gifted. | Monitors gifted programs to ensure compliance with the AAC and individual LEA Plans. | Supports parent advocacy organizations. |
| Provide professional development at national, state, regional and local conferences. | Sets standards for certification of gifted specialists in Alabama. | Partners with community and state leaders to support gifted education and meeting the needs of gifted and talented learners. |
| | Oversees quality of gifted specialists by requiring certification in gifted education within 3 years of employment. | |
| | Provides annual professional development targeting teachers of gifted children and Special Education / Gifted Coordinators at the district level. | |
| | Monitors curriculum development and instruction in gifted resource classrooms. | |
| | Provides on-site and online technical assistance to LEAs. | |



* Alabama funding is for 2016-17

** Mississippi funds their gifted program through teacher units; therefore, the amount fluctuates based on the number of identified gifted students.

Other states that provided funding in their 2014-15 budget for gifted education:

- Colorado: \$11.9 million
- Delaware: \$450,000
- Idaho: \$150,000
- Indiana: \$12.5 million
- Iowa: \$37.6 million
- Kansas: \$11.3 million
- Kentucky: \$6.3 million
- Louisiana: \$42.6 million
- Maine: \$4.9 million
- Missouri: \$24.8 million
- Nevada: \$5.1 million
- North Carolina: \$77.8 million
- Oklahoma: \$46.8 million
- Utah: \$2.6 million
- Virginia: \$46.4 million
- Washington: \$9.6 million
- Wyoming: \$2.6 million

Consequences of Failing to Meet the Needs of Gifted Students

When gifted and high-ability students are not challenged, they begin to think that being smart means that they don't have to work hard. This may lead to poor learning skills and eventually underachievement and even failure in school. Some families concerned about the availability of challenging content and rigorous instruction seek alternate options, such as private schools or home schooling. Students from poverty, however, are dependent on Alabama's public schools to meet their educational needs, meaning they may not be able to reach their true potential without appropriate gifted services from their school (National Association for Gifted Children, 2012).

Factors to Consider:

- The "Excellence Gap" (Plucker, Burroughs, & Song, 2010) is growing between groups of students achieving the advanced level on the NAEP exam. For example, in Grade 4 Math, the percentage of white students scoring at the advanced level increased by 5% between 1998 and 2007; the percentage of Black and Hispanic students increased by only 1%.
- Fewer than 1 in 4 teachers (23%) say that the needs of advanced students are a top priority at their school; 32% say that they are a low priority.
- Only 56% of children from low socio-economic backgrounds who are considered high achieving when they enter school remain high achieving by the end of 5th grade.

Meeting the Challenge of Educating Gifted Learners in Alabama

- We must implement **evidence-based gifted educational strategies** to make a meaningful difference for our gifted and talented students as well as for high-ability students.
- Students who are advanced in their academic knowledge and skills may require **acceleration** either by grade or subject area.
- Implementing **curriculum compacting** to streamline grade-level curriculum and avoid re-teaching of already mastered content to the gifted student will enhance motivation for continued learning.
- **Cluster grouping** of gifted learners with similar-ability peers within the general education classroom, which provides **differentiated learning opportunities** for gifted students with their academic/intellectual peers allows for creating a sense of belonging and academic progress commiserate with knowledge, skills, and interests...and helps teachers better serve their gifted learners.
- **Pull-out programs** allow gifted students to share learning experiences with their intellectual peers. The social-emotional needs of the gifted can be best addressed within a pull-out resource classroom with the gifted specialist who is trained to recognize and meet their unique affective needs.
- **Differentiation** of instruction and curriculum within the general education program allows gifted students who have already mastered certain areas of study to move forward gaining new knowledge and skills.