

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: United Ways of Iowa

Application ID: 15AC169464

Program Name: Iowa Reading Corps AmeriCorps Program

For the purpose of enhancing our programs by improving the quality and quantity of applications to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), we are providing summary feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of this application. These comments are not meant to represent a comprehensive assessment; rather the analysis represents those elements that had the greatest bearing on the rating of the application. Please note that this feedback consists of summary comments from more than one Reviewer. For this reason, some of the comments may seem to be inconsistent or contradictory. Comments are not representative of all of the information used in the final funding decision.

Reviewers' Summary Comments

Strengths:

The applicant provides satisfactory data, describing 25% of 3rd graders, potentially on a path to academic failure due to inadequate reading proficiency.

The applicant's logic model provides sufficient elements of inputs, activities, and outputs consistent with the program's theory of change. It also includes a sufficient outline of the steps necessary for success, based on Reading Corps interventions utilized by other school districts in other states.

Weaknesses:

The application does not sufficiently describe how AmeriCorps members will gain skills and experience as a result of their training that can be utilized in future work settings.

It is unclear how the applicant plans to specifically leverage the 1,225 outside volunteers in the logic model. Besides the initial mention of their inclusion, there is no discussion of their role in the reading intervention activities.

The applicant does not provide details of how the program will encourage Members to continue to engage in public and community service beyond their current service term. The applicant relays that 90% of past Members reported they were committed to community service. However, there is no specific explanation of how Members will be encouraged to develop these community connections.

Although the applicant cites the number of AmeriCorps members and volunteers needed to facilitate the tutoring program, how such numbers will be recruited from the target communities is unclear.

The applicant fails to describe the roles of leveraged volunteers beyond saying they would provide support with literacy events. No details are given to explain how much time volunteers would give or what literacy events would be provided.

The applicant fails to clearly indicate how AmeriCorps members will be recruited from the communities in which the programs operate.