Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the Alabama State Board of Education and the Alabama State Department of Education, it is my honor to welcome you to the 2018 Summer Professional Learning Conference!

Education funding challenges continue to be serious at all levels of education and create concerns in our classrooms, schools, and district offices. Therefore, it will be valuable for us to use the 2018 Summer Professional Learning Conference as an opportunity to explore innovative and effective instructional strategies, to network with professionals and business leaders who can help us accomplish our goals for students, and to energize ourselves as we prepare for the next academic year.

Working on school campuses as teachers, counselors, nurses, social workers, or administrators, we realize the uniqueness of our professions and how we impact the lives of our students. Probably on any given day, we experience joy, exhilaration, heartache, and fulfillment. As we reminisce on the influences our teachers had on our own education careers, let us be humbled by their commitment to our success as students and then dedicate ourselves to provide the same influences for our students we will serve tomorrow and in the future.

All of us have aspirations to be the best teacher, nurse, counselor, librarian, administrator, or superintendent we can be to help our students learn something new, exciting, and valuable every day of the school year. If we make that our goal, hopefully, our students will look back on their time with us and realize the positive influences we made on their lives. Some will even take the time to write you a letter, visit you, or share with you through social media how you made a difference in their lives.

I encourage you to strive every day to be the one who helps students to achieve their goals and especially the goal to graduate from high school. Depend on the 2018 Summer Professional Learning Conference sessions to help you be determined and dedicated to encouraging and establishing high expectations for all of your students to achieve.

Working together, we can ensure that the 2018-2019 school year will be an exciting one for us, our students, families, and communities so that every child will be a graduate and every graduate will be prepared for college/work/adulthood in the 21st Century.

Eric G. Mackey
Alabama State Superintendent of Education