

DATE: November 10, 2011

SUBJECT: Partnership for Achieving Readiness in College and Career Update

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Information

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: In January 2011, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission began a statewide engagement campaign to engage faculty from public institutions of higher education regarding the implementation of the Common Core Standards and ultimately, the PARCC assessment.

The PARCC assessment, which will begin being administered in Tennessee during the 2014-15 school year, will be able to determine the college readiness of a student in Mathematics and English/Language Arts at the end of the Junior year of high school. THEC, as well as both systems, have agreed to utilize the results of the PARCC assessment to determine whether the student will be eligible to enroll in credit-bearing courses or engage in remedial study.

At the center of PARCC engagement efforts is a focus on not only introducing faculty to the Common Core Standards, but directly informing and preparing them for implementation of the PARCC assessment and gaining valuable feedback regarding which competencies best define “college ready” in Mathematics and English/Language Arts.

To achieve these goals, THEC first constituted a Tennessee PARCC Steering Committee (Attachment A). This Committee consists of ELA and Math faculty, as well as institution administrators, who have been nominated and approved by their institution/system to serve as representatives regarding all PARCC related matters. The Steering Committee convenes via conference call regularly, and all PARCC related updates are transmitted to the Committee for review and comment.

The next step in state engagement occurred in April, with the convening of the Tennessee PARCC Summit. Over 35 faculty members were in attendance, representing all nine public universities, as well as three of the community colleges. Achieve staff provided briefings on the Common Core, PARCC Assessment and the implementation timeline. The additional benefit of this meeting is that participants now comprise a statewide cadre familiar with the PARCC assessment and have agreed to host THEC and Achieve staff at campus-level “PARCC 101” training sessions.

As a governing state in the PARCC initiative, Tennessee is also a part of the Advisory Committee on College Readiness (ACCR). The ACCR works with the PARCC Governing Board to shape the consortium’s strategy for working with postsecondary education systems, institutions, and K-12 to ensure the successful development of college readiness assessments that will be accepted

as an indicator of readiness for first-year, credit-bearing courses by all colleges and universities across PARCC consortium states.

The committee will help ensure that college and career performance levels meet the needs of higher education in determining student readiness. The committee will also guide the work the consortium undertakes to develop and/or identify effective intervention programs to increase the number of graduating high school seniors who meet college readiness standards prior to enrollment.

Tennessee is represented on the ACCR by Dr. Carl Hite, President of Cleveland State Community College.

Attachment A

Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Tennessee Higher Education Steering Committee

Math Content Area

Dr. Holly Anthony
*Assistant Professor of Mathematics
Tennessee Technological University*

Dr. Chuck Collins
*Associate Professor of Mathematics
University of Tennessee-Knoxville*

English/Language Arts Content Area

Dr. Lauren Ingraham
*Associate Professor, Director of Composition
University of Tennessee-Chattanooga*

Dr. Luke Powers
*Professor
Tennessee State University*

Higher Education Administration

Dr. Bill Kirkwood
*Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs
East Tennessee State University*

Dr. Kristi Roberson-James
*Director of Institutional Research
Roane State Community College*