

EDUCATOR TOOLKIT

Aligning with Alabama State Standards

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Introduction

The AFSA Education Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the delivery of high quality, effective personal finance education. Our flagship program, MoneySKILL®, is an interactive, web-based personal finance curriculum designed to build practical money management skills through 38 engaging modules. This toolkit was created as a guide for Alabama educators to use to connect MoneySKILL content to the Alabama State Department of Education's personal finance standards. By mapping each state standard to corresponding MoneySKILL modules and providing links to additional classroom resources, this toolkit simplifies lesson planning, ensures educators are meeting personal finance curriculum requirements, and

supports effective delivery of financial education across Alabama schools.

We invite you to explore this toolkit and use it as a resource to strengthen your personal finance instruction for students in middle school, high school, and beyond. Educators can sign up for a free MoneySKILL instructor account using the link below to gain full access to the platform's ad-free content, class management tools, and teaching materials. Together, we can ensure that every Alabama student gains the foundational knowledge and skills needed for lifelong financial success.

[Sign Up](#)

Using MoneySKILL in the Classroom

MoneySKILL is a free (and ad-free), customizable, interactive, web-based curriculum that teaches foundational money management skills that can last a lifetime. Topics covered in its 38 course modules include budgeting, credit, saving and investing, vehicle purchasing, income taxes, and insurance. MoneySKILL can be used as a standalone personal finance course or integrated into a variety of courses where personal finance is included (e.g., business, economics, family and consumer sciences, math, social studies, and more).

Any educator who is interested in teaching personal finance can sign up to become a MoneySKILL instructor. In addition to traditional schoolteachers,

this includes parents, home school educators, school administrators, nonprofit organizations, and community educators. As shown in the tables below, MoneySKILL is well-aligned with the Alabama State Department of Education's personal finance standards. Specifically, 32 of its 38 modules align with at least one Alabama course content standard and/or strand. In addition to the course modules themselves, the AFSA Education Foundation has additional resources that complement and support the MoneySKILL modules. Information about supplemental materials can be found on the AFSA Education Foundation website and linked within this toolkit (page 10).

Alabama personal finance standards are action oriented with words like “explain,” “develop,” “identify,” “create,” “compare,” “investigate,” “evaluate,” and “gather.” Each MoneySKILL module features 10 content chunks and related assessment questions that include case study analyses and math calculations, thereby providing educators with ready-made activities that align with state standards. MoneySKILL course structure can be self-paced by students or teacher-led.

Recommended MoneySKILL teaching strategies include:

- Teach course content first and then have students use MoneySKILL for review and application of concepts.
- Have students complete modules alone (e.g., for homework) or in small groups and debrief the answers.
- Work through MoneySKILL content as a total class; teach selected concepts and ask their related questions.
- Combine MoneySKILL content and questions with supplemental learning activities (a hybrid approach).
- Develop discussion prompts and/or include current events to reinforce key concepts.
- Provide additional resources and/or individual remedial instruction as needed.
- Use guest speakers (e.g., financial services professionals) to provide real-world insights.
- Have students apply knowledge gained through projects (e.g., a personal budget and credit card comparison).
- Assign a final project (e.g., personal financial plan) or use a final assessment to determine student progress.
- Encourage students to share what they learned (e.g., bulletin boards, school newspaper, social media).
- Give students who pass the course a certificate of completion (MoneySKILL provides certificates).
- Gather feedback from students to refine future teaching methods.

Students are never too young to learn about personal finance. In addition to supporting the Alabama personal finance course requirement for high school graduation, MoneySKILL can be adapted for use with middle school students. There are 12 specially designed MoneySKILL junior high/middle school modules and 10 of them align with the Alabama personal finance standards.

