

April 5, 2007

MEMORANDUM

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

From: Dr. R. Lynn Kelley, Acting Director of Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of
Improving Teacher Quality Competitive Grants Awards,
FY 2007-08
Funding Allocation to Continuing ITQ Awards, FY 2007-08
New ITQ Awards, FY 2007-08

Background

Since 1984, the Commission on Higher Education has been responsible for administering federal funds under a Title II program of *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*. In 2001, the federal legislation was re-authorized under *The No Child Left Behind Act*. Title II Part entitled *A Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers and Principals*, authorizes the Commission to conduct a competitive awards program. The purpose of this part of the federal legislation is to provide support to:

increase student academic achievement through strategies such as improving teacher and principal quality and increasing the number of highly qualified teachers in the classroom and highly qualified principals and assistant principals in schools.

The Commission is authorized to provide a competitive grants program to partnerships comprised, at a minimum, of schools of education and arts and sciences from higher education institutions along with one or more high-need local education agencies (LEA; defined as school districts). Additional partners may be included as defined by the legislation. Funds to the state are allocated based on the FY 2001 amount

received under the former *Eisenhower Professional Development and Class-Size Reduction* programs. Any remaining funds from the federal appropriation are distributed through a formula based on the State's school-age population and percent of these children in families with incomes below the poverty level.

Under federal regulations, 2.5 percent of the *Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education Grants* (ITQ) funds for the state are allocated to the Commission to be used for the competitive grants program. The Commission is expected to have \$960,000 with which to make awards with Federal FY 2007-08 awards. Proposed projects may request up to \$150,000 in funds per year. Average budget requests for both continuing and new projects range from \$125,000 to \$150,000. The Commission seeks proposals that will have maximum impact and encourages multi-year programs to assure positive results on the target audience. The number of grants awarded will be determined primarily by the quality of the proposals submitted and the size of the negotiated final budgets in comparison to the total funds available. Equitable geographic distribution (i.e., districts served) must be considered in making awards, assuming proposals are deemed to be of high quality. No proposal will be considered unless it meets the minimum federal definition of a partnership (as stated in the *ITQ Guidelines and in the Federal Title II Non-Regulatory Guidance*).

A listing of the new proposals received is included as **Attachment 1**. This attachment also indicates which proposals are recommended for funding by the Review Panel. There are nine continuing projects for FY 2007-08 that are recommended for funding as indicated in **Attachment 2**.

A review panel consisting of K-12 and higher education representatives (**Attachment 3**) met on January 11, 2007, to review and rate the proposals submitted for consideration. Abstracts describing all of the proposed projects are included in **Attachment 4**. A total of 15 proposals were received by the Commission for consideration.

*The panel recommended funding one proposed project for 2007-08 and four proposed projects for 2008-09. Members of the review panel noted that even though funding was available for one new proposal for 2007-08, the top five proposals were excellent in nature and geographic representation (**Attachment 5**) and recommended that four additional proposals be recommended to begin at a later date when additional funding is available. The four additional proposals will be contingent upon availability of funds from the federal government and the submission of an updated proposal by December 1, 2007 to CHE staff for review.*

Overview of Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education Grants *Guidelines*

The higher education program is a competitive grants program with the primary focus on professional development; however, there are several recent significant changes under the legislation. Foremost is that the Commission will only award grants to eligible partnerships that must be comprised of, at a minimum, (1) a private or public institution of higher education and the division of the institution that prepares teachers and principals; (2) a school of arts and sciences; and (3) a high-need local education agency (defined in the legislation as a school district based upon U.S. census data). Additional partners may also be included. A second change is that there is no longer a focus on science and mathematics. Instead, nine core academic areas (English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography) can be addressed in proposals. A third change allows professional development to focus on in-service and pre-service teachers, as well as principals and paraprofessionals. Finally, the emphasis of the proposed projects must be on low-performing districts and schools, and the Commission is charged with ensuring an equitable geographic distribution of grants.

The priority areas that proposals must address are determined by the federal legislation identified in the State's Consolidated State Plan submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

Review Panel Recommendations

Five fundable projects were identified by the review panel from the 15 eligible proposals submitted for review. As stated above, the panel recommended that one proposal be funded for FY 2007-08 because of the availability of funds and the additional four be recommended for funding for FY 2008-09. Members of the review panel noted the quality of the proposals received and made recommendations for programmatic and budgetary changes for each of the 15 projects, as a service to the proposers. The Review Panel made general comments regarding the quality of the proposals that the staff will use in future outreach activities with the institutions concerning the program. Some of the proposals received lower evaluations because of the level of quality of the proposed partnership, evaluation plan or meeting the needs of teachers and students, as required by the *Guidelines*. The federal legislation directly links teacher quality to student achievement, yet few of the proposals provided detailed evaluations of the projects' activities in relation to student achievement.

The funding amount requested for the new award for FY 2007-08 is \$147,231. The total amount that will be requested for FY 2008-09 will be \$577,403, contingent upon availability of funds and the submission of an updated proposal submitted to CHE staff for review by December 1, 2007. The total amount requested for all proposals

submitted is \$2,183,882. The second through fourth year of funding for awards made under the FY 2004-05 through 2006-07 grant competition total \$1,044,700 for a total of \$1,571,436.

In addition to the five new projects, ten previously funded Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education projects will continue to function during the coming year. Two other funded projects' operations have been concluded.

Staff Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing approve on behalf of the Commission the review panel's funding recommendations as shown in **Attachment 1** and **Attachment 2**. The Committee was given the authority to make the awards on behalf of the Commission for the Improving Teacher Quality grant program since its inception in 2002-03. In keeping with the procedure from previous years, the staff requests authority to negotiate the final program activities and budgets with the project directors (as per the recommendations of the review panel). Funding will be contingent upon the project directors' revisions of the proposed projects to meet the review panel's recommended changes and availability of funds.

