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 Executive Director

March 10, 2004

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Mr. Dalton Floyd, Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

**From:** Dr. Vermelle J. Johnson, Chair, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

**Informational Report on Awards for the  
 Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education Grants  
 No Child Left Behind Act 2001  
 (PL 107-110, Title II), Project Year 2003-04**

**Background**

Since 1984, the Commission on Higher Education has been responsible for administering federal funds under a Title II program of *The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*. In 2001, the federal legislation was re-authorized under *The No Child Left Behind Act*. Title II Part entitled *A Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers and Principals*, authorizes the Commission to conduct a competitive awards program. The purpose of this part of the federal legislation is to provide support to:

increase student academic achievement through strategies such as improving teacher and principal quality and increasing the number of highly qualified teachers in the classroom and highly qualified principals and assistant principals in schools.

The Commission is authorized to provide a competitive grants program to partnerships comprised, at a minimum, of schools of education and arts and sciences from higher education institutions along with one or more high-need local education agencies (LEA; defined as school districts). Additional partners may be included as defined by the

legislation. Funds to the state are allocated based on the FY 2001 amount received under the former *Eisenhower Professional Development* and *Class-Size Reduction* programs. Any remaining funds from the federal appropriation are distributed through a formula based on the State's school-age population and percent of these children in families with incomes below the poverty level.

Under federal regulations, 2.5 percent of the *Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education Grants* (ITQ) funds for the state are allocated to the Commission to be used for the competitive grants program. The Commission has approximately \$900,000 with which to make awards with FY 2003-04 funds and another \$550,000 in FY 2002-03 funds (FY 2003-04 ends September 30, 2004 for a total of \$1,450,000). Proposed projects may request up to \$125,000 in funds per year. Average budget requests range from \$70,000 to 125,000. The Commission seeks proposals that will have maximum impact and encourages multi-year programs to assure positive results on the target audience. The number of grants awarded will be determined primarily by the quality of the proposals submitted and the size of the negotiated final budgets in comparison to the total funds available. Equitable geographic distribution (i.e., districts and schools served) must be considered in making awards, assuming proposals are deemed to be of high quality. No proposal will be considered unless it meets the minimum federal definition of a partnership (as stated in the *Guidelines*).

A listing of all the applications received is included as **Attachment 1**. This attachment also indicates which proposals are recommended for funding by the Review Panel.

A review panel consisting of K-12 and higher education representatives (**Attachment 2**) met on January 30, 2004, to review and rate the proposals submitted for consideration. Abstracts describing all of the proposed projects are included in **Attachment 3**. A total of 15 proposals was received by the Commission for consideration, and the panel recommended funding five of these proposed projects. Members of the review panel expressed concern about the quality of the proposals, particularly as they related to *No Child Left Behind's* vision of meeting the needs of teachers. They also noted that many proposals contained inadequate evaluation plans. The panel urged Commission staff to continue the outreach program to institutions so that university and college faculty fully comprehend what is intended by *NCLB* and working with low performing districts.

### **Overview of Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education Grants *Guidelines***

The new higher education program is still a competitive grants program with a primary focus on professional development, but there are several significant changes

under the new legislation. Foremost is that the Commission will only award grants to eligible partnerships that must be comprised of, at a minimum, (1) a private or public institution of higher education and the division of the institution that prepares teachers and principals; (2) a school of arts and sciences; and (3) a high-need local education agency (defined in the legislation as a school district). Additional partners may also be included. Another change is that there is no longer a focus on science and mathematics but that nine core academic areas (English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography) can be addressed in proposals. Professional development is no longer just for in-service or pre-service teachers but now includes principals and paraprofessionals. The focus of the proposed projects must be on low-performing districts and schools and the Commission is charged with ensuring an equitable geographic distribution of grants.

The *Guidelines* approved by the Commission were developed to reflect the new legislation and have been developed in collaboration with the S.C. Department of Education. Federal regulations require that the Commission work in conjunction with the Department in meeting statewide educational needs. The priority areas that proposals must address derive from the federal legislation as well as those identified in the State's Consolidated State Plan submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.