Alabama Personal Finance Education Standards

Alabama is one of an increasing number of states that have passed legislation mandating financial education. In a 2022 document about personal finance education, the Alabama State Department of Education noted that “Personal Finance is a foundational course that introduces students to the principles of financial literacy for achieving personal goals. This course is designed to inform students about how the choices they make directly influence their occupational goals, future earning potential, and long-term financial well-being.”

Financial education is a requirement for high school graduation in Alabama. This requirement took effect for students entering high school (ninth grade) in the 2024-2025 academic year (i.e., the class of 2028). The required personal finance instruction was integrated into an existing course, called *Career Preparedness*, which has been updated to include personal financial literacy and money management topics. The course, which can be taught in Grades 9 through 12, focuses on three integrated content

areas—career development, financial literacy, and technology—and includes about 140 hours of instruction.

Career Preparedness contains 27 content standards, of which 14 include personal finance topics. Seven key content areas for which there are standards and strands are: digital literacy (including identity theft and fraud), financial management and budgeting, banking and financial institutions, credit and debt, saving and investing, risk management and insurance, and taxes. In 2025, Alabama received a grade of A from the Champlain College Center for Financial Literacy as a state requiring a standalone course in personal finance.

Career Preparedness is a year-long course and the personal finance sections are considered equivalent to a one-semester (half-year) course, which is frequently recognized as the gold standard for guaranteed access to financial education for high school students. Alabama students must take a 50-question, multiple-

choice state Department of Education financial literacy exam after completing the course and answer a minimum of thirty (30) items correctly to earn a passing score. Local school systems must record student performance and report a summary of examination results to the state. Passing the exam is not a graduation requirement, however.

The online MoneySKILL course is ideally suited to teach personal finance course content to Alabama students and is a valuable resource for financial educators nationwide. The 37 MoneySKILL modules can be used alone or in combination with

supplemental resources such as videos, infographics, online calculators, games, digital brochures, and student worksheets.

In the section below, each of the 14 Alabama personal finance standards and their respective strands in the Career Preparedness course are listed, along with MoneySKILL modules that teach the foundational knowledge required to meet the goals described in each strand. This format makes it very easy for educators to find content to support their classes and to prepare reports for school administrators.

DIGITAL LITERACY

Course Standards & Strands	MoneySKILL Modules
14. Explain specific steps that consumers can take to minimize online exposure to identity theft, fraudulent schemes, unethical sales practices, and exorbitant service fees.	Module 34 - Identity Theft
a. Describe the uses and limitations of online safety precautions, including data-encryption, password, strength, clearing browser cache, firewalls, and antivirus software.	Non-aligned Course Content Strand (Outside of the scope of MoneySKILL's personal finance curriculum)

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND BUDGETING

Course Standards & Strands	MoneySKILL Modules
15. Develop a personal plan for managing income, expenses, savings, and charitable contributions, using spreadsheets, online resources, or commercial software.	Module 1 - The Plans We Have For Our Lives Module 2 - Lifetime Plan
a. Create and adjust budgets, net worth statements, and income/expense statements using a spreadsheet or other financial planning tool.	Module 1 - The Plans We Have For Our Lives (net worth) Module 11 - Tracking Expenses & Budgeting
b. Identify types of income other than wages, including rental income, interest, and profit earned from various sources.	Module 1 - The Plans We Have For Our Lives Module 5 - Property & Business Income
c. Investigate, evaluate, and share information about various methods for acquiring goods and making major purchases. <i>Examples: borrowing, renting, leasing, paying cash.</i>	Module 13 - Managing a Checking Account Module 14 - Paying for What We Buy Module 15 - Renting vs. Owning a Home Module 19 - Vehicle Financing Module 22 - Purchasing Physical Assets
d. Compare costs of goods and services to determine best value, including sales tax, tips, coupons, discounts, product quality, and unit pricing.	Module 17 - Food and Clothing Purchases Module 21 - Vacation and Leisure Purchases
e. Explain how to use different payment methods, including cash, debit card, credit card, electronic payments via mobile devices or online, checks, payroll cards, layaway plans, and automatic bank deductions.	Module 13 - Managing a Checking Account Module 14 - Paying for What We Buy

