South Carolina
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MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Bettie Rose Horne, Chair, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

From: Dr. Gail M. Morrison, Director of Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of Centers of Excellence (Teacher Education) Appropriations Request, FY 2009-10

Background

The Educational Improvement Act of 1984 provided for the establishment of a contract program with public or private colleges in South Carolina to foster the development of "Centers of Excellence" in particular areas of need related to teacher training. In FY 2003-04, in an effort to engage higher education more collaboratively with the State's efforts to improve underperforming schools, the Commission issued revised *Guidelines* that provided a different focus for the program.

The revised program focuses on teacher training specifically linked to the State's low-performing schools and districts. The program's revised goals are to improve teacher quality, raise student achievement, and increase the graduation rate in the target schools and districts. State funding is provided for up to five years with the goal of establishing statewide resource centers that will have a positive impact on the State's most needy schools and children. There are currently eleven Centers of Excellence, although only six are receiving funding during the current fiscal year (FY 2008-09).

Program *Guidelines* stipulate that each Center must submit budgets for the first five years of funding. The maximum funding award is $150,000 in year one. In year two, funding is awarding at 90% of the original request, and further reduced to 75% of the original request in years, three, four, and five. In the event of budget shortfalls or mid-year reductions, funding awards are adjusted accordingly. In addition, reporting

requirements in the *Guidelines* further stipulate that each year there is a formal request for funding.

Budget Allocations for FY 2008-09

For FY 2008-09, full funding for the six newest centers still entitled to five years of State funding (including administrative costs) requires an appropriation of $744,730. However, the projected appropriation for FY 2008-09 (based on level funding) is $721,101 which results in a shortfall of $23,629. Thus, the funding for the Centers for FY 2008-09 will need to be reduced by approximately 4.8%.

The table shown below displays each center and institution eligible for continued and new funding, the amount of the requested FY 2008-09 awards, the percentage of total funds of that award, the 4.8% proposed decreased dollar reduction to be made, and the revised award amount for FY 2008-09.

This information is presented to the Commission for information since it is relevant to the Centers of Excellence (Teacher Education) appropriations request for FY 2009-10, which requires Commission approval.

Table 1

Center/Institution	Requested Award FY 2008-09	% of Total Funds	Reduction (4.8% decrease)	Revised Award FY 2008-09 (rounded)
Preparing Teachers of Children of Poverty, Francis Marion (year 5 of 5)	$108,208	15%	$ 5,193	$103,015
Collaborative Learning, USC-Beaufort (year 5 of 5)	$96,354	13%	$ 4,624	$91,730
Adolescent Literacy and Learning, Clemson University (year 4 of 5)	$110,318	15%	$ 5,295	$105,023
Advancement of New Literacies in Middle Grades, College of Charleston (year 3 of 5)	$129,850	17%	$ 6,232	$123,618
Middle-level Interdisciplinary Strategies for Teaching, USC-Aiken (year 1 of 5) (Approved in 2007 but funded in 2008)	$150,000	20%	$ 7,200	$142,800
Center of Excellence for Inquiry in Mathematics and Science, Clemson (year 1 of 5)	$150,000	20%	$ 7,200	$142,800
CHE Administration	$12,000			$12,000
Total	$744,730		$35,744	$720,986

Appropriations Request, FY 2009-10

This report outlines the appropriations request for FY 2009-10 that will be made to the General Assembly through the Commission's annual report to the Education Improvement Act Subcommittee of the Education Oversight Committee (EOC). In FY 2009-10, four Centers under the *Guidelines* will receive their second, fourth and fifth years respectively of funding.

Center of Excellence in Adolescent Literacy and Learning	Clemson	(year 5 of 5)
Center of Excellence for the Advancement of New Literacies in Middle Grade	College of Charleston	(year 4 of 5)
Center of Excellence in Middle-level Interdisciplinary Strategies for Teaching	USC-Aiken	(year 2 of 5)
Center of Excellence for Inquiry in Mathematics and Science	Clemson	(year 2 of 5)

We are seeking level funding of $721,101 for the program for FY 2009-10 with no increase requested, which will allow the funding of one new center and funding of existing eligible centers. These funds will support the four centers that are eligible for continuing funding, one new center, and CHE administrative expenses. The priority areas for funding have been established by the EOC and the Centers of Excellence program will seek new centers that will meet the high priority areas.

Recommendation

In order to permit the funding of one new Center of Excellence in Teacher Training at the full $150,000 level and the continuation of four centers that are eligible for continuing funding during FY 2009-10, the staff suggests that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing recommend that the Commission authorize the staff to seek funds in the amount of $721,101 from the Education Oversight Committee for this program.