### **Review Panel Recommendations**

The review panel determined that eight of the 15 applications were fundable projects. The members of the review panel made recommendations for programmatic and budgetary changes for each of the eight projects. The Review Panel made several general comments regarding the quality of the proposals that the staff will use in future outreach activities with the institutions concerning the program. Many of the proposals received poor reviews because of the weak quality of the proposed partnership, evaluation plan or meeting the needs of teachers. Several proposals were cited as having very weak evaluation plans as required by the *Guidelines*. The federal legislation directly links teacher quality to student achievement, yet few of the proposals evaluated the projects' activities in relation to student achievement. The Review Panel noted that institutions that submit multiple proposals should coordinate internally what school districts they are targeting and the subject matter of the proposals.

The funding amount requested for the new awards is \$830,000. The total amount requested for all proposals submitted is \$1,499,452. In addition, the second year of funding for awards made under the FY 2002-03 grant competition total \$343,807 for a total of \$1,173,807. Carry forward funds from FY 2002-03 (\$550,000) will be used for expenditures through September 1, 2004.

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing approved at its February 19, 2004 meeting, on behalf of the Commission, the review panel's funding recommendations as depicted in **Attachment 1**. The Committee was given the authority to make the awards on behalf of the Commission several years ago. This authority was granted in order to streamline the grant award-making process. In keeping with the procedure from previous years, the staff is granted authority to negotiate the final program activities and budgets with the project directors (as per the recommendations of the review panel). Funding is contingent upon the project directors' revision of the proposed project to meet the review panel's recommended changes. This report is provided to the Commission for information; no additional action is required.

**Attachment 1**

**Improving Teacher Quality FY 2003-04  
No Child Left Behind  
Proposals Submitted for Consideration  
Funding Recommendation**

Proposal #	Institution	Project Title	Project Director	Funds Requested	Funds Recommended for Funding
ITQ03-01	College of Charleston	Institute for Language Arts Teachers	J. Frank Morris	YR1 \$59,450 YR2 \$68,977 YR3 \$77,787 YR4 \$86,594	<b>NO</b>
ITQ03-02	Converse College	Professional Development in Literacy	Nancy Breard	YR1 \$124,191 YR2 \$119,439 YR3 \$121,815 YR4 \$124,000	<b>YES</b>
ITQ03-03	Converse College	Improving Teacher Quality through Vertical Teaming and Curriculum Alignment to State Standards	Martha Lovett	\$120,646	<b>YES</b>
ITQ03-04	Clemson University	S.C. Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Meeting Eight Grade Standards	John Wagner	YR1 \$69,382 YR2 \$70,702	<b>YES</b>
ITQ03-05	Furman University	Partners in Promising Practices for Professional Development	Lesley Quast	\$124,902	<b>NO</b>
ITQ03-06	Furman University	Richard W. Riley Summer Institute for Teachers of Government	Elizabeth Smith	\$40,940	<b>NO</b>
ITQ03-07	Columbia College	Building Excellence in Social Studies Teaching	Lynne Noble	\$93,973	<b>NO</b>
ITQ03-08	Francis Marion Univ.	Making Good Teachers Better	Kenneth R. Dye	YR1 \$124,969 YR2 \$124,986 YR3 \$124,986 YR4 \$124,986	<b>NO</b>
ITQ03-09	University of SC	No Teacher Left Unqualified: A Middle School Science Institute	Dana M. Hutto	\$116,188	<b>NO</b>
ITQ03-10	University of SC	Collaborative Inquiry in Elementary and Middle School Science	Stephen Thompson	YR1 \$109,030 YR2 \$121,993 YR3 \$121,993	<b>NO</b>

ITQ03-11	University of SC	Middle School/Higher Education Partnerships in Science Education	Jonathan Singer	\$124,937.00	YES
ITQ03-11A	Francis Marion Univ.	Joint Proposal Two Budgets	Derek W. Jokisch	\$101,352.00	YES
ITQ03-12	USC-Aiken	Developing High Quality Middle School Mathematics Teachers	Paula A Gregg	YR1 \$124,956 YR2 \$124,920 YR3 \$124,771 YR4 \$124,974	YES
ITQ03-13	USC-Spartanburg	Project Create	Lou Matthews	YR1 \$97,877 YR2 \$81,809	YES
ITQ03-14	USC-Spartanburg	Integration of Geographic Information System (GIS) & Global Positioning (GPS) Technologies into the Middle Grades	Judy Beck	\$66,659.00	YES
				<b>First Year</b>	<b>\$1,499,452</b>
				<b>funding request</b>	
				<b>Total</b>	

