

DATE: July 24, 2008

SUBJECT: P-16 Update: Dual Credit Legislation

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Information

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Public Chapter 459 is legislation authorizing postsecondary institutions and LEAs to jointly establish cooperative innovative programs in high schools that will enable high school students to complete courses that universities, community colleges, or technology centers will accept as credit. The legislation focuses on dual credit, distinct from dual enrollment, as a recruitment tool that provides the opportunity for early success and the belief that “I can too” in students who otherwise would not likely pursue postsecondary education. Definitions of dual credit and dual enrollment and the operational boundaries of dual credit offerings were approved by the Tennessee P-16 Council, the consortium overseeing the implementation of the legislation.

Dual Credit is a postsecondary course or a high school course aligned to a postsecondary course that is taught at the high school by high school faculty for high school credit. Students are able to receive postsecondary credit by successfully completing the course, plus passing the assessment developed and/or recognized by the granting postsecondary institution. The institution will grant the credit upon enrollment of the student.

Dual Enrollment is a postsecondary course, taught either at the postsecondary institution or at the high school, by the postsecondary faculty (may be credentialed adjunct faculty), which upon successful completion of the course allows students to earn postsecondary and secondary credit concurrently. The student must meet dual enrollment eligibility under the TBR and UT policies.

Because dual credit has no cost for the student, the dual credit provision is an attractive financial support opportunity. The Tennessee P-16 Council has approved seven pilots: three at community colleges, three at technology centers, and one at a university.

Dr. Gary Nixon, Executive Director, State Board of Education, will provide an update to the Commission on the progress of establishing pilots and the overall objectives of the initiative.