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Executive Summary

The California Endowment and Kern County Superintendent of Schools propose a statewide partnership in which AmeriCorps Members mentor more than 2,000 disadvantaged youth in 14 low-income communities as part of an innovative health initiative. Of the youth living in these communities, 65-80% do not feel safe at school. AmeriCorps Members will deliver high-quality mentorships to reduce aggression and disciplinary actions in more than 1,000 youth, thereby reducing violent behaviors.

Rationale and Approach

INTRODUCTION

The California Endowment (TCE) and Kern County Superintendent of Schools (KCSOS), an experienced AmeriCorps intermediary, propose a statewide partnership through which AmeriCorps Members will establish high-quality mentorships with disadvantaged youth in 14 low-income regions. These communities are the focus of TCE's groundbreaking 10-year Building Healthy Communities (BHC) initiative, which represents a community-led effort where over 20,000 residents identified the most pressing health issues in their respective communities. Nationally, this is the largest project of its kind, receiving acclamation from numerous entities because of the focus on a holistic approach to improve community health and initiate systemic change. Through the planning process, TCE discovered the primary issue was the impact of violence, best understood through the everyday safety concerns of youth within target communities. As a result, residents created a set of comprehensive logic models to improve community health, prioritizing the development of youth assets as a strategy for violence prevention.

TCE and KCSOS will combine forces with the BHC initiative to have AmeriCorps Members help youth chart paths to healthy and productive lives. Members will be enriched by many professional

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development and learning opportunities while implementing an evidence-based mentoring program. The proposed outcomes align with the Corporation's 2011-12 Education Focus aimed at decreasing disciplinary actions (ED7) and aggressive behaviors as well as increasing cooperative behaviors. Annually, Members will build meaningful relationships with more than 2,000 youth through a variety of structured activities, helping them thrive amidst a range of health challenges and exposure to violence.

In addition to the BHC initiative planning funds, TCE and CaliforniaVolunteers funded 14 AmeriCorps planning grants. Through this process, the partners decided Members should lead a mentor program to promote safe and supportive environments for middle/high school youth. This research-based strategy was proposed to achieve maximum results without compromising local, well-planned structured activities. In essence, this proposal provides local flexibility for mentor/mentee activities to show reverence to the unique, grassroots planning process of each community. This strategy will be further strengthened by the recruitment of Members from within the 14 regions. The personal insights and experiences of such local Members will maximize their impact as role models for the youth they serve.

KCSOS is an experienced AmeriCorps intermediary with a 14-year track record of successfully managing multi-city programs. Through the AmeriCorps planning grant process, KCSOS has built positive and productive relationships with the 14 partners, paving the way for a quick and efficient start. Further support will come from TCE's BHC plan, which will include robust community leadership throughout the 10-year initiative.

1a. PROBLEM

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The 14 localities targeted by TCE's BHC plan are areas of concentrated poverty facing a variety of risk factors. As part of the BHC year-long community engagement and planning process, TCE asked community leaders to establish local priorities based on 10 fundamental health outcomes, ranging from health care access to economic development. Surprisingly, the most pressing issues were not health care or jobs; rather, violence prevention was the most urgent community need.

The U.S. Surgeon General, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other health authorities have designated violence as a public health issue. The statistics on youth violence are shocking and disturbing. A 2010 CDC study found that homicide was the second-leading cause of death among youth ages 10 to 24 and 84% of homicide victims were killed with a firearm. In 2008, the CDC also found that emergency rooms across the U.S. treated 700,000 violence-related injuries to children and young adults.

However, the injured are not the only ones to feel the impact of violence. Thorough research demonstrates that violent neighborhoods have a wide range of destructive effects on youth, including significant mental health issues such as a high rate of depression; stress-induced physical health problems; a compromised ability to focus and complete school work, leading to higher dropout rates; poor impulse control, leading to disciplinary action; the inability to form close relationships; limited conflict resolution skills; high participation in risky behaviors; a lack of concern for the well-being of others; and a lack of hope, inhibiting the ability to establish and work toward life goals.

Addressing violence was not the foremost concern of TCE when BHC launched. In selecting the 14 regions, TCE identified communities with longstanding poverty and vibrant leadership committed to addressing health disparities. The localities, each with populations of 80,000-90,000, represent the

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diversity and vastness of California, with both urban and rural settings, a broad racial and ethnic population that includes large populations of Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans, and a distance of more than 700 miles between the southernmost and northernmost communities.

Each community is unique, but all experience high levels of violence and crime. While the statewide annual violent crime rate is 472 crimes per 100,000 people, the rate is 70% higher (803 crimes per 100,000) in cities that are the focus of BHC (FBI Uniform Crime Reports, 2009). The annual felony arrest rate for BHC cities is 18% higher (1,661 per 100,000) than the statewide average of 1,352 per 100,000 (CA Attorney General, Criminal Justice Statistics Center, 2008). Federal and state crime statistics are reported by city rather than neighborhood, so these rates reflect violence and crime within larger areas rather than the specific BHC regions, where the rates are most certainly higher.

This level of violence has caused students to fear for their safety. A statewide survey of school-age youth found that in the 14 BHC neighborhoods, 65-80% of 7th, 9th and 11th graders do not feel safe at school; 30-45% had either been harassed or been involved in fights at school; 9-14% reported belonging to gangs; and 4-6% reported bringing a gun to school (2009 CA Healthy Kids Survey).

Statistics from individual communities paint a vivid picture of why violence prevention is a top community priority. For example, Richmond has the highest homicide rate in California, according to the FBI. In Fresno, 75% of the city's 10,000 active gang members live in targeted neighborhoods. In Santa Ana, 70% of the violent incidents reported in 2009 occurred in the targeted community.