**Improving Teacher Quality  
Review Panel FY 2003-04**

Angela Bain Lexington School District Two	Dennis Wiseman Coastal Carolina University
Debbie Donovan Lexington School District Two	Lance Bedwell Coastal Carolina University
Jane Brailsford Lexington School District One	Sue Peck Winthrop University
Kitty Farnell Lexington/Richland District Five	Dodie Magill S.C. Department of Education
Judy Ford Kershaw County School District	Donald Tetreault S.C. Commission on Higher Education
Cindy Saylor S.C. Department of Education	Randy LaCross Governor's School for Science and Mathematics

**Proposal # ITQ03-01; College of Charleston; Institute for Language Arts Teachers:  
Project Director: J. Frank Morris**

The Classics Program at the College of Charleston (CofC) proposes to conduct professional development institutes for elementary and middle school Language Arts teachers in high poverty and/or low- performing elementary and middle schools in the summers of 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007. Through the two-week summer institute and a series of follow-up sessions during the academic year, teachers will master new content knowledge and acquire new standards-based teaching strategies to increase their students= achievement in language arts. At the end of the four-year period a new standards-based cohesive strand of instruction will have been implemented in the curriculum of schools and stretch continuously from fourth through seventh grades. A mechanism for teachers training teachers will have been established to insure this curricular innovation will be self-sustaining. A means for on-going communication of the program=s goals, objectives and content to parents will have been established. After completing the 45 hours of instruction at the institute and the 30 hours of follow-up activities, teachers are eligible to earn three graduate hours of credit.

The goals, objectives and structure of the institute as well as the model for implementation of a coordinated sequence of four years of new standards-base instruction were developed collaboratively by faculty from CofC Classics Program and the School of Education and teachers and administrators in two county school districts in the Lowcountry. Based on materials which have been revised at CofC, the institute will be taught by experts and master teachers who have broad experience in their use.

A longitudinal study will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the institute in increasing teachers= knowledge of new content and expanding their repertoire of teaching strategies and to evaluate the effectiveness of new materials and skills in increasing students= achievement in language arts.

**Proposal # ITQ03-02; Converse College; Title: Professional Development in Literacy; Project Director: Nancy Breard**

The purpose of this project is to increase teacher quality and student achievement in low-achieving schools through the professional study model, as outlined in *Redefining Staff Development: A Collaborative Model for Teachers and Administrators* by Laura Robb. This model incorporates professional reading, study groups, teacher collaborations, and the mentoring of teachers. Four school districts, Spartanburg Districts 4, 5, 7 and Newberry School District will collaborate with Converse College to develop summer study institutes that will focus on developing teachers' knowledge of literacy, specifically reading approaches, reading and writing as reciprocal processes, and reading across content areas. This increased knowledge of literacy will impact classroom practices and an increase in student achievement will result. Teachers in preschool through twelfth grade, along with preservice teachers at Converse College, will participate in the summer institutes.

The first two-week (45 hours) summer institute will be offered in the summer of 2004 with an additional 30 hours of follow-up training offered throughout the school year. The summer institutes will be offered for four years, beginning in the summer of 2004 and ending in the summer of 2007. The selection of professional resources, institute speakers, and workshop leaders will reflect Converse College's and the participating districts' philosophies and visions for improving teacher quality based upon current literacy research, the South Carolina Language Arts Standards, and the South Carolina Professional Development Standards. Participants who attend the two-week institute and participate in the 30 hours of follow-up will receive 3 hours of graduate credit from Converse College.

Since choice is necessary for professional study to be effective, teachers will determine the books they will study and the sessions and workshops in which they will participate. As authors and speakers are selected for participation in the summer institute, the teachers will be given the books to read prior to the authors' sessions. Having the background knowledge from the readings, teachers and instructional leaders will participate in the summer institutes together. The book studies will continue after the institute as teachers begin to implement practices studied over the summer. Teachers will have professional study groups throughout the year to continue professional reading, collaborate with other teachers and instructional leaders as classroom practices change, and mentor one another through the changes. Teachers will reflect on the changes in their classroom practices through journaling, conversations, and reflections. The data on student achievement in these classrooms will be analyzed over time as classroom practices change. Teachers will evaluate their professional knowledge and growth throughout this process.

A longitudinal study will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach in increasing teacher knowledge, changing classroom practices, and impacting student achievement. Although several instruments and rubrics will be used to assess growth in student achievement, PACT performance data will be a primary indicator of the success of this four-year project. External data analysis will be conducted by Nancy Fontaine of MGT to reduce biases in the analysis and interpretation of data.

