

November 7, 2002

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Dalton B. Floyd, Jr., Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

From: Ms. Dianne Chinnes, Chairman, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of Centers of Excellence Annual Report, FY 2001-02

Background

The Education Improvement Act of 1984 provided for the establishment of a contract program to foster the development of Centers of Excellence in teacher education in public and private college in South Carolina. Program Guidelines stipulate annual reporting requirements for ongoing Centers and the constitution of a review panel that includes external reviewers to make recommendation concerning the funding of any new Centers should funds be appropriated by the General Assembly. The Committee approved an awarding of a new Center of Excellence to Benedict College at its meeting on September 4, 2002.

This report summarizes the annual reports submitted by each of the four Centers that received State funding in FY 2001-02. These summaries also include the overarching goals for each of the four Centers. If you wish to receive a complete annual report for any or all of the Centers, please let the staff know and these will be made available to you.

The summaries of the achieved goals from the annual reports for each Center funded during FY 2001-02 are included as **Attachment 1**. **Attachment 2** summarizes the impact Center activities have on various components of the K-16 system.

Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend this report favorably to the Commission for transmission to the EIA Select Sub-Committee of the Educational Oversight Committee. The Committee will consider this item at its meeting on November 6 and will make its recommendation to the Commission on November 7.

Attachments (2)

Cc: Center Directors

Dr. Joanne Anderson, Executive Director, EOC

Mr. Jack Kresslein, Research Staff Senate Education Committee

Ms. Lena Lee, Research Staff House Education and Public Works Committee

**Center of Excellence in Instructional Technology Training
Clemson University
FY 1998-99/2001-02**

The Center completed its fourth and final year of state funding in FY 2001-02. The center was established to develop and promote effective strategies for training teachers to use technology in the classroom. The Center's two areas of focus are pre-service teacher preparation and in-service teacher training and support. A cornerstone of the Center's programs is that it will provide technology training and instruction that is flexible and customizable rather than the lockstep, one-size-fits-all approach to technology training. The Center also provides support to graduates through a variety of methods that assist new teachers. The Center has five main goals:

- To develop and model exemplary teacher preparation (pre-service) and professional development (in-service) practices in the area of instructional technology.
- To develop an influential constituency for the Center that will work with the Center and support its continuation once State funding ends.
- To achieve a position of leadership in the State.
- To exploit the research opportunities Center activities offer in order to develop and refine methodology of instructional technology preparation.
- To establish a funding plan that will allow the Center to continue to flourish after State support has stopped.

**Summary of Activities
Center of Excellence in Instructional Technology Training
FY 2001-02**

The Center has:

- Established a first-year teacher Web site that provides special support for Clemson graduates during their initial year of professional employment.
- Established a Web site that is a resource for teachers in the use of instructional technology in classrooms, assists them in acquiring new technology skills, and provides answers to technology-related questions/problems. The Center serves as a "consultant on call" across the state.
- Established a web-based "hot line" that allows teachers to post technology questions which are then answered via video streaming within 48 hours.
- Serves as a resource center for instructional materials and methods that are shared with school districts. Offered graduate level courses in technology using off-campus and distance education formats.

- Developed and implemented a train-the-trainer program to help ensure a high level of quality instruction in school district-sponsored professional development in instructional technology.
- Provided continued contact with graduates to ensure involvement in the Center in terms of resources use and in outreach activities to other teachers.
- Utilized the advice of an advisory board composed of teacher technology leaders.
- Established a network of educational technology leaders across the State which communicates through online discussions.
- Secured more than \$300,000 in software donations that are used in the Center's Software Preview Center to acquaint teachers with a variety of educational technology products.
- Received a \$10,500 grant from AOL for Service Learning.
- Received two grants in the total amount of \$3 million for technology support to teachers.
- Received a \$400,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education in conjunction with Upstate school districts for professional development, student training, and technical support for teacher and students in middle schools.
- Has awarded 50 mini-grants of \$3,000 each to support projects in schools that integrate technology in K-12 classrooms and university methods classes. The funding is from federal grants.
- Nine CD-ROM disks have been developed for classroom training. These will be marketed to other institutions nationwide in the fall of 2002.
- The Center has assisted numerous faculty in integrating technology into their classes, particularly methods classes.

