

## **Alabama Resolution 2017-19 – BACKPACK EDUCATION**

The Legislature strongly recommend that all school administrators, teachers, parents, and students be educated about the potential health impact of heavy backpacks and take proactive measures to avoid injury. Alabama schools are encouraged to develop backpack education talking points to include the following:

- Backpacks should weigh no more than a maximum of 10 percent of a child's body weight.
- Encourage ergonomic backpacks with individualized compartments to efficiently hold books and equipment.
- Encourage children to wear both shoulder straps and not sling the backpack over one shoulder.
- Encourage wide, padded adjustable straps that fit a child's body.
- Encourage the heaviest books be left at school and handouts or workbooks be used for homework assignments.
- Schools should consider moving toward e-textbooks as federal and state funding becomes available.
- Schools should consider integrated education about backpacks by using a hanging scale in the classroom, allowing students to weigh their backpack and enter the results into a graph that would track the weights, and then look at the data to determine what may be done to lighten loads.