The public policy response to violence has primarily been through law enforcement. Police

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departments and school districts seek to control crime through strategies that impose strict rules and punishments. In Fresno, the two high schools in the targeted community have expulsion rates of 33% and 28% because of a "zero tolerance" policy for misbehavior. In the rural city of Coachella, police have imposed a curfew that makes it illegal for youth under 18 to be in a public place between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. In the Los Angeles Unified School District, strict truancy policies result in students receiving \$250 tickets for being just a few minutes late for school, even if the tardiness of the public transportation system was to blame. All of these policies serve to push youth out of mainstream environments, increasing the risk of dropping out and straying from a healthy and productive path.

Consequently, this program will target disadvantaged middle/high school youth with a history of disciplinary actions who exhibit aggressive behaviors indicated by Orpinas, Bosworth & Epelage's 1995 Modified Aggression Scale survey. This age group was selected, because the rate of violent incidents in grades 6-12 is 1.5 times higher than primary schools. Rates are even higher in low-income areas (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008).

1b. SOLUTION - MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Advocates in the BHC localities are engaged in a range of violence reduction strategies including gang prevention, alternatives to incarceration, improved community-police relations, and efforts to change school policies. However, BHC focuses on indirect services to change policy and practice. As voiced by the 14 regions, there is a dire need for sustained youth mentoring services, because agencies do not currently have the capacity to provide consistent mentors for their targeted youth. Members will fill this void by providing direct mentoring services and energizing youth to strengthen their communities.

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Because Members will be recruited from local communities, their effectiveness will be enhanced by their familiarity of neighborhood issues and priorities. Members will receive the necessary training and supervision to implement the proposed strategy with fidelity and consistency, build positive and on-going relationships with youth, serve as role models in the community, and provide resource-poor organizations and schools with committed and well-trained assistance. The heart of this program will address positive youth development and resiliency, offering youth skills and support to increase physical and emotional safety, decrease violence, and lay the foundation for healthy and productive lives.

All 103 Members will provide caring adult relationships to youth through mentoring. As the Big Brothers Big Sisters 2000 National Evaluation reveals, mentees are 1) 33% less likely to engage in violent behavior; 2) 46% less likely to start using drugs; 3) 27% less likely to start using alcohol; 4) 52% less likely to skip a day of school; and 5) more likely to show significant improvement in their relationships with family and peers. The study further indicates 1) 64% of students developed more positive attitudes towards school; 2) 58% achieved higher grades; 3) 55% were better able to express feeling; 4) 64% had higher levels of self-confidence; and 5) 62% were more likely to trust their teachers. As explained, mentoring can create many changes in youth that lead to healthier and more productive lives. Because of the specific BHC community need, the BHC AmeriCorps program will focus on the violent behavior measure, striving to reduce aggressive behavior by 33%.

From September to June, Members will serve more than 2,000 youth annually. In keeping with the BHC grassroots model, each of the 14 programs may vary in terms of the structured activities mentors implement; however, the following will hold true across the state - 1) FT Members will hold a minimum of 25 mentees in their caseload (13 for HT and 7 for QT) 2) Members will spend a

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minimum of one hour/week with each mentee (maximum 3:1 ratio) over a 9-month period, and 3) Members will plan and participate in structured activities with their mentees. Stephen Small's research from the University of Wisconsin reveals, structured activities lead to more successful mentoring relationships. The program's evaluation will compare structured mentor activities and outcomes in the communities, using the information to guide future programming. A caring adult relationship will nurture youth physically, emotionally and intellectually by providing them with "assets" and "protective factors" that will help them thrive despite their challenging circumstances.

To assist sites, KCSOS will provide professional development in two research-based activities - PeaceBuilders and Service-Learning. These structured activities will provide a general framework for mentor/mentee relationships across the state. The 14 communities may choose to implement one or both of these activities or similar models.

PeaceBuilders is a science-based model for addressing risk factors that predict violence, bullying and substance use among children and young adults. Participation in PeaceBuilders has been shown to reduce aggression, promote language development, teach pro-social skills and foster safer communities. The model has been approved by the U.S. and California Departments of Education and is included in the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Model Programs Guide. It is based on the practice of 6 principles: Praise People, Give up Putdowns, Seek Wise People, Notice Hurts, Right Wrongs, and Help Others. Members will be trained in these principles to teach youth who, in turn, become Peace Coaches. Peace Coaches will - 1) become role models to other youth; 2) lead group discussions, activities, and rallies; 3) assist adult leaders in conflict resolution; 4) teach and model PeaceBuilders principles; 5) act as monitors in "Bully Patrol" groups; and 5) learn and practice leadership skills.

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Members will lead year-long PeaceBuilders groups to provide on-going mentorship and promote youth leadership. They will provide training and facilitate on-going coaching and support to youth in groups and individually. Members will also serve as liaisons with school staff and community/family members to monitor Peace Coach success. In addition, they will plan and conduct recognition and parent events.

Service-Learning is an evidence-based approach that fosters positive attitudes and behaviors among youth, improves civic attitudes, and increases hope and trust. The model incorporates 7 elements: 1) integrated learning and skills development; 2) high quality services that meet community/student needs and are age appropriate; 3) collaboration among multiple stakeholders; 4) student voice in all aspects of the project; 5) promotion of civic responsibility; 6) reflection that enables youth to connect their service with the academic curriculum and positive leadership skills; and 7) evaluation through which students assess their progress.

Members will train and support groups of youth to plan and conduct high-quality service-learning projects. Members will function as adult allies for youth-led projects, taking the youth through the 7 service-learning steps and acting as liaisons to ensure support from school staff, community members, and volunteers. Members will also implement service projects with youth, promoting a culture of service in the community. Examples of projects may include advocating for an in-house suspension system at a school; planning a community mural project; or developing a school garden.

All PeaceBuilders and service-learning groups will have between 10-20 youth per Member, some of which will be target youth. The large group meetings will not be counted as mentoring time, but the

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social interactions will enable Members to assess mentee behavior progress. With both activities, Members will spend 80% of their time mentoring target youth in a 1:1-3 ratio. Members might visit a mentees classroom to tutor and ensure he/she is practicing the PeaceBuilders six principles or have a one-on-one brainstorm session at lunch to assess a school need for a service project. In all cases, Members will work with all youth in their caseload for a minimum of one hour per week.