Attachment 1

| <p align="center">Improving Teacher Quality FY 2007-08 No Child Left Behind New Proposals Submitted</p> | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Proposal # | Institution | Project Title | Project Director | Funds Requested | Recommended for Funding |
| ITQ07-01 | Claflin University | Subject Area Development for Educators (SADE) | Tina Marshall-Bradley | YR1 \$140,466 YR2 \$144,520 YR3 \$148,693 YR4 \$152,992 | NO |
| ITQ07-02 | Clemson University | Leadership Excellence and Access Development Project (LEAD Project) | Donna Diaz | YR1 \$150,000 YR2 \$150,000 YR3 \$150,000 YR4 \$150,000 | NO |
| ITQ07-03 | Clemson University | School University Collaboration: Creating Early Student Success (SUCCESS) | Janie Hodge | YR1 \$150,000 YR2 \$150,000 YR3 \$150,000 YR4 \$150,000 | YES 2008-09 |
| ITQ07-04 | Clemson University | Meeting the Need for Highly Qualified Mathematics Teachers | Elaine Wiegert | YR1 \$134,534 YR2 \$149,075 YR3 \$149,880 YR4 \$110,529 | YES 2008-09 |
| ITQ07-05 | Coastal Carolina University | Teaching Language Arts and Reading to All Students | Ana Maria Schuhmann | YR1 \$149,439 YR2 \$149,439 YR3 \$149,439 YR4 \$149,439 | NO |
| ITQ07-06 | Columbia College | Integrating Science and Math (ISM) | Lynn Noble | YR1 \$125,604 YR2 \$105,462 YR3 \$126,844 | NO |
| ITQ07-07 | Francis Marion University | Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) – FMU Action Research | Tammy Pawloski | YR1 \$149,952 YR2 \$149,952 YR3 \$149,952 YR4 \$149,952 | NO |
| ITQ07-08 | Francis Marion University | Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) – FMU Professional Development | Tammy Pawloski | YR1 \$149,871 YR2 \$149,871 YR3 \$149,871 YR4 \$149,871 | NO |

**Improving Teacher Quality
FY 2007-08
No Child Left Behind
New Proposals Submitted**

| Proposal # | Institution | Project Title | Project Director | Funds Requested | Recommended for Funding |
|-------------------|---|---|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| ITQ07-09 | Furman University | T.E.L.L.-C.C. (Teaching English Language Learners in the Content Classroom) | Troy Terry | YR1 \$148,636 YR2 \$108,791 YR3 \$74,573 | NO |
| ITQ07-10 | Newberry College | Partnering Regionally to Improve Science and Math (PRISM) | Cindy Johnson-Taylor | YR1 \$148,856 YR2 \$143,802 YR3 \$149,180 YR4 \$143,802 | NO |
| ITQ07-11 | University of South Carolina – Columbia | Creating an Early Childhood Nature-Based Inquiry Model | Mary Earick | YR1 \$143,314 YR2 \$144,767 YR3 \$146,352 YR4 \$65,445 | YES 2008-09 |
| ITQ07-12 | University of South Carolina – Columbia | On-TRACK: Teaching Reading and Content Knowledge | David Virtue | YR1 \$147,231 YR2 \$148,784 YR3 \$148,784 YR4 \$148,784 | YES 2007-08 |
| ITQ07-13 | University of South Carolina – Aiken | Distance Education for Developing Highly Qualified Middle School Mathematics Teachers | Thomas Reid | YR1 \$149,555 YR2 \$149,540 YR3 \$149,540 YR4 \$149,528 | YES 2008-09 |
| ITQ07-14 | University of South Carolina – Upstate | Individualized Mentoring and Professional Opportunities and Resources for Teachers (IMPORT) | Charles Love | \$146,430 | NO |
| ITQ07-15 | Winthrop University | Building Professional Learning Communities | Lisa Johnson, Janice Poda | YR1 \$149,994 YR2 \$149,223 YR3 \$149,716 YR4 \$149,990 | NO |
| | | First Year Funding Requests Total | | \$2,183,882 | |
| | | 2007-08 Funding Recommended Total | | \$125,000 | |
| | | 2008-09 Funded Recommended Total | | \$577,403 | |

Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education
Continuing Projects
FY 2007-08

| PI | Grant | Institution | High Need LEA(s) | Additional LEA(s) | Requested Budget | Comments |
|--|---|---------------------|--|--|-------------------------|--|
| Derek Jokisch/Seth Smith | Continuing – Middle School/Higher Education Partnership in Science Education | Francis Marion | Florence 1,2,3; Marion 1,2; Dillon 1; Clarendon 3; Marlboro; | SC Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics | \$93,000 | Year 4 (of 4) |
| Rhonda Jeffries | Continuing – Increasing 2 nd and 3 rd Grade Teachers’ Mathematics Knowledge Using Standards-Based Instructional Strategies and Homework Assignments | USC – Columbia | Richland School District 1 | | \$0.00 | Year 5 (of 5) <i>Project will not be funded for year 5</i> |
| Nancy Breard | Continuing – Professional Development in Literacy (shared books) | Converse | Spartanburg 7, Newberry | Spartanburg 4, 5 | \$93,000 | Year 4 (of 4) |
| Tom Reid | Continuing – Developing High Quality Middle School Mathematics Teachers | USC-Aiken | Orangeburg 4 Lexington 4 | | \$94,000 | Year 4 (of 4) |
| Jon Singer | Continuing – Middle School/Higher Education Partnerships in Science Education | USC – Columbia | Richland 1; Sumter 2; Lexington 2 | Richland 2; Lexington 1,5; Sumter 17 | \$94,000 | Year 4 (of 4) |
| Tammy Pawloski | Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) | Francis Marion | Marion 2,7; Dillon 2 | | \$93,700 | Year 3 (of 4) |
| Donna Diaz | Building a Mathematical Learning Community | Clemson | Greenville | | \$93,750 | Year 2 (of 3) |
| Anna Baldwin | Digital Express | Clemson | Greenville, Oconee | | \$93,750 | Year 2 (of 4) |
| Lynn Noble | Making Math and Technology High-Quality | Columbia College | Richland 1 | | \$130,000 | Year 2 (of 4) |
| Christine Lotter | High School Teacher Inquiry and Technology Professional Development Program | USC – Columbia | Richland 1, Lexington 2, Orangeburg 5, Sumter 2 | | \$112,500 | Year 2 (of 4) |
| Jonatha Vare | Leadership for a New Millennium: District Aspiring Leadership | Winthrop University | Clarendon 3, Darlington, Marion 2, Marlboro | | \$147,000 | Year 2 (of 4) |
| Total Funded Requested FY 2007-08 | | | | | \$1,044,700.00 | |

**Improving Teacher Quality
Review Panel FY 2007-08**

Dr. Linda Sellars
Chief Academic Officer
Cherokee County School District
P. O. Box 460
Gaffney, SC 29342
864-902-3548
linda.sellars@gw.cherokee.k12.sc.us
District Office

Dr. Jerry Mitchell
Director, Center of Excellence for
Geographic Education
University of South Carolina
Department of Geography
Columbia, SC 29208
803-777-2986
mitchejt@gwm.sc.edu
Higher Education - public

Dr. Argentini Anderson
Academic Affairs & Licensing
SC Commission on Higher Education
1333 Main St., Suite 200
Columbia, SC 29201
803-737-2276
aanderson@che.sc.gov
CHE

Dr. Sandi Lemoine
Dean, College of Education
Lander University
320 Stanley Avenue
Greenwood, SC 29649
864-388-8248
slemoine@lander.edu
Higher Education - public

Dr. Fran Welch,
Dean, School of Education
College of Charleston
66 George Street
Charleston, SC 29424
(843) 953-8047
fwelch@cofc.edu
Higher Education - public

