

CHE
Agenda Item 7.02.E.
3/05/2009

March 5, 2009

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Ken Wingate, Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

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

Informational Report on Awards for *Improving Teacher Quality* Competitive Grants Program, FY 2009-10 (New and Continuing)

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 A 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 (LEAs) which are 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.

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 are 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 (in the core academic areas that the teachers teach). 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 and are identified in the State's Consolidated State Plan submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

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 receive \$960,000 with which to make Federal FY 2009-10 awards. This year, given the amount of funding available, proposed new projects may request up to \$90,000 in funds per year (In previous years, available funding allowed up to \$150,000 per year.) 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*).

Review Panel Recommendations

A review panel consisting of K-12 and higher education representatives (**Attachment 1**) met on January 23, 2009, to review and rate the seven proposals submitted for consideration. Three fundable projects were identified by the FY 2009-10 review panel (**Attachment 2**) for funding because of their excellence and geographic representation. The funding amount requested for the new awards for FY 2009-10 is \$246,000 contingent upon availability of funds from the federal government.

The three new proposals will allow four new school districts (Laurens 56, Lexington 4, Sumter 17 and Orangeburg 3) to receive professional development in science and language arts content. Staff will conduct technical assistance workshops for institutions to assist with writing strong, fundable grant proposals.

In addition to the three new projects, eight continuing projects were submitted and approved by the CHE staff for funding in FY 2009-10 (**Attachment 3**). These projects were reviewed by staff for their success in meeting the stated goals and objectives in their original proposals and for appropriate activities as identified by the federal guidelines. The total amount requested for continuing proposals in their second through fourth years of funding for awards made under the FY 2006-07 through 2009-10 grant competitions total \$722,364. The total funding amount requested for all approved projects is \$968,364.

A map (**Attachment 4**) is attached which shows the high-needs LEAs that are eligible to participate in the Improving Teacher Quality Grant programs and also identifies those that are current partners as well as those that will become partners with the FY 2009-10 projects.

Abstracts describing all of the new proposed projects are included in **Attachment 5**. Seven new proposals were received by the Commission for consideration for FY 2009-10.

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing approved at its February 5, 2009, meeting, on behalf of the Commission, the review panel's funding recommendations as depicted. The Committee was given the authority to make the awards on behalf of the Commission several years ago. This authority was granted in order to streamline the grant award-making process. In keeping with the procedure from previous years, the staff is granted authority to negotiate the final program activities and budgets with the project directors (as per the recommendations of the review panel). Funding is contingent upon the project directors' revision of the proposed project to meet the review panel's recommended changes.

This report is being presented to the Commission for information only.

Attachment 1

ITQ Review Panel
2009-10
January 23, 2009
9:00 am – 5:00 pm

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<p align="center">Improving Teacher Quality (No Child Left Behind) FY 2009-10 <u>New Proposals Submitted</u></p>						
Project Title	Institution	High-Need LEA	Project Director Name		Funds Requested	Recommended for Funding
<i>Inquire to Engage in Chemistry (ITEC)</i>	Newberry College	Laurens 56, Lexington 4, McCormick	Cindy Johnson-Taylor	YR1	\$ 90,000	YES \$83,000
				YR2	\$ 90,000	
				YR3	\$ 90,000	
				YR4	\$ 90,000	
<i>Project RES: Reform-based Environmental Science</i>	Clemson University	Orangeburg 3, Orangeburg 4	Michelle Cook	YR1	\$ 89,236	YES \$80,000
				YR2	\$ 89,492	
				YR3	\$ 87,883	
				YR4	\$ 80,946	
<i>The Writer's Edge: Empowering Students to Become Writers</i>	Benedict College	Sumter 17, Richland 1	Allen Coles	YR1	\$ 89,992	YES \$83,000
				YR2	\$ 89,992	
				YR3	\$ 89,992	
				YR4	\$ 89,992	
<i>Generating Leaders in the Elementary Area of Mathematics (GLEAM)</i>	Winthrop University	Florence 1	Elmee Nicholson; Deborah Mink	YR1	\$ 89,857	NO
				YR2	\$ 89,593	
				YR3	\$ 89,716	
<i>"Saving the Light," A Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Approach for High Quality Professional Development</i>	The Citadel	Charleston, Colleton	Tony Johnson	YR1	\$ 89,557	NO
				YR2	\$ 89,451	
				YR3	\$ 89,515	
				YR4	\$ 89,533	
<i>Individualized Mentoring and Professional Opportunities in Math and Science Content for Early Childhood and Elementary Teachers</i>	USC-Upstate	Sumter 2, Sumter 17	Laura Hooks	YR1	\$ 89,996	NO
				YR2	\$ 82,043	
<i>Elementary Teachers and Children Learning through Inquiry-based Content Instruction</i>	USC-Columbia	Marion 7, Lexington 5	Amy Donnelly	YR1	\$ 82,043	NO
				YR2	\$ 82,043	
				YR3	\$ 82,043	
				YR4	\$ 82,043	
FIRST YEAR FUNDING REQUEST TOTAL					\$ 620,682	\$ 246,000

Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education
Continuing Projects
FY 2009-10

PI	Grant	Institution	High Need LEA(s)	Number of Participants Served 2007-08	Requested Budget	Amount Awarded	Comments
Chris Peters, Anna Baldwin	Digital Express	Clemson	Lexington 2, Richland 1	27 teachers	\$125,000	\$ 93,750	Year 4 (of 4)
Elaine Wiegert	Meeting the Need for High Qualified Mathematics Teachers	Clemson	Anderson 3, Anderson 5	12 teachers	\$88,178	\$84,572	Year 2 (of 4)
Lynn Noble, Kathy Coskrey	Making Math and Technology High-Quality	Columbia College	Richland 1	16 teachers	\$130,000	\$130,000	Year 4 (of 4)
Tom Reid	Distance Education for Developing Highly Qualified Middle School Mathematics Teachers	USC-Aiken	Colleton, Hampton 1, Hampton 2, Jasper, McCormick, Orangeburg	No participants until Spring and Summer 2009. Estimate of 16 teachers and approximately 30 middle school students in summer camp	\$95,801	\$81,662	Year 2 (of 4)
Tom Reid	Supplemental Funding for Distance Education for Developing Highly Qualified Middle School Mathematics Teachers1	USC-Aiken	Colleton, Hampton 1, Hampton 2, Jasper, McCormick, Orangeburg	Adjustments to original DVD because of unforeseen circumstances with one of the instructors in the videos – reshoots required for DVD.	\$9,998	\$9,998	Year 1 (of 1)
Mary Earick	Nature-Based Inquiry	USC-Columbia	Georgetown	9 teachers, 1 principal	\$90,020	\$84,882	Year 2 (of 4)
Christine Lotter	High School Teacher Inquiry and Technology	USC – Columbia	Richland 1, Lexington 2, Orangeburg	20 teachers	\$146,376	\$ 112,500	Year 4 (of 4)

PI	Grant	Institution	High Need LEA(s)	Number of Participants Served 2007-08	Requested Budget	Amount Awarded	Comments
	Professional Development Program		5, Sumter 2				
David Virtue	On-Track: Teaching Reading and Content Knowledge	USC-Columbia	Colleton, Georgetown, Greenville, Marion 7, Lexington 2, Newberry, Dorchester 4	41 teachers	\$149,976	\$125,000	Year 3 (of 4)
Total Continuing Funds Requested FY 2008-09					\$835,348	\$722,364	

Proposal # ITQ09-01: Inquire to Engage in Chemistry (ITEC)

Project Directors: Cindy Johnson-Taylor
School of Education
Newberry College

Background

Students learn chemistry over several years through a vertically aligned curriculum. Chemistry in South Carolina is first introduced in Grade 5 through the unit called Properties of Matter. It is re-introduced in Grade 7 (middle school science) and Grade 9 (physical science). Nationally, a startling 93% of physical science teachers in grades 5-8 had inadequate content preparation.¹ In grades 9-12, 63% of physical science teachers and 61% of chemistry teachers had no major or certification in the area they teach demonstrating inadequate content preparation.¹ This project will focus on improving content knowledge of science teachers in grades 5 – 9 in Laurens 56, Lexington 4, McCormick, and Saluda school districts. In addition to chemistry and physical science content, participants will learn how to incorporate the contextual teaching and learning methods of active learning and inquiry-based learning into their classrooms.

The Committee on Prospering in the Global Economy of the 21st Century (“Committee”) supports summer camp educational programs for classroom teachers that focus on increasing content knowledge. The Committee’s comprehensive report states that many school children are systematically discouraged from learning science and mathematics because of their teachers’ lack of preparation, or in some cases, because of their teachers’ disdain for science and mathematics. This project will increase the chemistry and physical science content knowledge, science safety understanding, and inquiry-based learning strategies of teachers in grades 5-9 who teach units of chemistry and physical science.¹

Focus on Teachers

This project will focus on teachers in grades 5-9 who teach chemistry and physical science units. Stipends and curriculum materials will be provided to teachers who participate in summer camps and follow up activities focusing on chemistry content and pedagogy that involve active learning.

