

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Ogden City School District

Application ID: 13AC147816

Program Name: Read. Graduate. Succeed.

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 a strong scope of needs including a large number of children reading below grade level and a high number of young people dropping out of high school in the South Salt Lake Ute Indian Tribe Reservation areas.
- (+) The applicant provides thorough reasoning for why they selected the population including demographic information, commitment from schools, and alignment with core strategies.
- (+) The applicant provides a persuasive analysis of the probable effectiveness of AmeriCorps members. This analysis is based on use of 21 full-time and 108 part-time Members providing student tutoring and volunteer training. Another 12 full-time and 24 part-time Members will be involved in the secondary school portion of the program, mentoring and conducting volunteer training. The applicant's discussion of the duties that will be performed by each Member suggests that the number and allocation of Members is appropriate for the desired intervention.
- (+) The applicant describes how AmeriCorps members are uniquely situated to support a culture of success since they serve but not from within the school and will not be duplicating services.
- (+) The applicant does give evidence-informed research for its similar existing AmeriCorps elementary school-aged children's tutoring programs which show a 71 percent increase in students who are reading at grade level following the AmeriCorps tutoring. The applicant gives extensive impact details in reading increases. This research is significant since it is reviewing similar student population and conditions as will be accomplished in the proposed project.
- (+) The applicant adequately explains the demonstrable and measurable impact of the AmeriCorps members' activities for the entire three-year project. A large gain in reading fluency/math skills and an 80 percent mentoring program completion rate are expected for each of the three project years.
- (+) The applicant has identified a strategy to not duplicate services so that the students in most need receive the

interventions. This will lead to greater community impact.

(+) It is a strength of this application that it identifies desired outcomes for which there are well established metrics for measurement. The metrics to be used mainly are based on those used and approved by the Utah State Department of Education.

(-) The applicant did not sufficiently describe the need of the rural population. They state that the schools are understaffed, the economies are depressed, and graduation rates are lower than the state average, but they do not provide sufficient statistics or other evidence to support these statements.

(-) The applicant identifies reading below grade level and low graduation rates as the problems to be addressed, but it is not clear if low-income students and English as Second Language (ESL) students will be specifically targeted.

(-) The applicant did not consistently provide sufficient details for all of the Members' activities (aside from the tutoring program), schedules, and how they would allocate their time. From the information provided, it is difficult to assess if the request is appropriate for the planned activities.

(-) The applicant is requesting 165 Members (33 will be full-time and 132 will be part-time) but did not identify how the different slots aligned with the program activities.

(-) The applicant does not present clear evidence-based research for the intervention of mentoring the middle/high school students. Greater specificity is needed in terms of number of students in the research project, demographic types, and number of mentors in order to closely align with the proposed mentoring project.

(-) Changes such as a 30-point gain in oral reading fluency are identified, but the applicant does not place that proposed gain in a context that would allow a meaningful evaluation of the potential community impact.