

DATE: July 24, 2014**SUBJECT:** Race to the Top Update**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Information

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Through Race to the Top, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission received \$20 million to assist state efforts to improve educator training programs, provide accountability in educator preparation, increase competitiveness in STEM fields, and expand the P-20 data system. On June 30, 2014 marked the 4-year end of THEC's initial contract with the Tennessee Department of Education and the completion of five of the Race to the Top projects directed by THEC.

THEC was very pleased to receive a one year extension from the US Department of Education to continue the highly successful work on the Report Card on the Effectiveness of Teacher Training Programs, higher education Common Core State Standards professional development partnership with the Ayers Institute at Lipscomb University, and the Tennessee College Access and Success Network.

Advanced Analytics

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission and SAS Institute Inc. worked together to expand the research for the teacher preparation programs using the Tennessee Value Added Assessment System (TVAAS) teacher value-added reporting. The goal of these Advanced Analytics is to provide diagnostic information for each teacher preparation program. To inform the research agenda, SAS, THEC and teacher preparation program representatives attended three meetings held throughout the state to discuss different research areas. Thirty-two educator preparation programs participated in the Advanced Analytics work. A statewide, public report was published to provide insight to programs across Tennessee and the nation as to what factors impact the future performance of teachers. By the end of the month, each of these programs will receive a private, individualized report looking at the impact of such factors as standardized test scores, grade point averages, mentor teacher quality, hours spent in student teaching or residency, and degree held at the time of initial licensure on the future effectiveness of teachers as measured by TVAAS.

STEM Professional Development

In order to promote innovative practices in K-12 STEM teaching, 29 professional development grants were awarded to eight higher education institutions in Tennessee in which higher education faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences and College of Education came together to provide professional development to K-12 STEM teachers. With two rounds of STEM Professional Development (PD) grants, over 700 K-12 teachers received high quality PD.

THEC contracted with the Tennessee Consortium on Research, Evaluation and Development to evaluate the 29 programs and to identify best practices that

could be shared to increase the quality of professional development around the state. The evaluation used both qualitative and quantitative data to determine the impact of PD. Programs organized the delivery of their PD around the Core Conceptual Framework for Effective Professional Development which promotes the following best practices: content knowledge, active learning experiences, and coherence with state/district goals and standards.