

# PART I - FACE SHEET

<b>APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE</b>		1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction															
Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to confirm to the Corporation's eGrants System)																	
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS):		3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE:  22-APR-13	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:  N/A														
2b. APPLICATION ID:  13AC149588		4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER:  13WCHTX0010001														
<b>5. APPLICATION INFORMATION</b>																	
LEGAL NAME: Austin Independent School District  DUNS NUMBER: 076933746		NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Susan Patterson TELEPHONE NUMBER: (512) 414-4860 FAX NUMBER: INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: susanpatterson2012@gmail.com															
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 1111 W 6th St Austin TX 78703 - 5338 County: Hays																	
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN):  746000064		7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Local Government - Municipal  7b. School (K-12)															
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE <input type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> AMENDMENT If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es): <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> A. AUGMENTATION        B. BUDGET REVISION  C. NO COST EXTENSION D. OTHER (specify below):		9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: <b>Corporation for National and Community Service</b>															
10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: 94.006 10b. TITLE: AmeriCorps State		11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: AISD 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps Initiative  11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): City: Austin County: Travis County																	
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 08/01/13      END DATE: 07/31/16		14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF:    a.Applicant <input type="text" value="TX 021"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="TX 021"/>															
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: 1		16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">a. FEDERAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 398,109.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. APPLICANT</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 400,147.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c. STATE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d. LOCAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e. OTHER</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f. PROGRAM INCOME</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g. TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 798,256.00</td> </tr> </table>		a. FEDERAL	\$ 398,109.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 400,147.00	c. STATE	\$ 0.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00	e. OTHER	\$ 0.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 798,256.00	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
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f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00																
g. TOTAL	\$ 798,256.00																
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.																	
a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Susan A. Patterson		b. TITLE:	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (512) 414-4860														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:			e. DATE SIGNED: 06/17/13														

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## Executive Summary

Thirty AmeriCorps members will leverage \$400,107 per year in AISD support to provide HDT, dropout prevention services and family and community supports in Austin, Texas. At the end of the project, we anticipate increased academic achievement on state level assessments, increased graduation rates, increased academic engagement, and increased school attendance. AmeriCorps member activities will advance the services and strategies identified by CNCS in the 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps opportunity: to include increasing learning time; providing ongoing mechanisms for youth, family, and community engagement; and supporting the social, emotional, behavioral, health and other non-academic needs of students, their families, and Austin communities.

The CNCSS investment of \$398,109 will be matched by \$400,107 from AISD.

## Rationale and Approach

RATIONALE/APPROACH: The Austin Independent School District (AISD) serves 86,612 students on 129 campuses in Austin, Texas. AISD has a richly diverse student community, including children from all economic levels and backgrounds. Our students come from homes in which 72 different native languages are spoken. The dominant language other than English spoken in students' homes is Spanish. Over sixty percent (60.2%) of our students are Hispanic, 24.3 percent are White non-Hispanic, 8.7 percent are African American, and 6.2% identify themselves as members of another demographic category. Today, nearly two-thirds (63.8%) of AISD students come from low-income families, and nearly one-quarter of our students enter school as English Language Learners (ELLs) (23.3%): Special Education services are provided to 10.1% of students (roughly 9,000 youth in 2012). Much of our student diversity stems from central Texas's ongoing economic stability: as a tech industry hub with sizable education and government sectors, Austin fared well in comparison to other cities in the recent recession. Yet, the cost of providing public education continues to increase, as funding declines. At the same time, enrollment continues to grow, bringing new challenges to central Texas educators. The number of ELL students is growing at three times the rate of the general student population, and the percent of students with disabilities is projected to increase by 5%. Currently, eight AISD schools are rated as Academically Unacceptable (AU) (under 2010-11 TX criteria). Under federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability standards in 2010-11, 88 schools met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets, while 30 did not.

CAMPUS NEEDS: In 2010, Reagan and Travis High Schools were identified as Tier I SIG campuses. Tier I SIG schools are the lowest performing 5% of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action,

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or restructuring.

\*\*John H. Reagan High School (RHS) had struggled academically for years. In 2009, it was declared academically unacceptable by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the fourth year. In 2007, Reagan High School was in stage four of school improvement under NCLB criteria. Failing to make AYP in 2008 meant the campus entered stage five school improvement. Again not meeting AYP targets in 2009 translated into a second year of stage five NCLB school improvement status. Although RHS had met Texas and federal performance goals in Reading/English-Language Arts in 2009 with 74% of students passing the Reading/ELA assessment component of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), the campus had not performed at or above State and federal performance targets in mathematics and science, with 38% of RHS students passing the math TAKS test, as compared to the Texas performance target of 60% and the federal goal of 67%. On TAKS Science, 42% passed, much below the State goal of 55%. Although the campus's performance on TAKS in the four core content areas had increased exponentially from 2003 to 2009, it was not enough progress to remove the school from the threat of closure. The graduation rate in 2009 was 70.6%, and of those graduating, only 28% were identified as college ready. In 2010, most students attending Reagan were economically disadvantaged: 87.7% of 913 students were economically disadvantaged under Title I guidelines. Of those enrolled, 35.5% registered for English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, and 38.6% had Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The attendance rate was 84.1%; roughly 16% of incoming freshmen were retained. To effectively close achievement gaps in the four core areas, Reagan would need to maximize school day instruction time and find new strategies increasing learning time.