Dr. Heyward Hickman
Applied Mathematics and Science Consultant
Office of Curriculum and Standards
State Department of Education
916-B Rutledge Building
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, Sc 29201
803-734-0805
hhickman@ed.sc.gov
SDE

Dr. David Blackmon
Chair, Education Department
Coker College
300 East College Avenue
Hartsville, SC 29550
843-383-8103
dblackmon@coker.edu
Higher Education - private

Lori Ann Smith
Science Coordinator
NBCT
Sumter District Two
1345 Wilson Hall Rd
Sumter, SC 29151
Ph: 803-469-6900 ext. 511
LSMITH@scsd2.k12.sc.us
Science - K-12

Staff Support
Paula A. Gregg, Ph.D.
Academic Affairs & Licensing
SC Commission on Higher Education
1333 Main Street, Suite 200
Columbia, SC 29201
803-737-2246
pgregg@che.sc.gov
CHE

Proposal # ITQ07-01: Subject Area Development for Educators (SADE)

Project Directors: Tina Marshall-Bradley, John D. Jones

School of Education

Clayton University

The idea of highly qualified teachers presupposes a need for continuous learning of in-service teachers, especially in subject-area content. Teacher-leaders must demonstrate competence in pedagogical skills and their respective content areas. Rath (2001) found that excellent teachers, as well as highly qualified teachers, need to develop high levels of content knowledge and skills. Highly qualified teachers are teacher leaders and subject matter experts.

After joint meetings with local school districts (Calhoun, Orangeburg 3, Orangeburg 4, and Orangeburg 5), individual discussions with each school district soon evolved into a recognition of a commonality of a need to address subject area content among the districts. Based on the identified need to strengthen the content knowledge of current teachers in the districts, the Subject Area Development for Educators (SADE) program was developed. The purpose of the Subject Area Development for Educators (SADE) is to engage practicing teachers in the act of identifying their subject matter knowledge through discourse on student learning, using existing curricular materials, and student work (i.e. class work and standardized test results) to increase their understanding of their own subject matter knowledge

Subject area teachers will participate in a Subject Area Institute focused on the core subject areas of English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish. The Institute will be conducted in the Fall, Spring, and Summer of each year. In the first year, a course taking format will be used to provide educators with an enhanced understanding of the content knowledge teachers need to be effective masters of subject area content. During the second year of the grant, using a workshop format facilitated by subject area university specialist, project participants will develop assignments and exercises to be used in the classroom to ensure that students are meeting South Carolina academic standards. In the third year, project participants will collaborate with subject area university specialists to present professional development seminars in each district. In the fourth and final year, content area university faculty members and project participants will implement developed action research studies by subject area in each district.

Proposal # ITQ07-02: Leadership Excellence and Access Development Project (LEAD Project)

Project Director: Donna Diaz

Department of Mathematical Sciences

Clemson University

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) is a landmark in education reform designed to improve student achievement and to change the culture in America's schools from one of academic achievement for select groups of students to one of academic achievement for all groups of students. However, in school districts across the nation, shortages of qualified teachers and diminished resources for professional development and instructional materials prevail, and nowhere more acutely than in the high-poverty, culturally-isolated communities of the South (Hirsch, 2002). Simply put, America's schools, particularly less advantaged schools in the South, are not producing the math and science excellence required for global economic leadership and homeland security in the 21st century. Among the disadvantaged southern states, South Carolina's students continue to trail the rest of the nation's students in mathematics achievement, thus our South Carolina students from low socio-economic, rural communities are among the most mathematically disadvantaged students in this country.

In response to this disparity, Clemson University has partnered with three culturally isolated, high poverty school districts in South Carolina—Hampton 2, Union County, and Spartanburg 1. The purpose of the project is to develop leadership in the area of mathematics in order to implement and sustain a mathematics program of professional development for K-5 teachers that will lead to improved student achievement for K-5 students in these regions. Building the capacity for mathematics leadership at the elementary level is a first step towards building a stronger K-12 mathematics pipeline, and a stronger K-12 mathematics pipeline will ultimately contribute to the strengthening of these communities, both economically and socially.

The focus of the project will be to develop leadership at the district level, school level, and classroom level, within select elementary schools of the three districts. This will be accomplished by focusing on three populations of leaders.

1. At the district level, a “train the trainer” model of professional development will be utilized in order to develop a cadre of **Mathematics Professional Development (MPD) Facilitators** within each district. At the completion of the project, each district will have instructional leaders who will be qualified to provide professional development in the area of mathematics for every elementary teacher in the district.

2. Within each school, a coaching model of professional development will be utilized in order to develop **Grade Level Mathematics Leaders**. At the completion of this project, each participating school will have a cadre of school-based instructional leaders who will be skilled in creating and sustaining mathematically focused learning environments within the school community.
3. An inquiry-based model of professional development will be used to develop **Elementary Classroom Teachers** in each district to assist teachers in understanding and implementing the SC Mathematics Curriculum Standards. At the completion of this project, each classroom in the participating schools will have teachers who have the training and resources they need to create and sustain student-centered, inquiry-based mathematics learning environments.

Proposal # ITQ07-03: School University Collaboration: Creating Early Student Success (SUCCESS)

Project Director: Janie Hodge
School of Education
Clemson University

As a nation, we are failing many of our children from minority and high-poverty backgrounds. Across the nation, children who depend on the educational system to better their way of life are shortchanged by the schools they attend. Achievement gaps, particularly in reading, have long existed between White students and those from ethnic and racial minorities and between students with and without disabilities. South Carolina, like much of the nation, faces the challenge of addressing significant and persistent gaps among disadvantaged students. Many of South Carolina's students who live in poverty and who are from diverse backgrounds are at risk for learning problems.

Charleston County School District (CCSD), one of the largest districts in South Carolina, serves over 43,000 students with more than 50% of the population from minority backgrounds and has a growing number of English Language Learners. Many of these diverse learners are not able to read at Proficient levels according to the statewide assessment. Furthermore, many classes in CCSD's high-poverty schools are taught by teachers who are not highly qualified according to the state requirements. To meet the needs of this diverse population and to address the long-term negative outcomes associated with the inability to read, teachers and administrators in these high-needs schools need support and training in developing a systematic and comprehensive approach to reading instruction.

Faculty from Clemson University's Teacher Education Department, a faculty member from the English Department, and the Executive Director of Special Education from CCSD are collaborating to address the achievement gap in reading for students in high-needs schools. The **School University Collaboration: Creating Early Student**

Success (SUCCESS) Project is designed to prepare teachers in CCSD to address reading gaps between advantaged students and those from disadvantaged backgrounds with particular attention paid to culturally and linguistically diverse students in high-needs schools. We will provide intensive and ongoing instruction and professional development for teachers across the district with coaching support for teachers from two partner high-needs schools for 2 years. Project SUCCESS focuses on preventing reading difficulties through early identification and intervention and provides teachers with strategies to address the learning needs of students with established reading difficulties, including students who are culturally/linguistically diverse and students with disabilities.

