

**DATE:** January 26, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Improving Teacher Quality Grant Program Awards, 2012

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:** Information

**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 training for in-service K-12 teachers.

In accordance with the state's adoption of the Common Core Standards in English/Language Arts and Mathematics, THEC and the Tennessee Department of Education jointly developed the Request for Proposals which focused on providing high quality professional development in these subjects to in-service teachers. An advisory committee consisting of both K-12 and higher education experts was convened 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 projects and funding levels recommended by the Advisory Committee. The General Competition projects will be funded for the period January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012. Thirty proposals were submitted; of those, the Advisory Committee recommended funding for 10 projects totaling \$716,115.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION INCLUDED:** A list of recommended institutions and funding levels is provided in Attachment B. The grant review process is described on Attachment C to this agenda item.

**OTHER SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE:** All grant proposals are available for review at the Commission office.

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**2012 IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY**  
**ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Kathy Butler  
Sumner County Schools

Linda Jordan  
Tennessee Department of Education

Connie Casha  
Tennessee Department of Education

Catherine Loss  
Vanderbilt University

Kay Clark  
Tennessee Board of Regents

Patrick Meldrim  
TICUA

Nicki Fields  
Tennessee Education Association

Katrina Miller  
Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Art Fuller  
Tennessee State Board of Education

Sally Millsap  
MTeach

Jessica Gibson  
Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Barry Olhausen  
Tennessee Department of Education

Marianne Gilbert  
Williamson County Schools

David Sevier  
Tennessee State Board of Education

Wesley Hall  
Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Venita Lytle-Sherrill  
Volunteer State Community College

Fred Heifner  
Cumberland University

Tarol Wells  
Memphis City Schools

India Lane  
University of Tennessee

Brad Windley  
Citizen Representative

**ATTACHMENT B  
IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY  
2012 RECOMMENDED PROJECTS**

**PUBLIC TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS**

**Volunteer State Community College** **\$71,364**  
“Learning Math Through Science: The Upper Cumberland Common Core Initiative”  
Dr. James Roberson

**PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS**

**East Tennessee State University** **\$75,000**  
“Integrating K-2 Inquiry and Hands-on Science with Math Common Core Standards”  
Dr. Chih-Che Tai

**Middle Tennessee State University** **\$59,031**  
“Project RISE (Relevant Instruction in Social Studies/History and English/Language Arts)”  
Dr. Phillip Waldrop

**Tennessee Technological University** **\$74,829**  
“Discovering High School Mathematics: Teaching Content for Meaning”  
Dr. Holly Anthony

**Tennessee Technological University** **\$74,318**  
“Institute for Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking: When Arts and Sciences Collide”  
Dr. Shannon Collins

**University of Memphis** **\$74,286**  
“Community of Practice: Unpacking and Implementing the E/LA Common Core State Standards”  
Dr. Mary Boudreaux

**University of Memphis** **\$67,441**  
“Securing the Foundation of the Algebra Pyramid”  
Dr. Alistair Windsor

**University of Tennessee-Chattanooga** **\$71,555**  
“Exploring Middle School Mathematics”  
Dr. Meg Kiessling

**University of Tennessee-Knoxville** **\$75,000**  
“Write On! Strategic and Interactive Writing Instruction”  
Dr. Kimberly Wolbers

**PRIVATE FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS**

**Lee University** **\$73,291**  
“Mathematics in Biotechnology (MIB): Integrating Math Core Standards in High School Biology”  
Dr. Lori West

**ATTACHMENT C**  
**IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY**  
**PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS**

On August 1, 2011, 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 of the 41 teacher preparation institutions 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, the grant timeline, the evaluation rubric, and all appropriate forms to be completed for proposals. A Notice of Intent to Submit was due via email by September 12, 2011 and completed grant proposals were due to THEC on October 17, 2011 by 4:30 p.m. central.

THEC staff distributed the grant proposals to advisory committee members for review prior to the advisory committee meeting on November 14, 2011. The committee was divided into teams for Mathematics and English/Language Arts. The teams met separately in subject groups to discuss the grants related to their content area and score the grants according to the evaluation rubric.

Proposals with the top scores from both Mathematics and English/Language Arts were compiled into a master list. The 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 in scored-order with necessary geographical requirements taken into account.