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Executive Summary

Teach For America-South Dakota provides a critical source of well-trained teachers who are helping break the local cycle of educational inequity. Corps members teach for two years in low-income schools in South Dakota, going above and beyond traditional expectations to help their students achieve at high levels. At the end of the 2013-2014 school year, approximately 68 AmeriCorps members will have significantly improved educational outcomes for nearly 3,000 Native students living on South Dakota reservations and set in motion their own individual careers that will have a long-term impact on expanding educational opportunity for low-income students.

Rationale and Approach

A. NEED: Teach For America-South Dakota (TFA-SD) works to close the vast achievement gap that persists between students in low- and higher-income communities in South Dakota. In South Dakota, the achievement gap persists along racial lines, with our state's Native American students lagging far behind their non-Native peers. Living on remote reservations, far from amenities and opportunities available in large population centers, Native students attend schools that struggle to attract qualified and motivated teachers. Schools on the reservations in South Dakota receive fewer than 1 application for each teaching vacancy. We currently place our teachers in schools on the Rosebud and Pine Ridge Reservations, located on two of the poorest counties in the United States. We see the effects of poverty and low expectations manifested in test scores and in high school and college graduation rates. In the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress, 45% of all Native students in South Dakota scored below basic in reading, while only 18% of white students fell in this lowest category. At the other end of the spectrum, 44% of white students read at a proficient or advanced level, compared with only 17% of Native students performing on grade level (Nation's Report Card). The 2010 results on the Dakota STEP, our state's high-stakes exam, reveal the disheartening fact that among students living on reservations, just one in five demonstrates grade-appropriate math skills, and one in three read on grade level (South Dakota Department of Education). According to the South Dakota Department of Education, 92% of white students graduate from high school, compared with just 65% of their Native peers. This enormous disparity has severe implications for the life prospects of our state's Native students, as the National Indian Education Association reports that just 13% of our nation's Native Americans successfully complete a bachelor's degree.

We chose to serve this population because South Dakota is home to five of the top ten poorest counties in the country. Unemployment rates are 80-100% on reservations, and virtually all children

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on the reservations grow up in poverty. We see the effects of this on student achievement. Dropout rates hover around 50%, and far less than 10% of Lakota youth attain a college diploma. Our partner schools receive an average of 1.2 applications per elementary position and 0.8 applications per secondary position. Teach For America is providing a pipeline of research-proven talent, without which our highest-need students have little chance of having very strong teachers. The SD Department of Labor designated math and science teachers as a critical needs occupation. The reservation schools in which Teach For America does not yet place CMs often still have classroom teacher vacancies at the beginning of the year. B. AC MEMBERS AS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MEANS: While the problem is daunting, Teach For America-South Dakota (TFA-SD) addresses the achievement gap by placing members as the teacher of record in low-income classrooms. Corps members will aim to increase achievement by (a) cultivating rigorous, engaging and safe classrooms and (b) arranging for transformative learning experiences through extra-curricular activities, field trips, and other activities that prepare students for college. Through these daily actions, corps members produce dramatic results in their classroom.

AmeriCorps membership is a critical component of TFA 's recruitment and expansion efforts, particularly in increasing the diversity of our corps. We have seen that when teachers share the same background as their students, they have the potential to have an additional impact because they are uniquely positioned to serve as models of the potential for success. As a result, we place a particular focus on attracting and fostering the leadership of the individuals who share the racial and/or socioeconomic backgrounds of the students we teach -- 90% of whom are African-American or Latino children living in low-income communities.

The number one barrier to applicants from low-income communities joining TFA is the financial burden, specifically mandatory certification costs, and managing student loan payments on a beginning teacher's salary. The AmeriCorps education award and loan forbearance benefits alleviate these concerns and have thus enabled thousands of outstanding corps members to serve who might not have been able to do so without AmeriCorps. These corps members have positively impacted the lives of hundreds of thousands of students in low-income communities.

To continue our efforts, TFA-SD is requesting 68 full-time education award slots. Full-time enrollment in AmeriCorps accurately reflects our members' service as full-time teachers C. EVIDENCE BASED: TFA corps member activities work to alleviate the three causes of the achievement gap: (1) additional problems faced by children in low-income communities. First, corps members commit to teaching two years in low-income schools throughout South Dakota, providing a

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critical source of teachers who help ensure their students have the educational opportunities they deserve, despite compounding socioeconomic factors. Second, our corps members are charged with improving the academic achievement of their students. In succeeding with their students, members gain added conviction that educational inequity is a solvable problem and a grounded understanding of problem and solutions in all its complexity. Third, our network of more than 28,000 corps members and alumni -- work directly for change at every level of our education system, take the pressure off schools through endeavors in public health and law, and influence priorities and policies as advisers and elected officials. TFA alumni work to minimize the extra challenges facing children growing up in low-income communities through their examples and their advocacy.