To better understand the daily service of a Member, the following is a typical schedule for a South Kern County Member at Mountain View Middle School: 8am-9am - tutor language arts, 1:3 mentees; 9am-10am - play basketball with one mentee in PE class; 10am-11am - tutor math, 1:3 mentees; 11am-12pm - lead a lunchtime PeaceBuilders meeting; 12-12:30pm - lunch; 12:30-1:30pm - complete logs and prepare for service-learning project; 1:30-2:30pm - parent phone conference with three mentee parents to report academic and behavior progress; 2:30-3:30 - join afterschool program on campus and lead a service-learning group of 20; 3:30-4:30pm - one-on-one and small group structured recreation and social time with mentees. Mentors will work with their site supervisors to design structured activities most appropriate for their mentee's needs.

Members will meet during training Team Days. At these meetings, Members will plan four large-scale service projects in which they incorporate youth as volunteers. Members will determine community needs based on the BHC Logic Models developed by each community. Large-scale service projects will be implemented on the following days: Make A Difference Day, Martin Luther King, Jr., Day, AmeriCorps Week, and a free day to be selected by the local team.

KCSOS is requesting a total of 103 Members (78.65 MSY): 59 full-time, 34 half-time and 10 quarter-time. Full-time Members will be placed in schools and community agencies that serve youth. Half-

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time Members will also be placed in schools and community agencies but in only half-day programs such as the state funded After School Education and Safety Program or federally funded 21st Century Program. In Santa Ana, a group of youth volunteer leaders have played an active role in the community's BHC planning process. Since these young adults will be college students in the fall, Santa Ana has requested quarter-time slots.

1c. MEMBER SELECTION, TRAINING & SUPERVISION

An overarching goal of the BHC initiative is to develop the next generation of local youth leaders. The AmeriCorps program will play a key role in accomplishing this goal. The program will recruit Members that reflect the cultural, racial, ethnic and socio-economic qualities of each community. Partner agencies will share responsibility for recruiting Members locally.

To maximize recruitment efforts and select highly-qualified Members, KCSOS Coordinators and Program Managers will work in collaboration with Local Facilitators. At the local level, sites will outreach to BHC hubs, newspapers, career websites, career service centers, colleges, and universities. Meanwhile, KCSOS Program Managers and Coordinators will recruit Members statewide by attending college job fairs, creating an online application, and networking with community agencies. The ideal candidate will have experience working with youth or volunteering and meet AmeriCorps eligibility requirements. Applicants who meet the minimum qualifications will be invited to a face-to-face or phone interview with one or more staff. All candidates will be asked the same questions regarding experience, goals, strengths, challenges, working with youth, and ability to meet a year-long service commitment.

Next, each site will host a one-day AmeriCorps orientation for the highest-qualified candidates. At the

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orientation, candidates will 1) learn about AmeriCorps including policies, procedures, and expectations; 2) learn about the local agency and sites they may be assigned to; 3) participate in team building activities; and 4) be able to ask questions. Candidates will be given a 24-hour opportunity to opt-out if they do not feel ready for a year-long commitment.

Over the course of its 14-year tenure as an AmeriCorps multi-site intermediary, KCSOS has developed a proven and highly effective training structure that will be adapted to serve all communities in this statewide initiative. Training activities and materials will focus on instruction of high-quality mentoring programs; youth development theory and practice; civic engagement and national service; volunteer recruitment and support; and life after AmeriCorps. Each site will develop a local training plan adhering to the needs of the structured mentoring activities; however, all training plans will cover core concepts. More specifically, mentor training will be provided that meets the best practices criteria outlined by Stephen Small of The University of Wisconsin-Madison in "What Research Tells Us About Effective Youth Mentoring Programs" (2008): 1) an understanding of developmental issues the mentee is experiencing; 2) an understanding of the familial, cultural, and community context in which mentee lives; 3) having realistic expectations about the mentoring process and its outcomes; 4) relationship building; and, 5) on-going training.

To ensure uniformity across the state, 6 key training modules will be delivered via the California School-Age Consortium, a statewide non-profit providing free training for agencies working with school-age youth. Mandatory modules will include 1) Developmental Trends; 2) Building Relationships with Youth; 3) Effective Communication with Youth; 4) Professionalism in Working with Children, Youth, and Families; 5) Effective Supervision of Youth; and 6) Partnering with Communities. These modules will be delivered during pre-service training and during the early

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program months.

Member training will have two components. The first is pre-service training (first week of Sept.), which will be provided for a total of 40 hours for FT Members, 20 hours for HT, and 10 hours for QT. All Members will receive a mandatory 10 hours that will cover essential topics. Pre-service training will provide modules in the history of AmeriCorps and National Service, the ethic of service, data collection and performance measures, youth development, community and team-building exercises, CPR/First Aid, and program policies. To ensure uniformity, all sites will use the Corporation's Get Things Done for America! Ppt Presentation, a BHC AmeriCorps training manual detailing performance measures and data collection tools, standardized training videos produced by KCSOS's video production team, and a list of community and team-building exercises. Local Facilitators will provide training in the BHC Initiative, local history, site policies, Member and staff roles, neighborhood culture and community challenges.

The second component will be on-going development, through which Local Facilitators and Program Managers will provide Members with team training and meetings called Team Days, totaling 120 hours per year for FT Members, 60 hours for HT and 30 hours for QT. These trainings will occur on the first and second Friday of every month Oct.-May. Developmental training will include curriculum instruction in the PeaceBuilders and Service-Learning models respectively conducted by PeaceBuilders staff and eXcel Youth Zone. In addition, the following topics will be covered: youth development, volunteer recruitment and management, project planning, and disaster preparedness. Local Facilitators may also choose to provide training relevant to the structured mentor/mentee activities, which may include math/language arts tutoring, sports/recreation programs, parent engagement, youth counseling, resource referrals, gang awareness, etc. Optional California School-Age Consortium

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modules will include Developmental Trends 201, Including Youth with Disruptive Behaviors, Building Self-Esteem, Fostering Social Skills, and The Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Oppression Series.