\*\*Like RHS, William B. Travis High School (THS) in south Austin had struggled to meet Texas and federal performance targets for student achievement. Although rated acceptable under TEA's accountability system in 2005, THS did not meet AYP targets and was in NCLB stage two. In 2006, THS was again rated academically acceptable by TEA, but had progressed to stage three under NCLB criteria. The school was listed as academically unacceptable by TEA and in NCLB stage four in 2007. THS met state level performance goals in 2008 and 2009, but did not make AYP goals in 2008. The campus did meet both TEA and AYP targets in 2009. Although Travis had made significant gains, it was still identified as one of the lowest performing 5% of Title 1 schools and a SIG Tier I campus, primarily because the school's graduation rate had consistently lagged behind State and federal targets. In 2009, the graduation rate was 71.1% with 25% of students graduating college ready. When THS was first identified as a SIG campus, most students enrolled were economically disadvantaged:

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almost 80% of 1,343 were eligible for Title I Free/Reduced Lunch. Roughly 80% were at-risk of not graduating. The attendance rate was 85.2%, and almost one quarter of freshmen were retained in the ninth grade (22%). The four year completion rate was significantly lower than that of the district: 75.3%, as compared to 86.2%. Like Reagan, THS had to maximize school day instructional time and provide extended day programs increasing learning time, but also needed to invest in effective strategies to address dropout rates. To target interventions to students at-risk of dropping out, THS invested in Dropout Prevention Specialists implementing early warning/tracking systems and re-engagement strategies (Current RHS and THS campus scores: [www.austinisd.org](http://www.austinisd.org)).

\*\*RHS had a troubled history to overcome, if it was to be successful. A 2003 fatal school day stabbing of a young woman by her ex-boyfriend had shocked the surrounding community and the city of Austin. Above this, the St. John's community of roughly 9,344 residents surrounding the campus had struggled with the challenges of concentrated poverty. Five year 2005-2009 longitudinal American Community Survey (ACS) data for Census tracts 18.11 and 18.12 in the St. John's area indicated 31% and 40%, of the population had incomes below poverty level, respectively. The area's ongoing economic instability translated into significantly higher student mobility rates (>40%), as families transferred between schools in pursuit of affordable housing and jobs. ACS 2005-09 data showed less than 25% of housing units were single-family dwellings, and only 14% of these are owner-occupied. A Foundation Communities (2011) assessment found significantly lower housing quality in the St. John's area and significantly lower home values, with 33% valued between \$50,000 and \$99,000. The City of Austin, Travis County, and AISD responded to St. John's and RHS needs for effective wrap around services from multiple community-based providers by investing in Family Resource Centers (FRCs). In 2009 USDE Promise Neighborhood planning, St. John's residents, service providers, University of Texas (UT), and AISD completed a comprehensive needs assessment of the area. It identified increased college readiness, increased graduation rates, increased on-grade performance, improved school attendance, and improved health and economic stability to reduce mobility as critical needs.

**PROPOSED ACTIVITIES:** AmeriCorps member activities proposed below the address academic, social, emotional, and health needs of students attending THS and RHS students, their families, and Austin communities.

High Dosage Tutoring: In 2011, AISD's Office of Turnaround Schools developed and implemented a high-dosage tutoring (HDT) program. HDT is one of the five evidence-based tenets researched and recommended by the Harvard Education Innovation Laboratory (Ed Labs). HDT is supported by

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district local funds, Title I funds, and federal School Improvement Grant (SIG), known in Texas as the Texas Title I Priority Schools (TTIPS), dollars. HDT targets selected grade levels and subject areas and provides regularly scheduled tutoring assistance to all students in targeted grade levels, tailors tutoring to each student's academic need, and improves academic achievement in targeted strategic subject areas, such as middle school mathematics, pre-algebra, and algebra. HDT can significantly accelerate knowledge acquisition and close achievement gaps on state level standardized assessments for student participants. As HDT tutors, AmeriCorps members will provide personalized and frequent tutoring in small group settings at THS and RHS, with an average of 45 minutes of tutoring per day per student. Thirteen members (13 MSY) will be placed as HDT tutors at Reagan, and thirteen (13 MSY) will be placed as HDT tutors at Travis. The AmeriCorps member placements will continue school turnaround investments in HDT, ensuring consistent instruction delivered across multiple sites, and expanding program capacity. The HDT model complies with CNCS requirements for tutoring programs in 45 CFR 2522.900-950. HDT is the cornerstone of AISD's comprehensive approach to school turnaround, administered at the district level by Office of the Chief of Schools staff. AISD's 2011-12 cohort included ten schools served by a combination of district-employed tutors and tutoring service providers. The campuses were Travis, Eastside Memorial, and Lanier High Schools; Burnet, Martin, and Mendez Middle Schools; and Allan, Govalle, Langford, and Widen Elementary Schools; 2,366 students participated. District-staff tutored third grade reading. In middle schools, sixth grade students were tutored in math by district staff and an external provider. At high schools included in the cohort evaluation completed by AISD's Department of Research and Evaluation (DRE), students, mostly in ninth grade, were tutored in Algebra I through a partnership with two service providers: Sylvan and Catapult Systems. Acquiring tutoring services for ten schools by AISD centralized administration ensured high-quality, rigorous training of HDT tutors and enabled AISD to take advantage of economies of scale. Although Reagan was not in the evaluation of HDT completed by DRE, the campus currently has an HDT program similar to that at Lanier, Travis, and Eastside Memorial.