The impact of corps members is evident in individual classrooms, as well as more broadly through external evaluations of our work. Teach For America's corps members are on the front lines of our movement and demonstrate inspiring success. For example, 2011 South Dakota corps member Jonathan Santos Silva led his students to grow over five points on the ACT exam last year. Furthermore, Jonathan persevered to ensure that all juniors at Little Wound High School registered and took the ACT, giving the school its first-ever 100% registration rate for the exam, positioning those students to apply for college. Additionally, Devaney Buffalo, an enrolled member of the Crow Nation and 2011 corps member who taught freshman reading, saw her students, on average, increase two years in reading according to the nationally-normed and Bureau of Indian Education-mandated MAPS test. Jeff Brown, 2011 corps member and English teacher at Todd County High School, led his students to grow 3 points on the ACT exam in just one semester this past fall. Lucero Beebe-Giudice, a 4th grade teacher at St. Francis Indian School, helped her students to achieve over 2.5 years of reading growth last year on the nationally-normed DRA exam. In the 2011-12 school year, many of our corps members assessed their students using the MAPS exam for the first time. This allowed us to compare their performance with the teaching force across the country. Our corps members performed in the 63rd percentile of all teachers, including veteran teachers. This shows our teachers are effective, and that we are on track to meet our 2015 goal of having our corps members performing in the 75th percentile of all teachers. Additionally, our corps members' students on average grew 4 points on the MAPS exam over the course of the year, compared with 2 points of growth that students in other low-income classrooms made across the country.

A growing body of rigorous research demonstrates that TFA corps members are highly effective classroom teachers. The most rigorous studies have found that corps members' impact on student achievement exceeds that of other teachers in the same high-needs schools, including veteran

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teachers. ("The Effects of TFA on Students: Findings from a National Evaluation," Mathematica Policy Research, June 2004) (The Urban Institute/CALDER Research Center, 2009). Additionally, pathway studies on the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Louisiana concluded that TFA corps members are among the strongest new teachers with the greatest impact on student achievement over the course of multiple years. ("Impacts of Teacher Preparation on Student Test Scores in North Carolina: Teacher Portals," The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill/Carolina Institute for Public Policy, 2010, 2011, 2012; Report Card on the Effectiveness of Teacher Training Programs: State Board of Education and Tennessee Higher Education Commission, 2010, 2011; Noell, George, "TFA Teachers' Contribution to Student Achievement in Louisiana in Grades 4-9"). of experience (The Urban Institute/CALDER Research Center, 2009).

By the end of the three year cycle, TFA-SD aims to increase the effectiveness and impact of our corps members on student achievement and aims to foster a transformative corps member experience resulting in vision driven leadership in the classroom and dramatic academic outcomes for student. For these reasons, we are opting into the following performance measures: ED2, ED5, ED12-15, ED17. The targets for these measures were determined by reviewing past data and in alignment with TFA-SD's regional student achievement goals.

TFA measures performance based on the impact our corps members have on student achievement. This includes measuring the growth students make throughout the year and/or students' ability to demonstrate mastery of content at the end of the year. Our corps members are expected to progress their students at least a year or more of academic growth per school year. For the 2013-2014 school year, we anticipate that 70% of students will make gains of a year or more of academic growth.

Each corps member administers a diagnostic test in the beginning of the year to each student, and is then required to monitor student growth through ongoing and end-of-year assessments.

To ensure that our corps members lead their students to significant academic growth, we rely on high quality student achievement data from rigorous tests to drive program improvements and provide tailored support to corps members. In order to address the complications of cross-contextual comparisons and the need for well-calibrated student achievement data, we have designed a new Student Achievement Measurement System (SAMS), which focuses on a continuous measure, whereby corps members are evaluated based on the percentage of goal attained. SAMS will be used to set classroom goals, guide decision-making, assess student progress, and fuel continuous improvement. CURRENT GRANTEES: TFA-SD has been an Americorps subgrantee since 2011. In

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each grant progress report submitted, we have been pleased to report meeting nearly all performance measures. During the 2011-2012 school year, we retained 100% of our corps members. We are on track to retain 100% of our corps members during the 2012-2013 school year as well. Last year, we exceeded our goal around the number of students who would experience at least one year's academic growth, with 1,777 students making significant academic growth. In classrooms using the ACT series tests, students of TFA-SD corps members made twice as much growth compared to the average classroom in South Dakota.

We have also been successful in progressing toward the day where the achievement gap between Native and non-Native students in our state is eliminated. Since TFA-SD brought 17 corps members in 2004, we have expanded to a current corps of 52 corps members, reaching increasing numbers of Native students. By 2015, we will reach 6,000 Native students, and two-thirds of all Native students living on reservations in South Dakota. In classrooms using the ACT series tests, students of TFA-SD corps members made twice as much growth compared to the average classroom in South Dakota. D. MEMBER RECRUITMENT: TFA employs a rigorous recruitment campaign to develop a robust pool of candidates of top performing students that are in the top third academic cohort, and are rigorously screened for other qualities believed to be predictors of successful teachers -- perseverance, ability to motivate others, passion for children, and organization and communication skills. TFA recruits at more than 350 colleges and universities, with aggressive campaigns focused on over 300 campuses. Through this intensive targeted recruitment effort and mass marketing, more than 48,000 people applied to join the 2012 corps.

Part of TFA-SD's 2015 growth plan calls for a corps that is 20% Native. To reach this goal, we hired a specialist of community investment. He is charged with building and strengthening relationships with individuals and organizations in our communities and with helping corps members build deep and enduring bonds with their students and families. Next, we are held our 2nd annual Native Recruitment Weekend in early January 2013. This is a key strategy for increasing the number of Native corps members in our corps. Last year, 6 Native college students attended; this year saw 16 top Native juniors and seniors join us to learn more about our work. After the weekend, all of the seniors pledged to apply to Teach For America this year. Additionally, a member of TFA's recruitment team works to actively recruit corps members from the University of South Dakota and South Dakota State University.

