

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2013 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: The New Teacher Project

Application ID: 13ED146987

Program Name: TNTP Teaching Fellows Programs

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 general overview of compelling conditions that warrant proposal funding such as 14 percent of African-American and 21 percent of Hispanic eighth grader scored proficient in math on the NAEP and half of students in large urban centers will not graduate from high school.

(+) The applicant identified 14 economically disadvantaged, target communities – Chicago, IL, Indianapolis, IN; Philadelphia, PA; New York, NY; Charlotte, NC; Baltimore, MD; Nashville, TN; Memphis, TN; New Orleans, LA; Ft Worth, TX; Washington, DC; and the states of Arizona, Georgia and Rhode Island.

(+) The applicant explains the areas were targeted because the school districts in these areas serve a disproportionately high number of economically disadvantaged and minority children and the number of children failing to meet academic standards in math and reading exceeds the state averages.

(+) The applicant documents the extent and severity of the need in the target communities citing research on teacher effectiveness extracted from Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2000; Wright, Gordon, Kane & Staiger, 2006 and data obtained from NAEP, EPE Center and National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance, which indicates that teachers who are not highly effective leads to low achievement levels and high dropout rates.

(+) The applicant provides a clear description of AmeriCorps member activities, roles and responsibilities Specifically, stating that members will engage in intensive and ongoing training and full-time teaching. For instance, the applicant provided details on members teaching math, science and other critical shortage subjects with activities such as lesson planning, instructing students and meeting with students and parents.

(+) The applicant provides sufficient examples of the types of activities that members will be engaged in on a daily basis. In addition to classroom instruction, members may meet with students, parents, other faculty, and lesson planning, and participating in professional development workshops. Members will also be involved in training on an ongoing basis and will be involved in coursework that leads to a full teaching certificate.

(+) The applicant clearly identifies an evidenced-based approach to addressing the stated need by utilizing the Fast Start theory of selecting, training and developing educators in order to increase the number of high quality and effective teachers in economically disadvantaged and minority communities.

(+) The application provides documentation of specific program goals that are expected to be met, and include enrolling 4,800 Members by the end of the three-year cycle, 70% of Members designed as "effective teachers", 168,000 students taught, and 1,632 Members serving in high-need schools.

(+) The applicant provides a description of evidence-based and evidence-informed interventions citing research relevant to highly effective teachers, the lifelong impact on students by Chetty, Friedman and Rockoff, 2012, the results of applicants' internal data, and the use of the Fast Start theory of change which focuses on the mastery of high-impact teaching skills.

(-) The city of New York was used both as an example of a failing school district and as a district that has utilized teaching fellows since 1997. The two statements appear to contradict one another.

(-) The applicant does not offer compelling evidence that this is a productive and effective means to address the stated need of improving student achievement in communities of color and in economically disadvantaged communities.

(-) The application did not provide adequate data documenting any improvements in student performance, and data provided regarding teacher performance was insufficient. For instance, the applicant cites that the retention rate for teachers beginning their fourth year of teaching was 63% vs. the national average of 57%. While this is an improvement, it fails to substantiate that this is an effective means to addressing the stated need.

(-) The applicant does not provide a description of what the organization will accomplish that it would not otherwise accomplish through existing staff or volunteers.

(-) The applicant provides results from 2012 on the ability to make an impact but the results include data about participation rather than outcome-based statistics. For example, 43,651 students started in an AmeriCorps-led classroom and 30,223 students completed participation in an AmeriCorps member-led classroom. The results for students who had contact with Members are not indicated.