**Proposal # ITQ 03-03; Converse College; Title: Improving Teacher Quality through Vertical Teaming and Curriculum Alignment to State Standards; Project Director: Martha Lovett**

The purpose of this project is to enhance the content and pedagogical knowledge of teachers of English/language arts, social studies, and mathematics in grades 6,7, 8, and 9 in Union County Schools and in Spartanburg District One Schools. Additionally, teachers will strengthen their classroom skills in developing student-oriented instruction for and assessment of state standards. These purposes will be accomplished as follows:

- Providing a master principal from District One Schools who will serve as the project liaison with the project director at Converse College and as the facilitator for the core subject area vertical teams of teachers.
- Establishing core subject area vertical teams of teachers from grades 6,7,8, and 9 in Union County Schools and using established core subject area vertical teams in District One Schools to
- collaborate in studying state standards and corresponding grade level content to identify
  - strategies to ensure students' mastery of standards within grade levels and to facilitate
  - students' transition from one grade level to the next through curriculum alignment.
- collaborate in studying assessment in state standards and interpretation of assessment to
  - improve student achievement.
- Identifying 20 master teachers from Union County Schools to serve as mentors to vertical teams and to support the master principal in the facilitation of teams.
- Conducting Summer Institutes in core subject knowledge and a yearlong course in "best practices" in instructional strategies as professional development parallel to the work of vertical teams.
- Providing initial and follow-up sessions/workshops on targeted "high need" topics throughout the duration of the project.

Union County Schools and Spartanburg District One Schools are clearly different in their economic status, demographics, and student achievement. More importantly, however, they are both committed to insuring their teachers are knowledgeable in subject content and are highly skilled in using "best practices" in instructional strategies for student achievement. These two participating school districts are united in providing their teachers with the needed training to (1) integrate state standards and develop student-focused instruction and assessment based upon standards and to (2) understand, interpret, and utilize the results of assessment for improved instruction and student achievement. Through this project that will utilize the strengths and expertise of the partners, both Union County Schools and District One Schools will benefit significantly. District One faculty has initiated vertical teaming to engage all teachers in aligning curriculum with standards and in collaborating on strategies for raising student achievement. District One vertical teams will not only serve as mentors to Union faculty in the early stages of the project but also will also be "students" along with Union County teachers in the courses and follow up sessions to support the work of vertical teams. The teachers participating in the core area vertical teams will work with the master principal/facilitator and the project director to refine and structure the content for the project activities. The vertical teams will be an ongoing, integral part of professional development in both Union County and District One during and beyond this project. Vertical teaming will provide a channel through which teachers can collaborate over multiple grade levels to not only identify barriers to student achievement but also to develop student-oriented strategies for achievement.

**Proposal # ITQ 03-04; Clemson University; Title: South Carolina Studies: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Meeting Eighth Grade Standards; Project Director: John Wagner**

Several eighth grade curriculum standards focus on South Carolina topics, especially in Social Studies and Science. However, even Language Arts and Mathematics standards for this grade level can be addressed appropriately by including activities related to South Carolina. A six to nine week standards-based interdisciplinary study can be integrated into a school's instructional plan without any loss of class time or content coverage by following the proven EIC model (using the Environment as an Integrating Context for learning) currently employed by the South Carolina EIC School Network. The locally-based materials would cover the same curriculum standards as the traditional textbook-based program, but, by team-teaching the topics, standards from different disciplines could be covered at the same time, thus freeing up more time for inquiry lessons and enrichment activities that many teachers normally do not have time to schedule. Good sources of such curriculum materials already exist within several exemplary programs and will be used.

Two EIC schools, Conway Middle in Horry District and Waccamaw Middle in Georgetown District, have agreed to be the first year pilot test sites for the project. Other EIC schools will be added either during the first or second year to provide a broader statistical base for research evaluation. A maximum of 24 teachers each year will enroll in a two-week summer field course for graduate credit. Participants will focus on understanding the EIC model, inquiry-based learning, and the importance of using curriculum standards to develop interdisciplinary lesson plans. All teacher teams at participating schools will attend a series of inservice sessions during the academic year.

During the first academic year, project staff will work with school administrators and teacher team representatives to schedule implementation of the South Carolina Studies unit. They will also plan a series of inservice sessions during which concepts and background information would be presented to eighth grade teachers who did not attend the summer course. Assessment results from the first year of implementation will be reviewed by project staff leading to revisions and/or additions for the second year. Each school will schedule a field trip to a nearby state park at least once each year. Assessment instruments will gauge the effectiveness of the integration of content knowledge with its application.