We place a particular focus on attracting and fostering the leadership of the individuals who share the racial and/or socioeconomic backgrounds of the students we teach, 90 percent of whom are

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African-American or Hispanic children living in low-income communities. We recruit heavily at historically black colleges and universities. Applicants included 10% of seniors at Morehouse College, 8% at Howard University and at the Ivy League schools, one in seven African-American seniors and one in seven Latino seniors applied. Last year, 38% of our 2012 corps are people of color and 35% received Pell Grants.

In pursuit of our diversity vision and goals, we are implementing several important initiatives to ensure members from underrepresented populations have a positive experience. We offer and encourage staff, corps members and alumni to form resource groups to come together around common identity areas and to network, build community, strengthen skills and support one another. We recently launched a diversity and inclusiveness committee on our national board. We also incorporate diversity and inclusiveness into manager training for staff and corps member training. E. MEMBER TRAINING: The bedrock of our training and evaluation model is a framework we call Teaching As Leadership (TAL), which include the six strategies that we have found drive effective teaching: (1) setting an ambitious vision; (2) investing students and families in that vision; (3) planning purposefully to meet ambitious goals; (4) executing plans effectively; (5) working relentlessly to achieve their vision; and (6) continuously reflecting and improving. Each of these strategies corresponds to a series of 28 teacher actions, which comprise the TAL rubric.

INDUCTION -- At the beginning of the summer, members spend a week in South Dakota on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations learning about the communities in which they will serve. AmeriCorps pre-service orientation is conducted, so members learn about the responsibilities and benefits of AmeriCorps membership before they begin serving.

INSTITUTE -- Next, corps members attend a rigorous five-week residential summer training institute to prepare them for teaching in a low-income classroom. Members teach as part of a four-person collaborative that is supervised and mentored by both a veteran teacher and TFA staff member who provide regular feedback about their teaching, reflect and refine their practice to ensure that students meet summer school goals. Corps members also attend daily curriculum sessions where they gain the foundational knowledge needed to become highly effective beginning teachers. ORIENTATION -- After Institute, corps members return to South Dakota to create their first unit plans, assessments and tools to track their students' progress. They also spend time deeply immersed in their new communities, beginning the critical task of building relationships with students and families. With these elements established before the school year begins, our teachers are better prepared to move their students forward. ONGOING SUPPORT -- Building on the foundation received during the

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summer training, TFA-SD program team provide intensive training and professional development.

Corps members are paired with a Manager of Teacher Leadership Development (MTLD). MTLDs conduct observations of the member's class, and provide corps members with feedback and support. They work with corps members to review student data to identify and find solutions to problems or gaps in student achievement. This approach builds corps members' abilities to independently evaluate student outcomes, identify causes of problems, and seek solutions. Members also meet regularly in content- or grade-level-specific learning teams led by experienced teachers to discuss ongoing challenges, share best practices, and work together on professional development. Finally, members participate in certification and/or master's degree programs designed to ensure that members meet state certification requirements.

Throughout the training and support cycle outlined above, we have imbedded several opportunities to reinforce key issues of AmeriCorps compliance. Prohibited activities are reviewed with corps members at TFA-SD's pre-service orientation to ensure that they have clear and solid understanding of their responsibilities. We continue to enforce collective compliance at monthly professional development sessions and email blasts. Individual compliance will be monitored by MTLDs who are trained annually on prohibited activities. This training includes a comprehensive explanation of the prohibited activities, examples and case studies of what these activities encompass, and how to detect and report them. Through their regular interaction with corps members, MTLDs are able to review regulations with members and verify that corps members are not engaging in them.

Our placement sites will be provided with an AmeriCorps orientation guide, which includes information on AmeriCorps policies and prohibited activities. Ensuring that our principals and other school administrators are aware of these activities provides another system to ensure corps members are not engaging in this activities, as well as an on site resource, should they have any questions or want clarification or guidance on any activities they plan to participate in. F. MEMBER SUPERVISION: TFA-SD's plan for supervising corps members may differ from the majority of AmeriCorps programs because we are a professional corps. All TFA corps members are college graduates who have gone through a rigorous application process that is designed, in part, to measure their ability to work effectively in a professional setting. Therefore, our supervision plan is concerned with corps member development and evaluation. Additionally, since our corps members work as full-time professional teachers, they are directly supervised by their school principal, instructional coaches, and other school administration.

As mentioned previously, every corps member is matched with a MTLD -- highly effective TFA

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alums who manage a cohort of current members, which provides an additional layer of support and a high level of supervision to corps members. Our MTLDs are corps members' first point of contact with TFA. They perform regular observations of member classrooms, regularly meet with corps member to review student data with a focus on progress to date, and provide strategies for overcoming current challenges. MTLDs refer corps members to targeted resources based on strengths and weaknesses. At the end of the year MTLDs and corps members analyze student growth based on final assessments.