Center of Excellence for the Study of Standards-Based Education Reform
Coastal Carolina University
FY 1999-00/2003-03

The center completed its third year of state funding during FY 2001-02. The Center has been developed to improve the abilities of teachers to facilitate optimum learning by South Carolina K-12 students. The focus of the center is threefold: 1) to identify through research the factors contributing to the success of students in meeting local, state, and national educational standards; 2) to apply what is learned through the research to the teacher education program at Coastal Carolina University at both the undergraduate and graduate level; and 3) to disseminate this attained knowledge to all teacher education programs in South Carolina. The Center has identified five main goals:

- To develop a research agenda relative to standards-based educational reform in the State.
- To facilitate the implementation of effective and appropriate practice in instruction in courses and programs in teacher education at Coastal Carolina University.
- To develop and disseminate models and materials for the preparation of teachers.
- To provide a base of support for the Center by networking with school districts, state department personnel, business leaders, teacher education institutions, and other entities involved in standards-based educational reform.
- To develop additional sources of funding.

Summary of Activities
Center of Excellence for the Study of Standards-Based Education Reform
FY 2001-02

The Center has:

- Established a resource center consisting of print and non-print materials (CD-ROM) for use by K-16 faculty.
- Assisted in the evaluation of the PACE program (alternative teacher certification).
- Assisted in the work of the curriculum revision committee to address standards-based educational issues in teacher education courses at CCU.
- Funded five research projects with Coastal faculty on standards-based education.
- Identified schools that have high achievement on PACT and are researching characteristics of success.

- Convened conference on Standards-Based Learning and the Achievement Gap in Spring 2002.
- Maintained a Web site as a resource center for K-16 community.
- Received a \$68,585 grant from the Education Oversight Committee.
- Involved undergraduate education majors in active research on standards-based educational reform.
- Worked with several school districts on determining the factors leading to success of students in the classroom.
- Conducted a survey of middle and high school teachers and of primary/elementary teachers on the Health and Safety Education Standards.
- Examined alternative methods to teach specific mathematics concepts to K-2 students.

Center of Excellence: South Carolina Earth Physics Project
University of South Carolina-Columbia
FY 1999-00/2002-03

The Center (SC-EPP) completed its third year of state funding during FY 2001-02. The Center's overall goals and objectives are to serve as a resource, training, and curriculum development center for South Carolina teachers that facilitates an increase in the quality and quantity of interdisciplinary, inquiry-based learning so that students will be better able to meet or exceed appropriate subject matter and technology-related standards in the South Carolina Science Achievement Standards for grades 9-12. The Center has identified four objectives and six primary activities to meet these objectives:

- Through Center actions, high school science teachers will have an increased knowledge and perceived importance of earth physics so as to be better prepared to utilize SC-EPP resources to address appropriate standards.
- Through Center actions, high school science teachers will have an increased knowledge of, and confidence in their ability to use state-of-the-art instructional and research technology.
- Through Center actions, high school students will have an increased knowledge of natural science concepts so as to be able to meet or exceed the appropriate standards.
- Through Center actions, high school students will have an increased knowledge of and ability to use research technology so as to be able to meet or exceed the appropriate standards.
 - Develop high-quality, academically sound, seismology-based instructional materials.
 - Install seismometers at one high school in every county of S.C. and operate an on-line resource center at USC-Columbia.
 - Offer courses and workshops in seismology to pre-service teachers.
 - Assist pre-service teachers in the use of the instructional materials and instrumentation in their supervised teaching experience.
 - Offer workshops to assist in-service teachers in the implementation of the seismology-based instructional materials.
 - Provide on-going assistance to maintain the hardware, software, and instructional material resource center for the SC-EPP program.

Summary of Activities
Center of Excellence: South Carolina Earth Physics Project
FY 2001-02

The Center has:

- Revised curriculum modules to correlate with the National Science Standards and the new South Carolina Physical Science Standards. There are now a total of five modules for use in high schools.
- Modified curriculum modules to be used in the Global Earthquake Explorer software for national and international use.
- Revised instruction manual for students in using Carolina and Global Earthquake Explorer software programs.
- Added seismometer stations at eight additional high schools. Based on absolute report card ratings for these schools, four were rated unsatisfactory, one below average, one average and three good. There are now a total of 22 seismometers in high schools across the state.
- Offered the Annual SC-EPP workshop to 17 in-service high school teachers. In addition, two middle school teachers participated.
- Offered a graduate-level course in geology for in-service teachers of which there were four participants.
- Conducted extensive work in schools to assist with the installation of Carolina Earthquake Explorer, assisted teachers in the implementation of the SC-EPP curriculum modules, and assisted teachers with assessment materials.
- Provided SC-EPP follow-up for previously trained teachers.
- Made presentations at the annual meeting of the South Carolina Science Council and the Low Country Hub for Science and Mathematics.

