

**IT INVESTMENT CAPITAL FUND
PROJECT STATUS REPORT**

To: Information Technology Strategy and Investment Committee
John Vittner, Office of Policy & Management

FROM: Kevin Corcoran

AGENCY/PROJECT NAME: Board of Regents – CT Education Academy

PROJECT MANAGER: Kevin Corcoran

REPORTING PERIOD: Project Inception through 12/31/2016

Total Funds Requested: \$ 1,857,615

Bond Commission Approval(s): Date: Jan. 2014 Amount: \$ 1,595,838

Accumulative Total Capital Fund Expenditures to Date: \$1,132,288.88 (as of 12/31/2015)

Brief Project Description/Summary:

The CT Education Academy is an eLearning ecosystem for the State of Connecticut workforce to receive mandatory training as well as professional development opportunities via online coursework.

Summary of Progress Achieved to Date:

January-June 2014

During the first six months, the initial set of specifications was drafted for the program, and the development of the administrative and learning system platforms, as well as the Department of Administrative Service's *Active Shooter Response* course, had begun.

July-December 2014

During the next six months, the first phase of the CT Education Academy administrative system was finalized to accommodate web-based training. (A summary of functionality is included as Attachment A.) A high-availability designed Blackboard learning system was also fully deployed during this time. Additionally, the *Active Shooter Response* course development was completed.

In November 2014, a group of 30 state employees connected to state training and education efforts were invited to pilot the finalized *Active Shooter Response* course within the CT Education Academy system. The feedback provided by the pilot users was collected and addressed in system and course improvements throughout the month of December in preparation for the next, larger pilot group scheduled for early 2015.

January – June 2015

In February 2015, a second pilot group containing 120+ Department of Administrative Services employees and 80+ Charter Oak State College employees completed the *Active Shooter Response* course within the CT Education Academy platform. The pilot feedback coupled with the course evaluations provided additional information to further enhance the program and was implemented during this time period. A full quality assurance process was completed on the system and course in preparation for a state-wide launch.

Also from February through April, we visited state agencies currently utilizing SABA for online learning to ascertain what system features would be required in the CT Education Academy platform to accommodate current business processes in the SABA system. During the visits, we were able to determine current business practices and processes needing to be addressed as well as current processes in need of improvement and missing functionality in the current system. We gathered this information to develop a Phase 2 road map for the CT Education Academy program. The Phase 2 plan will not only provide similar functionality, but will provide enhanced processes and additional features. We are waiting for confirmation that Phase 2 will be approved and funded.

In March 2015, the Advisory Council had its inaugural meeting. This group was orientated to the CT Education Academy program and asked for feedback on how to best serve the state. The Advisory Council will be asked to help guide the future direction of the program and help determine the state's current training needs.

In May 2015, the initial stage of course development was started on the *Workplace Violence Prevention* course.

In June 2015, the Executive Steering Committee met to discuss a roll-out strategy to the state agencies interested in the *Active Shooter Response* course and the CT Education Academy platform.

July-December 2015

In late July, the Commissioner's office sent a state-wide message about the availability of the *Active Shooter Response* course and the steps for onboarding for the CT Education Academy. From that point, CTDLC coordinated and facilitated over **20 visits** to interested agencies. During the visits, CTDLC performed a readiness assessment with agency representatives to ensure minimum technical requirements were met and performed training for the designated agency administrators within the CT Education Academy platform.

Also, a new release of the CT Education Academy platform was launched in August. This version offered an improved user experience, enhanced reporting, and additional program and onboarding information for interested agencies.

In addition, the *Workplace Violence Prevention* course development neared completion. The course is ready for piloting. Once the pilot feedback has been processed, the final alterations and media elements will be completed.

Lastly, the Executive Steering Committee continued to discuss potential SABA LMS migration to the CT Education Academy platform. After reviewing the Academy product road map and the SABA agencies' function requests, a conversation regarding further needs analysis was had.

Issues and Risks:

The funds allocated to the program only support the development and implementation of services. Since the program has been active for a period of time, operational costs are being realized. The platform is ready to support individual agency's training programs and some agencies have expressed interest in utilizing the platform. With no sustainability plan in place, however, agencies have no mechanism to determine budgeting for CT Education Academy access. The funds generated from agency use would address the on-going operational costs and long-term sustainability and improvement of the program.

Next Steps & Project Milestones:

With the unfortunate series of events that happened during the past holiday season, agency interest in the *Active Shooter Response* course has grown. We have several agency visits planned during the months of January and February to continue the onboarding process.

Also, we will look to pilot the *Workplace Violence Prevention* (WVP) course with select DAS representatives in the January/February timeframe. Once the pilot feedback has been processed, we will look to finalize and launch the course state-wide shortly afterwards.

In addition to WVP, we will look to provide online versions of the *Sexual Harassment Prevention* and *Ethics 101* courses in the early part of 2016, while starting development on the state's *Diversity* training course.

We will continue to work with the Executive Steering Committee to determine and finalize the sustainability model for the CT Education Academy program as well as look to continue the Advisory Council meeting structure and explore what professional development opportunities the state workforce may need. We hope to continue conversations with the Connecticut Community Colleges regarding utilizing the platform for their In-Service courses to alleviate administrative burdens on agency training reporting.

Lastly, we will continue to develop and grow the CT Education Academy program and platform. We will be launching a new version of the CT Education Academy platform in late January with incremental updates in February and March and then a larger release in July.