To be hired, MTLDs must have a demonstrated track record of success during their time in the classroom and had to display the characteristics needed to be a successful in this role, such as critical thinking, influencing and motivating, and problem solving. Upon joining staff, MTLDs attend a new staff conference and independently participate in 20 hours of online modules before working with corps members. Once MTLDs complete their on-boarding process and begin working with members, they engage in the following ongoing trainings: weekly check-ins with their manager; monthly group professional development and skill building sessions; and weekly individualized professional development. G. MEMBER EXPERIENCE: TFA-SD works to reinforce a culture of service by providing opportunities for members to take on increased responsibility. For example, second year members have the opportunity to mentor first year members, and develop and conduct professional development sessions. Additionally, all members are encouraged to work at our summer training institute, welcome new members, and recruit at their colleges and universities. During their service, we host discussions and panels designed to help members reflect on the causes of educational inequity and fostering a sense of responsibility to address these issues.

Also, reflection is a major component of our teacher development model. Our teachers are regularly observed by teacher coaches with whom they debrief to reflect on the successes and challenges of their work in an out of the classroom. End of year meetings between teachers and coaches are usually the most powerful as they reflect on the arc of their experiences over the course of the year and celebrate their impact on the communities that they proudly serve. Additionally, our corps members reflect and discuss best practices with other members throughout their Professional Learning Community (PLC) groups.

After successfully completing their service, members become part of TFA's alumni network. We employ a two-part strategy to foster the leadership of our alumni base. First, we work to build community among our alumni and keep them connected to TFA. Second, we support the career development of our alumni through a series of initiatives that fast track the pathway to leadership in several key sectors. Currently, over 570 alumni are serving as school leaders, over 5,500 are still

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teaching, 45 are elected officials, over 500 alumni work in public policy, and 14 are recognized as social entrepreneurs. In South Dakota, we currently have 35 alumni in the state, 25 of whom are teaching in their original placement schools. They play an active role in mentoring current corps members, and continue to focus their teaching on dramatic academic achievement in their classrooms. We have one alumnus who is a principal at Crazy Horse School, where 5 corps members and 1 alumna are currently serving.

TFA-SD values its relationship with AmeriCorps. In instances where there are national or community service projects that bring together members of service programs across our region, we encourage our members to participate and provide support to programs. Further, through their direct access to students, our teachers provide information, encouragement, and support for students to serve their school and broader community, thus creating a culture and legacy of civil responsibility and service in the next generation.

We participate in Americorps week and the National Day of Service by providing our corps members with opportunities to serve outside of their full-time service. Last year, our corps members wrote cards to children at Sanford Children's Hospital in South Dakota, and to recovering veterans at Walter Reed Hospital. Through our focus on service many of our corps members have incorporated civic engagement and community service into their visions for what they will accomplish with their students. They participate in quarterly community service projects and work to instill the value and habit of service in their students.

The small number of Americorps programs in South Dakota, as well as the geographic span that separates them, has thus far been a barrier to our collaboration state-wide. There is a clear opportunity for the South Dakota Americorps community to try to come together more often. Additionally, we work to partner with local community organizations that are promoting service and community well-being. We and our corps members have partnered with the White Buffalo Calf Woman Society, the Defending Childhood Initiative, Sinte Gleska University, Oglala Lakota College, Thunder Valley, Spring Creek Saturday School, and the Boys and Girls Club of Mission and Pine Ridge. In the fall of 2011, our TFA-SD staff visited Red Cloud Indian School, an Americorps site, to observe their instruction and college-readiness efforts. As they are currently the closest Americorps site to us, there is opportunity for continued collaboration and service together.

TFA-SD strategically reinforces the AmeriCorps identity and brand with corps members and community members. Prior to their summer pre-service training, corps members receive written materials designed to provide foundational information and history about AmeriCorps as it relates to

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both TFA and the broader AmeriCorps network. These materials enable corps members to gain a basic understanding of AmeriCorps prior to the start of their term of service.

To build upon this information, all TFA-SD corps members participate in an AmeriCorps Pre-Service Orientation, led by our program staff, which familiarizes them with the benefits and responsibilities of being an AmeriCorps member. During this pre-service orientation, corps members are provided with numerous materials and resources that they can utilize to: (1) gain more information about AmeriCorps; (2) provide information to others about AmeriCorps; and (3) help them to clearly identify as an AmeriCorps member. We continue to reinforce these ideas during regular email blasts and during periodic member general meetings. Orientation sessions and ongoing discussions with program staff help members develop a deeper understanding of what it means to be an AmeriCorps member, including viewing their service commitment as part of a much larger movement.