Developmental trainings will include Life After AmeriCorps, with topics such as lifelong civic engagement and volunteering, education and career options, and using the education award. Training sessions also will include guest speakers from the BHC initiative who will share their knowledge and enthusiasm for a range of public service activities. TCE's statewide initiative also offers many opportunities for Members to observe advocacy first-hand and build important leadership skills such as public speaking and group facilitation that will benefit Members long after their AmeriCorps commitment. In addition, Members will be prompted with journal reflections during Team Days. Two example prompts will be 1) How has your awareness of community issues changed since you began your term of service? 2) Of all the students you are mentoring, which one has affected you most? Why?

During National Mentoring month in Jan., the program will host a statewide competition for Members. The winner will receive an all expense paid trip to the National Conference with the Coordinators. Members will be assessed on the following three categories 1) Mid-year performance evaluation (30%); 2) Local Facilitator ranked nominations (30%); and 3) An essay competition on what their national service experience means to them (40%). Coordinators will review essays, and the winner will be announced on Jan. 31. This will be used as a Member retention tool and allow the program to formally recognize Members for their service.

The unique nature of this AmeriCorps partnership creates opportunities for Members to engage in networked learning environments. On a local level, the Members will engage with the local BHC

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group consisting of public and private sector advocates working toward shared community health goals. This experience will offer Members opportunities to see how their work contributes toward a larger set of health outcomes. Members will share experiences with peers across the 14 areas through webinars, social online networks, and in-person meetings. In addition, KCSOS will build an online network to act as a communication hub, featuring documents, "Mentor & Mentee of the Month" awards, blogs, and best practices. To promote statewide camaraderie, Northern and Southern California regions will gather for a minimum of one Team Day in their respective regions.

Members will receive daily supervision and support from their supervisors at the sites. One Local Facilitator (.20 FTE) at each partner agency will provide weekly one-on-one meetings with all Members to assess progress, provide support, give guidance, troubleshoot challenges, and give Members opportunities to air grievances. Program Managers will be the second line of support for Local Facilitators and Members. They will evaluate Members three times per year, meet monthly with Members, Local Facilitators, and site supervisors, give guidance, support training, and correct personnel issues.

In addition, Coordinators and Program Managers will host a monthly conference call in which a Member in each of the 14 communities will discuss topics such as Member satisfaction, data collection, training, projects, team dynamics, etc. Each month, the Program Assistant will randomly select one Member from each community to deliver a telephone survey. A template of progress questions will be asked, including: 1) How are things going at your site? 2) Are you able to complete necessary paperwork? Explain. 3) How are the team dynamics? Program Managers will handle situations involving Member dissatisfaction in a quick and efficient manner.

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Furthermore, Members will complete pre-training surveys and personal/professional goal worksheets.

These forms will be used as a tool to guide training and technical assistance. They will be revisited during performance evaluation meetings and updated regularly to demonstrate growth and target deficiencies. Member support and supervision practices will maximize retention by establishing a culture of commitment and responsibility. KCSOS will continually engage Members in leadership and decision-making processes to foster a sense of ownership of the program and build strong relationships between Members and program partners.

KCSOS staff and partner agencies will collaborate to recruit and train the 14 Local Facilitators. Local Facilitators will meet a minimum of two times before the operational grant begins, utilizing planning grant funds. These meetings will be critical in establishing program design, professional development, and monitoring processes. Online video tutorials will be designed for site supervisors. Local Facilitators will work directly with service site supervisors to ensure program success.

To assist Local Facilitators, Program Managers will offer site level support. They will be recruited, hired, and trained on procedures and policies using planning grant funds. The Program Managers will provide support to Local Facilitators and site supervisors both in person and by phone. The budget includes funds for the Program Managers to travel and meet with Local Facilitators and partner agencies as needed.

Program Managers will be the official supervisors of Members; however, Local Facilitators and site supervisors will play an integral role in daily Member supervision. Program Managers will have uniform site visit templates to record Member performance and general program observations monthly. These templates will be used as a tool to complete Member performance evaluations.

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Additionally, Program Managers will keep logs of phone calls and emails to Members, Local Facilitators, and site supervisors.

Coordinators will visit sites twice per year. One Coordinator will be responsible for Southern California and the other for Northern California. Coordinators will receive weekly email updates from their respective Program Manager, detailing successes and issues with Members and sites. The budget includes funds for emergency site visits for issues that only a Coordinator can resolve. Additionally, Coordinators will host monthly conference calls with Local Facilitators and Program Managers; in Oct. and Feb., site supervisors will be invited to participate in the call.

1d. OUTCOMES

By the end of the three-year AmeriCorps grant cycle the program expects to see: 1) a decrease in disciplinary actions and aggressive behavior (fighting, bullying, anger) and increase in caring/cooperative behavior among mentees; 2) a corps of skilled and motivated Members who are integrated into their communities as leaders and who intend to remain committed to community service; and 3) a group of mentees and volunteers who are more committed to civic engagement and improving the conditions of their communities.