\_Ongoing Mechanisms for Youth, Family, Community Engagement: AISD implemented and operates a Family Resource Center (FRC) and Personal Responsibility Center (PRC) in collaboration with neighborhood organizations, community members, parents, youth, and businesses surrounding RHS. As one stop centers for families needing services, referrals to community resources, and information, the FRC and PRC are campus-based ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement. Two members (2 MSY) will be placed at Reagan's FRC as resource specialists. The

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FRC/PRC provides an accessible office and infrastructure for coordinating services from internal and community providers. Created with local dollars, and expanded with TTIPS funding as part of the Early College High School academic model at RHS, the FRC provides the following services/programs: graduation and dropout recovery, social and emotional support services provided by a licensed social worker, attendance and judicial committees; credit recovery; parent engagement programs staffed by a Parent Support Specialist; teen parenting programs; and community outreach initiatives.

\_Dropout Prevention: Under an assistant principal's supervision, the goal of Dropout Prevention Specialists, initially funded with SIG dollars, was to work with at-risk students to facilitate their remaining in school through graduation. Dropout Prevention Specialists contact retained students to begin identifying obstacles to success; monitor absences, grades, and behavior of the identified at-risk students; meet with students' families to discuss progress; contact students/parents on the no-show list to encourage enrollment in school or in an alternative education program; work with parents to improve students' attendance, behavior, and grades; collaborate with administrators, teacher, and counselors to provide individual or group activities on achievement, attendance, self-concept development, and behavior management; conduct exit conferences with students intending to withdraw from school; maintain records of all student, parent, and teacher contacts for their assigned students; and participate in staff development and training. The early warning and tracking system and re-engagement strategies first implemented with SIG (TTIPS) funding will be continued as part of the activities of the Graduation Coaches (Grad Coach). AmeriCorps members serving as Grad Coaches offer the added potential for sustained peer mentoring for the duration of one school year. Research on effective mentoring programs shows that mentoring matches of at least one year function as effective protective factors in the lives of youth. The two AmeriCorps Grad Coaches will be part of a campus team collaborating with AISD dropout prevention and recovery staff on strategies for increasing graduation rates: effective warning systems and re-engagement strategies.

\_Increased Learning Time and Non-Academic Strategies: AISD's AmeriCorps School Turnaround project leverages investments at Reagan and Travis made with Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) resources. AISD coordinates campus-based after school programs providing student academic assistance, enrichment activities, and college and work readiness preparation using TEA CCLC grant funds. 21st CCLCs also provide family and community enrichment and support programs. By staggering schedules of AmeriCorps members serving as HDT tutors, Graduation Coaches, and FRC/PRC Resource Specialists at Reagan and Travis, instruction time and student,

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family, and community non-academic program capacity will increase.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS REQUESTED and AMERICORPS AS EFFECTIVE STRATEGY FOR ACCOMPLISHING PROGRAM GOALS: Placement of AmeriCorps 30 members is an effective means of providing the identified services, as members have subject-specific content knowledge to effectively serve as HDT tutors (13 at each site totaling 26 MSY), Graduation Coaches (two MSY at THS), and FRC resource specialists (2 MSY at RHS). AmeriCorps members wish to participate in community service projects, and they commit to a service year, thus allowing for pairing of students with a peer tutor for the school year or for linking student, families, and a graduation coach or a FRC resource specialist for a longer duration for effective monitoring and ongoing identification of supports. The project proposed under the 2013 expands the presence of AmeriCorps member efforts by OneStar grantees, Communities in Schools (CIS) and College Forward (CF). CIS AmeriCorps members serve Austin, Hays, Round Rock, Bastrop, Manor and Del Valle Independent School Districts. Within AISD, CIS AmeriCorps volunteers are placed many of the 129 elementary, middle, and high schools. The 96 volunteers provide mentoring and supportive guidance, tutoring and academic support to students. Members fulfill leadership and facilitation roles in student service learning projects. CIS AmeriCorps participants can and do serve RHS and THS. The HDT project described in the AISD School Turnaround AmeriCorps application is an intensive, high-quality academic intervention providing 45 minutes of small group tutoring at a very low student to tutor ratio. CIS would not have the capacity in its current AmeriCorps program to provide tutors for the HDT initiative proposed by AISD. CIS and AISD have a long-standing partnership, and each campus identifies a specific staff member to serve as the CIS liaison. CF has 85 AmeriCorps member placements serving at Connally High School in Pflugerville ISD; Crockett, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Travis High Schools in AISD; Del Valle High School in Del Valle ISD; Georgetown High School in Georgetown ISD; Jack C. Hays High School in Hays ISD; Lehman High School in Leander ISD; Manor and Manor New Tech High Schools in Manor ISD; Ross S. Sterling High School in Houston; and Stony Point High School in Round Rock ISD. Students who are in the top 60% of their class and qualify for the National School Lunch Program or are first generation college goers at participating College Forward schools who want to earn a four-year college degree apply to the College Forward program. Students submit an essay and teacher recommendations. The curriculum provides students and families information about all aspects of the college application and financial aid process. Students also benefit from opportunities to attend essay workshops, ACT and SAT preparation classes, college site visits, and opportunities to interact with current college faculty, staff, and students. Whereas CF provides college readiness and

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college success services to the top 60% of students who are economically disadvantaged and/or first generation college students, HDT, the FRC, and the Graduation Coaches within AISD's 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps project target students in the middle of their class or lower, providing high-quality social, emotional, behavioral, and academic interventions to accelerate their academic achievement, ensuring they meet state and federal academic performance targets and graduate high school. As a community based service provider, College Forward at RHS is coordinated and/or linked with the FRC, as the FRC is the campus hub for coordinating services from community providers. The 2013 AISD School Turnaround AmeriCorps staff will successfully collaborate and align services with College Forward: an initial assessment of a student's academic needs would determine which initiative was most applicable, but there would be an opportunity to support all students at many levels.