To further foster esprit de corps and a sense of connection with the AmeriCorps identity, we will continue to offer opportunities for service during AmeriCorps Week and the National Day of Service. We will invite other AmeriCorps members not involved with Teach For America to our All Corps events to build community and understanding. We will prominently post AmeriCorps signage in our office so that it is apparent to all visitors that we are part of AmeriCorps. In our biweekly communications with corps members, we will include a section with updates from other AmeriCorps programs and opportunities. Additionally, one of our staff members will be charged with stewarding AmeriCorps and raising awareness of AmeriCorps within the state and local communities. H. VOL GEN: TFA-SD uses several methods to recruit volunteers to expand the impact of our program. First, we strongly encourage corps members to recruit and involve volunteers in their classrooms. Our corps members are also strongly encouraged to build relationships with their students' families and invite them to volunteer in the classroom. Many corps members also recruit and manage volunteers from the community for help in the classroom, guest speaking opportunities, assisting with special events, and helping with extracurricular activities. We also involve volunteers through our annual Teach For America Week event. Over the course of a week in April, TFA-SD invites community leaders to present lessons in corps member classrooms. Teach For America Week volunteers bring real world lessons into schools and encourage students to set high goals for themselves. TFA-SD has welcomed staffers from US senators and representatives as some of our volunteers in the past. Finally, we have built significant capacity to engage our nearly 28,000 alumni in taking greater responsibility for the organization's well-being. This year, about 45% of our total alumni base nationally contributed time or money to the organization. Last year, over 80% of our alumni in South Dakota contributed time

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or money to the organization.

Corps members provide supervision and instruction to their classroom volunteers to ensure they have clear expectations, goals are met, and that no volunteer is engaging in prohibited activities. Additionally, each corps member signs a statement on our mid and end of year surveys affirming that they have managed and supervised their recruited volunteers at a level that they can ensure that no volunteer has engaged in prohibited activities. I. ORG COMMITMENT TO AC IDENTIFICATION: Teach For America has two specific teams, Marketing and Communications, that function to build and strengthen the Teach For America's brand among our most crucial constituencies, including corps prospects, corps members, alumni, staff members, donors, and all media outlets. We will leverage the experience and expertise of these two teams to develop clear strategies and plans to co-brand Teach For America and AmeriCorps. In 2013-2014, we will incorporate an AmeriCorps communications plan for senior leaders at Teach For America. We will work with our Marketing and Communication team to develop and implement a plan that will highlight the importance of our partnership with AmeriCorps and focus on essential speaking points that define our role as an AmeriCorps partner, so senior leaders can clearly communicate about the partnership in aligned way across the organization. Additionally, our Communication Team will be working with regions to ensure all press kits have the AmeriCorps language present. Our Marketing Team is working to ensure that all stationary, email signatures, signage, and marketing materials have the AmeriCorps logo clearly displayed.

TFA-SD will work to accomplish the following strategies for raising AmeriCorps brand awareness. We will ensure that our Executive Director discusses our AmeriCorps involvement with funders, community stakeholders, and our school communities. We will ensure our regional communications director includes a mention of AmeriCorps in publications and media stories about our work. We will prominently display signage in our regional office to indicate our status as an AmeriCorps program. To further increase excitement in AmeriCorps among our corps members, we will purchase AmeriCorps merchandise, such as t-shirts and tote bags for use at All Corps events. Lastly, we will nominate a corps member, and publicize this to our corps, for any applicable AmeriCorps awards on the national or state level.

Organizational Capability

A. ORG BACKGROUND & STAFFING: Wendy Kopp proposed the idea for Teach For America in her Princeton University undergraduate thesis in 1989. In 1990, a charter corps of 500 committed recent college graduates joined Teach For America and began fueling the movement to eliminate educational inequity. Since then, nearly 37,000 participants have reached more than 3 million children

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nationwide during their two-year teaching commitments. Thanks to the leadership of Dr. Rick Melmer and Dr. Melody Schopp, who were the Secretary of Education and Director of Teacher Quality at the time respectively, TFA-SD brought our first cohort of 17 CMs to Rosebud and Pine Ridge in 2004. Since then, over 200 corps members have taught on Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations in South Dakota.

TFA has effectively managed large-scale federal grants through both AmeriCorps and the Department of Education. We have received unqualified A-133 audits every year, and have built significant internal capacity to manage both the financial and programmatic components of a national AmeriCorps program. At the national office, a number of well-qualified specialists are available to meet and guide regional staff on AmeriCorps compliance, budget creation, and general grant management. We use our Financial Edge database to help track funding streams and expenses by department and program element. Our finance team reports to the auditing and finance committees of our board, and works closely with our development team and budget trackers to coordinate cash-in and expenses throughout the organization. This structure allows for the appropriate breakdown of responsibilities and a system of checks and balances needed to ensure accurate financial accounting, coordination of fundraising and spending, and the accurate tracking of all finances. Additionally, the national team provides on-going trainings and assistance for all regional staff positions via conference calls, regional and national conferences, and on-line tutorials.

In addition, Teach For America values research and internal and external evaluations and understands its place in refining and evolving our program model. The Research Partnerships team has developed both internal capacity and a team culture that enables the following efforts: shape internal research agenda, field and manage external research inquiries, studies, and surveys, translate research and respond to studies and work to improve data quality. Through this focus on research, Teach For America seeks rigorous independent evaluations to measure our impact and continually improve our program.

