

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: City of Orlando

Application ID: 13AC147689

Program Name: O-PASS

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 nature of the target area evidences a compelling need for intervention. The U. S. Department of Education classified the applicant's operational area as a "high need" local educational area. Florida literacy studies show that adults within the targeted geographic area substantially trail others in the county with respect to the percentage who obtain high school diplomas.

(+) The applicant identifies impoverished and low performing students, housing instability, and lack of staff as problems to be addressed, and supports this with statistical data of the number of students on free/reduced lunch.

(+) The applicant provides ample and specific details about the target population (test scores, percentage of free/reduced lunch, minority population, high mobility, percentage of adults with high school diploma).

(+) Two specific problems which will be worked on during the project are identified. The problems are directly linked to the community's needs such as the need for more high school completions, increase in student academic performance, and the increase in engaging older youth in meaningful activities.

(+) The applicant provides a detailed and specific description of the activities of the AmeriCorps members.

(+) Other activities that are well-designed and well-described include the After-School All-Stars program which includes development of Academic Success Plans for each child/youth, small group tutoring, college tours, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) activities. Another strength is that academic tutoring is directly linked to the curriculum utilized in the Orange County Public Schools.

(+) The applicant describes a daily schedule for Members (broken down by hours devoted to tasks) and it was easy to envision how the Members would spend their time.

(+) Evidence of the probable impact of intervention is substantial. The applicant identifies with great specificity successful programs after which its proposed intervention is modeled, including the Harlem Children's Zone and the

Whole School Whole Child program. Each of those programs generated substantial research regarding their community impact and influence on target populations.

(+) The applicant documents the measurement tools and data used to measure the impact of their program. These will include using baseline attendance and behavior data, and standardized performance measures.

(+) The applicant describes 'scaling up' successful models such as the Parramore Kidz Zone in which researchers have documented an 83.2% decline in juvenile arrests for Parramore youth.

(-) The application does not substantiate the problem of crime among young adults in the target area, despite the fact that program interventions seem to be designed to address such a need.

(-) The applicant included terminology that was difficult to understand without prior knowledge i.e., Focus/DD, differentiated accountability, and school grade scores.

(-) Evidence that high absenteeism is caused by high mobility is not provided.

(-) The applicant did not explain what the organization would not accomplish with the existing staff.

(-) The applicant did not describe how the eight reduced half-time Members' activities aligned with the program design.

(-) It is not possible to assess the validity of citing the studies described as the program's evidence basis since it is unclear when the studies took place, whether sample sizes were large enough to be statistically valid, and most importantly, whether the population studied was similar to the target population of the project.

(-) It is not clear how housing instability will be impacted by the proposed intervention.