

Agency Code: H03 Agency Name: S.C. Commission on Higher Education
 Program Title: Access & Equity

Summary of Description of Critical Need: Responsible states in the Southeast and throughout the country have recognized that the task of providing full access & equity has yet to be completed. The SC Commission on Higher Education is requesting an increase of \$1.6 million for Access & Equity for FY 2000-01. This money is proposed to be divided in the following ways: \$500,000 is requested as recurring funds from the past fiscal year. \$1.1 million are requested for a new initiative addressing College Preparedness across the State.

Justification for Designating request as a Critical Need: Given that South Carolina has not achieved parity in the percentage of minority students who attend and graduate from public colleges and universities in comparison with the composition of the state population, the Higher Education Program for Access & Equity is essential.

EXPLANATION OF NEED

1. Justification of Request:

South Carolina and the nation must renew and strengthen their commitment to the full participation of their citizens in higher education on an equitable basis. While tremendous progress has been made, the status of minorities in higher education still reflects a condition where Blacks are underrepresented in undergraduate and graduate enrollments and in professional positions of employment. A College Preparedness Model is a proactive approach to prepare our students in the state of South Carolina for entry into college, retention while enrolled, graduation, and empowering future employment.

2. Program Mission:

South Carolina recognizes that the contributions of its minority citizens are essential in order to avoid future compromises in the quality of life and lower standards of living for South Carolinians and other Americans. Effective higher education efforts to enable minorities to achieve full participation into the life and prosperity of our society are critical to support economic progress, technology advancements, and other improvements in society necessary for future growth and success of the State and nation.

3. Explanation of Costs:

The recurring request of \$500,000 would be distributed through an equitable formula utilizing full time degree seeking, undergraduates with a geographical origin from South Carolina as reported through CHEMIS. The \$1.1 million would be used at various levels of the higher education pipeline: 1. *Test Preparation* (SAT/ACT/GRE/LSAT/GMAT and other placement testing) (using the PSAT as a diagnostic test strategy for course selection utilizing a pre/post methodology); 2. *Summer Bridge Programs* (similar to Head Start or Transition where students that are already admitted attend classes for the summer); 3. *Pacesetter course research* and implementation; 4. *Retention* (beyond the sophomore return rate through graduation regarding services and support); 5. *Research* including non-cognitive indicators of academic success and improvement of graduation rates; 6. *Technical and Public institutional partnerships* for easier transfer and continuing education. Partnerships with the College Board and the Department of Education will empower the utilization of successful models to address the above areas.

4. Benefits Derived

Effective higher education efforts to increase the college attendance and to achieve the full participation of minorities in the life and prosperity of our society are critical to support economic progress, technological advancements and other improvements in society that are necessary for future growth and success of our state and nation.

5. Consequences if Not Funded

The likely adverse effect for not funding this program will be a reduction in the number of fellowships for students otherwise qualified for this program and minimal change in the State's position regionally and nationally related to college preparedness and SAT scoring.

6. Justification of Why Existing Resources are not used:

Existing resources are insufficient to fund an enhancement and expansion of this program. The focus of the program expansion is to improve the college preparedness of our students in the State.

7. Number of Years this Item has been requested for State Funding:

While the original funding for this program was the result of negative findings by the federal Office of Civil Rights, in recent years the State's appropriation has been insufficient to launch these types of initiatives. The College Preparedness Model is a new and innovative idea to address potential problems in the State.

8. Explanation of Annualization

The expectation is to continue this increase of 1.6 over the course of three years returning the program to its traditional level of funding and improving condition is the State.

9. Base Budget Information:

Agency funding for this program has remained stagnant over the last several years. The program has operated during this period with a minimum of administrative cost.