Across 4 years of the project, we will work directly with four partner schools to provide professional development, training, technical assistance, and coursework in reading for teachers in the schools. We will also provide professional development for other teachers across the district in scientifically based instruction in reading, use of children's literature for culturally diverse populations, and ongoing assessment of children's progress in important literacy skills. Through Project SUCCESS, we will build capacity in four partner schools to implement and sustain a school wide reading program that addresses the needs of all students, including those individuals most at risk. In addition to focused efforts in the four partner schools, Project SUCCESS will reach a broader audience in CCSD through high-quality professional development in reading as well as issues and strategies for teaching culturally diverse students.

Proposal # ITQ07-04: Meeting the Need for Highly Qualified Mathematics Teachers

Project Directors: Elaine Wiegert

School of Education

Clemson University

This project, supported by a collaboration between five middle schools in one school district and two departments at a university, will, over the span of four years, provide seven two-week summer mathematics institutes and three academic year courses on mathematics content and middle level mathematics methods, including the implementation of the South Carolina Mathematics Standards, in an effort to ensure that all participating middle level mathematics teachers are fully endorsed and highly qualified and are fluent in mathematics and pedagogical content. The seven graduate mathematics content courses (Algebra Concepts for Middle School, Number and Operations, Rational Numbers, Geometry and Measurement I, Geometry and Measurement II, Working with Data, and Calculus Concepts for Middle School) and the three graduate mathematics education methods courses (Teaching Mathematics at the Middle School Level I, Teaching Mathematics at the Middle School Level II, and Mathematics Education: Mathematics Leadership) will be taught by teams of mathematicians and mathematics teacher educators at a local school site to offer easier accessibility for teachers from district middle schools. The university and the school

district will partner to give up to 30 teachers funding for attending and presenting at state and national conferences for mathematics teachers; this will allow the work of the project participants and staff to be disseminated beyond just the full-time participants. In addition, the final mathematics education methods course, Mathematics Education: Mathematics Leadership, is intended to foster master mathematics teachers in the district, who can share understandings and strategies and who can mentor other mathematics teachers. The courses developed will continue to be offered by the four universities as needed after the conclusion of the project.

The objectives for this project are to increase teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge of mathematics, with the aim of increasing student mathematical knowledge and achievement. These objectives will be measured at each phase of this sustained and long-term educational program. The partnering school district has been identified as a high-needs LEA according to the Federal definition of high needs LEA. In addition to the high needs definition based on the number of children living in poverty, the middle schools in this district can also be classified as high needs with regard to academic achievement. All of these middle schools receive Title I funds and all are eligible for sanctions under the guidelines of the *No Child Left Behind* legislation of 2001 for failure to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Participating teachers will have the opportunity to earn up to 30 graduate credit hours towards a master's degree through this project. The courses in this educational program address the identified needs of our teachers by increasing the teachers' content and pedagogical content knowledge in the most problematic strands in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade mathematics, helping the teachers to better use the resources provided by the South Carolina Department of Education, and improving the quality of instruction. The program provides professional development activities that can increase the subject matter knowledge and teaching skills of middle level mathematics teachers. These professional development activities are sustained, intensive, classroom focused, and aligned with national, state, and local standards and mathematics curricula. The overall aim of this project is a demonstrable and measurable improvement in student academic achievement in mathematics at the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade level.

Proposal # ITQ07-05: Teaching Language Arts and Reading to All Students
Project Director: Ana Maria Schuhmann
Education Department
Coastal Carolina University

The Teaching Language Arts and Reading to ALL students project is a partnership between Coastal Carolina University College of Education, the College of Humanities and Fine Arts and the Horry County and Georgetown County School Districts.

The overall goal and purpose of the partnership is to improve the academic achievement of students in the Horry and Georgetown County schools by enhancing the content and pedagogical knowledge of teachers in the area of Reading and Language Arts with an added emphasis on English as a Second Language.

The specific objectives of the program are to:

1. Increase the knowledge and pedagogical skills of - K-12 teachers in the core subject area of reading and language arts.
2. Increase the knowledge and pedagogical skills of – K-8 mainstream teachers so that they can best serve the needs of English Language Learners (ELL) in the region.
3. Increase the knowledge and skills as well as the number of qualified ESL specialists in the region.
4. Develop and implement a master’s degree program in ESL at Coastal Carolina University that meets the needs of teachers in the region.
5. Develop and implement a master’s degree program in Literacy at Coastal Carolina University that meets the needs of teachers in the region.
6. Revise the undergraduate teacher education curriculum at Coastal Carolina so that all beginning teachers can effectively teach language arts and reading to all students-including ELLs.
7. Evaluate, disseminate and duplicate the model developed to other institutions and districts throughout South Carolina and the South East.

The project will be based on the recommendations of the National Reading Panel; the research based model for sheltered English instruction as well as the South Carolina Content Area Standards; the South Carolina ESOL Standards (2006), the NSDC Standards for Staff Development; the International Reading Association and the Teaching English to Speakers of other Language Standards.

As a result of the four year program, over 400 teachers will be provided with sustained professional development; 30 ESL specialists will be credentialed; two masters programs will be created and implemented; and a model for preparing teachers for an increasingly diverse student population model will be designated for replication.

Proposal # ITQ07-06: Integrating Science and Math (ISM)

Project Director: Lynn Noble
Education Department
Columbia College

Fairfield County Schools and Columbia College are pleased to present a proposal for a quality, sustained professional development program for the elementary teachers in

Fairfield County. The purpose of the program is to equip teachers to provide effective instruction in math and science. Columbia College will offer a two-week institute focused on integrating science and math instruction including the purchase and use of appropriate materials and equipment, and provide a follow-up, year-long, in-class coaching experience.

Fairfield County Schools received an unsatisfactory in both improvement and absolute ratings on the most recent annual school report. Specifically, their PACT scores in math and science reveal that approximately three-fourths of their students have scored basic and below in these subjects. They have been unable to provide quality, sustained professional development in math or science in the recent past. They have asked that this project focus on integrating science and math.

Columbia College is able to offer strong instruction in science, math and integration through the Departments of Science, Mathematics and Computing and Education. Faculty are eager to design and deliver a high quality, effective professional development program for the elementary teachers in Fairfield County. The institute is designed to include 18 segments – 6 in science and 6 in math, each covering a strand identified in the SC Standards – and 6 in integration. Participants will create lessons and units that focus

Continued focus on integrating math and science and planning and delivering quality lessons will take place through observations and coaching. At least one lesson will be videotaped so teachers can reflect on their own pedagogical skill.

The project will be evaluated by Dr. Lisabeth Saunders Medlock of Results Consulting. The evaluation will include information on the acquisition of, and then the use of, new knowledge and pedagogy in science and math. The evaluation will also include data that supports increased achievement in math and science for children whose teachers have participated in this project. A comparison of their achievement to the success of children in other classrooms will be included.

