

APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Napa County Office of Education

Application ID: 15AC170737

Program Name: CalSERVES

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's narrative has shown the correlation between the community's need/problems and how the proposed intervention will address each aspect of the student's needs.

The program narrative provides substantial evidence to support a correlation between the proposed activities to be implemented and the projected outcomes to increase literacy skills, math scores and emotional competence.

The proposed project gives a comprehensive overview of the training to be received by the Members and includes opportunities to provide feedback after all training exercises and program requirements. The member training also includes adequate training time and monthly booster sessions to reinforce subject content.

The applicant provides well-documented data supporting the critical needs for its proposed intervention as summarized by the fact that only 29% of specified students in participating schools earn diplomas. Particularly noteworthy is that 31 identified gangs exist in neighborhoods surrounding a participating school.

The applicant describes in detail a holistic approach by using a 3-tiered intervention based on student needs and highly supported with cited research studies. This approach includes often-neglected areas of positive climate and emotional support activities.

The applicant points out that Members offer multiple layers of support to students, not only during the school day but after school as well, providing a vast array of needed services at a ratio of 1:2 not available otherwise.

The applicant describes a supervisory system of 10-years duration, which is reported to have been successful.

The applicant notes that trainings end with time to reflect, and reflection time is embedded in every meeting as well as on Service Day.

The applicant describes its successful recruitments through various means including targeting e-mails to graduating students and reaching out to multi-lingual key stakeholders.

The applicant cites local and comparison statewide relevant and specific data to describe the extent of the problem in

the targeted community of North Bay.

The applicant details a training plan AmeriCorps members and volunteers to ensure that prohibited activities are reinforced.

The applicant presents a sufficient plan utilizing outcome measures incorporated into the service experiences as a significant part of the AmeriCorps member's reflection.

The applicant's Theory of Change Model is well-described and the interventions are unified logically within both the narrative and the Logic Model.

The applicant presents a detailed outline of evidenced-based interventions that have demonstrated significant outcomes for populations with needs similar to the targeted community.

The applicant clearly describes a supervisory plan that is appropriate and acknowledges regular and ongoing supervisions of the member.

Weaknesses:

The proposed narrative does not provide an adequate training plan for volunteers or opportunities to reinforce their roles and responsibilities or prohibited activities.

The applicant did not include or identify if any of the member trainings (including online) will be implemented by subject matter experts.

Applicant did not provide details to indicate how much time is allotted for training of Supervisors. Also it is unclear if Supervisors meeting on a regular basis is defined as training is being conducted or meeting to address program policies and procedures.

The absence of information on how the Members will interact with other Members makes it difficult to determine if this criterion is met. Moreover, the applicant does not include a plan for volunteers to interact with Members from other national programs.

The applicant does not include the identification of the persons who will deliver member training or provide their subject matter expertise. In addition, the proposal lacks information on sources/topics for its use of a cited online training option.

The applicant does not describe working with national service programs. It lacks a detailed plan to recruit Members from relevant communities.

The applicant describes an intervention to address academic underachievement in math, this is not supported in the narrative.

The applicant presents a training protocol that fails to acknowledge training conducted by subject matter experts.

The applicant presents a supervisory training plan that clearly does not include member training requirements to address prohibited activities.

The applicant's proposed recruitment plan does not clearly describe specifically how it will recruit Members from the targeted communities where it serves.

The applicant does not clearly describe how Members will connect with other AmeriCorps members and the broader network, to build esprit de corps throughout the term of service.

The applicant does not provide details how the AmeriCorps member will continue to be engaged in public service after the completion of their term.