

**DATE:** March 19, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Status of the UTeach Program

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Discussion

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) and the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) are pleased to announce collaborative funding of two UTeach replication sites at Tennessee institutions. Through the Improving Teacher Quality grant program and the Math and Science Partnership grant program, THEC and TDOE released a joint Request for Proposals (RFP) to award two grants for up to \$1.825 million each over a five-year period to establish UTeach replication sites in the awarded institutions.

The UTeach program began at the University of Texas, Austin with the goal of increasing the number of mathematics and science teachers with a strong content knowledge. Since 1997, the program has gained national recognition and expanded throughout the country. The UTeach Institute partnered with the National Math and Science Initiative to fund replication sites through a competitive grant process. Institutions such as the University of Florida, the University of Colorado, the University of California, Berkeley, and Louisiana State University were awarded grants to replicate the UTeach program. Over the next five-years, two Tennessee institutions will have the opportunity to create a UTeach program and collaborate with these and many other institutions in the process.

On March 10, 2009, THEC and TDOE hosted a kick-off meeting to introduce the Tennessee UTeach program and release the Request for Proposals. Approximately 60 participants attended the meeting from public and private higher education institutions across the state. Institutions who recommend teachers for licensure will submit preliminary proposals for grant funding by April 17, 2009. Competitive awards will be made by October 1, 2009 and grant funding will begin in January 2010. The grant will last for five years and create a UTeach program to be sustained by the institution once the grant period is over.

The UTeach program has proven effective in dramatically increasing the number of highly qualified math and science teachers in high-need schools. THEC and TDOE are eager to improve math and science education in the state through this unprecedented collaboration.