**EVIDENCE-INFORMED / MEASURABLE IMPACT:** HDT is one of five research based tenets of the Harvard Ed Labs Turnaround Model implemented in Denver, New York City, Houston and other cities. As Dobbie & Freyer found in assessing 35 highly successful New York City charter schools, summarized in *Getting Beneath the Veil of Effective Schools: Evidence from New York City* (2013), input measures traditionally tracked in assessing schools, such as class size, per pupil expenditure, and highly qualified teachers, did not directly translate into highly effective schools, but "frequent teacher feedback, [using] data to guide instruction, high-dosage tutoring, increased instructional time, and high expectations--[explained] approximately 50% of the variation in school effectiveness." (1) The authors argue HDT even promises to be a more effective strategy for accelerating student learning than many education technology investments. AISD's 2011 HDT initiative showed promising outcomes. The HDT program at Travis High School was facilitated by Sylvan Learning--staffed by 35 tutors, a site supervisor, and a program manager--and served 340 students. Sylvan implemented a program with a 2:1 or 3:1 student to tutor ratio using a combination of push-in and pull-out approaches. Tutors worked to identify and fill in learning gaps, according to each student's needs. Each tutor was required to possess at least a bachelor's degree. Sylvan staff began work in the first week of classes and provided 150 days of service. On average, students received 45 minutes of tutoring services per day every school day and worked with their tutors in the school cafeteria during school hours. Students received an average of 53 hours of tutoring, as documented by attendance records. Sylvan administered the CAT-A to students before tutoring instruction began (BOY). The CAT consists of two subtests: Computation and Concepts and Problems. The Computation section tests students "ability to do basic math operations." Concepts and Problems tests understanding of math concepts (e.g., signs and symbols, units of measurement, number system place values, and algebra and

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geometry-related concepts) and the ability to comprehend and answer word problems. To gauge progress, students were retested using a new version of the CAT in the spring (EOY) semester. Approximately 20% who pretested did not complete the post-test, possibly having transferred to another campus or absent when post-tests were administered. An analysis of pre- and post-tests showed that most students had substantial academic improvement. At Travis, 85% of students tested increased their scores by at least one grade level on the CAT assessment. Teacher responses on the HDT teacher satisfaction survey were generally positive. Teachers believed the tutoring curriculum supported and reinforced classroom instruction. Sixty-seven percent agreed that tutoring seemed to help students better understand Algebra I. Sixty-eight percent of student participants responded to the satisfaction survey, responding most favorably to the statements: "my tutor helped me become better at Algebra I" and "I feel like my tutor cares about how I do in Algebra I." Most students responding (62%) reported that the time they spent with tutors was "just about right." In open-ended comments, many students cited the personal, daily interactions with their tutors as the most important component of HDT. AISD's FRC model is aligned with evidence for effective delivery of support services to maximize collective impact of community based supports for youth, their families, and communities. A hub for delivery of coordinated wrap around services to students, their families, and Austin communities, FRCs are modeled on research/tools from the National Center of Family-Centered Practice. A city, county, and AISD investment in FRCs allowed centers to acquire the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) integrated case management software to track participant data, youth progress toward identified goals, and impact of each program that affects participants over time. ETO allows tracking of students transferring between campuses, similar to tracking of patient records from clinic to clinic in an integrated clinic-based medical records system. The theoretical framework underlying ETO is the California Matrix Model (officially known as the California Family, Agency, and Community Development Scales), a scales model measuring outcomes for interventions at family, agency, and community levels. The CA Matrix was a response to the federal Performance and Results Act and designed with the United States Department of Health and Human Services's Office of Community Services' Monitoring and Assessment Task Force (MATF). It is aligned with MATF goals for family self-sufficiency and used to varying degrees by community action agencies, Head Start programs, the California Mentoring Program, and others. The CA Matrix identifies high quality interventions for producing desired outcomes for children, youth, and families, and gives service providers an additional level of detail regarding frequency and dosage of treatment needed to produce desired outcomes. AISD has expanded the scope of services delivered and the capacity of FRCs. Above

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providing a campus-based infrastructure for service delivery from multiple community providers, the FRC can host campus meetings of the AISD Child Study Teams. The Child Study Teams (CSTs) convene AISD Learning Support Services staff by vertical team (defined as the high school and middle and elementary schools from which students come) and/or campus to deliver academic, social, emotional and behavioral interventions for Tier II and Tier III students, as defined in the district's three tier Response to Intervention (RtI) service delivery model. AISD's case management tool for service plans designed and delivered collaboratively by CSTs is the electronic Child Student Tool, or eCST. Community providers do not have access to eCST data, as required to ensure HIPPA and FERPA compliance, but FRCs do provide a physical space on campus for effective collaboration. After school programs funded by TEA's 21st CCLC grant are assessed and selected to advance the standards for achieving collective impact articulated in the Forum for Youth Investment's Ready by 21 model. It provides a framework and tools to ensure communities maximize the collective impact of services for youth, their families, and communities. The Ready by 21 service delivery model organizes effective, research-informed academic, social, emotional and behavior supports by child, youth, and young adult developmental stages.(2) Ready by 21 helps communities think about how they "insulate the education pipeline," first by strengthening families and then by strengthening formal and informal supports, such as other caring adults, mentors or peers; community based organizations that connect youth and their families to critical resources; and employers providing students opportunities to apply their learning in careers of their choice. The second layer of insulation, community supports/resources, includes health care, transportation, housing, and financial services. Grad Coaches' duties are aligned with research-based strategies addressing what Civic Enterprises, the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University, America's Promise Alliance, and the Alliance for Excellent Education identify as the "dropout factory" in urban American high schools in Building a Grad Nation (2013). (3) Grad Coaches are part of an early warning system and provide re-engagement strategies. The specialist is a critical component in thoughtful collaboration, ensuring parents and families are continuously engaged and providing appropriate resources to promote success (Building 91).