Proposal # ITQ07-07: Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) – FMU Action Research
Project Directors: Tammy Pawloski
Center of Excellence
Francis Marion University

Some of the most at risk children in South Carolina live in the PeeDee region. School districts in the region have a median poverty index of 82.7% and Marion County, containing three of the region's school districts, has the highest unemployment rate in the state. Generational poverty and breakdown of family structures have resulted in poor nutrition, low birth weight, high numbers of single parent/grandparent households, and an

absence of learning rich early childhood environments so necessary for later success in school. Preschool aged children in the region test developmentally 2-3 years below their chronological age. The extent of poverty is so great it impacts negatively on student achievement. Ratings on school report cards are among the lowest in the state. All 19 Pee Dee school districts appear on the eligible partner “high needs” list and thirteen are included in this proposal. Challenges to the dedicated teachers of this area are immense.

The high concentration of poverty in a single geographic area also provides great opportunities for Francis Marion University (FMU), the region’s premier state institution of higher education. Francis Marion has a tradition of partnership with surrounding counties, communities, and agencies to meet the needs of the region. In 2004, FMU established a Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty (COE) whose mission is to provide specialized teacher development necessary to meet the unique needs of teachers working with children of poverty.

The **FMU Action Research Project** will provide teachers of poor children in Partner Districts with the opportunity to engage in classroom action research projects that are designed to identify and disseminate research-based best practices for improving the academic achievement of children of poverty. A combination of resources from the FMU Center of Excellence, FMU School of Education and College of Liberal Arts, and thirteen local school districts (Clarendon 1, Clarendon 2, Clarendon 3, Darlington, Dillon 2, Dillon 3, Florence 1, Florence 2, Florence 5, Marion 1, Marion 2, Marion 7, and Williamsburg) will be used to achieve project goals.

Data from Partner Districts reveal that teachers struggle to find research based instructional strategies that will be effective in classrooms where a majority of students come from homes of poverty. Teachers of all subject areas and grade levels seek pedagogies and practices that will improve academic outcomes for these students. The FMU Center of Excellence recently completed a pilot action research project with 11 teachers who focused their research in the area of classroom management. The success of this project prompted the COE Advisory Committee to recommend expansion of that program in order to provide teachers opportunities to apply action research to classroom instruction in content areas. Action research has been selected because it gives teachers ownership and provides a structure for planning, implementing, reflecting, and adjusting classroom practice, as well as because it facilitates collegial communication and builds problem-solving capacity. In **FMU Action Research**, up to 39 teachers will receive instruction in action research from Dr. Lorin Anderson, a nationally renowned research professor. They will meet regularly to report and receive guidance as their projects progress throughout the school year. Finally they will share findings with colleagues through a summer institute, web pages, and in professional publications and presentations.

Dr. Tammy Pawloski, Director of the Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty will oversee the project. Dr. Lorin Anderson will provide project leadership. Data collection and evaluation will be provided by Mohr & Keim, respected independent evaluators.

*Proposal # ITQ07-08: **Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) – FMU Professional Development***

Project Director: Tammy Pawloski
Center of Excellence
Francis Marion University

Some of the most at risk children in South Carolina live in the Pee Dee. School districts in the region have a median poverty index of 82.7%. Free and reduced lunch counts are often in the 90th percentile. Marion County, home to three of the region's districts, has the highest unemployment rate in the state. Generational poverty and consequent breakdown of family structure has resulted in poor nutrition, low birth weight babies, high numbers of teen pregnancies and single parent/grandparent households, and the lack of literacy-rich early learning environments, necessary for later success in school. The extent of poverty is so great it negatively impacts all aspects of life, including student achievement. Ratings on school report cards are among the lowest in the state. All of the region's 19 districts are eligible high needs partners. Challenges to the dedicated teachers of this area are immense.

Francis Marion University (FMU), the region's premier state university, has a tradition of partnership with surrounding counties, communities, agencies, and businesses to meet the needs of the region. In 2004, FMU established the Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty (COE) whose mission is to provide specialized professional development necessary to meet the unique needs of teachers working with children of poverty. The COE began this effort by developing modules that infuse research-based best practice for teaching poor children into undergraduate education and liberal arts courses. In 2005, the Center led selected teachers from Partner Districts in the development of standards-based core curriculum units that incorporate the revised Bloom's Taxonomy and instructional strategies proven successful with children of poverty. The COE also completed a successful pilot project using action research to address classroom management issues in an effort to build teacher capacity for problem-solving and collaboration.

With this project, **FMU Professional Development**, the Center will build on these prior successes to provide teachers from Partner Districts the opportunity to enhance their skills through a comprehensive professional development program. Activities will include: a Summer Institute where master teachers present successful strategies and

promising practices from their classrooms in partnership with FMU faculty members, graduate or recertification courses that incorporate research-based best practice for teaching and assessing children of poverty, and participation in a professional organization specifically created for teachers of children of poverty in which teachers can dialogue, publish, and present on critical issues. All activities will incorporate state standards for each core content area and the revised Bloom's Taxonomy, as well as national professional development standards. Course and Institute content will be selected by a steering committee composed of education and liberal arts faculties and COE Partner District teachers and administrators.

Resources from FMU, the Center of Excellence, the Pee Dee Education Center, and the thirteen Partner School Districts (Clarendon 1, Clarendon 2, Clarendon 3, Darlington, Dillon 2, Dillon 3, Florence 1, Florence 2, Florence 5, Marion 1, Marion 2, Marion 7, and Williamsburg) will be used to achieve project goals. At least 250 educators from Partner Districts will participate in project activities.

Dr. Tammy Pawloski, Center Director, will oversee the project. Dr. Lorin Anderson will provide project leadership. Project evaluation will be provided by Mohr and Keim, highly regarded external consultants. Project reports will be available on the Center website and disseminated through professional publications and presentations.

Proposal # ITQ0709: T.E.L.L.-C.C. (Teaching English Language Learners in the Content Classroom)

Project Director: Troy Terry
Graduate Studies in Education
Furman University

Furman University's TELL-CC Program will be a state-of-the-art collaboration of Furman University's Education Department and Office of Graduate Studies in Education with the School District of Greenville County's Lakeview Middle School and the Northwest Crescent Center. The purpose of the program is to expand the current TESOL partnership between the Greenville County Schools and the Office of Graduate Studies that has prepared more than 75 teachers for ESOL certification in the last two years while providing innovative professional development in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) strategies to content area teachers.

