

**R. Wes Hayes, Jr.**  
*Chairman*

**Rusty L. Monhollon, Ph.D.**  
*President & Executive Director*



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Chair Dr. Betty Rose Horne, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

**From:** Mr. Georges Tippens, Deputy Director and General Counsel

**Date:** August 24, 2023

### Centers of Excellence Competitive Grant Program, FY 2023-24

#### Background

The purpose of the EIA Centers of Excellence grant program is to enable eligible institutions, or consortia of such institutions, to serve as resource centers in a specific area related to the improvement of teacher education. Teacher education encompasses both in-service and pre-service training. These resource centers develop and model state-of-the-art teaching practices, conduct research, disseminate information, and provide training for K-12 and higher education personnel in the center's specific area of expertise.

During FY 2022-23, six funded EIA Centers of Excellence conducted activities to address teacher shortage; provide leadership training and professional development for in-service teachers; recruit, retain, and induct teachers, including minority teachers; and research teacher working conditions. Outcomes included continued implementation of an alternative educator certification program, a leadership coaching model, professional training workshops in mathematical literacy, and educator mentorship in Pee Dee Region. In addition, the centers conducted comprehensive research on the impact of teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention policies and practices on teacher effectiveness in South Carolina.

#### Proposed Two New Centers of Excellence for FY2024

To respond to the need for leadership training and to improve Pre-K-12 students' learning outcomes, staff propose funding two new centers on a three-year term pending fund availability in FY25 and FY26. The new Centers will focus on the following areas:



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- **Science of Reading**, which will equip pre-service teachers with fundamental reading principles, strategies, and methods to teach Pre-K-3 students, including English language learners and learners with special needs. Proposals that focus on connecting the fundamental reading skills to teaching practice to improve Pre-K-3 students' learning outcomes will receive priority.
- **Growing Teachers into Leaders** by providing an individualized practical coaching model and training in science of reading and fundamental reading principles to improve students learning outcomes. Proposals that have a well-established candidate pool including minority educators will receive priority.

### **Funding Requested for FY 2023-24**

To support the continuing work of currently funded centers and fund two new Centers, the CHE requested the S.C. General Assembly appropriate \$1,137,526:

- \$112,500 respectively for the Center of Alternative Pathways for Educator Certification ([APEC](#)) at Columbia College to support their work to replicate the APEC model across the state.
- \$129,580 for the Center of Excellence for [Mathematical Literacy](#) at the Citadel.
- \$129,969 for the Centers of Excellence for Leading Education Administrator Development for Excellent Rural Schools ([LEADERS](#)) at Clemson University
- \$129,767.78 for the Center of Excellence for Teacher Retention and Induction in the Pee Dee ([TRIP](#)) at Francis Marion University.
- \$230,000 for two new centers of Excellence; and
- \$55,702 for CHE Administration expenses.

Currently, a proviso appropriates an additional \$350,000 to Francis Marion University for the Center of Excellence for Preparing Teachers of Children of Poverty.

For FY 2023-24, staff propose funding the EIA Centers of Excellence at the same funding level, which includes funds for administration.

### **Funding for a Replicated Center of Excellence**

APEC, which has received funding since 2018, has successfully proven its effectiveness in teacher recruitment and retention. In October 2023, APEC presented its program and outcomes to the Education Oversight Committee (EOC); and EOC suggested replication of the model. The replicated Center of Excellence will address the issue of teacher shortage in the Pee Dee Region. APEC has been working closely with Coker University to develop the program proposal.

The Center of Excellence program has accumulated carryforward funds from returned unused funds over the years. As of June 30, 2023, the carryforward balance is \$886,962.32. For FY 2023-2024, staff proposes using \$120,000 of the carryforward funds to fund a replicated APEC at Coker University as the startup fund for the first year. The replicated model will be on a three-year term pending the program proposal approval by the South Carolina Department of Education.

**Requested Action**

Staff request that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) review and vote on continued funding for the centers at Clemson University, Columbia College, the Citadel, and Francis Marion University; funding two new proposed centers from the EIA Centers of Excellence FY 2023-24 budget, and new funding for a replicated APEC at Coker University using available carryforward funds.

**Attachment 1:** Centers of Excellence Award Allocations



EIA Centers of Excellence  
 Projected Budget for  
 FY2023-2024

	Institution	Project Director	FY 2023-24 Projected Awards	Project Award Year
Center of Alternative Pathways for Educator Certification (APEC)	Columbia College	Marla Sanders Tracy West	\$112,500	Year 6
Center for Mathematical Literacy	The Citadel	Jennifer Albert Britnie Kane	\$129,580	Year 3
Center for Teacher Retention and Induction in the Pee Dee (TRIP)	Francis Marion University	Kimberly McCuiston Lindsay Simmons	\$129,767.78	Year 3
Centers for Leading Education Administrator Development for Excellent Rural Schools (LEADERS)	Clemson University	Hans Klar	\$129,969	Year 3
New Center for Science of Reading	TBD		\$115,000	Year 1
New Center for Growing Teachers to Leaders	TBD		\$115,000	
Center of Excellence in Teacher Children of Poverty (Proviso)	Francis Marion University	Tammy Pawloski	\$350,000	
		Award Subtotal	\$1,081,816.78	
		Administration	\$55,709.22	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,137,526</b>	
Replicated APEC Center at Coker University		<b>Carryforward Fund</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>	