Primary Performance Measure: This proposal is opting into the national performance measure Education Focus, proposing measures ED3A, ED4A, and ED7. The program will use the Corporation's standardized instruments to measure outputs and outcomes. In addition, the program will reduce aggressive behaviors, utilizing the self-reported Modified Aggression Scale. Output-a) 2,502 (30 per FT, 18 per HT, 12 per QT) youth/mentor matches will be commenced. To participate, youth will need to meet the minimum Corporation standards of "disadvantaged youth," receive a

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referral from a school or program site administrator indicating disciplinary actions from the previous year, and score a minimum of three points in Fighting, Bullying, and/or Anger on the Modified Aggression Scale. Disciplinary actions may include referrals, removal from class or activity, detention, suspension, or expulsion. Mentees will also need parent/guardian permission to participate. By implementing a rigorous selection process, the program is ensuring that only the highest need mentees are served, youth/mentor retention is maximized, and Members have a clear objective. The program will explicitly establish the mentor/mentee relationship, so mentees understand they will have a mentor AmeriCorps Member. In line with best practices, the program will match mentees with mentors that have similar interests. b) 80% (2,002 of 2,502) of youth/mentor matches will be sustained over nine months, averaging one hour of service/week. Outcomes-Of 2,002 mentees a) 64% (1,281) will show no or reduced disciplinary actions b) 33% (661) will show reduced aggressive behavior demonstrated by a decreased score in Fighting, Bullying, and/or Anger on the Modified Aggression Scale c) 55% (1,101) will show increased caring/cooperative behavior demonstrated by an increase in Caring/cooperative Behavior on the Modified Aggression Scale. Mentees will receive the survey in Sept. (baseline), Jan., and May (outcome). The midterm administration of the survey will allow staff to assess the need for midcourse adjustments in activities. School/program record data regarding disciplinary actions will be collected for the year before services begin (baseline) and the year after services commence (outcome). Outcome targets were carefully selected using the national Big Brothers Big Sisters 2000 Evaluation, which concluded: a) 64% of mentees developed a more positive attitude towards school b) 33% of mentees were less likely to engage in violent behavior c) 55% of mentees were better able to express their feelings.

Member Development: Output - 103 Members (59 FT, 34 HT, 10 QT) will participate in 3,140 pre-service and 9,420 on-going training hours. Training attendance will be tracked with attendance logs.

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Outcome - 20% (21) of Members will increase skills by .2 points on a 5 point Likert scale from a pre-post performance evaluation. Program Managers will administer evaluations in Oct., Jan., and May. Outcome target was carefully selected on the following research - 14 years of results from KCSOS' KernCorps AmeriCorps program.

Volunteer recruitment: Output--770 volunteers will be recruited by Members, including 170 on-going volunteers (1,000 hrs) and 600 one-time volunteers (1,575).

1e. VOLUNTEER GENERATION

Full and half-time Members will recruit volunteers in each community, with a goal of 770 volunteers statewide. Members will spend a total of 14,020 hours on recruitment, seeking youth volunteers from schools and community organizations. Local adult volunteers will also be recruited to assist with the service-learning projects, PeaceBuilders community events, or to support other BHC efforts.

The 14 communities in this program have a solid base of individuals who demonstrate interest in improving their neighborhoods as revealed by the BHC planning process. In addition, Members will outreach to local churches, colleges, service clubs, business organizations, etc. for volunteers. For example, a social media expert may volunteer as an advisor for a service-learning project where youth create a video featuring young people and community members discussing the effects of violence. The Members will explore new technologies to solicit donations of time, expertise and money and increase civic engagement. Members will manage/support volunteers and track time in logs.

1f. PARTNERSHIPS/COLLABORATION

Strong collaboration is central to the BHC initiative. The Governor has selected the BHC strategy as

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one of his official Governor Initiatives. At the grassroots level, thousands of residents and community-based organizations from the 14 communities have created detailed logic models to address key community needs.

The AmeriCorps partner sites include the Weingart East Los Angeles YMCA; Mid-City Community Advocacy Network, in San Diego; Regional Access Project, in rural Coachella Valley; the Wild Rivers Community Foundation in Del Norte; Hands on Central California in Fresno; California State University Long Beach Center for Community Engagement; United Way of Merced County; Alameda Public Health in Oakland; East Bay Center for the Performing Arts in Richmond; Boys and Girls Club of Greater Sacramento; Girls Inc. of the Central Coast, in Salinas; Kidworks in Santa Ana; KCSOS in Kern County; and the Los Angeles Brotherhood Crusade in South L.A.

At the local level, partner agencies will play a pivotal role in the program. Site supervisors and Local Facilitators will recruit, train, and supervise Members. At the state level, KCSOS and TCE will provide technical assistance and support to sites, establish and maintain reporting systems, and ensure a cohesive program. TCE staff will also help create online systems to streamline reporting and communication. KCSOS will use TCE offices to house Northern and Southern California Program Managers. Furthermore, Members will be invited to participate in BHC statewide meetings to provide them with leadership opportunities and help them understand their role as part of a larger health initiative.

1g. SUSTAINABILITY

The BHC AmeriCorps program has been developed and designed as an integral component in local violence prevention and youth development strategies in the 14 communities. TCE expects to continue matching AmeriCorps funds for 10 years. Moreover, TCE investments in local community

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organizations will create more opportunities for leadership, allowing Members to continue their public service careers and create a pipeline for multiple generations of Members between 2011 and 2020. Beyond direct investments, TCE will showcase the program design and impact with community investors and other foundations across the country to seek additional funding partners and encourage broader adoption of AmeriCorps in the philanthropic community.

Organizational Capability

2a. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

Mike Figueroa, current Program Manager for the KernServe service-learning program, will be the primary contact. Jeff Coomber, current Safe Schools/Healthy Students Coordinator, and Ann Georgian, Director of School-Community Partnerships, will serve as secondary contacts.

Established in 1866, KCSOS is a county office of education that provides fiscal and instructional leadership to educators, students, and the community for the county's 47 school districts. It ensures sound fiscal management and accountability through cost-effective, high-quality local and regional services and will provide personnel and fiscal management support for the program. The office adheres to the fiscal management guidelines and procedures established through the California Department of Education. The procedures reflect standard practice: (1) financial reports to document and track separate revenue sources; (2) source documentation for all program costs; (3) payroll documentation through time, attendance, and payroll tax records; and (4) written costs allocation procedures and records.

The office's track record for educational leadership extends beyond the borders of Kern County. It administers numerous statewide and regional services and programs, including Safe Schools, statewide safety and violence training and technical assistance; California Preschool Instructional

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Network, an effort to improve the quality of preschool programs in a 4-county area; Self-Insured Schools of California, a joint powers entity to manage an insurance pool for local education agencies; Schools Legal Service, legal and collective bargaining services for California public education agencies; and Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team, providing fiscal advice, management assistance, training and other school business services to local education agencies.