COLLECTING DATA, REPORTING OUTCOMES, DATA-DRIVEN SERVICES: DRE provides AISD leaders qualitative and quantitative assessment data for monitoring and ongoing HDT planning. This information drives the ongoing continuous improvement process for HDT. For the 2011 cohort, various assessments were used to gauge students' progress during the school year, according to subject content, grade level, and campus tutoring provider. At Lanier, Catapult Systems used the Stanford

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Diagnostic Text (SDMT-4) for Algebra I tutoring. At Travis and Eastside, Sylvan used the California Achievement Test (CAT-A). HDT, to include opportunities for greater alignment and expansion afforded by the 2013 AmeriCorps School Turnaround project, will continue to be assessed based on pre- and post-test assessments of student participants and quantitative and qualitative data compiled by the district. The 2011-12 HDT evaluation provides a model for future data collection and reporting. The CAT and CAT-A for grades K-12 is a nationally normed standardized test measuring achievement in the areas of reading, language arts, and math. It will be used by AISD to assess math and literacy academic performance. Norms for the CAT were established during the design phase of the test by administering to a large, representative sample of the test population (for CAT, the sample size was over 300,000 students). The test is given in a group, classroom setting. A teacher typically administers the CAT, which is scored by the test provider. The test includes a scale score, which is the basic measurement of how a child performs on the assessment and a national percentile (NP), which reflects the percentage of students in the national norm group who have scores below that of the student. The SDMT-4 is also one of three most often administered standardized assessments in the United States. The StanfoSDMT-4 measures competence in basic concepts and skills and emphasizes problem solving and problem solving strategies. Recent assessment of validity and reliability of the SDMT-4 in pencil-and-paper and computerized testing formats found strong evidence that the SDMT-4 is reliable and valid regardless of administration mode (Pearson). Like the SDMT-4, the CAT and CAT-A have been shown to be valid and reliable assessment tools. One FTE AmeriCorps Site Coordinator will be hired for the AISD 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps program. The Site Coordinator, who will serve both RHS and THS (allocated as a .5FTE to each), will report to the principals at regularly scheduled meetings. The Site Coordinator is responsible for the daily operations of the project, facilitating recruiting, recommending, selection, orientation, providing ongoing training/technical assistance, and engagement strategies for ensuring a high retention rate for AmeriCorps member placements. The Site Coordinator is responsible for reporting to CNCS for the AISD AmeriCorps project for both sites. The Site Coordinator will have the knowledge, education, and experience to serve as an instructional coach. He or she will collect student academic achievement scores and is responsible for reporting progress toward meeting National Performance Measure targets. The Site Coordinator will collect and compile performance measure data with FRC staff, the Office of Community Education Afterschool Program Coordinator, the Office of the Chief of Schools, external HDT providers, and the campus principal and staff. Whenever possible, the AmeriCorps Site Coordinator will attend grade-level or subject level AISD teacher planning meetings that might inform

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and improve alignment of AmeriCorps provided services to school day instruction.

**RECRUITMENT:** AISD staff will recruit from four year universities / colleges (IHEs) in central Texas using campus-based newspapers, magazines, and other media, to include web sites and radio stations and on Craig's List and similar sites. These IHEs include UT-Austin, South TX State, St. Edward's, Texas A&M, UT-San Antonio, Huston Tillotson, and Southwestern. AISD will promote AmeriCorps volunteer opportunities at Texas State Teacher Association, Parent Teacher Association, Texas Retired Teacher Association, and the Association of Texas Professional Educators events. AISD recruiting will include outreach to as many Historically Black Colleges and Universities and as many United States Department of Education certified higher education Hispanic Serving Institutions in Texas as possible, as part of the district's plan for recruiting members from local communities to be served and/or groups traditionally under-represented in AmeriCorps programs. AISD provides a number of additional supports to students and staff with disabilities, and all AISD educational programs and hiring practices are subject to the Americans with Disabilities Act. AmeriCorps volunteers and leaders with disabilities will be provided all accommodations available within AISD to support employees and enable them to successfully participate as an AmeriCorps volunteer. Recruitment materials will include information about supports and resources available to individuals with disabilities. The Site Coordinator and campus staff will interview and recommend volunteers for placement to the RHS and THS principals who will review recommended candidate credentials and interview, as needed, to select placements.

**TRAINING:** AmeriCorps members placed with AISD will be provided a four-day orientation to AmeriCorps. The training will replicate effective practices used by other AmeriCorps programs. AISD will engage in benchmarking of effective AmeriCorps orientation practices as part of the planning process. Potential units of instruction in the orientation include: discussion of the mission and history of AmeriCorps; information on the impact AmeriCorps members have communities/education; opportunities to reflect on their role as AmeriCorps volunteers; anticipated outcomes for the project; opportunities to learn more about the affects poverty has on youth, families, schools and communities; review of member job description/duties; review of professionalism/appropriate work place skills; review the characteristics of a productive, high-quality supervisor/employee relationship, communication styles, and opportunities for self-reflection on members' communication skills; and review of regulations governing CNCS AmeriCorps prohibited activities. All AmeriCorps members will sign a contract that stipulates the following: minimum number of service hours and other requirements necessary to successfully complete the term of service and be eligible for an education

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award; acceptable conduct; prohibited activities, including those specified in the regulations; requirements under the Drug Free Workplace Act; suspension and termination rules; the specific circumstances under which a member may be released for cause; the position description; grievance procedures; and other requirements, as established by the program. AmeriCorps staff will attend new AISD employee professional development sessions, as applicable to assignments. The Site Coordinator will work with the Reagan FRC Director, Travis High staff, and the Office Learning Support Services to design an orientation to the types of dropout prevention, graduation promotion, and college readiness initiatives offered by AISD. The Site Coordinator will work with campus administrators to develop a site-specific orientation for AmeriCorps members. AISD will engage an external provider to train AmeriCorps HDT tutors and provide ongoing training/technical support. HDT orientation and training will be similar to that of the 2011-12 implementation.

