

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: City Year, Inc

Application ID: 15AC169971

Program Name: City Year Los Angeles

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 clearly presents a compelling case for the need for academic intervention and cultural change to address the dismal academic performance and dropout rate in the 9 middle schools and 19 elementary schools named in its application.

The applicant clearly describes a comprehensive three-prong approach member-training plan that will provide advance training on general topics pertaining to the AmeriCorps and their near peer tutoring assignment. It will also provide on-going and "just in time" topical training aligned with its school year curriculum mapping.

The applicant persuasively describes how its AmeriCorps members will gain transferrable skills (e.g. goal setting, project management, working as a member of a diverse team, and making data informed decisions) that can be utilized and honed during their term of service and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.

The applicant substantiated this claim by providing that its Members are accepted by Teach for America at a rate of three times that of non City Year Members.

The applicant provides sufficient data demonstrating low academic achievement at its partner public schools. The schools' students historically are characterized as having urban, low-income, English as a Second Language (ESL) backgrounds; poor attendance, low math and English achievements. The severity of the problem is these schools have some of the lowest achievement test scores in the state.

The planned evidence-based, intervention services are clearly designed to foster more positive academic experiences and behaviors. The expected outcomes should lead to improved attendance and increased high school graduation.

The applicant provides appropriate pre-service orientation and preparation activities to prepare Members to perform duties as assigned. The applicant also has a high-quality, well-coordinated, comprehensive, multi-faceted, on-going system to support Members' development and monitor member performances throughout the project year.

Applicant's use of individual development plans (IDP) will effectively help Members set goals, document skills gained that could transfer to future career opportunities. The IDP process is suitable to encourage reflection on

experiences leading to developing more engaged, active citizens.

Strong evidence is cited of the effectiveness of the applicant's program design in Los Angeles, New York, and throughout the organization's operating sites to achieve academic improvement outcomes for clients being served.

The program design includes extensive, relevant plans for Member training, supervision and professional development related to the proposed interventions.

Weaknesses:

The applicant provided no performance data regarding the increase in the number of targeted students who persist to graduate.

Recent, relevant demographic and descriptive data about the 26 schools to be served by the program are not provided to explain those schools' designations as Priority, Support or Focus Schools, part of LA's Promise Zone or Partnership for Los Angeles Schools; rather, only district-wide data are cited.

It is not clear what functions the 3,000 volunteers will provide in the program design, how the volunteers will be recruited/managed/sustained, or what role Members will have in working with the volunteers.