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# Alabama Commission on Higher Education

James E. Purcell, Executive Director

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“Why responding to workforce needs matters more than ever,” was the focus of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education’s new Executive Director Jim Purcell’s first presentation to the coordinating board at its June meeting.

“Alabama has tremendous potential,” Purcell told commissioners; “both in terms of human capital and through our natural resources.” “Through a strong education system, we can build on our strengths and elevate Alabama’s standing in today’s global economy.”

The state’s higher education executive officer emphasized higher education’s role in addressing the needs of business and industry, while providing oversight and accountability with the most efficient use of resources.

‘Since 2008, more than six million jobs have been lost nationwide, with Alabama taking a major hit’ said Purcell. “It is imperative that we supply potential employers with an educated, trained workforce that is competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

Purcell was named executive director during the 2017 legislative session that passed legislation creating an advisory committee to address performance based funding for Alabama’s two-year colleges. He will be one of seven committee members.

Also, during the session, Senate President Del Marsh called on educators (K-12 through higher education) to develop a statewide comprehensive education plan to be presented to lawmakers when they return to work next January.

Commissioners received a 15-year report highlighting activities associated with the *No Child Left Behind* Professional Development Program. Federal funds allocated to the Commission are awarded through a competitive grant process to higher education institutions throughout Alabama. The institutions then provide professional development in various content areas for K-12 teachers.

More information may be found at:

<http://www.ache.alabama.gov/Content/CommissionMeetings/Presentation.pptx>