

DATE: November 18, 2010

SUBJECT: Improving Teacher Quality Grant Program Awards, 2010

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Operating as Title II of the No Child Left Behind Act, the Improving Teacher Quality Grant Program is a federally funded program which provides grants to public and private higher education institutions. Administered in Tennessee by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, these grants are designed to conduct training for K-12 teachers, paraprofessionals and principals. Eligible subject areas include Mathematics, Science, English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Foreign Languages (including English as a Second Language) and related Arts. The Commission previously adopted a State plan and created an Advisory Committee to review grant proposals and make funding recommendations to the Commission. This year's Advisory Committee is listed on Attachment A.

The attached materials present the projects and funding levels recommended by the Advisory Committee. The recommended projects reflect those that provide maximum effectiveness in involvement of instructional effort for public and private K-12 schools in Tennessee.

As a method of soliciting proposals in direct alignment with Tennessee's K-12 needs, the Request for Proposals included special categories that could be integrated into a project's goals and objectives. This initiative highlights strategies for professional development. The General Competition was the same as in previous years, with institutions being able to request up to \$75,000 over a 12-month period.

It is also important to note that the Improving Teacher Quality Grant program, in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education's Math and Science Partnership, serves as a funding source for the UTeach program at Middle Tennessee State University and the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Funds for the UTeach program in both FY2011 and FY 2012 are reserved from the current year ITQ award.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION INCLUDED: A list of recommended institutions and funding levels is provided in Attachment B. The General Competition projects will be funded for the period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011. The grant review process is described on Attachment C to this agenda item.

OTHER SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE: All grant proposals are available for review at the Commission office.

**ATTACHMENT B
RECOMMENDED PROJECTS FOR 2011**

PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

<u>East Tennessee State University</u> "Reaching for Excellence in Elementary School Science" Dr. Jack Rhoton	\$75,000
<u>Lee University</u> "Improving Numeracy and Algebraic Thinking" Dr. Steven Lay	\$75,000
<u>Lipscomb University</u> "Improving the Teaching of Mathematics in Grades 5-8" Dr. Carroll Wells	\$42,000
<u>Tennessee Technological University</u> "Supporting the New Algebra II Standards" Dr. Holly Anthony	\$74,994
<u>Tennessee Technological University</u> "Virtual Spaces For Accessing Content in English" Dr. Jeremy Wendt	\$69,693
<u>Tennessee Technological University</u> "Teaching Mathematics with Chess" Dr. Lisa Zagumny	\$74,736.10
<u>University of Tennessee-Chattanooga</u> "Developing Expert Teachers and Readers of Non-fiction Texts" Dr. Lauren Ingraham	\$71,511
<u>University of Tennessee-Chattanooga</u> "EXPLORE-ing Middle School Mathematics" Ms. Meg Kiessling	\$74,988
<u>University of Tennessee-Chattanooga</u> "STARS in the Classroom: Science Teachers Achieving Real Success In the Classroom" Dr. Tom Patty	\$55,155
<u>University of Tennessee-Martin</u> "Project RICA: Reading to Increase Comprehension in Academics" Dr. Beverly Hearn	\$75,000

Attachment C

Proposal Review Process

On September 9, 2010, a memo from Dr. Rhoda and the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Improving Teacher Quality Grants was distributed to college and university chancellors, presidents, deans, and faculty. A contact at each of the 41 teacher preparation institutions was sent the RFP. The RFP included the background of ITQ grants, a list of funding priorities as determined by THEC, a description of eligible partners (including a list of high-need school districts), competition guidelines, the grant timeline, and all appropriate forms to be completed for proposals. Completed grant proposals were due to THEC on November 8, 2009 by 4:30 p.m. central.

THEC staff distributed the grant proposals to advisory committee members. The advisory committee received all grant proposals by November 9, 2010. The advisory committee met on November 15, 2010 to make recommendations for awards. The committee was divided into three teams for each subject area, Language and Literacy/Other, Science, Mathematics. The teams met separately to discuss the grants related to their content area. Each grant proposal was assigned a lead discussant who gave an overview of the proposal and moderated the team's discussion. Each team chose their top proposals for funding and brought them before the entire committee.

The committee was given an overview of the proposals chosen for funding. The committee could pose questions about the grant proposal, make recommendations or amendments, and discuss the level of funding the proposal should receive. Once each team presented the proposals recommended for funding, the committee voted on funding levels for each of the proposals and stated any required conditions for funding.