

November 3, 2005

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Layton R. McCurdy, Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

From: Dr. Vermelle J. Johnson, Chair, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

**Informational Report on Awards for the
Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education Grants
Project Year 2005-06**

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 *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; school districts whose eligibility is determined by U.S. Census Bureau data). 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 had approximately \$900,000 with which to make awards with FY 2005-06 funds. Proposed projects were permitted to request up to \$125,000 in funds per year. FY 2005-06 budget requests ranged from \$50,000 to \$125,000.

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 are 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) is considered in making awards, assuming proposals are deemed to be of high quality. Proposals lacking the minimum federal definition of a partnership (as stated in the *Guidelines*) are not considered.

Several years ago, the Commission authorized the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing to make awards on its behalf. This authority was granted in order to streamline the grant award-making process. The Committee bases its recommendations on a review of the proposals considered by an external review panel. 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.

Grant Awards

A Review Panel consisting of K-12 and higher education representatives met twice to review and rate the proposals submitted for consideration.

On September 1, 2005 the Committee approved on behalf of the Commission the ITQHE Review Panel's funding recommendation to award \$124,848 to Francis Marion for year 1 of a four-year project. Due to a relatively small number of eligible proposals received in time for this competition, the grant review panel agreed that Commission staff should re-issue an updated Request for Proposals to the submitting institutions, with revised proposals due October 1, 2005. Significant attention in the re-issued RFP was placed on the importance of LEA involvement, student achievement, and the presentation to the review panel.

On October 11, 2005, the Committee approved on behalf of the Commission the ITQHE Review Panel’s funding recommendation to award Clemson University \$125,000 for a project focusing on literacy by using instructional technology and \$125,000 for a second Clemson University project focusing on building a mathematical learning community.

In addition to the three new projects, six Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education projects will continue to function during the coming year, while five other projects have concluded. Following is the list of ITQHE projects that are new and continuing during FY 2005-06 (see **Attachment 1**).

**Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education Grant
Review Panel
FY 2005-06**

Jeffrey Priest, Head School of Education University of South Carolina- Aiken	Randy La Cross, Director Center of Excellence Governor’s School for Science And Mathematics
Kitty Farnell, Coordinator Science Education Lexington/Richland District Five	Leonard McIntyre, Dean College of Education, Humanities and Social Science South Carolina State University
JoAnn Anderson Executive Director S.C. Education Oversight Committee	Michael Raley Program Manager S.C. Commission on Higher Education
Deborah Larkin Education Associate S.C. Department of Education	Esther Kramer Program Manager S. C. Commission on Higher Education

**Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education
Continuing Projects
FY 2005-06**

Higher Ed Institution	District Partners	Principal Investigator	Years	05-06 Year	05-06 Award	Outcomes
Converse College	Spartanburg 4, 5, 7	Nancy Breard	4	3 rd	123,327	-Coordinated activity with SC Reading Initiative & SC Reads -Organized Study Groups at district schools -Organized staff development activity -Presented Literacy Conference
Converse College	Union Spartanburg 1	Marty Lovett	3	3 rd	120,646	-Instituted course "Best Practices in Teaching" for future principals -Organized "Vertical Team training" with current and future school principals
Winthrop	Chester Lancaster	Sue Peck	4	4 th	124,989	-Hosted summer academy -Implementing workshops focused on developing school principals -Facilitating groups of mentor principals
USC-Columbia	Richland 1	Rhonda Jeffries	5	4 th	85,055	-Providing training to parents on math homework -Conducting follow-up workshops with teachers -Developing helpline to assist students
USC-Columbia	Richland 1, Sumter 2, 17 Lexington 1, 2, 5	Jonathan Singer	4	3 rd	124,120	-Increased student achievement in science -Increased science teacher content knowledge
USC-Aiken	Lexington 4	Paula Gregg	4	3 rd	124,788	-Developing set of courses for middle level math teachers -Providing "coaching" -Providing instruction for using technology -Developing interactive DVDs for teachers

Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education
New Projects
FY 2005-06

<u>Higher Ed Institution</u>	<u>District Partners</u>	<u>Principal Investigator</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>05-06 Year</u>	<u>05-06 Award</u>	<u>Anticipated Outcomes</u>
Francis Marion	Marion 2, 7 Dillion 2	Tammy Pawloski	4	1 st	124,848	-Collaboration with the Center for Excellence To Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty -Creation of 10 instructional units in core content areas in response to SC curriculum standards specifically focused on the needs of children in poverty -Increased student achievement in core areas by enabling teachers to develop content expertise
Clemson	Greenville Oconee	Anna Baldwin	4	1 st	125,000	-Increased student achievement in reading by enabling teachers to use technology in 7 schools -Teachers using digital cameras, digital imaging & online publishing to support student writing in a variety of standards-based instructional activities
Clemson	Greenville	Donna Diaz	3	1 st	125,000	-A sustainable mathematical community of learners in three schools -Increased student achievement in math by enabling teachers to use "Math Out of the Box" in their classrooms -Develop teaching modules consistent with "Math Out Of the Box" concepts & SC standards