From 1995-2003 and again from 2004-2010, the office successfully administered the KernCorps (originally Central Valley Communities for Children) AmeriCorps Program through the combined resources of KCSOS, participating school districts, community partnerships, and other agencies. KernCorps Members served as tutors and coordinated community projects for local collaboratives in several Kern County communities. The Members each tutored approximately 20 students in reading and/or math on a sustained basis with 60% or more exhibiting academic improvement at a rate above the normal rates of growth. During the program's existence, 100% of Member slots were filled every year but one; retention ranged between 59-94%, with the best year occurring in the most recent operational 2009-10 year. The program took the following actions to increase member retention to 94%: 1) Added interview question about year-long commitment; 2) Provided a 24 hr opt-out period after orientation; 3) Implemented monthly site visits; and 4) Asked for Member feedback through monthly surveys.

With the leadership of the Grant Development Director, the office has raised approximately \$22,166,770 from private and public sources since 2008. In 2009-10 alone, \$5,727,606 was awarded. For the BHC AmeriCorps proposal, TCE and partner agencies have committed \$1,402,875 in cash match. In 2011-12, CNCS funding will represent less than 0.48% of KCSOS revenues.

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For the past five years, total CNCS support to KCSOS for AmeriCorps programming amounted to \$2,382,287. This breaks down as follows: \$774,737 in 2005-06; \$691,737 in 2006-07; \$479,794 in 2007-08; \$228,390 in 2008-09; and \$207,629 in 2009-10. KCSOS also received \$172,000 in Learn and Serve funds in 2009-11. In addition, the office manages \$80,000,000 in other federally-funded programs, including Safe Schools/Healthy Students (\$6,000,000 over four years) and Migrant Education (\$7,943,344).

2b. STAFFING

Ann Georgian will serve as the Director and devote 25% of her time in-kind to oversee the program. She has an extensive background as a teacher and administrator, currently overseeing a department managing 12 school-community grants. Two Coordinators will manage the program. Mike Figueroa will handle programming, including recruitment, training, data collection, evaluation, and reporting; he managed the KernCorps AmeriCorps Program 2008-2010. Jeff Coomber will be responsible for personnel, contract, and fiscal management of the grant, including subcontracts with the partner agencies; he managed the AmeriCorps Program 1996-2008. Also, the two Coordinators will each cover 7 sites, ensuring compliance with grant provisions and program design through regular contact with site staff and biannual site visits.

Two full-time Program Managers based at TCE offices in northern and southern California will perform local management with monthly site visits. The Program Managers will be KCSOS employees possessing the following qualifications: B.A. or equivalent in a field related to youth or health services, at least two years experience managing a health or youth development program, experience training staff, ability to work effectively in diverse settings and on a team, and demonstrated knowledge of local safety issues, youth development theory, and best practices. One

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Local Facilitator, Elizabeth Velasco-Ramirez, will be directly employed by KCSOS to supervise Members in South Kern; she served in the previous AmeriCorps Program as a Member, Team Leader, and Local Facilitator, supervising two teams of Members. The other 13 Local Facilitators will be employees of partner agencies and funded through subcontracts.

Additional support will come from April Dominguez PPS, KCSOS Prevention Specialist, who will devote 10% of her time to training and technical assistance. She is certified in several evidence-based interventions. Members will be able to call her with questions about their mentees. Further Member support will be provided by Program Assistant Alicia Mil, who served the previous AmeriCorps program and is well-versed in AmeriCorps regulations. Accountant Nancy Shelton, who handles fiscal matters for KCSOS's federal and state grants (including all of the AmeriCorps grants since 1995), will complete invoice and fiscal reports.

During the first eight months of 2011, KCSOS will work closely with TCE to select Program Managers and Local Facilitators using planning grant funds. Staff orientation will occur through teleconferences and site visits to ensure compliance and consistency during the Member recruitment/training and program implementation stages. Other training will be provided via teleconferences and webinars arranged by KCSOS.

2c. MULTI-SITE APPLICANT

The 14 partner agencies are listed in section 1f. The partners were chosen through the BHC AmeriCorps planning grant process and have been active participants in TCE's community health planning process. The agencies are strong, established organizations in their communities with proven track records of successful fiscal and programmatic management that exemplify the

Narratives

Corporation's criteria as stated in 45CFR 2522.475 and .450. As the budget shows, the program has committed \$496,396 in in-kind support. The partner agencies are key participants in TCE's BHC initiative and have participated in TCE's community health strategy process since 2009. Through the on-going planning process, KCSOS and partner agencies have forged strong relationships that will continue in 2011.

2e. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

This program has a number of competitive advantages including: 1) KCSOS implemented a successful, cost effective AmeriCorps program in multiple Kern County communities for 14 years; 2) the proposed program will serve 14 highly-distressed and under-resourced communities across California; 3) the BHC AmeriCorps planning grant described throughout this proposal will ensure that the program is well-designed and meets targeted community needs; and 4) in partnering with TCE on its ambitious statewide BHC Initiative, the Corporation will significantly advance its Education Priority Focus Area, bringing state and national attention to AmeriCorps.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

3a. COST EFFECTIVENESS

The federal share of the total program costs will be 33% and the grantee share will be 67%, which is greater than the federal requirement. The cost per MSY will be \$12,000, also considerably lower than the allowable cost per MSY. The national average cost of making and supporting a match relationship with Big Brothers Big Sisters is \$1,000 per year. The BHC AmeriCorps Program cost to make and support a match is \$1,136 per year. The cost per mentor/mentee match is \$136 higher; however, Big Brothers Big Sisters does not pay living allowances and benefits to mentors. After removing \$1.3 million to more closely reflect the model, the program is much more cost effective at \$615 per match.

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A Memoranda of Understanding will commit all non-federal matching funds in advance from partner agencies. TCE will provide the largest share of the cash match. Partner agencies are providing an additional \$121,100 in cash match and \$496,396 in-kind resources.

