

**DATE:** July 28, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Status of First to the Top

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Information

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** The Tennessee Higher Education Commission has been responsible for implementing several projects of the state's First to the Top initiatives, managing \$23 million in funding. THEC has been working closely with institutions of higher education and the TN Department of Education to ensure that the work aligns with the overall goals of education reform.

One of the primary goals of the First to the Top agenda is implementing the Common Core State Standards. These standards will dramatically increase the rigor of K-12 education and lead to high school graduates who are college and career ready. THEC works closely with the Department of Education for the K-12 implementation of the Common Core. Additionally, THEC convened a working group of Deans of Colleges of Education and Arts and Sciences to integrate the Common Core State Standards into teacher training programs. Staff will give an update on the working group's plan for Common Core Implementation and alignment with K-12 efforts.

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