

# APPLICANT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

## 2015 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

**Legal Applicant:** B-H-K Child Development Board

**Application ID:** 15ES169414

**Program Name:** B-H-K Child Development Board III

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 adequate information regarding the problems they will address in the grant application. It is clear that the problems addressed include disadvantaged students at risk. This risk is described through a documented review of the literature on this subject matter.

The applicant clearly describes the community need and has documented statistics of relevant data. This data includes local and statewide statistics in addition to evidenced based research. The data also includes a thoroughly documented review of current literature on the subject.

Through a detailed manual, the applicant demonstrates how Members and volunteers will be aware of rules including prohibited activities. The applicant specifically lists the training devoted to allowable and prohibited activities.

In regards to high quality guidance and support from supervisors, the applicant provides well-documented and detailed roles of supervisors as it relates to the number of hours trained, director contacts, and scheduled meetings. This high quality direction and management ensures support for supervisors and promotes programmatic excellence.

The applicant provides adequate data which describes the prevalence of the community problem. The prevalence of poverty, as well as the DIBELS and MEAP results for the targeted area are clearly linked to the intervention strategies.

The applicant presents a sufficient description on how the problem of low academic literacy performance and low literacy skills in Pre K-3rd grade students will be addressed by the proposed intervention strategies (of SMART; Phonics for Reading; and Read Naturally).

The implementation of evidence based models (SMART; Phonics for Reading; and Read Naturally) adequately responds to the identified outcomes on the logic model.

The applicant presents a comprehensive training plan for AmeriCorps members that includes allowable and prohibited activities, training on the interventions and on the DIBELS and COR measures. Member training will be ongoing, occurring one day a month.

The applicant articulates a comprehensive plan for member supervision. The expectations of member supervision are

articulated in a formal consortium agreement.

The applicant identifies the development of AmeriCorps member skills that can be utilized by future employers after the service term is completed. These include working with data to document student progress, as well as monthly training topics.

The plan for recruitment of AmeriCorps members from the local communities is identified. The targeted areas include local schools, community service agencies, grocery stores, retail businesses and local universities.

The applicant thoroughly describes the problem of students at risk of reading failure and how their rural status and distance from services increases this risk. Furthermore, the applicant makes the connection between poor literacy skills to future issues such as employability.

The Applicant provides a clear description of the reading programs that will be used for the intervention. The intensity of the intervention is supported by the literature. Members and volunteers will provide various interventions between 2 and 4 times per week and through the summer to address content that is lost when school is out.

The applicant provides evidence from studies on each of the proposed interventions to be used that documents the likelihood that their approach will lead to the outcomes of improved literacy skills.

The applicant provides an extensive description of member training to take place prior to and throughout service. Content experts from BHK and the school district provide training for Members.

Extensive time is devoted to training in allowable and prohibited activities using AmeriCorps documents Prohibited Activity and Safety Protocol and Code of Conduct.

The plan provided for member supervision includes a detailed description of the role of supervisors and a contingency plan when the assigned supervisor is not present. The contact between supervisor and member allows for meaningful individual and group interactions.

The applicant provides good detail with regard to the nature and frequency of contact between AmeriCorps leadership and the site supervisor(s). The contact takes place via e-mail, telephone and both announced and unannounced site visits.

The work of Members is described as meaningful as they will observe students' progress and know that they are part of the reason for the progress. The skills and knowledge they will acquire, such as learning how schools operate and how to collect and manage data, will be useful beyond this service experience.

The applicant builds in time for reflection on a monthly basis along with opportunities for connection with the group of Members working on the present project and beyond through participation in MCSC events.

**Weaknesses:**

None noted.