Regionally, TFA-SD currently employs 5.5 full-time staff members who work directly in region to handle the day to day programming and operational responsibilities of TFA-SD. In addition, the regional office works closely with TFA national staff to ensure that the regional systems in place are on par with the policies and procedures stipulated by the national administration. Jim Curran (Executive Director) is responsible for maximizing the organization's impact in the region by working to establish TFA's presence in the community, ensuring effectiveness of corps members, building a broad and sustainable base of financial support, and raising community awareness. An alumnus of

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the 2005 Phoenix corps, Jim moved to South Dakota to work as a manager, teacher leadership development and became ED in 2011. Marion Katz (Manager, Regional Operations) is responsible for supporting corps members and staff in the areas of program, development, alumni affairs, and operations. Marion is alumna of the 2007 South Dakota corps. Tara Harrington (Director, Teacher Leadership Development) is responsible for managing the Teacher Leadership Development team. Tara was a 2007 corps member. Dennis Robillard, Megan Kittispoikul (Manager, Teacher Leadership Development) are responsible for managing and developing corps members to ensure that they achieve ambitious academic goals with their students. They are both former TFA corps members. Dave Espinoza (Specialist, Community Investment) is responsible for helping corps members build strong and lasting relationships with students and families. Dave was born and raised on the Rosebud Reservation.

As outlined above, our regional and national staff capacity is such that it enables us to provide each Teach For America corps member comprehensive training. Each corps member completes a 5-6 week intensive training program prior to entering the classroom. This training program is designed to give corps members hands on experience by actually teaching in a classroom, as well as to learn the skills and values that will prepares them to be leaders and excel in the classroom. Once in the region, each corps member is assigned a Manager, Teacher Leadership Development--a one-on-one coach--who works closely with corps members to further develop teaching and leadership development. In addition, corps members also attend TFA led professional development opportunities throughout the year, many of which are specific to the content and grade level that they teach.

As a recipient of AmeriCorps funding since 1994, TFA has built the systems and tools to successfully manage AmeriCorps grants and ensure compliance. Additionally, TFA receives other federal sources of funding and continuously updates our systems accordingly to successfully manage these grants. CURRENT GRANTEE: In the 2011-12 school year, TFA-SD met or exceeded 4 of our 8 performance measures. The 4 measures we missed were by extremely small margins. We missed our goal of placing 60 corps members by just 2. We also fell short of our goal of having 2280 students begin the school year. Our student population is highly transient, so it extremely difficult to set targets for this performance measure. We are proud that we experienced 100% retention, and exceeded our goal for the number of students who experienced at least 1 year of academic growth. TFA-SD placed 58 highly qualified corps members enrolled on the State AmeriCorps grant as full-time teachers in grades ranging from kindergarten through 12th grade in a variety of content areas, reaching over 2,090 students from low-income communities. All 58 of those corps members also completed the year in

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their classrooms. To ensure future success in regards to student achievement and to help corps members build positive cultures of achievement in their schools, MTLs carry out a school based model. In this model, MTLs are assigned all corps members at a school site. This allows them to make more frequent, more meaningful observations and understand their school's environment in way that will assist them develop their cohort of corps members. B. SUSTAINABILITY: TFA-SD has had significant experience raising the necessary resources to run our program from a variety of sources: foundations, corporations, individual donors, and public sources. We actively seek to grow funding across all sources going forward and expanding across South Dakota where both funding and placement opportunities exist.

We are approaching sustainability by diversifying our funding base and pursuing new public and out-of-state opportunities. We seek investments in our mission and work from foundations, corporations, individuals, and state appropriations. A broad funding base serves both to sustain our organization, as well as to increase awareness in all sectors of the educational inequity that plagues Native communities--as well as build investment in our vision that something radically different is possible. In addition to broadening our funding base we focus our resources on what will be the highest impact for students, schools, and communities.

Locally, we seek to cultivate relationships with individuals, corporations and foundations who are interested in advancing their communities and who see education as the key way of doing so. We meet one-on-one with potential donors in order to build their understanding of our work and give them insight into who we are, what we believe, and what our vision for education is in South Dakota. We continuously cultivate the relationships we have with existing donors by meeting with them and providing them timely updates about our work.

Nationally, TFA-SD has targeted those foundation and individuals who have giving priorities focused on rural areas and serving native students. There are a number of individuals who grew up in South Dakota who have since moved away but are interested in continuing to see the region flourish. We identify those individuals and cultivate relationships with them. On the foundation side, we do hours of research to identify those national foundations who may be interested in our work because of alignment in their foundation priorities and our vision of providing all students with an excellent education.

TFA-SD is working to build a sustainable movement through investing students, family members, community leaders, and state leaders in creating excellent schools for reservation students to attend. Our specialist, community investment works relentlessly to build relationships in our communities.

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TFA-SD's impact on closing the achievement gap is dependent upon our ability to form partnerships with local school districts, charter networks, and certifying bodies, in addition to building a large and sustainable base of supporters.

We rely on the guidance of our district partners in placing and supporting corps members. Our partner districts identify their staffing needs each spring and request our assistance in meeting them. We foster an ongoing relationship with each partner conducting meetings with principals and the superintendent of each district to ensure that they are satisfied with our teachers' performance. Currently, we place in 6 partner school districts: Todd County School District, American Horse School, Crazy Horse School, Little Wound School, St. Francis Indian School, and Wounded Knee District School.

Once placed, our corps members work with the Sinte Gleska University or Oglala Lakota College to earn the teaching certification they need to be classified as "highly qualified" under state law. Additionally, corps members have the option of pursuing a Masters in Educational Administration from the University of South Dakota. C. COMPLIANCE: Teach For America's national AmeriCorps Team will provide training and technical assistance to all regions, which includes ongoing technical assistance and communications around AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited activities. TFA-SD will also check-in with the national team regularly to norm on all member service activities. To ensure compliance at our placement sites, TFA-SD will provide extensive pre-service and ongoing training to both corps members school administrators. These trainings will be designed to communicate AmeriCorps rules and regulations, as well as assist corps members and site supervisors make well informed decisions regarding the members' activities to successfully maintain compliance. Additionally, TFA-SD's program team will be trained on both acceptable and prohibited AmeriCorps activities so they are equipped to reinforce these ideas to corps members, as well as monitor member activities.

