

## APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

### 2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** Reading Partners

**Application ID:** 13AC146143

**Program Name:** Reading Partners NY

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 support as to why the target group was selected by stating that 4th graders at risk of not earning their high school diploma may be without a promising future of academic and employment success.

(+) The applicant provides persuasive evidence such as reading proficiency rates and that the rates are worse for students eligible for free or reduced price lunch. They also cite Annie E. Casey Foundation statistics noting that students reading below grade level in third grade were four times as likely to not complete high school.

(+) The applicant provided a clear description of the roles of Members in the project and the service areas AmeriCorps members will serve. AmeriCorps members will serve as Site Coordinators, Regional Site Coordinators, or Outreach Coordinators. These Members will recruit, train, and manage community volunteers to provide literacy tutoring to K-5 students reading below grade level.

(+) The role of Regional and Outreach Site Coordinators was clearly defined. These are school-based positions responsible for managing the delivery of tutorial program. These individuals will provide professional development training and tutoring make-up days. The coordinators will train individuals how to use the research-based curriculum, facilitate learning, and monitor tutors and completion of monitoring notes. Outreach coordinators will develop volunteer appreciation events to ensure volunteers feel connected to their service commitments.

(+) A comprehensive evaluation system is in place. Students will be tracked using school-based data monitoring at the entrance, mid-term, and end of the program. The goal is that 65% of the 825 targeted children K-5 who receive the full 16 hours of one-to-one tutoring will advance their literacy skills by at least one full grade-level by July 2014. 2500 children will be impacted in three years. The target was derived by using internal trend analyses on assessment data collected over the past five years.

(-) The degree by which the severity of the need exists within the target community is unclear because limited information is included to document the need at the Title I schools as well as the five added schools.

(-) The applicant does not provide sufficient documentation of the need in the target community, nor do they adequately provide a description of the community, whether it is economically disadvantage or why they selected a specific population. They only describe the issue and population in general terms.

(-) While evidence is provided that 10 of the schools were part of an initial Reading Partners initiative, there is no specific data provided for the selection of the additional five schools in this expansion. A general needs statement does not provide compelling evidence for site selection.

(-) While the applicant provides the Members' slots and roles for the project, compelling evidence has not been provided that this will be a highly effective means of solving the community literacy issues.

(-) The applicant does not fully describe how the proposed intervention will have a measurable community impact. They state that the results of the study used to design the program will not be available until 2014, therefore it is difficult to understand how a model not yet complete is going to be used in designing the program.