By the end of the project, most of the EIC schools, and perhaps other schools, will have in place a six to nine week interdisciplinary curriculum model through which classes in Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Language Arts will work together to interrelate subject-specific concepts through the common framework of the environment of South Carolina. Forty-eight teachers will have received three units of graduate credit and will have served as project leaders in their own school settings. Approximately 100 teachers and media specialists will have been involved in using exemplary standards-based curriculum materials in their own classrooms.

**Proposal #ITQ03—05 Furman University; Title: Partners in Promising Practices for Professional Development; Project Director: Lesley Quast**

Furman University, Berea Middle School (Greenville County Schools), Arcadia Elementary School, Lone Oak Elementary School, and Fairforest Middle School (Spartanburg District Six) plan to extend their already existing partnership through the Teacher-to-Teacher Program into the arena of professional development. Each school is identified as "high-need", with between 61 percent and 81 percent of students receiving subsidized meals. Additionally, they have growing populations of non- or limited English speakers, predominately Hispanic. Each school has chosen professional development needs in literacy across the curriculum and TESOL, with strategies that integrate arts and technology.

The P4D Project proposes to base activities on the new paradigm for professional development that is standards-based, long-term, sustainable and that which effects changes in organization, on-the-job behavior, and student achievement. Advisory Teams in each school will develop a school professional development plan and teachers will incorporate the school plan into their individual plans for professional development. Teachers will select one of three options: master's degree or plus-30-hours program, recertification program, or flexible professional development. In each option, job-embedded follow-up activities will occur throughout the year. To initiate the project, a two-week Summer Academy is planned, with featured presenters on brain-compatible strategies for literacy, curriculum mapping across content areas, TESOL strategies, writing across the curriculum, arts integration and technology integration.

In addition, a principal's network will be established that will offer opportunities to exchange ideas, problem-solve, reflect on their practice, and relate the professional development project to their roles as instructional leaders.

Collaborative mentoring of new teachers by university faculty and mentors released from teaching responsibilities will continue to be a focus through the Teacher-to-Teacher Program in each of the partner schools. Induction and mentoring courses will be offered for support and professional development.

The P4D Project is designed over four years. The first year will build a knowledge base related to each curriculum content area and include opportunities for experimenting with strategies learned. The second year will initiate implementation with the setting of student achievement goals. The third year and fourth years will continue implementation, with modifications based on results of years one and two evaluations. Continued professional development and follow-up will occur throughout the four years of the project.

Evaluation will be based on results of the project on student achievement, changes in organization of the schools, changes in on-the-job behaviors of teachers and administrators, and the application of the South Carolina Standards for Professional Development. Additionally, individual professional development plans of teachers will be evaluated according to the fulfillment of goals.

**Proposal ITQ#03-07; Columbia College; Title: Building Excellence in Social Studies Teaching (BESST); Director: Lynne Noble**

The partners in this proposed project are the Departments of Education and History at Columbia College, two of our Professional Development Schools - Nursery Road (Lexington-Richland District 5) and Windsor Elementary (Richland District 2) Schools, and two elementary schools that have been listed as high risk - Forest Heights (Richland District 1) and Killian (Richland District 2.) Representatives from these entities comprise the Planning Committee. This committee chose to focus on the need for a high-quality staff development program designed to enhance the ability of classroom teachers, grades K - 5, to teach the content and concepts of social studies. The project will focus on Building Excellence in Social Studies Teaching (BESST).

The objectives for BESST include increasing the social studies knowledge base for teachers, providing instruction in specific skills for teaching social studies concepts to children such as using problem-based exercises and integrating social studies content and concepts with other disciplines, increasing teachers' self-efficacy as social studies instructors, and ultimately improving the elementary students' ability to explain and apply concepts, increasing scores on the PACT and developing positive student attitudes towards citizenship.

The project includes the design and implementation of a staff development program that follows the SC Professional Development guidelines and is based on the work of Joyce and Showers. The course instruction, small group discussion and problem solving sessions and individual classroom coaching will result in three hours of graduate credit for each participant. Each of the four partner schools will select one teacher in each grade, K - 5 to participate in the staff development. In the second year of the grant, these first-year participants will become coaches for 24 new participants in their schools. In years three and four, this pattern will be repeated in four new schools. By the end of the fourth year, 96 teachers and nearly 8,000 students will benefit from this project.

