

# APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

## 2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** Reading Partners

**Application ID:** 15AC170778

**Program Name:** Reading Partners California

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 persuasively describes its target students and their need for support in attaining reading proficiency. Furthermore, the applicant provides compelling data from both The Anne E. Casey Foundation (2013) and the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAPE) which document the significant need for reading support in their community.

The proposed interventions are well-aligned with the desired outcomes in that Members provide daily 1:1 tutoring and that the Members also serve as liaisons between their students and all of their stakeholders.

AmeriCorps member training is sound as extends throughout the entire service year with personalized coaching sessions and weekly check-ins.

AmeriCorps members gain skills and experience relevant to future employment as 100% formalize employment/education plans prior to the end of their service term.

The applicant describes a comprehensive, on-going member training plan that includes a three week, pre-service orientation, and a two week training session centered on service provision, and on-going observation and coaching by Program Managers. Trainings are designed to support Members' understanding of service provision, program management and supervision. In addition, Members will receive weekly coaching, including reminders of prohibited activities, monthly group training and support for leadership and professional development skills.

The applicant provides a comprehensive plan for member supervision of the Volunteer Coordinators, Regional Service Coordinators and Service Coordinators. These Members will be supervised and supported by Program Managers who have extensive experience in education and an AmeriCorps Program Manager who will ensure all Members understand their commitment to AmeriCorps.

Applicant provides clear and compelling evidence of the need to increase the reading proficiency among K-5 students in Title 1 schools citing data from the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress which indicate that statewide, 85% of 4th graders fail to meet reading proficiency standards.

The applicant provides solid evidence based on past program data that show a linkage between applying a dosage of

16 hours of student specific, one to one tutoring and an expected outcome of producing a 1.6 month increase in reading skills proficiency per month of instruction as measured by seasonally administered STAR reading reports.

Applicant provides an exceptionally well-constructed plan for member training, using a multi-level approach to educate, prepare and build a strong, qualified team of AmeriCorps site, regional and volunteer coordinators versed in subject matter content required by AmeriCorps and relevant to their specific roles which is reinforced throughout the service term.

The applicant presents a comprehensive and persuasive logic model that summarizes and aligns the components of the program and its linkages between state level need as assessed by National Center For Education Statistics; intervention which has recently been evaluated as an evidence based model; and expected outcomes which are likely to produce the intended increase in skill mastery and reading proficiency among K-5 students.

**Weaknesses:**

The applicant indicates it will implement this program in the state of California, however, it does not identify the needs of those specific communities related to children's reading proficiency and other community needs that will be addressed by this funding, beyond stating that the participants will be 3,000 low income, high-needs children in grades K-5 in 80 Title I elementary schools across the state.