

DATE: January 30, 2014

SUBJECT: GEAR UP TN, CACG, and Latino Student Success Grant Status Reports

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Information

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The Office of P-16 Initiatives administers programs focused on college access and success in Tennessee. Current initiatives include:

- GEAR UP TN provides Tennessee students with a clear path to college. Funded through a seven-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education, GEAR UP TN works with Collaboratives in 15 Tennessee counties to promote college readiness and success. GEAR UP TN Collaboratives serve a cohort of students starting in the seventh grade continuing through their first year of postsecondary education. The program also provides services to high school seniors each year of the grant. GEAR UP TN is designed to promote student achievement and expand the college-going culture statewide.

- The College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) is a federal formula grant program focused on developing partnerships to promote college access and success. CACG creates professional development opportunities for college access professionals and enhances resources found on CollegeforTN.org. The program expands current college access programs via the Tennessee College Mentor Corps. The overall goal of Tennessee’s CACG is two-fold: (1) make college accessible to more Tennesseans and (2) facilitate the transition between high school and community college, and community college and four-year institutions, thereby aiding in college retention and completion.

- In October 2011, Lumina Foundation for Education awarded the Tennessee Higher Education Commission a Latino Student Success Grant aimed at increasing the number of Latinos completing higher education in Memphis. The Memphis Latino Student Success Collaborative directs its work using a three-tiered approach: public will building through a community-wide Latino student success report card for Memphis and Shelby County, the development and expansion of college access and success programming including the Abriendo Puertas (Opening Doors) college access and success mentoring program, and the formal development of a community-wide collaborative focused on increasing Latino student success in Memphis.

- The Tennessee College Access and Success Network connects college access and success programs with like-minded organizations for the purpose of increasing the number of Tennesseans participating and succeeding in postsecondary opportunities. The Network was established through a Lumina Foundation grant and expanded through Race to the Top funds. Its purpose is to create a college-going culture in communities across the state by expanding and creating new college access and success programs, educating professionals, and facilitating statewide advocacy.