There is an evaluation plan that addresses each objective. There is a schedule for pre-assessments, formative assessments and summative assessments. A formal evaluation report will be written each year and will include each individual year's data, and a years-to-date cumulative report.

Staff for BESST includes a Project Director, a Curriculum Specialist, Course Co-Instructors and Co-evaluators and the work will be overseen by a committed Advisory Committee.

A graduate level course syllabus, the evaluation report(s) and recommendations and several assessment instruments for teachers and students will be made available to districts, schools, teachers and institutions of teacher education on CD.

**Proposal # ITQ03-08 Francis Marion University; Title: Making Good Teachers Better;  
Project Director: Kenneth Dye**

The three organizations involved in this project, **Francis Marion University, Clarendon School District 3**, and the **School District of Marlboro County**, seek to provide district teachers with the opportunity to engage in an intensive professional development experience designed to improve their mastery of core content areas, enhance classroom pedagogical approaches, and provide instruction in educational technology programs proven to have a positive impact on student learning. In this proposed project, teachers in Clarendon School District 3 and the School District of Marlboro County will enroll in EDUC 525, a course in educational professional development offered by the School of Education at Francis Marion University. This three-credit graduate course will be co-instructed by Francis Marion University professors with specialization in the core content areas, in collaboration with experienced professional personnel from nearby school districts. This course will include an intensive seminar, followed by individual and group instruction sessions with project personnel throughout summer 2004 and district in-service dates during the 2004-2005 school year. This project is designed to improve teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge in the core academic subjects and thereby improve student knowledge in core content areas. Funding from this project will also be used to provide participating teachers with technology resources and materials to be used with students in their classrooms.

**Proposal # ITQ03-09; University of South Carolina; Title No Teacher Left Unqualified: A Middle School Science Institute; Project Director: Dana Hutto**

The University of South Carolina Center for Science Education and College of Education, working with the Midlands School District Consortium propose a yearlong program to increase the number of “highly qualified” science teachers in midlands area middle schools. The program will be repeated in the second year. This project will build on a current project funded by the National Science Foundation that supports the University’s new middle school certification program. This project is designed to support teachers who will need to meet the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) mandate that all public school teachers in the United States be “highly qualified” for their positions by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. NCLB states that in order to earn the “highly qualified” status, a teacher must hold at least a bachelor’s degree, hold a teaching certificate with no waivers, and demonstrate content knowledge in each academic subject that he or she teaches. Veteran teachers have several means by which to demonstrate competence within the academic subjects they teach:

- Obtain a passing score on the appropriate PRAXIS test;
- Have a major in the content area;
- Hold a master’s degree, master’s plus thirty, or a doctorate in the content area(s);
- Obtain NBPTS (national Board) certification for the specific age range and the specific content area; or
- Successfully complete the “high, objective, uniform state standard of evaluation (HOUSSE) in each core academic subject.

The program proposed by the partners in this project will assist South Carolina teachers who wish to demonstrate their competence by any of the means listed above, but it is aimed specifically at the HOUSSE program that would appear to be the best path for many experienced teachers. HOUSSE evaluates teachers on five specific “performance dimensions (PD)s that have been selected from South Carolina’s “Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teachers” (ADEPT) program. This project will be aimed specifically at those five dimension. It will provide three grade-level integrated science courses designed specifically for middle school teachers. These will meet PDs 5 and 6. The project will also provide two professional education courses (middle school science teaching methods and classroom assessment) that will assist teachers who need to meet PDs 3 and 7, Finally the project will contain an extended research and presentation project in which the participants will work in teams on action research involving their own classrooms and teaching, and they will present the results of their study at a professional meeting. This will assist with PDs 1,5 and 7.

The project’s three major objectives are:

**Objective 1:** To strengthen teachers’ content knowledge of middle school science and enhance their ability to teach these sciences in the integrated manner required by South Carolina’s standards.

**Objective 2:** To strengthen teachers’ professional teaching skills in integrating science topics, evaluating curricula, and assessing students.

**Objective 3:** To introduce teachers to high quality professional development and action research, and to help them become more involved in the growth and development of their profession.