**Center of Excellence in Early Childhood Professional Development
Winthrop University
FY 2000-01/2003-04**

The Center completed its second year of funding during FY 2001-02. The Center has been created jointly by Winthrop University (lead institution) and the Institute for Families in Society at USC-Columbia (USC-IFS) to provide leadership and professional development in the area of early childhood education and childcare. The Center's purpose is to better prepare early childhood professionals and childcare workers to work effectively with diverse families in their efforts to enhance school readiness of children, birth to six years. The Center has developed the following four overarching goals:

- Develop and model exemplary teacher preparation and campus-based and schooled-based faculty development programs that are: a) family-centered, b) collaborative, c) field-based, and d) use state-of-the-art technology.
- Develop an influential constituency for the Center composed of stakeholders who will work with the Center's activities and will support the Center's continuance when State funding is completed.
- Achieve a position of leadership in the State within four years such that the Center is a State resource in selected critical issues facing the training of early childhood professionals.
- Develop a detailed research agenda related to the families and education of young children that will enable higher education and K-12 faculty statewide to improve teacher preparation training at the two and four year colleges. This agenda will address other critical issues, including recommendations for development of a policy and advocacy plan for changing licensure regarding early childhood teacher education in the state, as related to a family-centered approach.

**Summary of Activities
Center of Excellence in Early Childhood Professional Development
FY 2001-02**

The Center has:

- Met with effective practice experts from across the state to gain input into Center activities.
- Partnered with several districts, First Steps, and a national consultant to design and begin implementation of a Civic Engagement Plan for Children. The program will serve as a model for other collaborative efforts across the state.
- Partnered with York County's Success By 6 to secure a Family Resource Center in York County.

- Had staff designated by First Steps as “Effective Practice Experts.” This allows staff to develop and review county program evaluation reports for parent education and family strengthening initiatives.
- Conducted 19 site visits to exemplary early care and education programs. These programs will serve as models in the development of training materials.
- Taken a leadership role in First Steps’ Early Childhood Effective Practice Network. This group provides expertise to the Office of First Steps.
- Conducted a statewide survey of two and four year institutions that provide early care and education training in South Carolina. The survey assesses the current level of family-centered issues in early care and education courses.
- Continued discussions with York Technical College on the articulation of early care and education between two- and four-year institutions.
- Conducted a curriculum review by assessing the family-centered content in early childhood development textbooks used by Winthrop and York Tech.
- Taught four education classes at Winthrop concerning Center activities and curriculum enhancement at two and four year institutions.
- Conducted numerous seminars and workshops on a variety of topics including Hispanic/Latino Issues, Helping Children and Families, Effective Black Parenting, Head Start, Home Visitation, among others.
- Partnered with IBM and First Steps to distribute 35 Young Explorer computers to early care and education programs in South Carolina. The award to the state was \$100,000. Also assisted in the training of providers on how to utilize the computers to facilitate school readiness.
- Produced a training video with SCETC, SDE, and USC on “Measures of Success: Assessing Young Children and the Programs that Serve Them.”
- Developed a protocol for the Interdisciplinary Faculty Small Grants program that awarded grants to faculty to conduct research focused on early care and education.
- Conducted surveys and focus groups with Hispanic/Latino, African –American, Catawba Indian and families with exceptional learning needs and rural families to assess perceptions of barriers on parent involvements and their understanding of school readiness.
- Secured a grant from Clover School District for two years for \$16,576 for training and evaluation services.

**FINAL REPORT
SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION
CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE
EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1984**

**SUMMARY OF
SERVICE TO K-16 COMMUNITY
FY 2001-02 Report**

Number of teachers served	1,294
Number of students served (K-12)	37,300
Number of pre-service students served	2,289
Number of school districts served	86
Number of in-service activities	95
Number of schools served (K-12)	778
Number of faculty (higher education) served	329
Number of higher education institutions served	30
Number of state and national presentations	17