

About the Program

The A+ Student VOICES Team is a student advocacy group comprised of Alabama high school students from different districts across the state. Founded in 2018, we work to ensure that students' voices are heard in spaces where education decisions are being made. Students work together as a team to identify issues within our education system, gather research, and advocate for student-centered improvements.

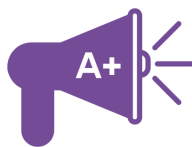
Important Findings from the 2025 Student Survey

Each year, the A+ Student VOICES Team conducts a student survey to hear student perspectives about their education. This year, we gathered data from 2,225 Alabama students in grades 9-12 on the impact of student mental health, rigorous school curriculum, and school funding.

Our 2025 survey revealed:

- 1 Students experience gaps in college and career preparation, with many feeling unchallenged, lacking relevant curriculum, and needing essential life skills like financial literacy.**
- 2 The lack of mental health resources and life skills education is making it harder for students to feel supported, understood, and prepared for life beyond school.**
- 3 Students believe that their schools would benefit from having more funding. They report having inconsistent experiences in the opportunities available to succeed, with many citing a lack of school resources and outdated school facilities.**

To learn more about these takeaways, read what Alabama students shared on the following pages.



Rigorous School Curriculum

Students reported feeling unprepared for life after high school due to a lack of relevant curriculum, limited exposure to essential life skills like financial literacy, and coursework that doesn't consistently challenge them. Addressing these concerns is key to creating a more meaningful and effective educational experience.

➔ **Students experience gaps in college and career preparation, with many feeling unchallenged, lacking relevant curriculum, and needing essential life skills like financial literacy.**

1 in 3 students do not feel prepared for life after high school, and 52% of students do not feel that they are offered a curriculum relevant to life after high school.

42% of students do not feel challenged in their coursework.

20% of students mentioned the need for a financial literacy course.

"...offering more Advanced Placement (AP) courses, dual enrollment opportunities, or specialized electives in areas like technology, business, or the arts, would better prepare students for post-secondary education or careers in specific fields."

Student Mental Health

Students reported limited access to mental health resources and a lack of life skills education. Without proper support for their well-being, students are left without the tools they need to thrive both inside and outside the classroom.

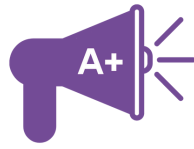
➔ **The lack of mental health resources and life skills education is making it harder for students to feel supported, understood, and emotionally prepared for life beyond school.**

38% of students feel that they have adequate mental health resources at their school.

46% of students feel that they don't have classes that focus on life skills or ways to manage their mental health skills.

"School should be an environment where students' well-being is considered alongside academic achievement."

"... teachers and administrators should make an effort to build relationships with students. Often students hide their true feelings or don't express themselves and teachers or administrators don't even notice."



School Funding

Many student respondents feel that the resources and opportunities available in their schools are inconsistent and inadequate. They point to a need for more funding to support academic resources, more access to opportunities regardless of background, and updated school facilities—highlighting how factors beyond the classroom can impact student success

➔ **Students have inconsistent experiences in the opportunities available to succeed, with many citing a lack of school resources and outdated school facilities.**

82% of Students believe that with more funding, their school could provide more academic resources for students (e.g., ACT Test Prep, Tutoring Support, College/ Career Support).

47% of students do not believe that their school building is as updated as it should be.

30% of students, less than half of the respondents, agree that their school provides the same opportunities to succeed regardless of their background.

"Student success isn't solely based on school academics; factors such as socioeconomic challenges, lack of resources (basic necessities), and mental health can impact student success."

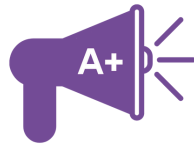
"Students recognize that school funding is costly, but it also costs more to educate some students than others based on their needs."

➔ **We asked students what they wanted legislators to know about school funding:**

"I want Alabama legislators to know that while my school enjoys adequate funding to facilitate student learning, not all schools do. I wish I could see more resources allocated towards Alabama schools in low socioeconomic areas."

"More funding would be extremely beneficial, providing us with more opportunities to further our education."

"We don't have enough funding, we need more extracurriculars and options for advanced classes."



A+ Student VOICES Team

A statewide advocacy group for Alabama high school students

Student-centered recommendations from students

Through collaboration with state lawmakers and education officials, the A+ Student Voices Team is focused on driving meaningful, student-centered change in response to the challenges students face across the state.

➤ **Modernize Alabama's School Funding Formula.**

By modernizing the school funding formula, schools would be able to provide more student resources, educational programs, teacher training, and address each student's needs adequately.

➤ **Offer a more rigorous and relevant curriculum for students so that they are prepared for life after high school.**

➤ **Provide more access to mental health resources and services to students, especially those with more needs such as students with ADHD, ADD, Dyslexia, Autism, etc.**

➤ **Provide more Mental Health Professionals in schools and school districts**