**SUPERVISION:** AISD campus staff will oversee the daily implementation/operations of HDT at RHS and THS, the FRC Resource Specialists at RHS, and the Grad Coaches at THS. AmeriCorps members will be supervised by a senior level AISD staff member at each campus. Staffing structure at each AISD school differs slightly, as campus principals have some degree of flexibility in the "types" of positions they fill. An AISD campus budget provides staff to principals in the form of FTEs. The principal can his or her FTE allocation to hire pre-identified positions by which the funds were allocated, but can also hire a different mix positions to meet the specific campus's need, but he or she must use these dollars to hire staff. Funds cannot be transferred to another expense category, such as supplies. For example, at RHS the FRC Director and Academic Director positions are the equivalent of an Assistant Principal (AP) and report directly to the Principal. At THS, the Math Department Chair is the most senior position in the Math Department and has the requisite content-specific knowledge to direct HDT tutors. As pre-algebra and algebra have been shown to be "gateway" courses to high school graduation, in that most students who successfully complete algebra and pre-algebra, will graduate in four years, much of the small group tutoring of the HDT program is in mathematics. A Math Chair often has a very similar AISD job code/rank and compensation plan as an AP. An AP may not have the same level of math content knowledge, if he or she were not a mathematics instructor before accepting an AP position. The Math Chair reports directly to the AP supervising Grad Coaches, who in turn is a direct report to the Principal. Principals regularly report to the Associate Superintendent of High Schools, a direct report of the Chief Schools Officer. For the purposes of coordinating supervision, the principals, the School Turnaround Supervisor, and Site Coordinator will routinely meet to discuss program progress and supervision needs. This information will be provided

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directly to the Chief Schools Officer. This is designed to streamline supervision at the district office level. AISD's Office of State and Federal Accountability (SFA) oversees and ensures district compliance with state and federal rules and regulations governing education funds. SFA will likewise monitor use of CNCS AmeriCorps funding to ensure resources are managed and expended in alignment with state and federal regulations. One 2013 AmeriCorps Site Coordinator, who will serve both RHS and THS (allocated as a .5FTE to each service site) will report to the principals. The Site Coordinator is responsible for the daily operations of the project, facilitating the recruiting, recommending, selection, orientation, provision of ongoing training/technical assistance, and engagement strategies for ensuring a high retention rate among AmeriCorps member placements.

**MEMBER EXPERIENCE and ENGAGEMENT:** The AISD AmeriCorps initiative will incorporate best practices for developing connectedness and engagement identified at the post-secondary education institution level. (4) Integrating engagement and enrichment strategies shown effective with a similar peer group as the AmeriCorps members will ensure volunteers have a service experience that produces community impact and leads to continued civic participation. In assessing what works in engagement and community building at the post-secondary education level, AISD will engage AmeriCorps members as soon as possible after their arrival in Austin, hosting member welcome and social events before the start of the school year. The AmeriCorps Site Coordinator will schedule ongoing and frequent engagement opportunities. These opportunities will provide social interaction and opportunities to reflect on members' experiences. Possible activities providing AmeriCorps members to share experiences and reflect on lessons learned may include, but are not limited to: Think-pair-share activities: members are given a service-related topic, think about the topic and write statements about the topic. They then share their written statements in small group discussions. These small group discussions are followed full group discussions. Think-pair-share activities are facilitated by an AISD staff member to promote effective processing of ideas and experiences; writing activities: blogging, journal keeping, structured "pen pal" relationships between members serving at different sites; group brainstorming for identifying effective strategies and innovative solutions; games related to roles, responsibilities, and daily activities of member placements; debates staged at group meetings to encourage members to think about the underlying issues students at these SIG Tier I campuses face; group work in which students research a service-related issue and present information at an AmeriCorps member training; technology-based communication strategies to encourage team building and collaboration between members; accessing guest lectures and other events at UT-Austin, Texas State, and other IHEs for AmeriCorps member participation as a group; and establishing

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AmeriCorps / Faculty mentor pairings.

COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION: AISD is committed to branding the 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps initiative at the District effectively and in compliance with Corporation for National and Community Services regulations regarding use of the AmeriCorps name and logo. All recruiting and outreach materials used at central Texas colleges and universities and at education professional associations and parent-teacher associations will use the AmeriCorps name and logo. AISD will create a web page on the AISD web site for the 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps initiatives using the AmeriCorps name and logo. The district will leverage investments made in public relations and communications strategies, such as constant contact, web-based newsletters, and twitter, to promote AmeriCorps, using the program name and logo, where applicable and appropriate. AISD will share information and updates about the 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps initiative with our current partners and financial supporters.