**Proposal # ITQ03-10; University of South Carolina; Title: Collaborative Inquiry in Elementary and Middle School Science; Director: Stephen Thompson**

This project focuses on the teaching of inquiry in elementary and middle school science classes. Funding to support a three-year collaborative curriculum improvement plan in Richland District One and Fairfield Counties has been requested. The project investigators will work with teachers to first develop an understanding of inquiry-based instruction. Using the 5e Learning Cycle instructional model, participants will first engage in several learning cycles. Then they will discuss the characteristics and attributes of this model for student learning. Next, participants will work in small groups of common grade level teachers known as Curriculum Study Teams developing a single inquiry-based instructional unit based on the South Carolina Science Education Standards that each team member will implement in his/her classes in the fall. Participants will develop, pilot test and revise their units. They will also engage in training related to methods used to observe peer teaching following the Japanese Lesson Study model. During the fall, teams will continue to work with project staff and their teams as they implement their units while being observed by their Curriculum Study Team members and video-taped by project staff. Following implementation of the units, participants will debrief with team members and project staff focusing on ways to implement the units to ensure student understanding of the content. Part of this debriefing will focus on participants selecting portions of the lessons that they feel others would need to see in order to be able to effectively teach the unit lessons. These units will eventually be placed on a dedicated website with accompanying video of problematic or important segments of video accompanying the unit text. Project staff will then work with participants to create presentations that will be given by Curriculum Study Teams to peers during district supported professional development activities and at science education conferences. During the initial cycle of the project, several Lead Teachers will be recruited and trained to act as mentors, instructors and project staff during future cycles of the project, with the goal being that they will eventually assume the leadership roles for the project in home schools and districts.

**Proposal # 11 and 11A; University of South Carolina and Francis Marion University; Title: Middle School/Higher Education Partnerships in Science Education; Directors: Jonathan Singer (USC\_ and Derek Jokisch (FMU)**

This proposal serves as a professional development outreach plan principally involving a meaningful collaboration between higher education faculty and local area school district middle school teachers. Through this project, we seek to form sustainable partnerships between institutions of higher education and local area school districts, increase student achievement in science content and inquiry skills, increase teacher science content knowledge, and increase teachers' pedagogical understanding for facilitating inquiry-based instruction. These goals will be met through the use of a research-supported, two-phase approach. Phase 1 is a summer institute in which middle school teachers will (1) engage in a three-credit graduate-level science content course, (2) interact with innovative curriculum, (3) connect mathematics to science instruction, (4) practice teaching lessons to middle school students, (5) engage in post-enactment reflections, and (6) form local area learning communities to facilitate curriculum enactment during the proceeding school year. Phase 2 is the use of the CERA model of professional development (Marx *et al.*, 1997) to support coordinated enactment of innovative curricula during the academic year by university faculty, fellow teachers, pedagogical experts, and other community leaders.

The partnership will utilize faculty from Francis Marion University and the University of South Carolina to work with middle school classroom teachers in high-need school districts in the geographical regions between Columbia and Marion, South Carolina, including Richland County School District 1; Saluda County School District; Sumter County School Districts 2 and 17; Marion County School Districts 1 and 2; and Florence County School Districts 1, 2, 3, and 5.

The institute is planned to be recursive, with a new cohort of teachers attending each additional summer of the grant, so that the total potential impact of the project activities will be 216 teachers and 21,600 students. We see this project as active means to satisfy crucial tenants of the *No Child Left Behind* legislation, including augmentation of South Carolina teacher quality and school accountability.

**Proposal # ITQ01-12; University of South Carolina-Aiken; Title: Developing High Quality Middle School Mathematics Teachers; Director: Paula Gregg**

This project is intended to increase the mathematics content and pedagogical knowledge of mathematics teachers in grades 5-8 to enable them to become highly qualified as described in the *No Child Left Behind* legislation and middle school mathematics certified as defined in the South Carolina State Board of Education guidelines for add-on endorsement of elementary certified teachers. Specifically, graduate courses will be developed at the University of South Carolina Aiken with assistance from a partnership of mathematicians from mathematics departments from Claflin University, Columbia College, Frances Marion University and USCA and mathematics educators from Schools of Education at College of Charleston, Columbia College, and the University of South Carolina. Additional support will be provided from mathematics specialists from the Low Country Mathematics and Science Regional Center Low Country site, the Central Savannah River Area Mathematics and Science Regional Center and the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center.

