



2025-26 Employer Survey

Methodology: In Fall 2025, the Employer Survey was sent to 205 principals and superintendents in school districts in the surrounding areas, primarily the Montgomery River Region school systems; principals were asked to forward the survey email to assistant principals who actively supervise employees. Though initially intended to disseminate the survey in the spring of each academic year, due to conflicting surveys sent from the Alabama State Department of Education, AUM assessment staff opted to shift to a fall dissemination to avoid survey fatigue in the spring.

Sixteen employers (2 superintendents, 9 principals, 2 assistant principals, and 2 academic coaches/curriculum specialist, and 1 unknown role) responded for a response rate of 8%.

Respondents were asked to select, with multiple choices possible, the most recent AUM degrees completed by their employees (i.e., Bachelor's, Alternative Master's, Advanced Traditional Master's, Educational Specialist). Due to small respondent numbers, the data were collapsed into initial and advanced certification groupings. Note that a final category exists of school sites that have hired both initial and advanced certification employees from AUM. Because respondents were also asked to classify their school configuration (Elementary vs. Secondary vs. K-12 school), most of the data could be broadly analyzed at the elementary vs. secondary program level per degree type.

The survey includes items related to employers' evaluations knowledge, skills, and dispositions of AUM-prepared professionals (see Table 1), as well as overall satisfaction of employers with AUM-prepared professionals (See Table 2). The survey concludes with optional open-ended responses.

Overview of Results: At all levels, inclusive of the College total, the averages for the responses related to knowledge, skills, and dispositions were positive, yielding ratings above 3.0. What is notable is the jump in ratings related to items measuring satisfaction of employers with employees who were educated at AUM; those ratings increased consistently, yielding ratings of 4.0 or higher

Table 1: Educator Effectiveness Skills

Educator Effectiveness Skills: Using a scale of 1 (Not Well at All) to 5 (Extremely Well), how well do your AUM-educated teachers and administrators at your school site/within your system do the following?	Initial Cert		Advanced		Both Initial and Advanced Cert at School Site		COE Total
	Elem (n=5)	Sec (n=2)	Elem (n=2)	Sec (n=2)	Elem (n=2)	Sec (n=2)	N=16
Support learner growth and development	3.80	4.00	3.50	4.00	4.50	4.00	3.94
Address individual differences and create inclusive environments	3.80	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.50	4.00	3.88
Create positive environments that encourage active engagement and motivation	3.80	3.50	3.50	4.00	4.50	4.00	3.88
Understand the central concepts of the discipline or field of study in which they were prepared to teach	3.40	3.50	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.63
Engage learners/clients in critical thinking and problem solving	3.40	3.50	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.50	3.63
Use multiple assessment methods to monitor learner progress	3.40	3.50	2.50	4.50	4.00	4.00	3.63
Plan goals strategically to support every learner in achieving outcomes	3.40	3.50	4.00	4.00	4.50	4.00	3.80
Use varied methods of assessment to support learners in meaningful activities for growth	3.40	3.50	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.50	3.67
Engage in continual self-evaluation and reflection of educational practice	3.40	2.50	*	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.57
Collaborate with their students, parents, partners, colleagues, and members of the educational and/or school community	3.60	4.00	5.00	4.50	4.50	4.00	4.07
Use various tools of technology that are appropriate for their field of study and career (IP and Advanced)	3.60	3.00	*	4.00	4.50	4.00	3.79
Use data to inform instructional, training, or professional decisions (IP and Advanced)	3.20	3.50	5.00	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.86
Understand and use research to inform instructional practices	3.20	2.50	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.60
Break down student achievement data in appropriate groupings to better understand patterns in performance that lead to targeted interventions in instruction	3.20	2.50	5.00	4.00	4.00	3.50	3.53

Notes: One of the respondents indicated that they have worked with AUM-prepared teachers certified at both the elementary and secondary levels (full K-12 level); that single response remains in the COE total, but the responses are not disaggregated by elementary or secondary subgroupings; and (b) an asterisk (*) indicates data was not collected for that subgrouping in a cell.