BANKING AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Course Standards & Strands	MoneySKILL Modules
16. Describe the functions, advantages, and disadvantages of various types of financial institutions. <i>Examples: central banks, retail and commercial banks, Internet banks, credit unions, savings and loan associations, investment banks and companies, brokerage firms, insurance companies.</i>	Module 6 - Unearned Income and Transfer Payments Module 27 - Investment Funds Module 35 - Understanding Insurance
a. Evaluate services and related costs associated with personal banking at various financial institutions.	Module 13 - Managing a Checking Account Module 14 - Paying for What We Buy
17. Manage checking and savings accounts, balance bank statements, and use online financial services.	Module 13 - Managing a Checking Account
18. Explain advantages and disadvantages of using credit.	Module 29 - Costs and Benefits of Borrowing
a. Assess ways that credit card terms affect the cost of using credit and the impact of those costs on personal finances. <i>Examples: annual percentage rate (APR), grace period, fees, methods of calculating interest.</i>	Module 29 - Costs and Benefits of Borrowing Module 30 - Secured Borrowing Module 31 - Credit Cards and Other Unsecured Borrowing
19. Explain why credit ratings and credit reports are important to consumers.	Module 32 - Your Credit Rating
a. List ways of building and maintaining a good credit score. <i>Examples: credit card utilization, closing credit accounts, quantity of credit cards.</i>	Module 32 - Your Credit Rating

BANKING AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS CONTINUED

Course Standards & Strands	MoneySKILL Modules
b. Determine the implications of entering into contracts and binding agreements. <i>Examples: cell phone contracts, rent-to-own agreements, subscription services, automatic enrollments.</i>	Module 29 - Costs and Benefits of Borrowing Module 31 - Credit Cards and Other Unsecured Borrowing
c. Compare different types of loans and their advantages and disadvantages, including college loans, payday loans, personal and/or signature loans, vehicle loans, collateral loans, passbook loans, and home mortgages.	Module 16 - The Costs of Homeownership Module 18 - Preparing to Acquire a Vehicle Module 19 - Vehicle Financing Module 30 - Secured Borrowing Module 31 - Credit Cards and Other Unsecured Borrowing Module 33 - Student Loans
d. Describe legal and illegal types of credit that carry high interest rates, including payday loans, rent-to-buy agreements, and loan-sharking.	Module 31 - Credit Cards and Other Unsecured Borrowing (payday loans)
e. Gather and share information about requirements and eligibility for filing bankruptcy, including means tests and credit counseling.	Module 32 - Your Credit Rating
f. Assess the effects of bankruptcy filings on the consumer, including Chapter 7, Chapter 11, and Chapter 13.	Module 32 - Your Credit Rating

SAVING AND INVESTING

Course Standards & Strands	MoneySKILL Modules
20. Gather, evaluate, and share information about saving for short-term goals. <i>Examples: holiday savings accounts, "rainy day" or emergency funds, passbook savings accounts.</i>	Module 23 - Saving Money Module 24 - Short-Term Saving Products
21. Gather, evaluate, and share information about investing for income, retirement, and other long-term goals, indicating advantages and disadvantages of various forms of investment. <i>Examples: mutual funds, exchange-traded funds (ETFs), stocks, bonds, certificates of deposit (CDs), real estate, commodities; compound interest, Rule of 72.</i>	Module 24 - Short-Term Saving Products (Rule of 72) Module 25 - Long-Term, Fixed Income Assets Module 26 - Equity Investing

RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCE

Course Standards & Strands	MoneySKILL Modules
22. Determine the types of insurance available to deal with different risks, including automobile, personal and professional liability, homeowner's, renter's, property, health, life, long-term care, and disability.	Module 16 - The Costs of Homeownership Module 20 - Costs of Operating a Vehicle Module 35 - Understanding Insurance Module 37 - Health Insurance
a. Identify factors that affect the cost of insurance.	Module 35 - Understanding Insurance
b. Identify perils that are insurable. <i>Examples: injury, loss, destruction.</i>	Module 35 - Understanding Insurance
23. Summarize safety and health standards in the workplace for daily procedures, emergency procedures, equipment and tools, dress, use of technology, and work area maintenance.	Non-aligned Course Content Strand <i>(Outside of the scope of MoneySKILL's personal finance curriculum)</i>
24. Develop a plan for financial and personal security in the event of disaster, including secure storage of financial records and personal documents, available cash reserve, household inventory, medical records retention, wills, and living wills.	Module 23 - Saving Money Module 34 - Identity Theft Module 36 - Life Insurance, Wills, and Disability Insurance

TAXES

Course Standards & Strands	MoneySKILL Modules
25. Explain why taxes are necessary, including how they are used at local, state, and federal levels.	Module 9 - Federal Income Taxes
26. Gather and share information about types of taxes paid by individuals, families, and businesses. <i>Examples: sales, property, fuel, Social Security, Medicare, and income taxes.</i>	Module 9 - Federal Income Taxes Module 16 - The Costs of Homeownership Module 38 - Retirement Planning
a. Research and explain how taxpayers receive information about taxes owed. <i>Examples: sales, property, fuel, Social Security, Medicare, and income taxes.</i>	Module 9 - Federal Income Taxes Module 10 - Other Deductions From Pay Module 16 - The Costs of Homeownership Module 38 - Retirement Planning
27. Gather and share information regarding how taxes are computed and collected.	Module 9 - Federal Income Taxes Module 38 - Retirement Planning

Effective financial education requires high-quality teaching and learning materials and professional development resources for financial educators. Listed below are national and Alabama resources to support the execution of personal finance education standards in Alabama:

AFSA Education Foundation & MoneySKILL Resources

- [MoneySKILL instructor sign-up](#)
- [Evaluating MoneySKILL: Effects on Financial Knowledge and Behaviors research paper \(2023\)](#)
- [MoneySKILL course flyer](#)
- [MoneySKILL video](#)
- [About MoneySKILL video](#)
- [MoneySKILL: Free Personal Finance Course for Your Classroom video](#)
- [MoneySKILL Supplemental Videos Per Module list](#)

Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy Resources

- [Jump\\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy](#)
- [Jump\\$tart Coalition National Standards for Personal Financial Education](#)
- [Jump\\$tart Clearinghouse \(curated financial education resources\)](#)
- [Jump\\$tart Financial Foundations for Educators \(online professional development course\)](#)
- [Jump\\$tart National Educator Conference](#)

Alabama Resources

- [Alabama Jump\\$tart Coalition](#)
- [Alabama Council on Economic Education](#)
- [Alabama State Department of Education, Career and Technical Education Plans of Instruction](#)
- [Alabama Cooperative Extension](#)
- [Alabama Report Card \(Champlain College Center for Financial Literacy\)](#)

The AFSA Education Foundation was founded as a nonprofit in 1990 with the mission to educate consumers of all ages on personal finance concepts and responsible money management. For more than 30 years, the foundation has been dedicated to providing free personal finance education, resources, and training to educators of all types from schools to the workplace.

In support of its mission, the foundation developed MoneySKILL® in 2002 as one of the first online personal finance curriculums. MoneySKILL is designed to allow instructors to create custom, web-based personal finance courses primarily for middle school, high school, and college students and consists of 38 different topic areas focusing on a broad range of money management fundamentals. In addition to being completely free with no commercial advertisements for all educators, MoneySKILL is offered in English and Spanish, contains audio dictation options, and aligns with nationally recognized personal finance standards.

To learn more about MoneySKILL and sign up today, visit www.moneyskill.org or contact the foundation at info@moneyskill.org.

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