

**DATE:** November 14, 2013

**SUBJECT:** 2014 Improving Teacher Quality Grant Awards

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Approval

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**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 and non-profit organizations. Administered in Tennessee by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, these grants are designed to conduct professional development for in-service K-12 teachers.

In accordance with the state's adoption of the Common Core State Standards in Reading: Literature and Informational Text, THEC and the Tennessee Department of Education jointly developed the Request for Proposals which focused on providing high quality professional development in grades 6-12.

Institutions prepared proposals to demonstrate their ability to provide a summer workshop, along with sustained activities throughout the school year, to grade 6-12 teachers. Proposals were allowed a maximum funding level of \$75,000. Projects will be funded for the period January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014.

An advisory committee consisting of both K-12 and higher education experts was constituted to review grant proposals and make funding recommendations to the Commission. This year's Advisory Committee is listed on Attachment A. Attachment B presents the 12 projects recommended by the Advisory Committee.

The grant review process is described on Attachment C to this agenda item. All grant proposals are available for review at the Commission office.

**Attachment A**  
**2014 Improving Teacher Quality**  
**Advisory Committee**

Emily Carter  
*Statewide Collaborative on Reforming Education*

Melissa Canney  
*Tennessee Department of Education*

Scott Eddins  
*Tennessee State Board of Education*

India Lane  
*University of Tennessee*

Tiffany McDole  
*Tennessee Department of Education*

Patrick Meldrim  
*Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association*

Kathryn Meyer  
*Tennessee Higher Education Commission*

David Sevier  
*Tennessee State Board of Education*

Vanita Sherrill-Lyell  
*Citizen Representative*

DeAnna Stacey  
*Tennessee Board of Regents*

Melissa Stugart  
*Tennessee Higher Education Commission*

Tarol Wells  
*Memphis City Schools*

Brad Windley  
*Citizen Representative*

**Attachment B**  
**2014 Improving Teacher Quality**  
**Proposal Review Process**

On August 1, 2013, 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 teacher preparation institution was sent the RFP.

The RFP included the background of ITQ grants, federal requirements, funding priorities as determined by THEC, a description of eligible partners (including a list of high-need school districts), competition guidelines, grant timeline, evaluation rubric, and all appropriate forms to be completed for proposals. A Notice of Intent to Submit was due via email by September 9, 2013 and completed grant proposals were due to THEC on October 7, 2013 by 4:30 p.m. CST.

THEC staff distributed the grant proposals to the Advisory Committee for review prior to the committee meeting on November 5, 2013. The committee was divided into teams to individually evaluate proposals. The teams met separately in small groups to discuss their assigned grants and score the grants according to the evaluation rubric.

Proposals with the top scores were compiled into a master list. The entire committee could pose questions about the grant proposal, make recommendations or amendments, and discuss the level of funding the proposal should receive. The committee then funded the proposals based on the scored average, with necessary geographical requirements taken into account.