
Wallace Community College Selma's AMSTI Partnership Supports Teachers and Student Progress Across the Black Belt



Wallace Community College Selma's commitment to education reaches beyond its own classrooms. Through its involvement with the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative, known as AMSTI, the college helps support the teachers preparing the next generation of students across the Black Belt.

WCCS and Alabama State University serve as an AMSTI regional site, connecting K–12 educators with specialists and instructional support focused on strengthening math and science teaching. The work supports a shared goal: helping more students develop the knowledge and skills they need to succeed throughout school and beyond.

Recent Perry County math proficiency data offer an encouraging example of progress within the region.

Supporting the Teachers Behind Student Success

AMSTI coaches and specialists work with K–12 teachers to strengthen how students learn math and science. Their support emphasizes hands-on instruction that gives students opportunities to explore concepts, practice problem-solving and demonstrate their understanding.

For teachers, that means professional learning focused on how to deliver lessons that help students understand what they are learning and apply it. In math, the goal extends beyond finding a correct answer to understanding the reasoning behind it. In science, hands-on learning gives students opportunities to investigate, ask questions and connect classroom concepts to the world around them.

Coaching also provides teachers with ongoing support as they put instructional strategies into practice. By investing in educators, AMSTI's work can reach students across multiple classrooms and grade levels.



Perry County Shows Gains in Math Proficiency

According to an AMSTI presentation highlighting the impact of school-based math coaches, Perry County hired coaches for the 2023–24 academic year.

The presentation compared math proficiency rates for third, fourth and fifth graders from the 2022–23 academic year through 2024–25. Each grade level showed improvement:

- Third grade: Proficiency increased from 19.15% to 43.64%, a gain of 24.49 percentage points.
- Fourth grade: Proficiency increased from 3.85% to 14.93%, a gain of 11.08 percentage points.
- Fifth grade: Proficiency increased from 3.57% to 38.89%, a gain of 35.32 percentage points.

The results also show improvement in each successive year. Third grade proficiency reached 24.29% in 2023–24 before rising to 43.64% in 2024–25. Fourth grade increased to 11.63% before reaching 14.93%, while fifth grade rose to 17.39% before reaching 38.89%.

These gains reflect progress during the period that school-based math coaches were in place. They offer an encouraging example of improving student outcomes while underscoring the need for continued work to help more students reach proficiency.

Why This Work Matters to Wallace

As an AMSTI regional site, Wallace Community College Selma plays a role in supporting education before students reach college.

The connection matters because the foundations students build in K–12 classrooms shape their preparation for future learning. Math and science skills support problem-solving, critical thinking and the ability to apply knowledge—skills students carry into college programs, technical training and careers.

Wallace’s involvement with AMSTI connects the college’s service to the community with the daily work taking place in local schools. Supporting teachers today is an investment in the students who may one day enter Wallace’s classrooms, join the workforce or pursue other educational opportunities.



Continuing the Work Across the Black Belt

Perry County’s results provide a concrete example of progress within the region. While the data do not establish that coaching alone caused the gains, they highlight improvement alongside added instructional support for teachers.

The work continues with a focus on helping educators deliver meaningful math and science instruction and giving students more opportunities to succeed.

Through its AMSTI partnership, Wallace Community College Selma is helping strengthen the educational foundation of the Black Belt—building pathways, creating opportunities and changing lives.