Activities provided include: Innovative and research-based Professional Development in inclusive instructional strategies for **all** students of diverse backgrounds (including ESOL students) for all in-service teachers in the schools; Professional Development in standards-based reading/writing strategies that are skill-centered (research-based literacy strategies are a key component of meeting the needs of diverse learners); Professional Development in technology-based instructional techniques for

ESOL students including use of *Rosetta Stone* and *Plaza Comunitaria*; Professional Development in hands-on, student-based instructional strategies that meet the needs of all learners, and improve overall student achievement; Undergraduate, bi-lingual tutoring programs using Furman University foreign language majors; Graduate courses for teachers for ESOL certification, an M.A. with a concentration in TESOL, or for re-certification; inclusive instructional strategies in the diverse classroom; and the effects of technology and inclusive strategies on student achievement in low-performing middle schools.

Target Population: By focusing on in-service teacher preparation in a growing area of instructional need, Furman University and its partners will meet the needs of teachers and ESL students in Greenville County. The partnering middle school is a Title I school with a large, growing population of non- or limited- English speakers, primarily Hispanic. As the innovative program expands, our model will be exported state-wide and provide relevant theory and practice for increasing student achievement for diverse learners.

Outcomes: Predicted outcomes will be a growth in the number of ESOL certified teachers in Greenville County and in the Upstate of South Carolina; all teachers in the middle school will receive strategies for dealing with non- and limited English speakers in their classrooms and strategies for teaching students of diverse backgrounds; and increases in achievement for targeted students at the school. Evaluation will be based on data from TESOL enrollment; evaluations from teachers participating in staff development, journals of tutors, and results of the project on student achievement.

Partners: Furman University's Office of Graduate Studies and Education Department in collaboration with the Greenville County Schools' Lakeview Middle School and the Northwest Crescent Center. More than 100 teachers and 800 middle school students will be impacted initially along with more than 25 Furman faculty and administrators.

Proposal # ITQ07-10: Partnering Regionally to Improve Science and Math (PRISM)

Project Director: Cindy Johnson-Taylor

Department of Education

Newberry College

The Partnering Regionally to Improve Science and Math (PRISM) program will increase teacher quality and student achievement in grades 2-12 by assisting and supporting teachers in implementing best practices for teaching math and science. A partnership between teachers, principals, and professors has been created. The partners include the School District of Newberry County, District 56 of Laurens County, the

Newberry College Department of Education, and the Newberry College departments of Science and Mathematics.

The scope of PRISM will include approximately 50 teachers from 4 high schools, 5 middle schools, and 12 elementary schools across the two counties and 75 preservice teachers from Newberry County. The design of PRISM is as follows:

- Teachers and preservice teachers will participate in a book study on Best Practice in Instruction which will conclude with a visit by the authors.
- Teachers and preservice teachers will participate in workshops at Newberry College to develop long-range plans, organize units of instruction, and create common pre- and post-tests for these units based on the new ADEPT requirement of Unit Work Samples. The lessons created during the workshops will be shared through a website created by PRISM and by presentations at conferences.
- Newberry College will facilitate a graduate course addressing the concepts needed to teach content-specific standards and to develop a ‘toolbox’ of researched-based instructional strategies that will engage students in the learning process. Coaching by professors and school-based math and science coaches throughout the year will ensure proper application of techniques learned during summer workshops and graduate level courses.
- Monthly meetings between project participants will be held to discuss how Best Practice is being incorporated into classes and to analyze assessment data collected from units of instruction and to reflect on the implementation of the strategies.

Research supports the need for a program of this nature and for a reasonable expectation of success. One prevailing view of the National Science Foundation is that teachers of math and science should develop the habits of mathematical and scientific thinkers. With continued professional development, teachers must translate those processes into interactive, flexible methods of teaching in the classroom. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development says that professional development is more effective in changing teachers practice when it is organized around the collective participation of teachers, focused on active learning activities, and coherent.

An equally important part of this project will be the focus on engaging teachers and preservice teachers in collaborative knowledge construction rather than isolated study. New findings in cognitive science suggest that the coordination of multiple perspectives into a single system is a vital part of the learning process. When this takes place, on the social plane, it helps individuals learn how to internalize these metacognitive tools (Bransford, et al., 1999).

It is believed that PRISM will improve teacher quality and student achievement in math and science in grades 2-12 in two high need school districts while also producing better prepared teachers to enter the field.

Proposal # ITQ07-11 Creating an Early Childhood Nature-Based Inquiry Model

Project Director: Mary Earick

Department of Instruction & Teacher Education

University of South Carolina - Columbia

To effectively teach science through inquiry, a teacher must have a strong understanding of the inquiry process and have had opportunities to conduct projects through an inquiry-based approach (NRC, 1996; NSES, 1996; AAAS, 1998). Two significant components of effective science instruction at all education levels are 1) a teacher's strong science content background, including a solid understanding of the scientific or inquiry process, and 2) teacher self-efficacy in teaching science. In general, early childhood and elementary teachers do not possess either of these "tools" and therefore face significant obstacles to effectively teach science to their students (Tosun, 2000). In addition, Eshach and Fried (2005) argue that, children naturally enjoy observing and thinking about nature, an educational setting that few teachers perceive as necessary for the teaching and learning of science. This translates into a need to plan and design more content-rich, inquiry-based professional development opportunities, including courses for in-service teachers, in natural or outdoor settings, in order to change teacher practices. Changing beliefs (Richardson, 2003; Richardson & Anders, 2005) is the first step in changing classroom practices and allows teachers to become content (Brophy & Goody; 1986; Gage, 1978; Stallings, Needels, & Stayrook, 1980; Good & Grouws, 1979) and process (Fenstermacher, 1994; Anders & Richardson, 1991; Wilson & Berne, 1999; Ortiz, 2001) competent. Our one week Nature-based Inquiry (NBI) summer institute will service 60 teachers over four years from the Georgetown County School District at the Waccamaw Nature Explorations Center at Prince George and receive school based support over the following two years. Teachers will come from the PreK through 2nd grades in each of the 9 elementary schools that are serviced by the GCSD. In addition, four district-wide professional development sessions for PreK through 2nd grade teachers will be offered annually over the course of three years in nature-based inquiry, standards-based curriculum design and goals-based assessment.

With a focus on the early elementary content requirements as outlined in the *South Carolina Science Academic Standards*, this project will develop teachers' abilities in science and scientific inquiry by focusing on the recognition and understanding of various cycles in nature. Natural cycles include stages of growth and change in organisms that occur over periods of days, months and years, the changes of the seasons, the lunar cycle, and the hydrologic cycle, among many others. Teachers will conduct a week-long NBI research project, from which data will be collected and shared. In addition, instruction will focus on the skills

of inquiry as applied to authentic and accessible nature environments; i.e., schoolyards and outdoor areas found at or near the schools represented in this project. Twice a month, teachers will receive material, technical and instructional assistance in the development of standards-aligned curriculum utilizing schoolyard areas for science instruction, and in the conversion of areas of these schoolyards to be more “nature focused”, to benefit nature-based inquiry approaches with young children.

Proposal # ITQ07-12 **On-TRACK: Teaching Reading and Content Knowledge**
Project Director: David Virtue
Department of Instruction & Teacher Education
University of South Carolina - Columbia

Many middle school teachers in South Carolina are not properly certified and highly qualified (HQ) in the subjects they teach (South Carolina Department of Education, 2006). Through **On-TRACK: Teaching Reading and Content Knowledge**, qualified middle level teachers will:

1. Make progress toward becoming “highly qualified” and properly certified as defined by state and federal regulations by completing content coursework and coursework in content area reading, and by passing the Praxis II exam.
2. Increase their content knowledge in the subjects they teach and be considered “content competent” as defined by state regulations by passing the Praxis II exam.
3. Effectively teach content to their students by implementing research-based content area reading strategies.

During the project period, project participants will enroll in at least one course in the core content area in which he/she teaches (i.e. English language arts, science, social studies, or mathematics) and a graduate course designed to help them effectively teach the new content knowledge to their students by focusing on content area reading strategies. Project partners will work together to design optimal learning experiences for the latter course, which will include segments on instructional planning, instructional strategies that focus on reading skill development, and assessment of student learning.

The project will increase the number of HQ teachers in participating LEAs while focusing on two important areas of need for middle school teachers in South Carolina: 1) increasing content knowledge (which is especially an issue for middle level teachers prepared and certified to teach in the elementary grades), and 2) improving student achievement by focusing on content area reading strategies.

Proposal # ITQ07-13 Distance Education for Developing Highly Qualified Middle School Mathematics Teachers

Project Director: Thomas Reid

Department of Mathematics

University of South Carolina - Aiken

This project is intended to increase the mathematics content and pedagogical knowledge of mathematics teachers in grades 5-8 to enable them to become highly qualified as described in the *No Child Left Behind* legislation and middle school mathematics certified as defined in the South Carolina State Board of Education guidelines for add-on endorsement of elementary certified teachers. Specifically, this grant will fund production of DVD sets to deliver content for graduate-level contract courses, and offer those courses to our partnering districts (Colleton, Hampton #1, Hampton #2, Jasper, Lexington 2, and Orangeburg 4). While the districts will pay for the contract courses, the grant will provide the texts and a laptop computer for one participating teacher at each district each year.

Under a previous ITQ grant, the University of South Carolina Aiken developed and offered on-campus sections of these courses. The Higher Education Mathematics Partnership provided guidance and support for these course offering. This partnership is composed of mathematicians and mathematics educators from a variety of institutions (such as Claflin University, Columbia College, Frances Marion University and the University of South Carolina) and seeks to improve communication and collaboration between the mathematics and education departments to assist with joint planning of appropriate mathematics courses that will assist teachers with K-12 learning.

Under the previous grant, a videographer captured raw footage of the lectures, with the intent to produce DVDs for use in distance education courses. A supplementary ITQ grant purchased equipment and funded the production of the DVD set, *Algebra for Middle School Teachers*. In its first year, the proposed project will offer that algebra course via distance education, allowing middle school teachers from the partnering districts, who were unable to make the commute to Aiken for the on-campus offerings, to improve their teaching through deeper content knowledge and improved teaching strategies. In addition, the proposed project will produce a DVD set for another course to be offered in Year 2. Subsequent years will continue the pattern of offering the new DVD course and producing the DVD set for the next course.

Ultimately, the goal of the program is to produce DVDs to support distance education courses to facilitate teachers across South Carolina in obtaining both highly qualified status and middle school mathematics certification. The Higher Education

Mathematics Partnership will continue to provide guidance and support for this project, and encourage mathematicians and mathematics educators from colleges and universities around the state of South Carolina to work together to increase teachers' mathematical content knowledge, which in turn, will improve student learning in our schools.

Proposal # ITQ07-14 Individualized Mentoring and Professional Opportunities and Resources for Teachers (IMPORT)

Project Director: Charles Love

School of Education

University of South Carolina – Upstate

Research indicates that ongoing, high-quality staff development is essential to achieving significant standards-based reform. The concept of individual professional development plans as a way to involve teachers in the decision making and goal setting of professional development has been supported in recent literature as evidenced by state mandates. This model gives teachers the opportunity to learn more about the needs of their students, their own learning needs, and how these align with district goals and national standards. However, these efforts are typically used for evaluation purposes and do not afford teachers with the resources that can lead to “true” professional growth.

Given the need for more individualized professional development of the diverse student populations in three of South Carolina's school districts (Clarendon 2, Sumter 2, and Sumter 17), *Individualized Mentoring, Professional Opportunities and Resources for Teachers (IMPORT)* was designed to (a) increase the content and pedagogical knowledge of teachers in the areas of science, mathematics and student thinking, (b) acknowledge and respect teachers' individualized strengths and experiences, (c) address individualized knowledge and skill gaps;(d) enhance teachers' vision of the skills, knowledge, and school experiences their students should and must have to ensure success, and (e) provide teachers with the skills to share their growth with other colleagues.

To meet these objectives, the School of Education at the University of South Carolina Upstate and the Division of Arts and Sciences at the University of South Carolina Sumter propose a comprehensive and unique professional development initiative that will involve a partnership between these institutions of higher education and three school districts. IMPORT will utilize an “import of skills” model for professional development in the areas of science and math. Participants develop individualized professional development plans for addressing their unique content and pedagogical knowledge and skill needs in the areas of science and mathematics, as well as diversity sensitive pedagogy. Access to expert support and resources are provided to support their plan. The process also requires that they be conversant on the topics with

other colleagues and in this manner they “import” their knowledge and skills to students, but also to colleagues.

Proposal # ITQ07-15 **Building Professional Learning Communities**

Project Directors: Lisa Johnson, Janice Poda

Center for Pedagogy

Winthrop University

Winthrop University and the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) propose to collaborate with six high-need school districts (Chester, York One, Marion Two, Marlboro, Clarendon 3, and Darlington) to assist in developing and implementing quality induction and mentoring programs. The South Carolina Department of Education recently adopted criteria for individuals serving as a mentor and requirements for written district induction and mentoring plans (http://www.scteachers.org/Cert/certpdf/mentor_guide.pdf, 2006a). Although the guidelines have now been adopted, there are limited opportunities for training for teachers who serve as mentors to be effective due to a lack of funding. In fact, the South Carolina General Assembly does not provide any funding earmarked for teacher induction and mentoring. Even with the laws and guidelines in place for an induction and mentoring program, some new teachers are never assigned a mentor, and even more new teachers rarely have any substantial interaction with their mentors. *Building Professional Learning Communities* will work to provide high need districts with the support needed to meet the demands of a high quality mentoring program leading to increased rates of teacher retention and improved student achievement (Strong, 2006). This support will come from two main initiatives: (1) assisting each district in the development and implementation of induction and mentoring plans and (2) integrating technology to improve communication, assessment, and development.