The partnership of mathematicians and mathematics educators has been formed with Lexington School District 4. Teachers who teach mathematics in grades 5-8 will be invited to join a cohort of teachers to complete twelve mathematics content, mathematics methods, and middle level education courses over a four-year period. Other middle schools, especially from high needs areas, will be invited to join the cohort once available slots have been filled by all interested teachers from Lexington School District 4. Teachers agreeing to join this cohort will be required to take the Praxis II Middle School Mathematics exam prior to the first course and again after completing courses in Algebra, Geometry, and Probability and Statistics.

Mathematicians and mathematics educators have worked together to develop these traditional undergraduate course into graduate level courses that teach both the needed mathematical content and expose teachers to current research on best practices in teaching strategies. The mathematics courses will be taught by a team of mathematicians and mathematics educators.

The courses will be videotaped by the Office of Instructional Services at the University of South Carolina Aiken for the purpose of capturing the images on the computer to edit and produce a DVD that can be used through the Distance Education program for interested teachers and schools. Study guides will be developed by the instructors and assistant instructors each course to assist in this endeavor.

Members of the higher education partnership will serve as coaches/mentors for the participants by visiting their classrooms for observations, teaching model lessons, and providing additional assistance to the teachers in implementing best practices in the mathematics classroom.

The ultimate goal of the program is to have 100% of the participants to be both highly qualified and middle school mathematics certified by the end the four-year project.

**Proposal # ITQ03-13; University of South Carolina-Spartanburg; Title: Project Create; Project Director: Lou Matthews**

Project CREATE (Creating Rewarding Experiences in Algebra through Teaching Excellence) is a creative partnership project between the University of South Carolina Spartanburg and Spartanburg County School District 7. This proposal is aimed at impacting student achievement in mathematics through high quality teaching and support experiences for teachers, parents, and students. Project CREATE is an innovative research-based two-year program designed to provide support for all students to reach high standards in mathematics, and create bridges between Spartanburg County District 7 mathematics teachers in grades 5-8, district officials, and the University of South Carolina Spartanburg. This project will facilitate effective implementation of the South Carolina Mathematics Curriculum Standards.

Project CREATE is comprised of the following four major components:

- (1) *Creating annual summer institutes that will provide opportunities for teachers to become more proficient with conceptual underpinnings of middle grades content, examine and explore research-based teaching perspectives for teaching mathematics for understanding, and create relevant standards-aligned lessons and tastY which build on the experiences of the diverse backgrounds of students in the district.*
- (2) *Creating annual summer enrichment programs taught by summer institute teachers, which provide opportunities for teachers to incorporate standards-based approaches to teaching mathematics within collaborative, reflective environments, that will better serve the students of the district.*
- (3) *Creating and supporting cadres of teachers and lead teachers across grades and schools which participate in ongoing collaboration and reflection on classroom experiences, and work to design and implement exemplar learning experiences within the district.*
- (4) *Creating and supporting a network of support for students and parents, which increase opportunities for success in mathematics through tutoring partnerships and parent forums.*

The sustained impact and expected benefits of this proposal will result in the formulation of program changes designed to raise academic standards for all students and to increase student success rates in mathematics at 5-8 grade levels.

**Proposal #ITQ03-14; Title: Integration of Geographic Information System (GIS) & Global Positioning (GPS) Technologies into the Middle Grades; Director: Judy Beck**

This project is aimed at training teachers in the effective use of new technologies, namely Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Global Positioning Systems (GPS) technology.

The project goals are to:

- Develop the knowledge and skills of participating teachers in the utilization of GPS and GIS technologies.
- Enhance the content knowledge of participating teachers in the areas of math, science, and social studies through the use of GIS and GPS technology.
- Provide middle level students (grades 5-8) in high-need schools with quality instruction through teacher created units integrating math, science, and social studies.
- Provide on-going support to assist teacher participants with implementation of GIS and GPS technology and accompanying subject matter in their classrooms.

The project consists of the following components:

- Professional development workshops during the summer and academic year to increase knowledge and skills related to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Global Positioning Systems (GPS) technology.
- Creation of collaborative lesson/unit plans integrating math, science, and social studies through the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Global Positioning Systems (GPS) technology.
- Action research project including videotaping of lesson and reflection by teacher to improve teaching and student learning.
- On-going support through follow-up workshops scheduled throughout academic year.

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**Proposal ITQ03-06; Furman University; Title: Richard W. Riley Summer Institute for Teachers of Government; Director: Elizabeth Smith**

No abstract was received