3c. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

In addition to the advantages listed earlier, fiscally advantageous elements of this program include: 1) KCSOS is a fiscally sound intermediary with experience in building the capacity of community-based collaborations; and 2) TCE has made a commitment to sustain the program for multiple years in its effort to help the BHC communities achieve their goals for healthier youth.

3d. BUDGET ADEQUACY

With 14 years of experience administering AmeriCorps programs, KCSOS has proven budget expertise. The proposed budget supports the program design in a cost effective manner and has been thoroughly reviewed and approved by the office's Business Services Department. In addition, substantial committed cash match and in-kind support described above ensures that the robust program design is financially feasible.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

The program will utilize the established planning process to develop the evaluation plan described herein. All partners will be included in the design process, which will include: selection of the research questions; instrument selection; and questions of methodology/implementation. This process will result in a plan to inform program effectiveness and continuous improvement.

The anticipated focus of the evaluation will be on the program's effectiveness in reducing aggression

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and increasing caring/cooperative behaviors among mentees. Questions may include:

-Are mentees reducing aggression and increasing caring/cooperative behaviors at a statistically significant rate compared to comparable groups of youth who are not receiving these services? Which behaviors are most prominently changed?

-Which mentor/mentee activities lead to greater outcomes? Service-learning? PeaceBuilders? Other? A combo of activities?

-What other important outcomes are achieved as a result of the services (improved attendance, academic achievement, and/or discipline at school)?

-Do Members feel their service is important? They have the skills to effectively mentor youth? They work cooperatively on targeted outcomes?

The program will include both quantitative and qualitative methods of evaluation, collecting data on the length and frequency of mentor matches, mentee self-reports on the Modified Aggression Scale, and discipline issues. The data will be supplemented with results from interviews/focus groups with mentees, Members, and agency administrators. Member development will be measured through tri-annual performance reviews and interviews conducted by the evaluator.

Planning Year - Questions and evaluation instruments finalized Aug. 2011.

Year 1 Sept. 2011 - Program start date - Baseline data collected; Jan. 2012 - Mid-year data collected; June 2012 - End-of-year data collected.

Year 2 Sept. 2012 - June 2013 - Data collection as in Year 1

Year 3 Sept. 2013-June 2014 - Data collection as in prior years; June-Oct. 2014 - Analyze, report, review and disseminate results among partners; Oct. 2014 - Final Evaluation Report due

Narratives

Transforming Local Communities, Inc. (TLC), an independent evaluation company, will conduct the evaluation. TLC has successfully conducted evaluations for 13 years including evaluations for AmeriCorps and several federally funded prevention programs. Dr. Dixie King will lead the evaluation. She has a M.A. and Ph.D. in Medical Anthropology & Psychocultural Studies. Her areas of expertise include youth development, violence reduction, conflict mediation, and mentoring.

The budget includes \$40,000/year to fund the evaluation.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

PROGRAM CLARIFICATION ITEMS

FYI - Some clarification items are addressed directly in budget or performance measures. Program was reduced from \$943,799 (78.65MSY) CNCS share to \$600,000 (50MSY) CNCS share.

* Please describe how you will ensure that the member training and service experience will lead to post service civic engagement.

The goals and objectives of this grant will run parallel with the 10-year, statewide Building Healthy Communities initiative focused on systems change. The work in these two projects will compliment each other as Members will get the opportunity to serve a high-need population, participate in meaningful community service projects, meet local and state leaders, and be educated through high-quality training. As a result, BHC AmeriCorps anticipates a cadre of civically engaged individuals committed to systems change post their AmeriCorps term. In addition, BHC AmeriCorps Alums will

Narratives

be invited to participate in future BHC work.

* Please remove reference to the requested number of member positions from the executive summary.

Will do

* Is the Operations Director who has twelve years managing an AmeriCorps the same person as the Operations Specialist?

Unsure of what you are referencing as Operations Director and Specialist are not mentioned. There will be two Program Coordinators. One coordinator will focus on business related tasks (person who managed AmeriCorps for 12 years). One coordinator will focus on programmatic tasks (person who managed AmeriCorps for 2 years).

* Please revise the PM statement and target value for ED4 to reflect the indicator (youth/mentor matches sustained).

Will do

* Please explain the time frame of the mentoring matches (9 months, and not a full year). The dosage of mentoring is sufficient for school-based programming but not for community based programming.

BHC AmeriCorps is working with mentees at both school- and community-based programs. The majority of community-based programs run parallel with the academic calendar and many of the

Narratives

organizations are partnering with schools. When the school year ends, programs end, and it will be difficult to locate youth to continue serving. In addition, many communities have migrant youth who leave during summer months. A nine-month program is more appropriate for both the target population and the structure of the program.

BUDGET CLARIFICATION ITEMS

* Section I.A: Personnel Expense - Please verify that that position of Secretary II will be the Accountant position referenced in the narrative. Additionally, please provide explanation for the number of partner agency staff supervisors (79 NOW 50MSY) and how the positions related to the 14 communities that the project will serve.

The Accountant actually falls under indirect administration, along with other basic administrative functions like personnel and payroll. She was mentioned in the narrative to illustrate the depth of our institutional knowledge and experience managing AmeriCorps programs. The Secretary II is the secretary for the Department of School-Community Partnerships; a former legal secretary, she will assist with processing contracts and invoices from multiple partners, a role she performed as an in-kind contribution in our previous AmeriCorps program.

Within each of the 14 BHC Communities, Members will be based mostly at single-placement sites with community partner agencies, such as schools, youth centers, and faith-based organizations. Each agency must assign a staff member who will supervise the AmeriCorps Member(s) at their site. The Lead Agency in each BHC Community will assign a staff person (20% FTE) to serve as a liaison

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with each service site and ensure that each agency provides a supervisor. KCSOS will draft and sign MOUs with each BHC Lead Agency as well Service Site Placement Agreements with each site detailing roles and responsibilities as well as AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities.

* Section I.C: Staff and Member Travel - Please provide explanation for the car usage by members to travel to their service sites.

Member Travel does not cover the Members' normal commute to and from their service site. However, at times there may be mandatory trainings or community service projects that require them to travel farther than their normal commute. The funds budgeted for car usage is intended to reimburse them for that extra travel.

* Section I. C: Member Travel - Please provide an explanation the cost for one member traveling to the CNCS sponsored meeting is reasonable and necessary.

This item has been eliminated due to the budget cut. The budgeted item was intended to allow one outstanding Member who best exemplifies the spirit of AmeriCorps to attend a CNCS National Conference along with the two Program Coordinators. A criteria was to be developed to select the Member in an objective manner. Budget considerations precluded us from selecting more than one Member.

* Section I.E: Supplies - Please provide additional explanation for the program activity supplies and materials supplied in-kind by partner agencies.

Narratives

These would include basic supplies for trainings such as chart paper, markers, tape, paper, and materials needed to implement service projects (e.g., work gloves).

* Section I.G: Staff and Member Training - Please include all travel costs for member training under Section I.C: Staff and Member Travel.

All travel costs are currently under Staff and Member Travel. The expenses listed in this section are for materials and meeting space rental.

* Section I.G: Staff and Member Training - Please move the in-kind space costs by community agencies to Section I.I: Other Program Operating Costs.

Okay

* Section I. G: Staff Training - Please explain why the training for local facilitators does not include costs for all facilitators.

As stated in the description, two trainings will be held in each of two regions: Northern California and Southern California, one at the beginning of the year and one at mid-year. The facilitators from the seven Northern California communities (from Fresno north to Del Norte County) will attend the conferences in their region. The facilitators from the seven Southern California communities (South Kern south to San Diego) will attend the conferences in that area.

* Section I. H: Evaluation - The applicant is not required to propose a program evaluation plan until

Narratives

the first recompetete application is submitted (after first 3-year grant cycle). Therefore, please justify the costs associated with conducting an evaluation during the first three year cycle of the grant, and whether these costs are reasonable and necessary.

This item has been eliminated due to the budget cut. However, our experience with a number of grant-funded programs has shown that it is wiser to engage a Program Evaluator at the beginning of the process. The evaluator is key to helping us design appropriate data collection instruments, helping us assess the data we receive, and establishing baseline data. Beyond the outputs and outcomes required for AmeriCorps progress reports, the evaluator can also collect qualitative data from AmeriCorps Members, supervisors, administrators, and even beneficiaries that can help inform efforts towards continual improvement.

* Section 1-I: Other Program Operating Cost - please confirm criminal history background checks, including FBI checks are provided for all staff and members supported by this grant.

Member background checks are funded at \$68 per person, which includes an online fingerprinting/background check with both the FBI and the California Department of Justice. Staff members are required to undergo the same process, but per KCSOS policy, they are required to pay their own fingerprinting fees prior to employment.

* Section I.I: Other Program Operating Costs - Please provide explanation for the website production and maintenance costs and infrastructure costs for maintaining IT systems, as the purpose of these costs is not included in the narrative.

Narratives

The infrastructure cost is set by the Kern County Superintendent of Schools at \$500 per work station to defray the cost of maintaining our office's computer network, Internet and e-mail servers, and telephones. This is charged to all programs in our office. The web site fees include \$300 to set up the web site and \$260 to maintain it annually. With 14 sites across the state, we feel a web site is necessary for continual communication.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Performance Measures

SAA Characteristics

- AmeriCorps Member Population - None c Geographic Focus - Rural
 Geographic Focus - Urban Encore Program

Priority Areas

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Opportunity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Stewardship | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Futures | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans and Military Families | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Services | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 78.65

Service Categories

Service-Learning

Mentoring

National Performance Measures

Priority Area: Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

Briefly describe how you will achieve this result (Max 4,000 chars.)

Members will work in schools and in afterschool programs mentoring 2,502 youth (mentees). Members will work with mentees to identify challenging behaviors using the 'Modified Aggression Scale.' Members will work with mentees in a variety of structured activities which may include one or more of the following: service-learning, PeaceBuilders, tutoring, homework help, parent conferences, anger management, and prevention, recreation, leadership and social activities. Members will use appropriate opportunities to model desired behavior. Members will meet with mentees 1:1-3 at least one hour per week. Members may also work with mentees in small groups. Mentees will be assessed with 'Modified Aggression Scale' 3x per year.

Result: Output

Result.

Youth will receive sustained one-on-one or small group mentoring both in school and after school.

Indicator: (DELETED) ED4: Youth/mentor matches sustained.

Target :80% of 2,502 [2,002] of youth/mentor matches will be sustained.

Target Value: 2002

Instruments: Youth/Mentor Participation Summary Output Log to collect data on youth/mentor matches receiving minimum contact hours; log to be completed monthly by Member.

PM Statement: 80% of 2,502 [2,002] mentees will receive a minimum of one hour of mentoring per week for nine months one-on-one or in small groups in school and after school.

Result: Output

Result.

Youth will receive one-on-one or small group mentoring both in school and after school.

Indicator: ED3A: Youth/mentor matches started.

Target :2,502 youth/mentor relationships will be commenced.

Target Value: 2502

Instruments: Youth/Mentor Contact Log to collect data on youth/mentor matches commenced and daily activities; log to be completed by the Member daily or whenever mentee receives services.

PM Statement: 2502 youth/mentor relationships will be commenced and youth will receive one-on-one or small group mentoring both in school and after school.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Youth will decrease disciplinary actions.

Indicator: ED7: Students with fewer disciplinary referrals or suspensions.

Target :64% of 2,002 [1,281] mentees will show no or reduced disciplinary actions.

Target Value: 1281

Instruments: Student Tracking Log to collect data on disciplinary actions; log to be completed by Member.

PM Statement:

National Performance Measures

Result.

64% of 2,002 [1,281] mentees will show no or reduced disciplinary actions.

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Not Applicable

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable