

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** Teach For America

**Application ID:** 13AC145954

**Program Name:** Teach For America Hawaii

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing specific feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

#### **Reviewers' Summary Comments:**

- (+) The applicant provides significant 2011 data from NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) to highlight education deficiencies between Hawaii's students and the United States overall. Among the state's 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 39% were proficient or above in math and 26% in reading. Additionally, only 65% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders will graduate from high school.
- (+) The applicant selected the population to serve in order to lessen the impact of perpetual achievement gaps between low-income students and their wealthier peers. The applicant determined that by increasing the academic success of the targeted population, not only would academic achievement improve, but Members of the community would become more civically engaged and less likely to be incarcerated.
- (+) The project will place Members in high-need schools as defined by Title 1, which assists schools with the highest student concentration of poverty, low student achievement, and high teacher turnover. The applicant has utilized statistics to support placement of Members in the 2012-2013 school year in the target areas.
- (+) The application states that 200 slots are requested to work with students who are in high-poverty communities and demonstrate underachievement in educational success. The applicant has utilized information from the previous year to determine the appropriate number of slots that will allow them to serve twice as many students for this project.
- (+) The applicant encourages the hiring of teachers with similar backgrounds to the targeted population, which is useful in providing great role models for students and fostering an environment where students are given models of their potential success. The applicant focusing on hiring a diverse staff demonstrates an intention to help the targeted community. The applicant also describes the role of teachers to provide opportunities for "outdoor classrooms", showing that the organization intends to use non-traditional teaching strategies to help students learn.
- (+) The project intervention is evidence-based as reported by evaluation findings for 2011-2012. The applicant has listed several criteria to support this model including pre and post-tests, internal tracking, student data, outcomes, and

performance data.

(+) The impact of this program is supported by improved academic achievement and by Teach for America (TFA) Members acting as role models for students since they are from similar ethnic groups. This improves the higher education and job prospects for students.

(+) The applicant provides the overall change they expect to see and what demonstrable impact their program will have by relying heavily on high quality student achievement data from rigorous tests that drive program improvement and provide tailored support to AmeriCorps members.

(+) The applicant provides data from existing projects to show comparisons of information about having quality full-time teachers and their effects on the reading and math scores.