

DATE: July 25, 2013

SUBJECT: First to the Top Update

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Information

THEC staff will provide an update on the current status of the STEM teacher professional development project within the Race to the Top grant. This project focuses on providing professional development for current teachers in alignment with the state’s policies to address science and technology gaps in the workforce through improving educational achievement.

As part of the effort to expand STEM educational opportunities, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission released two rounds of funding focusing on professional development for K-12 STEM teachers. The purpose of this particular program is to promote innovative practices in K-12 STEM subjects by developing teachers’ pedagogy and content knowledge using the expertise of Tennessee’s higher education institutions. Information about best practices learned from the projects will be housed and used through Tennessee’s STEM Innovation Network. A total of \$5.2 million has now been directed towards STEM Professional Development programs from THEC’s Race to the Top funds.

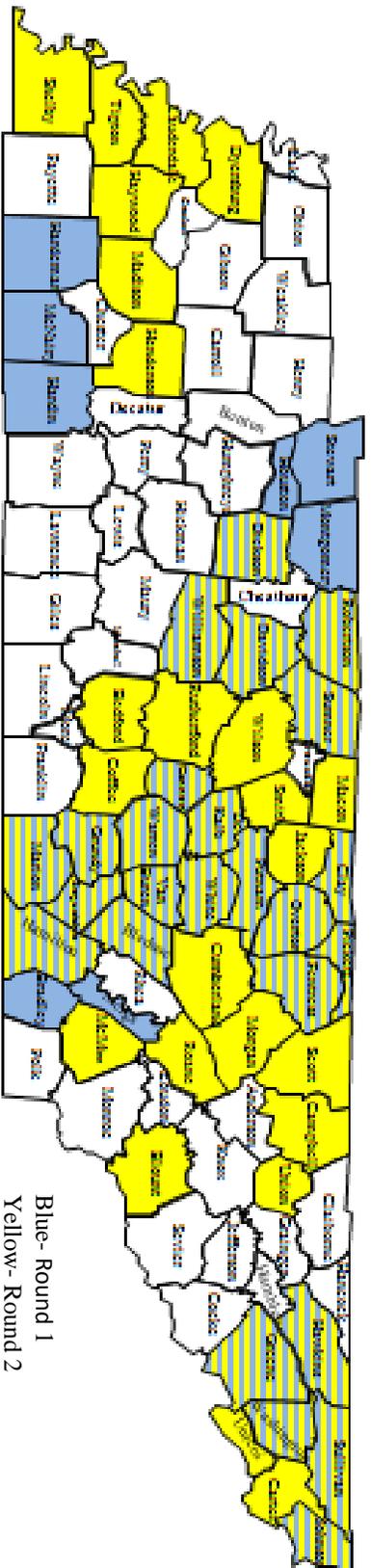
Universities participating in either round include: Austin Peay State University, East Tennessee State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee Technological University, University of Memphis, University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, University of Tennessee-Martin, and Lipscomb University. Please refer to Attachment A for participating counties.

THEC contracted with the Tennessee Consortium on Research, Evaluation, and Development to complete the evaluation on each round of projects. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected through classroom observation videos and teacher surveys. Preliminary results from Round One show general growth in STEM pedagogy and content knowledge.

The full report will be available this fall. The report for Round Two will be completed by June 2014 and will include an overall evaluation of all 29 STEM professional development programs.

Attachment A

STEM Professional Development Rounds 1 and 2 Counties Served



Blue - Round 1
Yellow - Round 2

Teachers Served:	799
Counties Served:	57
Higher Education Institutions:	8
Number of Programs:	29