### Organizational Capability

HISTORY/MISSION: AISD was established in 1881 and is now the fifth largest school district in Texas. The district has a richly diverse student community, including children from all economic levels and backgrounds: 86,612 students are served by 129 campuses. Our students come from homes in which 72 different native languages are spoken. The predominant language other than English spoken in students' homes is Spanish. Over sixty percent (60.2%) of students are Hispanic; 24.9 percent are White non-Hispanic; 8.7 percent are African American; and 6.2 percent identify themselves as members of other demographic groups. Today, nearly two-thirds (63.8%) are from low-income families, and about one-quarter of our students enter our schools as English Language Learners (ELLs) (23.3%).

STAFFING/MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE: The 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps project will be under the leadership of the Chief Schools Officer at district-level. The administrative supervisor of the Office of the Chief of Schools will provide district-level supervision of the project and will help the campuses in selecting the site coordinator for RHS and THS. The site coordinator will be responsible for the daily campus-based operations of the project. At THS, HDT Tutors will be supervised by the Math Department Chair, who reports to an Assistant Principal (AP). The AP will directly supervise the Grad Coaches at THS. The AP reports directly to the THS Principal, who in turn reports to the Associate Superintendent of High Schools, in the Office of the Chief of Schools. HDT Tutors at RHS will report to the Academic Director who reports directly to the RHS Principal. Two FRC volunteers will report to the FRC Director, who reports directly to the RHS Principal. Like the THS Principal, the

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RHS Principal reports to the Associate Superintendent of High Schools, office with the Chief of Schools.

**ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPERIENCE OF STAFF:** All campus-based staff participating in the 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps project and providing supervision have a current teaching certificate and/or principal certification. All have significant years of experience as secondary instructors serving in high schools in large urban school districts. The Associate Superintendent of High Schools has principal and superintendent certification and ten or more years of experience fulfilling principal and central office administrator responsibilities. The Chief Schools Officer has a doctorate in education and superintendent certification. AISD's Chief Schools Officer has over fifteen years providing senior leadership to K-12 public schools. AISD has a strong history of successfully launching new initiatives and of scale-up: responding to expanding enrollments and changes in student demographics has required adopting new frameworks for instructional delivery and academic supports to ensure all students graduate college and career ready. AISD's commitment to providing high quality, innovative, student-centered, and culturally relevant learning options is reflected in the 2012-13 and 2013-14 Board priorities. Initiatives adopted since 2009 include: K-12 Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) classroom instruction, dual language, and cross-sector partnerships for arts education informed by the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts audit of Austin's arts education programs. SEL, implemented at AISD in 2010, is a part of a paradigm shift in delivery of social, emotional, and behavioral interventions. SEL AISD helps individuals acquire/apply attitudes and skills needed to manage emotions, persevere, develop resiliency, establish positive relationships and make responsible decisions. Embedding SEL in AISD RtI framework has created a systemic approach to teaching social skills, thus a more comprehensive strategy and not a deficit model or punitive approach to behavioral interventions. An additional substantial shift in education philosophy advancing high quality education programs was the launch of a dual language initiative as an education option for students/families, proven more effective, as it is enrichment, not deficit-driven, instructional model. In 2012, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, AISD, the City, UT, businesses and arts organizations conducted a comprehensive survey of arts education in Austin. The audit found strong foundations in sequential fine arts. In response to Austin's strong arts culture and growth opportunities for arts education in arts-rich schools, AISD and partners launched the Any Given Child initiative for arts-rich education options ensuring all youth benefit from learning in a creative classroom.

**SUSTAINABILITY:** AISD is committed to ensuring all education resources provided to schools

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translate into continued high-quality programs and professional development advancing student success. This applies to the services provided by AmeriCorps members at THS and RHS, as well. In 2010, AISD created an Office of Innovation and Development for effective partnerships and resource development within AISD. The Office of Innovation and Development will continue resource development activities in support of identifying strategic, flexible funding streams for school turnaround initiatives. The Office of Innovation and Development collaborates with the Chief Schools Officer and Chief Finance Officer to identify strategic funding needs to complement locally available resources. AISD has sustained the FRC at RHS for more than four years and has implemented HDT tutoring at more than ten sites by strategically investing local funding, federal Title 1 dollars, and through competitive grant funding. AISD will continue to invest education resources and resource development efforts for school turnaround initiatives.

**COMPLIANCE/ACCOUNTABILITY:** For FY 2013, AISD received roughly \$61 million in federal education grants. This includes USDE funds provided under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and competitive grants. AISD is required to conduct annual independent financial audit, as described in OMB circular A133. The audit is conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in the Government Auditing Standards Bulletin (GASB), issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. AISD uses the Integrated Financial and Accounting System, or IFAS, for recording financial transactions and financial reporting. The IFAS account coding system assigns a unique grant account number to every grant-funded initiative and a unique location code to every campus. The financial records of the AmeriCorps project would be available through IFAS. IFAS allows reporting for the AmeriCorps initiative at Reagan and Travis separately, as well, for effective budget and compliance monitoring. AISD's Office of State and Federal Accountability (SFA) monitors and ensures district compliance with state and federal rules and regulations regarding education funding. SFA will likewise monitor the use of CNCS AmeriCorps funding to ensure resources are managed and expended in alignment with state and federal regulations. The Site Coordinator will collaborate with SFA to review all expenditures and ensure funds are spent in compliance with state and federal regulations. The SFA Compliance Coordinator has final responsibility for funds, ensuring projects are managed according to grant guidelines, AISD policies and procedures, and applicable laws and regulations. The Coordinator collaborates with program staff at all sites in ensuring campuses leverage all federal funds effectively and maximize resources available to support district-level initiatives. He or she will review and approve all grant activity and expenditures and ensure that all applicable requisitions and expenditures