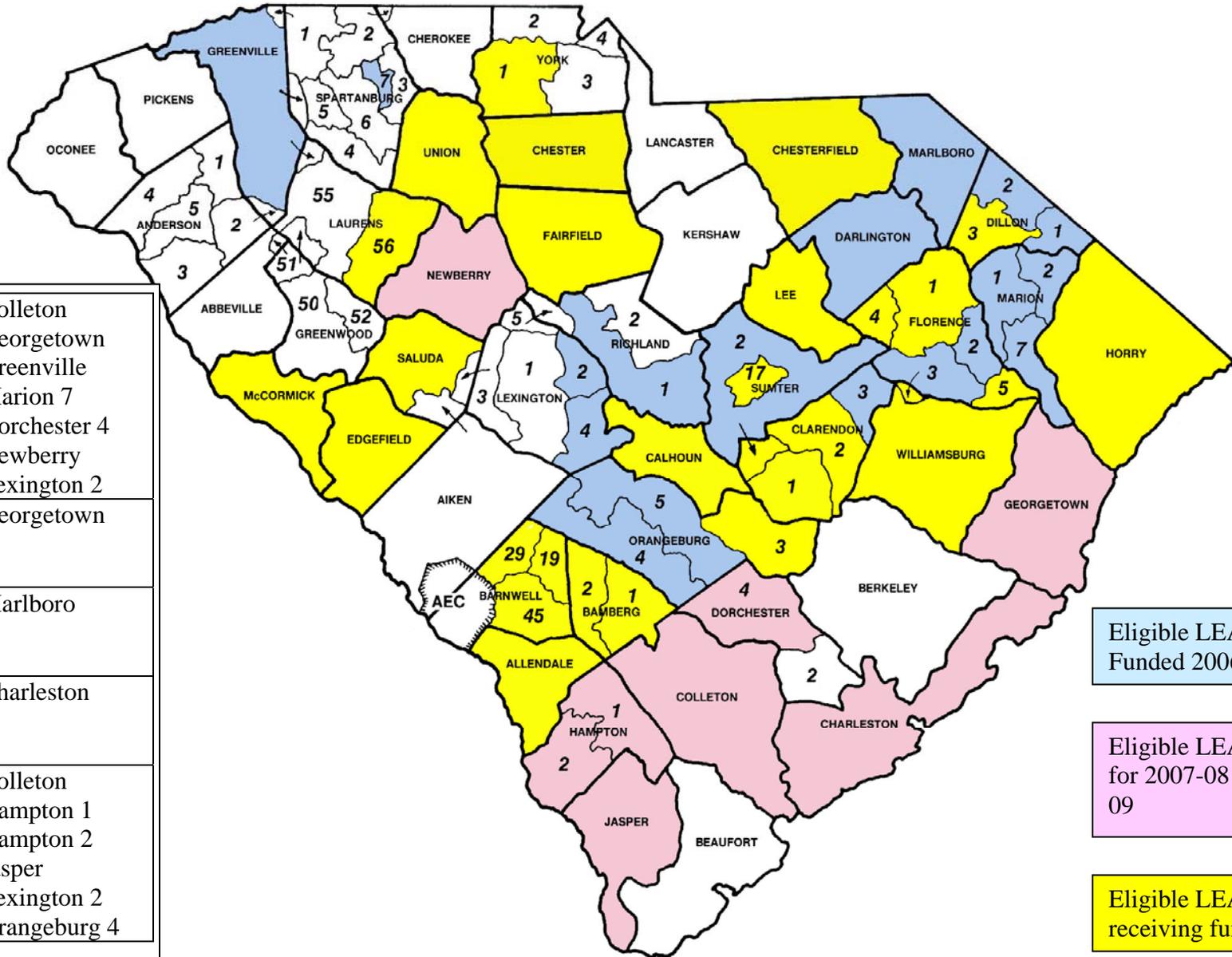
Building Professional Learning Communities will assist each partnering district to establish an Induction and Mentoring Leadership Team. This team will be charged with developing and implementing curriculum for advanced and continuous mentor training as well as for administrator training to improve working conditions for teachers. Winthrop faculty from the College of Education and CERRA will work in partnership with each district’s Leadership Team as they create an induction and mentoring plan that meets the district’s individual needs. The plan will include development, implementation, and evaluation of mentor training at three levels: initial, continuous, and advanced. Written plans will be submitted to the State Department of Education for approval by the State Board of Education. The training provided each district will be based on the needs of that district such as specific groups of teachers who have historically had challenges being inducted into the profession or who have high turnover rates (e.g., special

education teachers, alternatively prepared teachers, international teachers). As training occurs within each district, mentor leaders will be identified as prospective trainers for other districts thus disseminating successful programs and ensuring continuity once the grant period expires. Additionally, the districts' Induction and Mentoring Leadership Teams will plan and coordinate training for school administrators in meeting the needs of beginning teachers and their mentors. Survey data collected from teachers regarding working conditions will be used as a foundation for establishing action plans administrators can implement to reduce teacher attrition.

As a second initiative, *Building Professional Learning Communities* will provide each participating district with technological tools to improve mentor/beginning teacher communication and development as well as allow for participants across districts to communicate with each other, CERRA, and Winthrop University's Education and Arts and Sciences faculty. Each partnering district will receive thirty laptops and webcams on which to capture specific teaching and/or mentoring strategies. The digital records can be used during mentor/beginning teacher conferences, as a mentor demonstration, or archived for use by other beginning teachers or mentors. A Tandberg kit allowing for virtual real-time video communication will also be provided to each district. Districts can consult with each other regarding developing Induction and Mentoring Plans, teachers can "sit-in" on a science class being conducted by one of the professors from the College of Arts and Sciences, or districts can receive three-day training from CERRA and the State Department of Education without having to leave their school.

High quality induction and mentoring programs can counteract the rate of teacher turnover and impact higher student achievement. Such programs include collaborative discussion, demonstration, and opportunity for practice in relation to strategies for classroom management, understanding learner engagement, and communicating with families (Wang & Odell, 2002). *Building Professional Learning Communities* uses technology-enabled resources to assist districts in building a program not only that acknowledges and meets the needs of the district, but the beginning teachers they are trying to retain.

High Needs LEAs – ITQ Grants 2007-08



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|----------------------------------|---|
| USC-Columbia (Virtue) 2007-08 | Colleton Georgetown Greenville Marion 7 Dorchester 4 Newberry Lexington 2 |
| SC-Columbia (Earick) 2008-09 | Georgetown |
| Clemson (Wiegert) 2008-09 | Marlboro |
| Clemson (Hodge) 2008-09 | Charleston |
| USC-Aiken (Reid) 2008-09 | Colleton Hampton 1 Hampton 2 Jasper Lexington 2 Orangeburg 4 |

Eligible LEAs Currently Funded 2006-07

Eligible LEAs Proposed for 2007-08 and 2008-09

Eligible LEAs not receiving funding