Table 2: AUM Preparation Program Satisfaction

AUM Educator Preparation Program Satisfaction: Please rate your agreement with the following statements using a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)	Initial Cert		Advanced		Both Initial and Advanced Cert at School Site		COE Total
	Elem (n=5)	Sec (n=2)	Elem (n=2)	Sec (n=2)	Elem (n=2)	Sec (n=2)	N=16
AUM-educated teachers and administrators know expectations of Alabama State Department of Education initiatives, student testing, and curricular requirements.	4.50	4.00	5.00	4.50	4.50	5.00	4.57
AUM-educated teachers and administrators apply professional dispositions, laws, policies, and standards in their professional learning environments.	4.50	4.00	4.00	4.50	4.50	5.00	4.50
AUM-educated teachers and administrators make an impact on the learning growth of the students at the school site.	4.50	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.50	5.00	4.57
AUM-educated teachers and administrators are well-prepared each day, which leads to overall effectiveness in and out of the classroom.	4.50	4.00	*	5.00	4.50	5.00	4.62
AUM-educated teachers and administrators show awareness of individual differences, including cultural and linguistic diversity, and apply the knowledge into learning environments.	4.50	4.50	*	5.00	4.50	5.00	4.69
AUM-educated teachers and administrators welcome constructive feedback on performance from supervisors and apply the feedback to improve their effectiveness in learning environments.	4.25	4.50	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.64
The AUM College of Education was effective in preparing teachers and administrators who now work at my school site and/or system.	4.25	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00		4.57

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Optional Open-Ended Responses

What do you consider the greatest strengths of your educators who have received an AUM education?

- Educators with an AUM education bring a strong foundation in teaching theory and practice, backed by hands-on classroom experience. They are student-centered, culturally aware, and skilled in adapting instruction to diverse learning needs. AUM prepares them to integrate technology effectively, manage classrooms confidently, and uphold high professional and ethical standards. This well-rounded preparation makes them adaptable, thoughtful, and impactful educators from the start.
- Their ability to be flexible and attend to student needs.
- As a graduate of AUM, I was well equipped when I started my educational leadership journey. It was great to have a solid foundation when I started my administrative career.
- Knowledge of the culture of the city and how to provide culturally responsive instruction that yields the best results.
- Many teachers had a varied experience in clinical teaching hours.
- The greatest strength of educators who received AUM education is that they are well prepared for the classroom setting and are willing to collaborate with their colleagues to help improve student achievement and success.
- I would say their willingness to learn.

What recommendations would you make to AUM Administrators to help them improve their certification and educator preparation programs?

- To further strengthen AUM's educator preparation programs, I would recommend expanding partnerships with local schools to increase hands-on teaching opportunities earlier in the program. Incorporating more training on trauma-informed practices and classroom mental health support would also better prepare future educators for today's challenges. Enhancing coursework in classroom technology, especially tools used in virtual and blended learning, could ensure graduates stay current. Finally, offering more mentorship and support during the certification process would help students transition smoothly from preparation to professional practice.

- Be creative in their approach
- I really cannot think of anything at the moment.
- Create and maintain stronger relationships with the local school system to determine the district's needs and add the identified areas to your teacher training program.
- None at this time.
- 1) Have more scenarios for educators that deal with meetings/conferences with parental concerns. Examples of documentations they should provide to parents.
2) Scenarios that focus on specific areas i.e. students with an IEP, and IELP, or a 504. Have educators provide documentation of accommodations provided for the student(s) dealing with an IEP, IELP, or 504.

What additional comments would you like to provide that will help us understand the value of an AUM education?

- As a university located within the city, AUM has a unique advantage in forming meaningful partnerships with local schools. This close proximity fosters strong collaboration, providing students with valuable real-world experiences and allowing the university to directly support the needs of the community's schools.
- We appreciate AUM's work in preparing educators and leaders to serve our district. We appreciate when adjunct professors are there who are still in K-12 practice to place emphasis on new challenges we face in the K-12 world.
- Please keep up the good work.
- N/A
- None at this time.
- AUM is a great school for educators and does a great job at preparing students for the workforce.
- Punctuality
- AUM continues to produce educators who are prepared, adaptable, and committed to making a difference in students' lives. The university's emphasis on research-based instructional practices and professional ethics is evident in its graduates. Continued collaboration between AUM and school leaders will further strengthen the alignment between educator preparation and the evolving needs of K-12 education.
- An AUM education is valuable because the community truly supports people. My wife is AUM alumna and loves the school.