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are submitted on a timely basis. The Compliance Coordinator reviews financial reports to ensure all expenditures are appropriate and necessary, is responsible for the line-item budget, answers questions from auditors/grant monitors, and must find funding for disallowed expenditures. Independent auditors will have access to compliance documentation collected by the Office as part of the 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps program. SFA staff will provide training and technical assistance on budget and compliance. AmeriCorps campus activities will be assessed, as part of routinely scheduled school walk through (observations) conducted by the campus principal and instructional staff. Quarterly observations will be conducted by the Office of the Chief of Schools and the Chief Academic Officer with such site visits typically being unannounced. Campus observation protocols will ensure services are conducted in compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations and will ensure all staff associated with the initiative, whether grantee, subgrantee, or other affiliate, are not engaging in activities prohibited by the CNCS AmeriCorps School Turnaround program

**CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:** DRE provides AISD leaders qualitative and quantitative assessment data used in monitoring and the ongoing assessment of HDT. This information drives the ongoing continuous improvement of the initiative. The 2011-12 evaluation of HDT provides a model for future data collection and reporting efforts. More information on the 2011-12 HDT evaluation was provided in the program description/rationale portion of this application.

### **Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy**

The funding request for the 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps initiative for AISD provides intensive and frequent tutoring; ongoing youth, family and community engagement; extended learning time; and dropout prevention strategies to the most at-risk students attending two SIG Tier I high schools within AISD. All strategies are evidence-informed and leverage current AISD investments. The 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps will serve 800 at-risk students with \$398,107 from the Corporation for National and Community Service. This equals less than \$500 per student served per school year. AISD will contribute \$353,689 in matching program support. This is a cost effective method for providing services to students. For example, in a 2012 AISD evaluation of HDT implementation at ten sites, approximately 85% of at-risk students at THS had increased academic performance and increased academic engagement. HDT was implemented with local, federal Title 1 funds, and SIG grant dollars. HDT is an intensive, frequent, research based academic intervention that has the potential to put schools on the path toward meeting state and federal academic standards. In 2011-12, HDT was staffed by district employees and through contracted service providers. The cost of a contracted tutor was \$200 per day. If AISD were to contract 26 tutors from an external provider

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for 150 days of small group tutoring at 45 minutes per session at two campuses, the cost would be approximately \$780,000, an expense that could not be sustained. HDT service provider contracts for school year 2012-13 RHS tutoring alone was more than \$825,000.00.

Support from the 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps project allows AISD to build infrastructure for HDT volunteers and allows for standardizing HDT across both campuses and extending services. AISD has sustained the FRC/PRC at RHS for more than four years through a joint collaboration with community partners. The FRC leverages services provided by many community organizations and is an effective infrastructure for maximizing the collective impact of community-based services. Services delivered to families at the FRC/PRC and supported by the City of Austin, Travis County, and AISD, saves millions of dollars in lost wages for families and stabilizes students' home life, reducing costs associated with high mobility rates. It supports increasing school attendance and graduation rates: economic benefits to AISD and the community. The diverse mix of wraparound services for students, their families, and the surrounding community could not be provided cost effectively without coordination among organizations that happens at the FRC/PRC. As with the FRC, the early warning system and re-engagement strategies provided by Grad Coaches are a reasonable and appropriate cost for early interventions that save future costs associated with high dropout rates, as well as loss of economic resources for the community. The increased attendance of students tracked and served by Grad Coaches translates into additional funding for AISD, as the district is provided funding from the State in part through an Average Daily Attendance (ADA) methodology. Funding for Texas's public schools largely flows from three sources: local property tax, state funds, and federal funds. The majority comes from local property taxes collected by districts, and state funding. The State's Foundation School Program (FSP) establishes the amount of state and local funding due to school districts under Texas school finance law and provides the state share of that funding. TEA administers the FSP. The FSP to ensure all school districts receive "substantially equal access to similar revenue per student at similar tax effort, considering all state and local tax revenues of districts after acknowledging all legitimate student and district cost differences." FSP has two main components: Operations funding and Facilities funding. These provide operations and school facilities funding. The Operations provides districts assistance in financing maintenance and operations in three parts. Tier I of the FSP provides a basic allotments for regular education; special education; compensatory education, including Pregnancy Related Services; career and technical education; bilingual / English as a Second Language education; gifted and talented education; and public education grants. This tier also includes allotments for transportation, new instructional facilities, and the Texas Virtual School

Network, as well as an allotment for specialized programs at the high school level. Tier I funding is provided through a basic allotment adjusted to reflect the Average Daily Attendance of a school. ADA is an education resource allocation methodology that allocates education dollars based on an estimated cost to serve students attending, as compared to resource allocation methods that distribute education funds based on number of students enrolled. The ADA allocation method assumes that when a student is absent, funds are not used to educate the absent student, thus no resources are distributed to the district from the state for the purpose of educating the student on the day he or she is absent. The more students consistently attending school, the more funding the school has to provide high-quality education programs. As argued by The Chalkboard Project, ADA "explicitly [encourages] schools to emphasize attendance" where allocation methodologies relying on enrollment numbers provides no incentive for high attendance rates. SIG funding at Reagan and Travis High Schools will end in FY2013. AISD's investments in school turnaround infrastructure for HDT, FRC/PRCS and dropout prevention will continue to exist after SIG grant end. The 2013 School Turnaround AmeriCorps project allows campuses to align tutoring and expand services in school year 2014.

## Required Documents

**Document Name**

**Status**

Evaluation

Not Applicable

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable