

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

Citizen Schools will have 240 AmeriCorps members who will teach academic and leadership skills through hands-on projects, help students make connections between current learning and future opportunity, and develop trusting relationships with students and families at more than 30 high-need schools in California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, and Texas. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for enrolling 5,675 middle grades students, of which 4,540 will complete a rigorous and engaging program and 2,270 will demonstrate improved academic performance in literacy and/or math. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 4,300 volunteers who will be engaged primarily in leading "apprenticeships," weekly, hands-on courses that introduce students to new skills and careers.

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Education. In addition to the efforts of volunteers and the partnership of schools and districts, the CNCS fixed amount investment of \$3,000,000 will leverage more than twice that amount (\$7,230,000) in other public and private funding, with an estimated \$1,946,414 from public sources including school and district contributions and \$5,284,486 from private sources.

## Rationale and Approach/Program Design

### A. Problem/Need

THE NEED FOR EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS IN THE MIDDLE GRADES: Citizen Schools' expanded day program addresses the need for interventions that will keep middle grades students from low-income communities on positive educational trajectories.

Too many American students are failing to acquire the skills and experiences they will need to succeed as workers, citizens, and leaders. For example, on the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress in reading, just 19% of 8th grade students in Houston and 21% in Chicago achieved proficiency -- indicating that four out of five children in these communities were unable to demonstrate fundamental reading skills such as recognizing the main purpose of an informative article. Each year, more than a million young people fail to graduate from high school and, even among those who enroll in college, nearly 40% require remedial coursework that saps their resources and slows their progress. These challenges reinforce persistent inequalities; the income achievement gap (difference in achievement between children from families in the top and bottom income deciles) is 30-40% larger for the children Citizen Schools serves today than for those born 25 years earlier. [1]

In middle school, young people begin to solidify the aspirations, habits, and relationships that will

## Narratives

steer them toward either educational success or alienation and dropout. The belief that one's desired career requires a college education, measured in grade eight, is a significant predictor of college completion, and student interest in STEM subjects at this age is associated with later education and career choices. [2, 3] On the other hand, research has found that 6th grade students who attended school less than 80% of the time, received a poor final behavior mark, or failed math or English had no more than a 25% chance of graduating from high school. "In high-poverty neighborhoods, in particular," writes leading researcher Robert Balfanz, "our research and school improvement work indicate that students' middle grades experiences have tremendous impact on the extent to which they will close achievement gaps, graduate from high school, and be prepared for college." [4]

In order to stay on track for success, it is critical that adolescents have access to relevant hands-on learning, inspiring role models, meaningful information about educational and career opportunities, and adequate time to practice their academic skills. Far too often, however, persistently struggling middle schools that serve high-need communities are ill-equipped to provide these experiences on their own. They lack an infrastructure for engaging volunteers and other community resources, time during a constrained school day, and staff with capacity to focus on family outreach and building a culture of achievement. As a partner to high-need schools, Citizen Schools helps to shift students' educational trajectories and prepare them for their futures as successful learners, workers, and citizens.

**NEEDS IN PARTNER COMMUNITIES:** Citizen Schools partners with struggling schools in high-need communities. Census data indicate that, compared to national rates, the 12 cities served by Citizen Schools in 2013-14 have higher average poverty (19.4% vs. 14.9%), lower proportions of high school graduates (78% vs. 86%), and much higher incidences of languages other than English spoken at home (44% vs. 21%). All of Citizen Schools' partner schools have a majority of low-income students and two-thirds of schools serve 75% or more low-income students. Approximately one third are identified as SIG, priority, or focus schools. On average, less than 40% of 6th grade students at Citizen Schools' partner schools met state standards for proficiency in math before the program launched.

**SOURCES:** [1] Reardon, Sean F. 2011. "The Widening Academic Achievement Gap between the Rich and the Poor." In *Whither Opportunity: Rising Inequality, Schools, and Children's Life Chances*. [2] Bedsworth, William, Susan Colby, and Joe Doctor. 2006. *Reclaiming the American Dream*. Bridgespan Group, Inc. [3] Tai, Robert H., et al. 2006. "Planning Early for Careers in Science." *Science* 312 (May 26): 1143-1144. [4] Balfanz, Robert. 2009. *Putting Middle Grades Students on the Graduation Path*.

## Narratives

### B. AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems

AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows are the heart and the muscle of Citizen Schools' expanded day partnerships. Among those who began their service with Citizen Schools this year (less than 15% of those who applied), the average undergraduate GPA was 3.35, 53% self-identified as members of a minority group, 40% speak a key language such as Spanish, and 35% are first-generation college students. This talent, diversity, and energy are essential to driving powerful results for students and schools.

The 240 members requested in this application would serve at high-need schools in California (East Palo Alto, Oakland, Redwood City, and San Jose), Illinois (Chicago), Massachusetts (Boston), North Carolina (Charlotte, Durham), New Jersey (Newark), New York (Brooklyn, Bronx, Harlem); and Texas (Houston). They would support Citizen Schools' ambitious plan for continued expansion to meet school and district demand, which calls for student enrollment to nearly double to 10,000 students annually by 2016-17.

Citizen Schools has consulted with relevant state service commissions about this application and is also applying for a continuation of its AmeriCorps state grant for 21 MSY through the Massachusetts Service Alliance in FY2014. The two projects are distinguished by the geographic location (school site) in which services are provided.

**THEORY OF CHANGE AND LOGIC MODEL:** As shown in the logic model submitted with this application, Citizen Schools partners with public schools in low-income communities to serve students in grades 6-8 with expanded day programs that operate at least 12 hours per week for at least 32 weeks during the academic year. About 80% of current students participate in Citizen Schools through an Expanded Learning Time (ELT) program in which the school day is formally lengthened for an entire grade or school, while others participate in optional after-school programs. As a "second shift" in schools, Citizen Schools' full-time Teaching Fellows (supported by AmeriCorps since 2002) take part in five key activities:

1. Mentor students and create a positive, college-oriented peer culture: Each AmeriCorps Teaching Fellow leads a team of 15-18 students through program activities for the entire year, building relationships and trust with each student. Teaching Fellows and students strive to recognize positive behavior, awarding "value stars" for leadership, teamwork, communication, perseverance, courage, and joy. They also emphasize connections between current effort and future opportunity in order to build college and career readiness. For example, students participate in visits to local universities,

## Narratives

where they meet with admissions and financial aid representatives, sample the dining halls, and sit in on classes. Back at school, Teaching Fellows help students understand what they can do, starting in middle school, to prepare for college.

2. Teach essential academic skills: Each Teaching Fellow delivers a daily lesson in either math or English Language Arts to their team, using curricula developed by Citizen Schools' National Program Department or selected in partnership with host schools to build academic proficiency. Teaching Fellows also oversee a block of supported homework time, ensuring that students receive support and complete their assignments. Teaching Fellows communicate regularly with classroom teachers to share information about student progress and coordinate instruction.

3. Recruit, train, and co-teach with volunteers: AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows partner with volunteers from local companies, universities, and the community to lead Citizen Schools' signature hands-on "apprenticeships." Apprenticeships in topics as diverse as robotics, marketing, and nutrition enable students to explore careers, develop 21st century skills, and demonstrate their mastery by sharing authentic products and presentations at a culminating public celebration of learning called a WOW!. Teaching Fellows work with volunteers to prepare their lessons, co-teach weekly sessions, connect apprenticeships to school-day learning, and design the final project.

4. Engage families: AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows serve as an important bridge between families and schools. They call each student's parents or guardians at least every two weeks to share updates and listen to parents' aspirations and concerns. They also welcome families to the school during program and special events such as potlucks, high school fairs, and WOW! events.

5. Support program and school priorities through a morning role: In addition to working directly with a team of students in the afternoons, each AmeriCorps Teaching Fellow takes on a morning role that supports program and school priorities and builds transferable skills. All morning roles are designed to ensure compliance with AmeriCorps regulations. Most members serve in a campus leadership position, such as Academic Program Lead (leads lesson preparation and coordination with teacher-led instruction) or Citizen Teacher Lead (coordinates volunteer recruitment and support). Some serve in state-level roles such as Regional Data Lead or Regional Civic Engagement Lead, while others serve functions designated by the partner school, such as facilitating morning push-in or pull-out academic interventions. A few members serve with aligned community organizations, such as the community education arm of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. In these cases, Citizen Schools executes a formal agreement with the partner organization to ensure effective daily supervision, consistent expectations, and full compliance.

## Narratives

Together, the core elements of Citizen Schools' program, implemented in close partnership with schools, are designed to deepen students' understanding of the link between effort in school, success in school, high school graduation, college attainment, and career opportunity; increase student engagement; develop 21st century skills; and increase academic proficiency. They reflect best practices in out of school time programming, hands-on learning, and school-community partnerships, and extensive evidence (highlights of which are provided in the following section) has demonstrated that the model is effective in increasing student engagement, achievement, and high school graduation.

EVIDENCE BASE: There is substantial evidence that the intervention described in this application will lead to the outcomes identified in the theory of change and is effective for the proposed population and community challenge.

Policy Studies Associates completed a study of Citizen Schools' program in 2010 that meets the standard for moderate evidence as defined in the Notice. It was a well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental (matched comparison group) study of Citizen Schools' voluntary after-school program. The program evaluated included the same core elements as those proposed in this application, including small-group academic support and apprenticeships. Large majorities of the students in the sample were low-income, from communities of color, and failing to meet academic proficiency standards. This study produced positive, statistically significant findings on several intended outcomes, including student attendance, achievement, high school selection, on-time promotion, state test performance, and high school graduation. The final report from the study is available at <http://www.policystudies.com/studies/?id=39>.

In addition, a national evaluation by Abt Associates is producing promising evidence that Citizen Schools' full-grade Expanded Learning Time (CS ELT) programs are increasing students' time for learning, participation in college and career-oriented activities, and academic achievement. The study launched in 2010 and is examining both implementation and impact relative to a set of matched comparison schools not adopting CS ELT. It has found that a significantly higher proportion of teachers in CS ELT schools reported that they were satisfied with the time available for students to pursue topics of interest to them than would be expected than in the absence of Citizen Schools ELT. In addition, students in CS ELT schools reported significantly higher levels of participation in several future-oriented activities, including those to learn about college and careers. Abt also found that, based on data from two years of implementation, there were marginally significant positive effects on state assessment scores equivalent to an additional five months of learning in ELA and three months of learning in math each year relative to what would be expected in the absence of Citizen Schools ELT.

## Narratives

The study's first public report will be released by March 2014 and will be available at [www.citizenschools.org](http://www.citizenschools.org). A draft of the report is submitted by email with this application.

The stories of individual schools illustrate the transformative potential of expanded day partnerships powered by AmeriCorps members. Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School was a Level 4 turnaround school and considered the worst-performing in Boston when it launched a turnaround effort in 2010 and engaged Citizen Schools to serve all 6th and 7th grade students. Citizen Schools' Teaching Fellows delivered high-quality programs, sharing data and coordinating instruction with school-day teachers and supporting dozens of apprenticeships annually, including mock trials, solar car design, and rugby. Over the past three years, student proficiency at Orchard Gardens has increased dramatically (from 19% to 62% in 7th grade ELA and from 12% to 29% in 7th grade math), middle grades students ranked first statewide in growth, and the school's performance earned a rare leap from Level 4 to Level 1 status. Principal Andrew Bott has called Citizen Schools "my secret weapon in my middle grades" -- and, at his request, Citizen Schools now serves more than 300 Orchard Gardens students in grades five through eight.

### C. Member Training

Citizen Schools' AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows receive more than 270 hours of training annually. Training begins in July with an intensive, eight-day Summer Institute designed by Citizen Schools' National Program Department that addresses subjects including building a culture of achievement; promoting grade gains; student engagement; behavior management; college trips and community explorations; supporting volunteers; culturally competent teaching; family engagement; and CPR and first aid. In August, members participate in at least two weeks of in-depth training with those serving in the same state as well as in site-based training that includes orientation by their Campus Director and the school leadership to the school and neighborhood.

Throughout the year, additional training is provided at half-day or day-long in-service sessions (which occur at least monthly), regional conferences, campus team meetings, and through direct supervision and coaching. Recent training topics include differentiated instruction, work-life balance and career opportunities, and achieving a strong finish to the year. Many AmeriCorps members also participate in trainings offered to school staff and in other optional training and professional development opportunities, including programs that allow them to earn their teaching credentials while serving with Citizen Schools.

Citizen Schools strives to ensure that members are aware of regulations regarding prohibited

## Narratives

activities. Prior to Summer Institute, all members receive a Teaching Fellow Handbook that addresses this topic, along with other AmeriCorps policies and procedures. New members are required to complete a series of onboarding activities (videos and readings with accompanying exit tickets) that include information about prohibited activities. Summer Institute training includes sessions focused on the history of national service and AmeriCorps, compliance with AmeriCorps regulations, and prohibited activities. National staff members with expertise in AmeriCorps issues lead an "All About AmeriCorps" orientation that allows members to ask questions directly of the national grant management team and highlights issues that may require additional clarification or reinforcement during the year. Members are also given a "Who to Call?" card with a list of staff members to contact if they have questions about AmeriCorps and/or prohibited activities. Members' supervisors (and the supervisors' supervisors) also receive extensive training on AmeriCorps and prohibited activities.

### D. Member Supervision

The supervision of AmeriCorps members is designed to offer consistent, meaningful support for Teaching Fellows during their service as well as to develop transferable skills. Campus Directors and Deputy Campus Directors at each school site provide direct daily supervision of AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows. Campus Directors are experienced educators (often former teachers or graduates of the Teaching Fellowship) and receive training on effective supervision practices during Summer Institute, at a mid-year conference, and in regional in-service trainings. They also receive training on topics related to AmeriCorps, including prohibited activities. In addition to biweekly individual meetings, Campus Directors evaluate each Teaching Fellow's effectiveness five times per year using a detailed Instructional Rubric and share their feedback in coaching sessions. After the third and fifth rounds, Campus Directors give Teaching Fellows formal performance evaluations. Citizen Schools also conducts semiannual surveys that solicit members' feedback on the quality of training, supervision, and support they have received. Members' successes are celebrated regularly, including at campus and statewide staff meetings, with annual awards, and at an end-of-term graduation. Members are also offered resources, including workshops, career panels, a newsletter, and an online job bank, that reinforce their identification to the AmeriCorps community and help to prepare them for success after their term of service.

Campus Directors are supervised by a Managing Director of Program in each state, who has primary responsibility for managing program quality and implementing orientation, training, and supervision procedures for AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows. Managing Directors of Program, with the

## Narratives

National Program Department, solicit feedback from Fellows about their experiences and lead the ongoing improvement of the Fellowship experience through adjustments to recruitment, training, and support.

### E. Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification

All of Citizen Schools' current Teaching Fellows currently serve with support from AmeriCorps, and the organization is exceptionally proud of this affiliation, which is noted prominently in recruitment materials and during applicant interviews. Citizen Schools features the AmeriCorps logo on its website ([www.citizenschools.org](http://www.citizenschools.org)); stationery; recruitment materials; site and office signage; and publications, including newsletters and event programs. Members learn about the history of national service and AmeriCorps during their training and are encouraged to reflect on their AmeriCorps service by posting to Citizen Schools' InspirED blog (<http://www.citizenschools.org/blog/>) and in an exit reflection at the conclusion of their service. Members see the AmeriCorps brand at their school sites and state offices, wear the AmeriCorps logo daily on their branded laptop bags, and mark key milestones such as AmeriCorps Week with special blog posts, alumni panels, and appreciation events. In celebration of AmeriCorps' 20th anniversary, Citizen Schools is using social media to recognize one current or former Teaching Fellow each week during the education-themed month. Each year, Teaching Fellows honor their peers with the "You Inspire Me" award, given to the AmeriCorps member who has best demonstrated the spirit of service. Chief Financial and Analytical Officer Kait Rogers is accountable for ensuring strong AmeriCorps identification and works with Citizen Schools' Marketing Department as well as with Operations Managers in each state to create templates and ensure that appropriate branding guidelines are followed.

## Organizational Capability

### A. Organizational Background and Staffing

**ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY:** Citizen Schools is a 501(c)3 organization and a national leader in expanded learning, volunteer engagement, and education reform. In 2013-14, Citizen Schools has a national budget of \$32 million and employs approximately 230 FTE. Citizen Schools has operated after-school and expanded day programs in more than 20 school districts since its founding in Boston in 1995 and currently enrolls nearly 5,000 students in seven states. Citizen Schools has a track record of successful fundraising and effective financial management, has consistently achieved an operating surplus, and has always had a clean audit report.

Citizen Schools' national Board of Directors sets annual goals, develops long-term strategy, monitors

## **Narratives**

program quality, and ensures financial discipline, working closely with Citizen Schools' Executive Team and Leadership Team. As reflected in the organizational chart submitted by email, Citizen Schools' national office provides overall leadership and support in program design, curriculum, evaluation, volunteer recruitment strategy, human resources, and fundraising. Financial management is centralized in the national office. State offices are responsible for developing school and district partnerships, recruiting and training volunteers, and raising local funds.

**EXPERIENCE ADMINISTERING FEDERAL FUNDS:** Citizen Schools has administered AmeriCorps grants continuously since 2002 (including National Direct/Fixed Amount, Education Award Program, and state grants). Over the past five years, Citizen Schools has received AmeriCorps grants to enroll 1,071 members, all of whom have served full-time as AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows at our after-school and extended day program sites. During its decade as an AmeriCorps grantee, Citizen Schools has mobilized more than 55,000 volunteers who have provided more than one million hours of service. In addition to AmeriCorps grants, Citizen Schools has successfully administered grants from the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education as well as many state and local public grants.

**AMERICORPS PROGRAM MANAGEMENT:** Over more than a decade as an AmeriCorps grantee, Citizen Schools has developed the programmatic, administrative, and financial management systems necessary to assure effective performance, full compliance, and timely reporting across multiple sites. Chief Financial and Administrative Officer Kait Rogers holds lead responsibility for Citizen Schools' AmeriCorps programs and works with an experienced team to maintain compliance and address any potential issues with our program officers. Her track record of successful management includes few to no adjustments and no material/control deficiencies in annual independent audits since she joined Citizen Schools in 2008. Since early 2012, Ms. Rogers has stewarded a cross-departmental AmeriCorps Working Group that includes representatives involved in member recruitment, member training and support, program implementation, human resources, finance, and grant applications and reporting. This group meets at least monthly to share updates, identify any potential concerns, and coordinate efforts across the organization.

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT:** Citizen Schools builds deep community partnerships, with a focus on schools, school districts, and organizations that provide volunteers for its expanded day programs. Citizen Schools' school and district partners directly contribute an average of \$1,200 per student annually in support of the program, a remarkable investment at a time when many face significant budgetary constraints. The extraordinary commitment of our community partners and their

## Narratives

appreciation for the essential role of AmeriCorps are documented in the letters submitted by email in support of this application.

### B. Compliance and Accountability

As an AmeriCorps grantee since 2002, Citizen Schools has developed and maintains robust structures, policies, and trainings designed to improve member management and monitoring as well as prevent, detect, and address potential compliance issues. Compliance and accountability are overseen by Kait Rogers, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer, who ensures that Citizen Schools:

(A) Prevents compliance issues: In order to minimize the risk of noncompliance, Citizen Schools has explicitly designed Teaching Fellow terms of service and responsibilities to focus on students and school partnerships and avoid prohibited activities. As detailed in the Member Training section above, Citizen Schools provides information about AmeriCorps rules and regulations to members, managers, and school partners. Staff knowledge of rules and regulations is maintained primarily through Citizen Schools' AmeriCorps Working Group, which reviews current practice against the monitoring and compliance tools provided by CNCS in order to ensure that appropriate trainings, resources, and processes are in place. Members and supervisors are offered additional reminders about prohibited activities at times when the risk of noncompliance might be heightened (e.g., reminders about prohibited political activities during election seasons). Citizen Schools encourages open communication between members to their supervisors and has designated an office staff member in each state to serve as liaison between members and national staff and to support members if questions arise.

(B) Monitors sites for compliance: Citizen Schools monitors sites for compliance through its member and site supervision infrastructure, including one-to-one check-ins for each member with their supervising Campus Director, meetings of Campus Directors and Managing Directors of Program, and site visits by Managing Directors of Program and other staff familiar with AmeriCorps regulations. Citizen Schools also implements national processes to ensure compliance. For example, Citizen Schools' Human Resource Department conducts a yearly file audit to ensure each member file has all of the required documents. Timesheets are monitored on a monthly basis to ensure that timesheets are complete and hours are correctly coded. The AmeriCorps Working Group meets monthly and shares updates about site performance and compliance.

(C) Holds itself accountable for instances of risk or noncompliance: If a compliance risk or a

## Narratives

noncompliance issue is identified, Ms. Rogers will consult with the affected member(s), staff, and (if appropriate) AmeriCorps Program Officer in order to identify an appropriate response given the nature of the noncompliance or potential noncompliance and to establish a process for ensuring that the response is implemented and that future issues will be prevented.

### C. Past Performance

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:** Over the last three years, Citizen Schools has served more students and built a portfolio of strong evidence of impact, but has had a mixed record of achieving its AmeriCorps performance measure targets. In 2010-11, Citizen Schools met or exceeded nine of 11 targets, including those for student attendance, program completion, and student grades. Since adopting a narrower set of National Performance Measures in 2011-12, Citizen Schools has fallen short of targets in program enrollment, program completion, and improved academic performance. However, it is important to note that this underperformance in the past two years was driven almost exclusively by enrollment that -- while increasing each year -- fell short of our aggressive targets. Because this reduced the number of students eligible to meet other goals, Citizen Schools missed other targets despite increasing its rates of program completion and improved academic performance. In fact, of students who enrolled, the percentage completing the program has increased each year and, of students who completed the program, larger percentages demonstrated improved academic performance than projected. Since 2006, Citizen Schools has increased enrollment by an average of 20% annually, increased the number of students served per school from 66 to more than 150, and decreased its cost per student while maintaining or increasing program quality. Citizen Schools is hopeful that the Corporation will consider the expansion of the program, its effectiveness in addressing community needs as reflected in rigorous evaluations, its alignment with the Corporation's priorities, and the ambition reflected in our past performance measure targets as it evaluates this application.

**COMPLIANCE:** During the last full year of program operation (2012-13), Citizen Schools worked with CNCS to address areas of weakness or risk with respect to compliance. Citizen Schools worked throughout the year to ensure compliance with background check regulations, submitting Alternate Search Protocols (state and FBI checks) for states in which the organization faced compliance issues and ensuring that any member whose background check was not completed was accompanied by a cleared colleague when working with students. Citizen Schools also addressed a small number of issues raised by individual members. A report that members were being required to use their personal cell phones was addressed through the clarification and re-distribution of an existing policy. A report

## Narratives

that members were being required to participate in fundraising by accompanying students to the organization's annual gala was addressed by clarifying members' non-fundraising role at the event and planning for revised messaging related to this event and similar events that explains how members can participate while maintaining compliance with AmeriCorps regulations and ensures that members have the opportunity to opt out.

**ENROLLMENT:** Citizen Schools enrolled 104.7% of slots received in the most recently completed program year (2012-13). Citizen Schools' pool of applicants consistently exceeds the number of member slots available, so the organization uses a waitlist to ensure that all slots are filled/refilled.

**RETENTION:** Citizen Schools retained 85.3% of members in the most recently completed program year (2012-13). Members leave for a variety of reasons. Some find that they are unprepared, unwilling, or unable to serve in the challenging environment of a struggling urban school and meet the expectations of their role; some are dissatisfied with their compensation; and others leave for personal reasons, such as family, health, or location constraints.

Citizen Schools is taking several steps to increase retention to at least 90%. First, we are now collecting more detailed information about reasons for and trends in member departure that can be used to inform selection, placement, member responsibilities, and training. For example, we noticed that several members left early in their second year with Citizen Schools and are encouraging managers to have candid conversations with members in order to ensure that they are fully committed to complete an additional year of service before they re-enroll. Second, our Talent Acquisition Team is employing more sophisticated analysis of traits linked to success in the Fellowship in order to improve recruitment and selection, which in turn is expected to increase member effectiveness and retention. Relatedly, through updated materials and protocols, we continue to help potential members develop a realistic understanding of their role and the environment in which they will serve before they enroll, which will increase their likelihood of having a positive experience and completing their term of service.

### D. Continuous Improvement

A commitment to continuous improvement is deeply integrated into Citizen Schools' culture. Designated campus, state, and national staff are responsible for collecting and using data including apprenticeship quality, Teaching Fellow instructional proficiency, student attendance, grades, test scores, and 21st century skills. Citizen Schools also solicits feedback from internal and external stakeholders through semi-annual surveys of students, families, volunteers, partner school teachers,

## Narratives

partner school principals, and Citizen Schools. Citizen Schools' Salesforce.com program database supports sophisticated real-time reporting and analysis and formal reports are issued twice annually. Citizen Schools uses data to inform continuous improvement in multiple ways, including through individual coaching; in meetings of campus, state, and/or national staff teams; and at trainings and retreats. Citizen Schools has been invited to present on its use of data to AmeriCorps grantees on several occasions, including most recently at the September 2013 Grantee Symposium and Research Summit.

### **Budget/Cost Effectiveness**

#### A. Cost Effectiveness

**COST PER MSY:** With this application, Citizen Schools requests a fixed-amount grant with a Corporation cost per MSY of \$12,500. All 240 slots requested are for full-time members. This amount is a 3.8% decrease in Corporation cost per MSY relative to the previous grant cycle.

**A COST-EFFECTIVE APPROACH:** Citizen Schools' program is a cost-effective approach for addressing the community needs identified in this application. At a cost to AmeriCorps of approximately \$530 per student, Citizen Schools Teaching Fellows will lead a program that, as described above, is associated with achievement gains equivalent to three months of learning in math and five months in ELA. A 2012 analysis by Bain & Company found that, when both quality and cost are considered, Citizen Schools compares favorably to alternative expanded day models (other community-based organizations, charter schools, and traditional schools that extend teacher hours). It is this high return on investment that informed a February 2013 Boston Globe editorial arguing that, while the district could not afford to pay teachers to work additional hours at their contractual rate, nonprofit partners like "Citizen Schools are showing they can fill the afterschool hours with quality instruction and programs at a fraction of the cost. This may be the best answer we have for extending school days in [resource] poor school districts."

**HOW CITIZEN SCHOOLS WILL RAISE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:** Citizen Schools will raise significant additional resources to manage and operate the AmeriCorps program. Citizen Schools has the capacity to raise these resources, including several national staff and at least one staff member in each state office dedicated to fundraising. Citizen Schools receives funding from a diverse array of corporations, foundations, and individuals as well as other public sources and has a strong track record of securing resources, including two recent growth capital campaigns (\$30.3MM for FY07-11 and \$18MM for FY11-14). Citizen Schools has always significantly exceeded match requirements for its AmeriCorps grants. Citizen Schools has already secured approximately \$4.2 MM to support its

## Narratives

program in 2014-15 and is on track to meet its revenue targets based on historical performance.

### B. Budget Adequacy

Citizen Schools has budgeted a total of \$10,230,900 million to operate the program, including a fixed amount of \$3,000,000 (240 MSY at \$12,500 per MSY) from CNCS. The structure of the project budget is similar to Citizen Schools' AmeriCorps project budgets over the past several years. It includes all required costs (such as background checks and travel to technical assistance meetings) and is sufficient to recruit, supervise, and support AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows to serve in high-quality expanded day programs. Citizen Schools will continue to provide a living allowance that is close to the maximum permitted as well as extensive benefits, including health insurance with no monthly premium. In addition to direct member-related costs, the budget includes a portion of the time for staff members who implement the AmeriCorps program, including the Campus Directors at each school site, key state-level personnel (Managing Director of Program, Executive Director, Operations Manager, Director of Civic Engagement), and key members of the national staff (Chief Financial and Administrative Officer, Chief Program Officer, Chief of Research and Evaluation, Recruitment Manager, and Admissions Manager). It also includes expenses related to monitoring visits, volunteer recruitment, member transportation, program supplies, member recruitment materials, CPR and first aid training, and a portion of costs related to the ongoing independent evaluation of Citizen Schools' programs.

### Evaluation Summary or Plan

#### EVALUATION REPORT

Abt Associates has been conducting a national evaluation of Citizen Schools' programs since 2010. The confidential draft of an interim report from that study ("Evaluation of Citizen Schools' Expanded Learning Time Model: Year 3 Interim Report") is submitted by email with this application. This draft is currently under internal review by Abt Associates and Citizen Schools and will be publicly released in April 2014.

#### EVALUATION PLAN

The Abt Associates evaluation is ongoing and will fulfill the evaluation requirements of this grant.

PROGRAM: AmeriCorps members will implement an extended learning program for students in the middle grades (generally grades 6-8). As part of a team that also includes paid staff and volunteers, they will work alongside school faculty at public school sites, leading students through a series of

## Narratives

afternoon activities as part of a longer school day. The program, described in detail in the "AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems" section, consists of two primary program elements: academic support and apprenticeships. In addition, members work with their "team" of 15-18 students to build a positive, college-oriented culture. The theory of change for the program (also summarized in the logic model submitted by email with the application) anticipates that this extended learning program will produce (1) increases in student 21st century skills, (2) increased student engagement in school, and (3) increased academic performance. The Abt Associates evaluation will examine both academic and non-academic outcomes for students as well as selected outcomes for teachers.

**PROGRAM EVALUATION DESIGN:** The Citizen Schools ELT Evaluation conducted by Abt Associates examines how Citizen Schools ELT programming is being implemented across sites nationally, and assesses whether there are academic, behavioral, and aspirational impacts of Citizen Schools ELT participation on key outcomes. It addresses four research questions:

1. How successfully are schools implementing and integrating expanded learning opportunities into their school days?
2. What are the differences between Citizen Schools ELT and Matched Comparison (MC) schools on key teacher-level outcomes (e.g., perceptions of school leadership and family engagement, satisfaction with amount of time, collaboration amongst faculty and staff across the entire school day, teachers' endorsement and support of Citizen Schools ELT staff/integration of afterschool programs into the school)?
3. What are the differences between Citizen Schools ELT and MC schools on key student-level outcomes (e.g., participation of in and out-of-school activities, peer and teacher interactions, satisfaction, engagement, and aspirations)?
4. What are the differences between Citizen Schools ELT and MC schools on student achievement (e.g., on English/Language Arts (ELA) and math achievement test scores, for each participating grade level and as implementation matures over time)?

The implementation component of the study incorporates surveys, interviews, and site visits to assess how schools integrate Citizen Schools ELT into their school days, organizationally and instructionally. The data on implementation purposefully draw from multiple sources over different points in time to (1) ensure representation from the various stakeholders engaged in Citizen Schools ELT and (2) attempt to corroborate perspectives across stakeholder groups. Cross-sectional survey analyses assess the attitudinal and behavioral outcomes of teachers and students relative to matched

## Narratives

comparison respondents. The study also uses data from these sources to assess the level of implementation more systematically in an implementation index.

The impact component of the study uses a comparative interrupted time series type of quasi-experimental (QED) research design, one of the strongest alternatives to a random control trial (RCT), to assess whether there are systematic differences in academic achievement for students in Citizen Schools ELT schools, compared to the same outcomes for their counterparts attending similar schools without Citizen Schools ELT.

**DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES:** As noted above, the data collected for the implementation component of the study will include surveys (students and teachers at CS ELT and match schools; Citizen Schools AmeriCorps members and staff at CS ELT schools), principal interviews (CS ELT and match schools), and site visits (CS ELT schools). Site visits took or will take place in years 1 and 3 of the study, principal interviews in years 2-5, student surveys in years 2 and 3, teacher surveys in years 2-5, and Citizen Schools staff surveys in years 2-5. In addition to surveys used in the evaluation of non-academic outcomes, the study will also use extant data on the state test scores of students at CS ELT and matched comparison schools to assess academic outcomes. All data are collected on an annual basis by Abt, which is also responsible for all data analysis.

For the implementation component of the study, notes from site visits and interviews were synthesized, cleaned, standardized, and analyzed using qualitative analysis software (NVivo 9). The Abt team constructed coding categories based on emerging cross-site themes. Survey data are analyzed via simple descriptive statistics (sample means, standard deviations, and minimum and maximum value) for continuous measures and one (and two-way where appropriate) frequency tabulations for categorical measures. Where appropriate, the descriptive measures of implementation can also be used to model variation in impacts as a function of variation in implementation.

The impact component of the study employs a comparative short interrupted time series design, the most rigorous approach possible given programmatic constraints. This design uses a comparison group that consists of non-ELT schools deemed similar to CS ELT schools in order to account for external changes (such as policy changes). Four matches are identified for each CS ELT site using a matching process that utilized school-level averages of teacher and student characteristics, including pre-ELT test scores, to minimize the differences between the ELT and comparison schools. The design also uses "pre-ELT" data from multiple student cohorts who were not exposed to the ELT initiative but were in the same grades as those who were exposed, which allows the study team to account for persistent differences between CS ELT and matched comparison schools that were not fully mitigated

## Narratives

by the matching process.

The study sample will include five cohorts of CS ELT schools (an estimated 34 schools in all) and matched comparison sites.

USE OF EVALUATION RESULTS: Citizen Schools will use the evaluation results to assess the consistency of program implementation, inform program improvement, improve partnership selection, guide monitoring discussions with partners, and demonstrate impact to stakeholders. Interim results have already informed consideration of possible program improvements.

### Amendment Justification

N/A

### Clarification Summary

Thank you for the opportunity to provide clarification of our application to the Corporation for National and Community Service. Below are our responses to the clarification items included in the clarification letter dated April 4, 2014. Revisions have been made in other sections of the application as noted below.

a. Please respond to the following items in the clarification summary field of the narrative and in the budget narrative as is appropriate:

1. Please provide additional detail regarding the sources of the funds raised to date to support the program. In particular, please clarify what portion of those funds comes from partnering schools and school districts, and break this figure down to indicate the average financial contribution per school.

Citizen Schools raises funds in support of its program from diverse public and private (corporate, foundation, and individual) sources. In total, public funds (including AmeriCorps funding) will account for 31% of Citizen Schools revenue in the current year. A significant portion of this revenue is contributed by Citizen Schools' partner schools and districts. In the current year, Citizen Schools will raise \$5.5MM in such local public funds, which averages to more than \$170,000 per site and \$1,100 per student.

b. Programmatic clarification items: Please respond in the eGrants narrative field labeled "Clarification Summary"

## Narratives

1. In the Executive Summary, please break out the amount of public funds vs. private funds in the total leveraged funds presented (\$7,110,900).

This information has been updated in the Executive Summary.

2. Please describe the following member activities and explain how they contribute to meeting the identified community needs and align with the program's theory of change: serving as Regional Data Lead, serving Regional Civic Engagement Lead, and serving in the community education arm of the Federal Reserve Bank in Boston.

In addition to leading a team of students through program activities in the afternoon, each AmeriCorps Teaching Fellow plays an additional role to support the Citizen Schools program. As noted in Citizen Schools' application narrative, many of these "partnerships" are "campus lead" roles in which Fellows are responsible for a specific function at the site. Some play similar roles across multiple sites in the same state. For example, a Regional Data Lead works with Campus Data Leads at each site to ensure that student data is entered into the program database correctly and promptly and that data are used to inform program activities (e.g., identifying students who are struggling in specific academic subjects). A Regional Civic Engagement Lead works with Campus Citizen Teacher Leads at each site to ensure that a sufficient number of apprenticeship volunteers are recruited, that they receive training, and that AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows and other staff are prepared to effectively support volunteers throughout the semester. Typically, such "regional lead" roles are filled by Fellows who served in the parallel campus-level role during their first year and who can support sites and further advance their skills by providing support across sites. A few AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows serve in off-site partnerships in support of Citizen Schools' volunteer engagement and apprenticeship efforts. For example, for several years, one Fellow in Boston served with community education arm of the Federal Reserve Bank to advance opportunities for financial education within Citizen Schools' program (e.g., by developing a curriculum related to saving for college and by planning field trips for Citizen Schools students to the Federal Reserve). All Teaching Fellow partnership roles directly support program implementation and/or community and volunteer engagement and are directly aligned with the program's theory of change.

## Narratives

3. Please describe in greater detail how students are selected to participate in the extended day program. If all students in a particular school or grade level will participate, please explain how instruction and activities will be differentiated to meet the needs of both struggling students and their more proficient classmates.

Citizen Schools currently operates both full-grade extended day (ELT) and optional afterschool (OST) partnerships. Most sites and students (24/32 sites and more than 80% of students in 2013-14) participate in ELT programs. In these cases, all students in served grades are expected to participate in Citizen Schools' program as part of the formal school day. At OST sites, Citizen Schools provides students and families with information about the program and they complete an enrollment form in order to participate. Citizen Schools asks students to commit to consistent participation in the program but does not apply academic or income-based selection criteria.

Citizen Schools is committed to effectively serving a full range of students at our partner schools. In academically focused components of the program, AmeriCorps members and staff use data from exit tickets, interim assessments, consultations with teachers, parent phone calls, and "grades and goals" conversations with students in order to understand students' strengths and areas of challenge. During the program's supported homework time (AIM), each student receives individual help with his or her assignments. During academic lessons (Academic League), AmeriCorps members use a variety of methods to differentiate instruction. For example, students may be placed in groups based on their needs (for example, several students who struggled with the same standard on an interim assessment might be grouped together) and the AmeriCorps member will re-teach a key concept or coach students as they practice a specific skill -- or, for more proficient students, introduce more advanced activities. Students are then re-grouped as their needs change. In other cases, Citizen Schools employs a blended learning model and students use online learning platforms that are adaptive to their performance. At all sites, AmeriCorps members and campus staff work closely with teachers and instructional coaches at partner schools to ensure appropriate differentiation. The apprenticeship component of the program can offer a powerful opportunity for students who may struggle in traditional classrooms to excel, and Citizen Schools strives for the greatest possible degree of inclusiveness in apprenticeships. As Citizen Schools' National Program Department engages in an ongoing effort to strengthen the apprenticeship curricula used by volunteers, AmeriCorps members,

## Narratives

and staff, additional guidance for differentiating instruction by skill level and for students with special needs is being incorporated.

4. Please describe how the proposed tutoring curriculum and the proposed pre-service and in-service tutor training is research-based and consistent with the instructional content of the local education agency and with State academic content standards, as required by 45 CFR 2522.940. Please also describe how members that engage in tutoring will meet minimum qualification requirements to serve as tutors as required by 45 CFR 2522.910 - .940.

While Citizen Schools does not consider tutoring the primary focus of members' service activities, it does meet all of the relevant regulatory requirements for tutoring programs. The proposed tutoring curriculum is research-based and consistent with the instructional content of the local education agency and state academic content standards. Because the goal of Citizen Schools' academic support is to advance student learning in alignment with school instructional goals, curricula for the Academic League component of the program are selected jointly with school leaders. They may be (1) Citizen Schools-developed curricula, (2) curricula used during the school day, or (3) external curricula approved by Citizen Schools' Managing Director of Program in the relevant region as well as by the school. In each case, curricula are aligned with district and school instructional content and address relevant state academic content standards.

All members are required to have a bachelor's degree and complete extensive pre-service and in-service specialized training (including an eight-day Summer Institute and at least two weeks of regional and site-based training before beginning their service with students and monthly regional in-service trainings), exceeding the minimum qualification requirements to serve as tutors required by 45 CFR 2522.910 - .940.

5. Please explain the distinction between the roles of the AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows and the Teaching Associates also included in the Service Location organizational chart. Please also describe the differences, if any, in the qualifications and training of the Deputy Campus Directors as compared to the Campus Directors.

## Narratives

AMERICORPS TEACHING FELLOWS AND TEACHING ASSOCIATES: Citizen Schools AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows are full-time members who commit to a holistic approach to positively affecting the futures of middle school students in low-income communities across the country. Their commitment of two years of service embeds them within a school community, engaging them in applying their passion and perseverance across Citizen Schools' entire expanded day program by working directly with students, families, school professionals, and community volunteers. Their work falls into three categories that illustrate the full AmeriCorps experience: Teach, Serve, and Grow.

1. Teach: Teaching Fellows lead a classroom of students during the extended day, bringing hands-on learning and real-world application to academic subjects.
2. Serve: Teaching Fellows work to solidify networks in communities they serve in order to ensure students are present, supported, and working toward achieving their goals.
3. Grow: Teaching Fellows work each day with close supervision and management focused on targeted coaching, feedback and development. Through their two years, they develop transferable skills that position them for their next career opportunity.

In contrast, the Teaching Associate role is one of a finite set of part-time positions that are categorized by Citizen Schools as "school support" roles. Staff in these roles work part-time and contribute to program delivery through a limited, specific set of assigned responsibilities such as working to implement a disciplinary system as a "Step-Up Coordinator," working to maintain a behavior management system as a "Behavior Specialist," overseeing logistics and transition times for students as an "Operations Specialist," or instructing a specific set of students as a "Teaching Associate."

Citizen Schools' comprehensive approach to delivering resources to improve schools is only possible through the deep commitment and impact of our AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows. School support roles, such as the Teaching Associate, provide additional targeted capacity on a part-time basis to ensure that Teaching Fellows can make the biggest impact possible.

CAMPUS DIRECTORS AND DEPUTY CAMPUS DIRECTORS: The Campus Director is the senior leader at each site. Qualifications for the Campus Director role include a bachelor's degree (master's degree preferred); at least four years of professional, post-undergraduate experience; and at least two years of experience leading a K-12 classroom. Deputy Campus Directors provide additional support

## Narratives

and supervision at Citizen Schools' larger campuses. Qualifications for the Deputy Campus Director role include a bachelor's degree, at least two years of professional, post-undergraduate experience; and at least two years of experience working with students, with teaching experience preferred.

Both Campus Directors and Deputy Campus Directors receive extensive training, including in effective supervision of AmeriCorps members. Although most training is delivered to Campus Directors and Deputy Campus Directors together, Citizen Schools' national Summer Institute offers a small number of differentiated sessions for Deputy Campus Directors (Managing Up), Campus Directors who supervise Deputy Campus Directors (Managing your Deputy Campus Director), and Campus Directors who do not supervise Deputy Campus Directors (Managing your Campus Schedule).

6. Please enter the full text of your evaluation plan into the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in eGrants.

The full text of our evaluation plan has been entered into the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in eGrants.

7. For ED2, please specify the level of attendance throughout the school year (i.e., during the time between the Enrollment Snapshot Day and the last three weeks of the program) that will be required in order for a student to be counted under this measure. Please also describe how the students counted under this measure meet the definition of economically disadvantaged as specifically defined in the performance measure instructions for ED2.

No specific level of program attendance is required between Enrollment Snapshot Day in the fall and the last three weeks of the program in the spring in order for a student to be counted as completing the program under ED2. This is consistent with the measure that Citizen Schools has reported to the Corporation in the past, as well as with an internal metric in longtime use by Citizen Schools. It does not include an attendance threshold because students who meet these requirements for program completion have consistently high attendance rates in Citizen Schools' program (92% in 2013-14); therefore, adding an attendance threshold would make measurement more complex without

## Narratives

significantly improving the quality of the measure.

Consistent with its mission to close opportunity and achievement gaps for disadvantaged students, Citizen Schools partners with schools that serve a low-income population. All of Citizen Schools' current partner schools serve a majority of economically disadvantaged students; consequently, all students counted under this measure meet the definition of economically disadvantaged as defined in the performance measure instructions for ED2.

8. Please explain whether any of the service activities or trainings in which AmeriCorps members will engage will duplicate activities/courses that are required by academic courses, internships, or degree programs, including teacher certification programs.

As Citizen Schools noted in its application, some Teaching Fellows will have the opportunity to apply for and participate in programs to earn their teaching certification while serving as AmeriCorps members. Based on the high level of interest in teaching careers demonstrated by AmeriCorps members (~90% of whom indicated interest in such programs when applying to join the Fellowship in fall 2014), Citizen Schools plans to pilot a teaching residency program open to AmeriCorps members serving as Teaching Fellows and hopes to further develop such opportunities in the future with the Corporation's support. As planned, the residency will be specifically designed for Citizen Schools AmeriCorps Teaching Fellows, who will participate in a program of coursework, coaching, mentorship, and teaching practice co-developed by Citizen Schools and selected credentialing partners (including Relay Graduate School of Education and the University of Massachusetts - Boston), with consulting support from Urban Teacher Residency United, a national leader in residency development. Because the residency will be designed to take advantage of the unique teacher development opportunity offered by the Teaching Fellow role, some requirements will deliberately overlap with AmeriCorps member activities. (For example, members' experience in working with students during the extended day program will count toward their teaching requirements for the residency program.) Members' primary commitment will continue to be their service as Citizen Schools Teaching Fellows, and participation in the teaching residency will be an optional, additional professional development opportunity for Fellows hoping to pursue careers in teaching after completing their AmeriCorps service.

## Narratives

As Citizen Schools continues to develop opportunities for its AmeriCorps members to build skills and advance toward careers, including by earning their teaching certification, it welcomes guidance from the Corporation and will strive for compliance and alignment.

9. Based on a review of your cost effectiveness section, it has been determined that your funding request did not make a compelling case for the proposed cost per MSY. Please consider decreasing your overall cost per MSY by revising the CNCS share of the proposed program budget or explaining why the proposed program is cost effective in terms other than what exists in the original application.

Citizen Schools strongly believes that its program offers a cost-effective approach to addressing community needs as well as the Corporation's Education priority area, and that its substantial positive impact on the outcomes of disadvantaged students (including an estimated 3-5 months of additional learning in ELA and math each year -- a full year of additional learning across grades 6-8 -- and a 20% increase in on-time high school graduation rates, based on external evaluations) make it a more cost-effective approach than alternatives. A recently completed analysis found that the estimated return on investment from Citizen Schools' program is 11.1x -- that is, for every dollar invested, \$11.10 is returned to participants in the form of higher earnings.

In addition to generating impact for high-need communities, Citizen Schools operates its AmeriCorps program efficiently and has consistently increased the private and other public funding leveraged in support of its program as its student enrollment and revenue have grown each year. (Enrollment has increased by more than 40% since 2011-12, the first year of Citizen Schools' concluding AmeriCorps grant.) Membership in the AmeriCorps community is a critical source of value for Citizen Schools' partner schools, districts, and private funders.

To reaffirm its commitment to even greater cost-effectiveness, Citizen Schools is revising its request by reducing the requested amount per MSY to \$12,500 per member (a 3.8% decrease), for a total request of \$3,000,000. Citizen Schools has revised its program budget and narrative to reflect this change.

## Narratives

10. Grant Start Date and Member Enrollment Period: While we will prioritize early start dates in award processing, the earliest possible start date we can consider is 06/01/2013. It typically takes new AmeriCorps programs at least one to two months of preparation to be ready to enroll members. It is advisable that new programs select a member enrollment period starting August 1st at the earliest. Please review your desired grant award start date and member enrollment period start date in the Applicant Info section of your application. Please make any corrections necessary. In the Clarification narrative field, please enter a statement confirming the desired grant award start and member enrollment period start. In the Clarification narrative field, please also confirm your desired grant award start date and member enrollment period start date.

Citizen Schools confirms its desired grant award start and member enrollment period start date of July 1, 2014.

c. Please make the following changes in the Performance Measures screens in eGrants:

1. Per the performance measure instructions for ED2, a mentoring intervention cannot be included under this particular performance measure. Please de-select mentoring from the ""Increasing Academic Performance with high-quality expanded day"" performance measure. If desired, you may add a second aligned performance measure that captures outputs and outcomes associated with mentoring (using output measure ED4A).

Mentoring has been de-selected from ED2.

d. Strategic Engagement Slots Clarification:

1. What percentage of your slots will be targeted to recruiting members with disabilities? What is your program's plan, if any, for outreach and recruitment of members of the disability community?

Citizen Schools does not target a specific percentage of slots to recruiting members with disabilities but welcomes the participation of such members in its AmeriCorps Teaching Fellowship. As with all potential members, Citizen Schools targets outreach and recruitment based on reaching populations with the key qualifications for serving effectively, including strong academic skills in math and

## Narratives

English, completion of a bachelor's degree, commitment to Citizen Schools' mission and to changing the lives of middle school students, and ability to build relationships with people from diverse backgrounds. Key recruitment channels include 1) an online strategy, including the AmeriCorps website, the Citizen Schools website ([www.citizenschools.org/fellowship](http://www.citizenschools.org/fellowship)), and social media channels; 2) colleges and universities, where recruitment staff attends career fairs, holds information sessions and "office hours," and builds relationships with student organizations, faculty, and leadership development programs; 3) national feeder programs for outstanding and diverse candidates; and 4) personal referrals, usually from current members, alumni, or community partners.

2. In order to increase the number of individuals with disabilities serving as AmeriCorps members, CNCS is offering applicants the opportunity to request additional MSYs to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities. The additional MSYs would be funded at the clarification cost per MSY level. Applicants must describe their intent to recruit, engage and retain additional members with disabilities and provide a detailed outreach plan for how these members will be recruited and supported (e.g. established recruitment partners or strategies.) In addition, programs receiving these additional member positions will be required to report specific details on the success of the recruitment, supervision and retention of AmeriCorps members with disabilities in semi-annual progress reports. If you would like to request additional MSYs to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities, please describe your intent as requested above. Also indicate how many MSYs your program would like to request, the number of slots by slot type, and where the additional members will serve. Add these additional MSYs to your budget.

Citizen Schools does not wish to request additional MSYs to be filled by AmeriCorps members with disabilities.

e. Health care clarification items are to be addressed by programs with full-time members (excluding EAP and Professional Corps):

1. Please provide the name of the health insurance provider you are proposing to use to insure your AmeriCorps members.

## Narratives

Blue Cross Blue Shield.

2. How did you select the provider? (for example, direct marketing, through the Health Insurance Marketplace or other means)

Citizen Schools selected Blue Cross Blue Shield through its broker. (Citizen Schools obtains Blue Cross Blue Shield insurance coverage for its staff members in the same way.) Blue Cross Blue Shield offers coverage that meets minimum requirements and is accessible and inexpensive for our AmeriCorps members.

3. Does your proposed budget for member healthcare provide for Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC) coverage, as defined by the Affordable Care Act (ACA), for your full-time members?

Yes.

4. If not, what adjustment to your budget is necessary in order for you to provide Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC)?

N/A

5. If you do not have enough information to answer question (4), please explain why not and/or what prevented you from being able to obtain the necessary information.

N/A

f. MSY With No Program Funds Attached Clarification (No Cost MSYs):

Applicants may request No-Cost MSYs. These additional no-cost MSYs are national service positions

## Narratives

in which no grant funds will be awarded. In other words, grantees could receive additional AmeriCorps positions but no additional grant funds. Programs will be responsible for using their own or other resources to pay program costs, member support costs and other operating expenses. Keep in mind that full-time AmeriCorps program costs include expenditures for the AmeriCorps living allowance, health care and criminal history checks. Programs are not required to pay living allowances or cover health care for less-than-full-time members.

If you would like to request No-Cost MSYs, please edit your budget as appropriate (for example you may need to revise line items for member gear or criminal history checks). Please ensure your performance measures align with these additional MSYs. Lastly, you must include a response to each item below in the Clarification narrative field:

1. The number and type of slots requested. If the addition of these supplemental slots to the current approved grant exceeds the original FY13 request, please provide your proposed use of these additional slots.
2. A description of resources that will be provided to adequately support the additional members and how they are sufficient to; support the member support costs, management, oversight, program operations, and the program activities.
3. Source(s) of non-CNCS funds. Provide a brief description of the amount, classification (cash or in-kind), source(s) (State/Local, Federal, Private) for all resources secured to manage, monitor, and support these additional members.
4. The organization's capability and capacity to successfully implement, manage, and monitor the additional members.

Citizen Schools does not wish to request additional no-cost MSYs.

### Continuation Changes

N/A

### Grant Characteristics