Scope and Content of Project

Inquire To Engage in Chemistry (ITEC) will invite all 5-9 grade teachers in Laurens 56, Lexington 4, McCormick, and Saluda school districts who teach units of chemistry to attend Super Saturday Sessions and Summer Camps and participate in follow-up activities. This project is based on a recommendation by the *Committee* to increase teacher knowledge in content areas, thereby increasing teachers’ content knowledge and confidence in the classroom.

Proposal # ITQ09-02: The Writer's Edge: Empowering Students to Become Writers
Project Directors: Allen Coles
School of Education
Benedict College

The Writer's Edge is a project that will increase student achievement in writing by (a) increasing teachers' understanding and use of the state standards and the revised state writing rubric; (b) increasing teachers' ability to implement best practices in writing instruction; and (c) improving teachers' self-efficacy as writers. This project evolved from the needs identified by the superintendents of two high-need school districts (Sumter 17 and Richland 1) to improve students' writing at the middle school level. The Writer's Edge will engage teachers in a variety of activities over a 10-day summer session, which will be followed by quarterly meetings during the school year. Teachers will leave this experience as more proficient instructors of writing and more confident writers themselves.

Annually, this multi-year project will bring together middle schools from high-need school districts, the faculty from Benedict College and Clemson University, and the Director of the Writing Improvement Network in a collaborative undertaking that will produce a replicable model for other school districts who are seeking substantive change in teacher behavior through in-depth and ongoing professional development. The faculty from the institutions of higher learning will focus on teachers' ability to compose in a variety of genres and to apply a writing rubric in revising and editing their writing products. The Director of the Writing Improvement Network will emphasize the state standards, best instructional practices, and the revised writing rubric in a summer institute designed specifically for this project.

The project will give priority to the neediest school districts. Accordingly, in its first year the project will first serve the teachers of Sumter 17 followed by teachers in Richland 1. At the conclusion of the multi-year grant, the project will have a direct impact on 120 teachers and 8,000 students in school districts in the Midlands.

Proposal # ITQ09-03: Project RES: Reform-based Environmental Science

Project Directors: Michelle Cook

School of Education

Clemson University

Project RES: Reform-based Environmental Science, proposes to work with elementary and middle grades teachers to 1) enhance their content knowledge in environmental science and support the integration of these topics into their classroom instruction; 2) support teachers' use of reformed-based science teaching and development of pedagogical content knowledge; and 3) support and demonstrate the viability and impact of critical reflection on practice. To support the project goals and the needs of the participants, the partners for this project will include Clemson science education faculty and Arts and Sciences faculty members from the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources partnering with representatives of Orangeburg Consolidated School Districts 3 and 5 who will recruit teachers, support teachers' content knowledge development and reflective practice, and provide existing facilities and resources for this professional development experience.

Teachers will be participating in a professional development experience that is set within their school district and utilizes issues and resources relevant to their local environment. Our goal is to have 60 participants engaged in a four-year project. In Project RES, teachers will cycle through a two-phase program. In Phase One, the participants will participate in a summer workshop and academic year support that will introduce them to environmental science content and curriculum, engage them in reform-based science teaching, and support their development as reflective practitioners. Phase Two will build on the first phase of Project RES by engaging the cohort in a one-week summer course and academic year support which will a) support the teachers' research on environmental science issues that is relevant and meaningful to their students; b) continue to enhance their understanding of environmental science content, reform-based science teaching, and reflective practice; c) engage them in discovering ways of supporting other teachers in their development of knowledge about environmental science content, reform-based science teaching and reflection; and d) allow them to mentor other teachers participating in Phase One of Project RES.

The proposed short-term outcomes for this project include improving teachers' understanding of environmental science and reform-based teaching strategies, introducing teachers to Project Learning Tree (PLT) and GLOBE curricula and other resources, assisting teachers in the implementation of and reflection on their classroom lessons, increasing teachers' confidence to deliver environmental science instruction, and enhancing teachers' desire to become active in improving environmental quality. Medium-term outcomes include the implementation of lessons developed by teachers into their academic year classroom instruction. Science and science education experts will support teachers during follow-up meetings in the school district and classroom visits to assist them in implementing and reflecting on their lessons. Since students will be involved in long-term scientific investigations, they will be engaged in proposing questions, examining research, planning investigations, using technology to collect, represent, and analyze data, and developing explanations based on evidence. As a result of relevant, inquiry-based teaching, we predict that students will become better stewards of the environment.