Through sites visits, corps member classroom observations, and regular communication with site supervisor's our Managers of Teacher Leadership Development (MTLDs) will provide strict oversight of corps members and the activities that they engage in. Due to the frequency of interactions that MTLD's have with members and their in depth knowledge of the prohibited activities, they will be able to detect if members are in violation of AmeriCorps regulations.

If an MTLD or school administrator suspects that a member is engaging in prohibited activities, they will notify our regional leadership team. Partnering with our national legal counsel and the state commission as needed, the regional leadership team will assess the suspected violation and determine

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next steps. CURRENT GRANTEE: As mentioned above, the students that TFA-SD serves are a highly transient population, which often makes it difficult to set targets around some of our performance measures. As a result of this, TFA-SD did not meet some of our performance measure targets. To ensure success in meetings these targets in the future, we are working with our placements sites to get a better gauge of what percentage of students are transient and factor that in when goal setting for 2013. ENROLLMENT: In 2011-2012, we filled 58 of 60 slots or 97%. Due to the nature of our centralized admissions, we are never 100% sure if we will receive the exact number of corps members we anticipated. However, we are working very closely with our admissions team to ensure we are able to fill the slots requested RETENTION: Teach For America South Dakota's retention rate for the 2011-12 school year was 100%, a rate markedly higher than the estimated average retention for first-year teachers in low-income communities in general (82 percent) and the overall average for all first-year teachers regardless of school setting (86 percent) ("No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children" (2003) National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. Washington, D.C.). OPERATING SITES: We begin meeting with district officials to identify the highest need schools and teaching positions in South Dakota in advance of placing members. Corps members interview at the school site and compete for open positions along with other new teachers.

TFA-SD has partnered with Todd County School District, American Horse School, Crazy Horse School, Little Wound School, St. Francis Indian School, and Wounded Knee District School to meet the needs of low-income students by providing highly qualified teachers to assist in their efforts to close the achievement gap. We work closely with our partners throughout the year to align our pre-service training and ongoing support with district needs, and engage in an ongoing dialogue with school leadership to ensure they are satisfied with our teachers' performance.

Currently, all TFA-SD corps members are teaching in some of our state's most underserved schools. 100% of students receive free lunch, and 100% of students live on the Pine Ridge or Rosebud reservations. We are currently working with our existing district and charter partnerships and build new relationships to ensure as we determine service sites for 2012-2013.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

A. COST EFFECTIVENESS: TFA-SD is requesting 68 full time member slots at \$2000/MSY through a fixed amount grant. The \$2,000 cost per MSY does not exceed the maximum amount that can be requested for a professional corps fixed amount grant. A fixed amount grant, combined with commitments, will allow us to continue and further our work in South Dakota.

As a professional corps, our members are provided salaries and benefits from the school districts.

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Therefore, our costs relate solely to training and supporting our members. These expenses are directly linked to outputs and outcomes -- the AmeriCorps grant will cover a percentage of the costs that enable TFA to recruit, place and support corps members so that they are prepared to make academic gains with their students and engage community members in their classrooms. Our 2013 budget is \$950,000; with \$2000/MSY, we depend on other funding sources to raise the additional funding necessary to support our corps members.

In total, we raised around \$850,000 in FY12, which comprised of dollars from: FOUNDATIONS: In FY 2012, we raised \$260,000 from foundations in South Dakota. We continue to prioritizing forming new partnerships with foundations, to secure meetings with new foundations.

CORPORATIONS: Last year, we raised \$100,000 from South Dakota corporations. We are creating unique partnership opportunities that align with individual corporations' strategic plans and philanthropic priorities, enabling them to view our partnership as mutually beneficial.

INDIVIDUALS: In FY 2012, we were able to raise over \$75,000 from individuals in South Dakota.

We plan to hold events in FY 2013 to further expand our pool of potential supporters. SCHOOL

PARTNERS: In addition to our fundraising efforts noted above, we received \$129,000 from our school partners to help offset the training and recruitment costs of the TFA-SD teachers working their schools. PUBLIC FUNDING: Last year, we raised \$224,000 from public sources, including the state of South Dakota and AmeriCorps.

TFA has been an AmeriCorps program since 1994. However, funding from the national AmeriCorps grant has gone to pay for national initiatives -- recruitment, admissions, summer training -- that are not included on our regional AmeriCorps budget. TFA-SD first received funding from AmeriCorps in our fiscal year 2011 from the "States without commissions" application process. In 2012, South Dakota's AmeriCorps commission was established and we now receive funding from them.

TFA-SD has dramatically increased our funding base from fiscal year 2011 to fiscal year 2012. The base of funders and supporters across South Dakota is diverse and wide-reaching. Teach TFA-SD has already built a solid foundation of diverse corporate, foundation, and individual funders throughout the South Dakota, as well as investment from the schools that hire our corps members. Our funding breaks down as such: 22% from foundations, 8% from corporations, 6% from individual donors, 11% from school fees, and 19% from AmeriCorps funding and state appropriations. We are always working to expand and diversify our funding further, which is why prioritize cultivating and stewarding our current funders, as well as constantly seek to share our vision and work with new individuals, corporations, and foundations across the state. We will host our first Sponsor A Teacher fundraising

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event this year with the help of two new supporters who are prominent South Dakotans. We continue to meet with new prospects, as our current supporters actively introduce us to their peers. We have held initial meetings with individuals positioned to invest with us at a leadership level, and are optimistic about the prospects for continued partnership. We are again approaching the state legislature to request an upgrade in their investment in us. We are also working to expand our foundation support from foundations located outside of South Dakota but have a priority area of interest around improving opportunity for Native individuals and communities. By continuing to steward our broad donor base, and developing new campaigns and large scale events, we seek to continue to fund our program in sustainable ways.

For fiscal year 2013, TFA-SD has raised or received commitments for \$341,500 of our \$950,000 development goal. This puts us 36% to our goal for FY13, after just one quarter. We have developed a comprehensive fund raising plan for the year for each of our funding streams, and we anticipate reaching our goal by the end of the fiscal year.

For fiscal year 2012, TFA-SD raised \$850,000, exceeding our development goal of \$700,000. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: As a group, Native Americans achieve the lowest levels of educational attainment of any ethnic group in the nation. Much of the education reform discourse is centered on inner-city African-American and Latino youth, but we must not overlook the educational inequity in our country's rural corners being perpetuated against Native students.

Through our diverse fundraising efforts over the past seven years, we have demonstrated that we are a sustainable presence here in South Dakota serving a severely underserved population. However, a partnership with AmeriCorps is critical for us to achieve our ambitious growth plan by 2015. To build the movement toward educational equity, we cannot just maintain the status quo; we must grow to bring in 50 new teachers each year to reach far more of our state's underserved students and schools.

The state of South Dakota, and particularly the reservations on which we operate, do not have the financial and philanthropic capacity of large urban and population centers. There are very few large corporations with headquarters in South Dakota. Shannon County and Todd County, home of the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations, are two of the top ten poorest counties in the United States, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Todd County is rated a 9 on the Beale scale, meaning it is a "nonmetro county completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, not adjacent to metro area," which is the most rural a region can be rated. As an extremely rural region, it is challenging to seek out the funding sources necessary to support our critical work in our severely under-served communities. CURRENT GRANTEE: As part of our 5-year plan, TFA-SD strives to increase both the

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depth and breadth of our impact. As we grow our corps to scale while continually improving our program's effectiveness, we are taking on much larger fundraising goals. We are requesting an expansion to 68 slots without an increased cost per MSY, which will allow us to serve more students throughout the South Dakota. This expansion will also increase our corps members' sense of connection to AmeriCorps in the state of South Dakota, as all corps members will be under the commission's portfolio, which will increase our ability to partner with other AmeriCorps programs. Greater opportunity for partnership with other AmeriCorps programs will expand our impact by increasing the resources that we are able to offer our students and corps members.

B. BUDGET ADEQUACY: Although there is no budget required for a fixed amount grant, our regional budget is designed to adequately support our program and to align with our mission. Over 60% of our budget represents costs directly related to corps member development and support-- which includes costs related to personnel, trainings, and corps member meetings. These allocations are reflective of our programs needs for ongoing support and professional development, which enables them to lead their students to make significant academic gains. The remaining portion of our budget is allocated for placement and services, which align with our objective of placing all corps members as full-time teachers in schools that serve low-income students. Expenses within this allocation are associated with personnel, transportation, communications, management, operations, and development of our regional office and ensuring all staff are continually developed and highly effective. TFA has budgeted non-AmeriCorps funds to cover the costs of the National Service criminal history checks.

TFA-SD has already raised over 34% of the funds necessary to operate the region for the next fiscal year. The regional budget for 2013 is \$850,000 and we have raised nearly \$300,000 as part of our development efforts in the first two months of the fiscal year. We are continually focused on cultivating our current funders and building additional relationships to add to our funding base.

Teach For America will be using non-AmeriCorps funds to cover the costs of the National Service criminal history checks.

As a professional corps program, TFA's program design is a particularly cost effective model for increasing student achievement and closing the achievement gap. First, we are providing low-income school districts with a pool of highly successful candidates who exhibit the traits of highly effective teachers. Research consistently demonstrates that high-quality teaching is the most important factor in student learning; yet, low-income students are far less likely to get effective teachers than their wealthier peers. As part of TFA's program model, our intense recruitment process selects the brightest

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corps members, who consistently demonstrate the characteristics that have been found in successful teachers. Providing low-income district with this strong candidate pool drastically decreases the amount of money that they spend to recruit teachers at their schools and attracts high level talent that they may not otherwise attract. Second, in addition to providing pre-service training, we are one of the few teacher providers in the country who continue to give on-going support to teachers while they are in the classroom. Because of our rigorous selection model and student achievement focused training, TFA corps members are consistently reviewed as the strongest new teachers with the greatest impact on student achievement in every state that runs the data and in the most rigorous independent studies.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

N/A

Continuation Changes

N/A