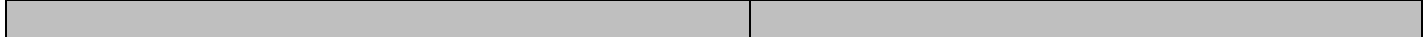


APPLICANT FEEDBACK - Program Design

2011 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Teach For America, Teach For America Wisconsin	Application ID: 11ES123029
--	---



Below are the comments from each External Peer Reviewer that read and evaluated the application. While Reviewers did engage in discussion about their evaluations, consensus was not required as part of their review. Therefore, there may be differing views in their feedback on the quality of the proposal.



COMMENTS: (+) Applicant uses academic information of low-income and minority students to provide persuasive evidence of a compelling need to address the disparity between academic achievement of low- and high-income students in Milwaukee. (+) Applicant provides an effective plan to create a diverse Corps by working with 350 colleges and universities to recruit from an established pool of over 180,000 college seniors, including those from historically Black colleges and universities. (+) Orientation, training and support ensure community impact by providing members with a pre-service opportunity to teach summer school, giving them real-life experience with low-income students. (+) Applicant has a track record of affecting positive change in the target community as supported by an article reporting three (3) of 100 best high schools in American founded and run by applicant’s alumni. (-) Applicant does not provide enough information to support the claim that teacher qualifications affect student achievement. (-) Applicant does not provide specific numerical data of past accomplishments.

COMMENTS: (+) Data notes a high percentage of low-income students in the Milwaukee schools and a correlation that tenth grade students show marked lack of proficiency in reading and math. (-) Site-specific information for the target schools is needed as justification for this Teach for America/AmeriCorps effort. (+) Well-developed training for members begins with a week-long pre-service orientation in Milwaukee, followed by an intensive and comprehensive five week residential teaching session in Chicago. (+) Highly effective ongoing support and oversight will be provided by Program Directors who are paired with the members. Members will also meet regularly in content/grade specific teams to discuss challenges and network. (+) The members’ experiences, as role models and in leading students to greater academic achievement, will provide transforming experiences and inspire enthusiasm for teaching. (+) Members are encouraged to take on additional responsibilities within the program and to serve as leaders among their peers. (-) No mention is made of volunteer opportunities which would afford members interactions within the community. (+) AmeriCorps members, especially following the training and bonding during their shared experiences, will bring a unique and special esprit de corps and volunteer spirit to the project. (+) A comprehensive plan is in place which, through pre/post assessments, will accurately gauge the impact of the program on students' academic achievement. (+) The innovative program design places clusters of highly trained and motivated AmeriCorps members as teachers in a single school, directly addressing the issue of

providing highly trained and motivated teachers, reflective of the students, as role models. (+) Outcome measures for members and students are pertinent and expectations are reasonable.

COMMENTS: (+) The applicant provides compelling evidence that students in the target communities live in a cycle of poverty, which has been linked to poor academic performance. (+) The applicant describes an intensive orientation and training program based on an established framework (Teaching As Leadership - TAL) for AmeriCorps members. (+) The applicant clearly articulates its goals for significant improvements in academic performance for a majority of students taught by AmeriCorps members.

COMMENTS: (+) The applicant provides a rubric that emphasizes six teaching strategies, including setting an ambitious vision, investing in students and families, developing and implementing effective plans, and continuous program improvement. (+) The applicant builds upon a successful model and effectively incorporates the values and skills brought by AmeriCorps members to bolster that success. The applicant offers a coordinated approach to addressing the issues of poor secondary school performance by both adhering to a solid curriculum and adding community building activities, such as volunteer generation.