

PART I - FACE SHEET

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE		1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction															
Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to confirm to the Corporation's eGrants System)																	
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS):		3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE: 19-JAN-11															
2b. APPLICATION ID: 11AC124334		4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY: FEDERAL IDENTIFIER: 09ACHCA0010015															
5. APPLICATION INFORMATION																	
LEGAL NAME: Reading Partners DUNS NUMBER: 806237264		NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Michael Lombardo TELEPHONE NUMBER: (510) 444-9800 FAX NUMBER: INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: michael@readingpartners.org															
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 106 Linden St Ste 202 Oakland CA 94607 - 2538 County:																	
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 770568469		7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Non-Profit 7b. Volunteer Management Organization															
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box). <input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> AMENDMENT If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es): <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> A. AUGMENTATION B. BUDGET REVISION C. NO COST EXTENSION D. OTHER (specify below):		9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: Corporation for National and Community Service															
10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER:94.006 10b. TITLE: AmeriCorps State		11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: One-on-One Literacy Intervention															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): Alameda County, Los Angeles County, Sacramento County, San Francisco City & County, San Mateo County, and Santa Clara County.		11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 08/01/11 END DATE: 07/15/12		14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant <input type="text" value="CA 009"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="CA 009"/>															
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: <input type="text" value="2"/>		16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">a. FEDERAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 517,285.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. APPLICANT</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 1,761,967.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c. STATE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d. LOCAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e. OTHER</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f. PROGRAM INCOME</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g. TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 2,279,252.00</td> </tr> </table>		a. FEDERAL	\$ 517,285.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 1,761,967.00	c. STATE	\$ 0.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00	e. OTHER	\$ 0.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 2,279,252.00	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
a. FEDERAL	\$ 517,285.00																
b. APPLICANT	\$ 1,761,967.00																
c. STATE	\$ 0.00																
d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00																
e. OTHER	\$ 0.00																
f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00																
g. TOTAL	\$ 2,279,252.00																
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT, THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.																	
a. TYPED NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Michael Lombardo		b. TITLE: CEO	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (510) 444-9800														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 05/03/11															

Narratives

Executive Summary

Reading Partners works with elementary schools to provide structured one-on-one literacy tutoring to students reading below grade level. Reading Partners places one AmeriCorps member at each school and then recruits, trains and supports 40-100 volunteers at each site who provide individualized reading tutoring. 89% of Reading Partners students measurably respond to the program, advancing an average of 1.75 months of reading skills for every month in the program.

Rationale and Approach

1. Compelling Community Need

According to the US Department of Education's 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress, 89% of fourth-graders in California's low-income communities are not reading at grade level. 65% lack even basic reading skills. Based on these statistics, California has the worst record for literacy among children from low-income households of all 50 states, with more than 1.5 million children struggling with literacy statewide.

Without intervention, outcomes for children who fall behind in reading are bleak. Studies have identified what is called the 'Matthew effect': once children fall back, they tend to fall further behind more quickly as time goes by. Learning in every subject is tied to reading. Because of this, researchers have found that third grade reading scores can predict high school graduation rates with 70% accuracy. Last year, 106,000 California high school students dropped out of school-- more than 500 for every day of the school year.

Limited literacy can also lead to dangerous and unhealthy behavior. 85% of juvenile offenders in California have problems with literacy, as do 70% of adults incarcerated in the state's prisons. Studies have shown that limited literacy also correlates with increased reliance on public assistance programs

Narratives

and a reduced outlook for lifelong health.

For these reasons, it is important to connect with struggling readers in grades K-5, when early intervention can set them on a path towards success in school and in life. For children growing up in low-income communities, strong reading skills are essential to unlock life opportunities and to escape the cycle of poverty. School districts recognize the importance of literacy skills and have tried numerous strategies to boost student achievement. Reading Partners is unique and different because it leverages community volunteers to deliver service and address this pressing need in schools.

Program Rationale & Approach

Research has demonstrated that volunteer driven tutoring programs are a highly effective way to improve reading skills for children in under-resourced public schools. A study published in *Scientific Studies in Reading* in 1997 authored by Marcia Invernizzi, Catherine Rosemary, Connie Juel, and Herbert C. Richards found that "two sessions of one-on-one tutoring per week by a trained, supported, and supervised community volunteer can be an effective and affordable alternative for children at risk for reading failure."

Using volunteers to deliver tutoring has not been implemented effectively on a broad scale, however, due to logistical and resource constraints within school districts. Specifically at the school level, most principals do not have staff with experience in effective volunteer recruitment and management so despite a desire to integrate meaningful service within the school, volunteer work is often sporadic, disorganized, and out of synch with classroom instruction. The result is frustrating to schools, volunteers, and students. Schools miss out on a potentially valuable resource in the form service hours dedicated to improving reading skills for students in need, while volunteers feel that their time is not well utilized and that their service lacks impact.

Narratives

Reading Partners' partnership with AmeriCorps fills this gap, by providing an on-site solution to schools that enables them to engage community volunteers as effective reading tutors. This is done through a unique model in which rather than tutoring students themselves, members serve as 'outreach coordinators' and 'site coordinators' who train, manage, and supervise volunteers providing direct one-on-one instruction to students using a highly structured curriculum.

Reading Partners volunteer tutors work with students twice per week, both during the school day and after school for 45 minutes each session. All tutoring is supervised and coordinated by members, who also provide training, coaching, and support for volunteers. Tutoring sessions utilize a custom curriculum developed in partnership with Stanford University that is designed to be used by volunteers with limited experience in education.

The key to our model are AmeriCorps members who are responsible for recruiting, training, supervising, assessing, coaching, and retraining volunteers before, during, and after their tutoring hours. Members respond to students' academic needs by preparing volunteers to better serve children and directly supporting them during each tutoring session. They are given a dedicated tutoring space within the school (usually a classroom) and are on-site both during the school day and after school to support and manage volunteers. Having been through a rigorous training program provided by Reading Partners and with the close support and supervision of Reading Partners staff, members are also able to act as a bridge between the school and volunteers, ensuring that instruction is coordinated and impactful.

As discussed in the 'community outputs and outcomes section', standardized assessment data show that this approach is extremely effective in helping struggling students to improve their reading. Additionally, survey data show that it results in more community support for the school, greater

Narratives

satisfaction for volunteers, and a greater interest in supporting public education within the community.

Through their service, members are able to leverage volunteers to expand the reach of the Reading Partners program. 33 members will recruit 1,550 volunteers and enable us to serve 1,400 students. If we did not have trained volunteers and members delivered tutoring we would only be able to serve 360 students. Member service has a direct impact on the end outcome, which is an increase in reading level for students in the program.

School & Student Selection

Reading Partners serves students in Title I schools where at least 50% of children are reading below grade level. Because this definition often includes a large number of schools, we partner closely with each school district to determine which schools will benefit most from our services. Each school is selected for a three-year program cycle, which can be renewed indefinitely. In some cases, when a school has made enough improvement, Reading Partners will reallocate its resources to a more needy school at the end of the three-year engagement.

Analysis of 10 years of data from standardized assessments have led us to define the subgroup of students that benefit most from our program. These 'target population' students are in grades K through 5 and: 1) are reading six months to two years below grade level; 2) do not participate in special education programs; and 3) have at least basic conversational English. Data from internal assessments show that these students will make the greatest gains in their reading skills if enrolled in the Reading Partners program.

At each school site, our staff work with principals and teachers to determine which students will be enrolled in the program based on these 3 criteria. Specifically, we look at school and standardized state

Narratives

assessment data to craft a plan that will increase the number of students in each school reading at grade level. Teachers are also able to refer students by filling out a detailed questionnaire about students reading level, attitude, and classroom performance.

Value of an AmeriCorps Grant

Through our experience as an AmeriCorps host site for other agencies we have found great value in AmeriCorps service. With a unique program model that is reliant on the support and effective management of volunteers on a statewide scale, Reading Partners is both an education and a service organization. For this reason, a partnership with AmeriCorps will be an ideal fit with our overall vision and mission, helping us take our volunteer recruitment and management activities to the next level.

A partnership with AmeriCorps is the best way to address our community need because we instill in members a passion for service and community building, which they bring into schools. Members can easily identify with our mission and make a measurable impact in the communities they serve.

Furthermore managing our own members would allow us to better align service to our community's need and our mission. A direct AmeriCorps grant will provide us greater flexibility in designing our training program for members while also enabling us to provide a high degree of support and attention to members. Taken together, the requested grant will enable us to serve more students and do it more effectively.

2. Activities and Member Roles

Overview

Members serve as outreach coordinators [OCs] who work from our central offices to recruit community

Narratives

members and engage them as volunteers and site coordinators [SCs] who work at individual school sites to train, support, and manage volunteers once they have become active.

OCs work to engage new volunteers through a variety of outreach efforts that include partnership with community groups, use of web-based recruitment tools, and participating in volunteer recruitment events. Once a volunteer has expressed interest in Reading Partners, he or she is referred to our website where they complete an online application and orientation that has been used for the past two years. (Surveys show that volunteers prefer an online orientation due to its flexibility and ease of use.) The OC also sends volunteers background check information (fingerprinting and tuberculosis testing) to complete before visiting the school site.

After completing the online application and orientation, the volunteer is passed from the OC to the school-based site coordinator [SC] who schedules a one-on-one training and screening session with the volunteer. The SC is trained by Reading Partners to both screen the volunteer and provide the initial training necessary to prepare the volunteer to work with a student. After this first training session, the volunteer is then scheduled to begin tutoring once his or her fingerprinting and TB test results have cleared. The SC then manage the relationship with the volunteer for the duration of his or her service, supervising and assessing their work, providing ongoing coaching and training, and acting as liaison between the volunteer and the school.

Outreach Coordinators

3 full-time members [1 in each of the statewide regions we serve] will serve as OCs, recruiting community volunteers to serve as Reading Partners tutors at individual school programs.

Specifically, OC Members will:

Narratives

- * Recruit volunteer tutors for program sites in their assigned region
- * Maintain relationships with community partners who collaborate on outreach efforts, including high schools, community colleges, universities, corporations, small businesses, service organizations, and other community institutions.
- * Execute the volunteer intake process, including all screenings and criminal background checks, to ensure compliance with the requirements of individual school districts.
- * Work cooperatively with program staff overseeing operations at individual school sites.
- * Communicate with volunteers to ensure their satisfaction, and create opportunities for volunteer recognition.

OCs work from 9-5, Monday-Friday. They spend time in their regional office managing volunteer communications and in the community working with partners to recruit more volunteers. OCs are trained to use our database to manage communications with current and potential tutors.

OCs work with existing recruitment partners to advertise volunteer opportunities by delivering fliers, brochures, and attending events. Several times a week OCs attend corporate and community fairs, and visit colleges and universities to recruit volunteers. OCs have the unique opportunity to form relationships with a variety of people in their community to promote volunteerism.

OCs are directly responsible for all volunteers recruited to serve within our organization. Reading Partners does not consider volunteer recruitment to be finished until a volunteer is actively working with a student. OCs have a direct influence on this process and their stewardship is essential to ensuring that volunteers are happy with their experience and return to serve in the following year. Once recruitment for the program year is completed, OCs focus on renewing the commitment of current tutors for the following program year.

Narratives

Site Coordinators

30 members [1 at each school site] will serve as full-time SC Members overseeing the logistics of volunteer management at each school-based program site. The SC manages and trains volunteer tutors. SC Members work closely with a Reading Partners program manager [PM], who has at least a masters degree in education. PMs spend one full day each week on-site providing support to the SC and observing their work. The support structure is described in greater detail under 'Development, Training, and Supervision.'

Specifically, SC Members will:

- * Coordinate a school-based, curriculum-driven, one-to-one tutoring program for 30-90 students in grades K-5.
- * Support 35-100 community volunteers in their role as reading tutors; helping to create a welcoming environment and positive experience for volunteers.
- * Train, assess, and retrain volunteer tutors.
- * Facilitate communication and maintain positive relationships between Reading Partners, teachers, students' families and community partners.
- * Support tutors during sessions by identifying resources and addressing questions and concerns.
- * Conference with tutors and teachers to maximize student achievement.
- * Implement 'Home Connection' programs designed to help parents become involved with Reading Partners, such as Reading Recitals.
- * Hold tutor-training workshops 4 times per year to help tutors interested in gaining a greater understanding of literacy development.
- * Recognize volunteers through monthly newsletter spotlights, appreciation events, and personalized thank you notes each semester.

Narratives

On a daily basis, SC Members have a broad spectrum of responsibilities. Tutoring is scheduled Monday-Thursday from 9-5 with Fridays used for professional development, staff and team meetings, 'make up' tutoring sessions for absent students, and other 'housekeeping' elements necessary for smooth operation of the program.

SC Members arrive at the school when tutoring begins at 9. There are an average of 8 45-minute sessions per day and each session has an average of 6 student and tutor pairs reading together. During the tutoring sessions, SCs float around the reading center and sit in with tutoring pairs to model reading strategies. SCs also formally observe tutoring sessions, document the student and tutor's strengths and challenges, and then share the feedback with the tutors at the conclusion of the session. This is done individually and in small groups.

Several times a week SCs will meet with students' classroom teachers to discuss progress and collaborate in the development of the Individual Reading Plan (IRP). The IRP is crafted at enrollment by the SC and PM and outlines the strategies that should be used help each child make progress in reading skills. One to two hours per day are dedicated to tutoring make-up sessions, to account for absent volunteer tutors or students and to ensure that students are receiving consistent weekly services. Make up sessions occur approximately 5 times per week and take place when the PM is on-site to manage the other sessions taking place.

There is also 1 hour of preparation time built into each day. During that time SCs review volunteer tutor notes, organize curriculum materials, coordinate student tutoring schedules with their teachers, input student data in the Reading Partners database, and respond to tutor emails. Scheduling is important because Reading Partners wants every student to receive two sessions per week at a time when it does

Narratives

not conflict with classroom activities.

PMs spend one full day at a reading center observing SCs in action. They provide the SC with feedback and review strengths and challenges at the center. They also review data for approximately 30-90 students, troubleshoot challenges with individual students, and engage in ongoing professional development. This time is also a valuable opportunity for the PM to mentor the SC by sharing their experience as a seasoned teacher and manager.

Coordination & Non-Duplication of Services

Thanks to our close relationships with school districts and individual site principals, Reading Partners is able to ensure that our programs are placed in schools where services will not be duplicated. In addition, SCs are trained to work with teachers at the school and afterschool program coordinators to ensure that resources are being equitably distributed among students at the school.

Because all of our members will serve as volunteer recruiters and managers, either supervising tutoring or providing community outreach, we will not displace any existing employees at our program sites. We have consulted with the school districts we serve to receive confirmation on this matter.

Self-assessment & Improvement

Reading Partners is committed to ongoing data collection and self-assessment. Our Student Information System (SIS) is a customized database that enables SCs and PMs to see real time information on student attendance and progress in reading and to make adjustments accordingly. Student test scores, attendance, and tutor notes are all captured in this system. We use this data to inform program decisions and provide support where it is most needed. Reading Partners Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) formally outlines the important data that must be reviewed at weekly staff meetings.

Narratives

All Reading Partners students are assessed three times during the school year using the Rigby PM Ultra Benchmarking Kit, a standardized test produced by Houghton Mifflin that is used in school districts across the country. Reading Partners also accesses school-based testing and state assessment data to calibrate RIGBY scores with grade level proficiency standards. To supplement standardized test scores, Reading Partners also conducts qualitative evaluations of program impact through stakeholder surveys given twice per year to principals, teachers, and volunteers. These tools are meant to gauge student behavior and probe the student's classroom behavior and the overall enthusiasm the student shows for learning.

Last year, Reading Partners completed the first phase of a multi-year control group study to examine program impact. The study will be ongoing and will answer questions about the linkage between site expansion and program quality, differences in program execution from school to school, and the long-term benefits the program provides for students.

Members receive and provide feedback during weekly meetings with PMs, at a weekly 'team day,' and during ongoing professional development sessions. These opportunities are described in greater detail under 'Development, Training, and Supervision'.

3. Measurable Outputs and Outcomes

Our program will address the Education priority area and Reading Partners will be using the standard National Performance Measures. Specifically, we will adopt measures 1, 2, and 5.

Narratives

Primary PM: National Performance Measure Pilot

30 members will work full-time on-site to train and support volunteers who will provide tutoring. By ensuring that volunteers are well trained, members have a direct impact on the end outcome, which is an increase in reading level. We will do the following in our first year of programming:

[1] 1,400 students will start our AmeriCorps Education program, as measured by student attendance logs.

[2] Of the 1,400 who begin our program, 952 will complete participation of the AmeriCorps Education program (16 hours), as measured by student attendance logs.

[3] 64% of 1400 [1,120] of target students who receive 16 hours of tutoring will increase academic performance by 1 grade level, as measured by RIGBY assessments calibrated to CST scores.

Common Strengthening Communities PM: Volunteer Recruitment

3 members will work full-time to recruit volunteers to serve as tutors in local public schools. By reaching out to organizations and individuals to inform them about highly structured volunteer opportunities, members can effectively engage citizens in improving the welfare of their local communities.

[1] 1550 volunteers recruited for on-going activities, as measured by volunteer logs.

[2] 100 volunteers recruited for one-time activities, as measured by volunteer logs.

[3] 45,000 volunteer hours for on-going activities, as measured by volunteer logs.

[4] 150 volunteer hours for one-time activities, as measured by volunteer logs.

[5] 75% of 1550 (1,162) volunteers recruited will increase their interest in issues facing public education as measured through stakeholder survey results.

Common Member Development PM: Member Development

Members deserve to be appropriately trained to perform services assigned, to increase both professional

Narratives

skills and community development skills, and to enhance their esprit de corps. Reading Partners will provide members with comprehensive training as discussed in our training plan. We will do the following in our first year of programming:

[1] 33 members will participate in 7,920 training hours as measured by training logs;

[2] 90% of members will increase by one performance level in any rubric area scored 'below satisfactory' as measured by performance reviews in June vs. September.

4. Community Involvement

For 10 years, Reading Partners has worked with school parents, principals, teachers, and community members to identify our compelling community need. Once we have identified the communities that need our services, we work closely with schools and school districts as part of an ongoing partnership. They are the experts on education within their community and know best where the support we provide is needed. Once the district has identified which schools most need our services, we work together to ensure that our work will do the most possible good for students.

Reading Partners also recruits community leaders to serve on a regional board in each of the communities we serve. This is in addition to our statewide board of directors, which oversees all programming throughout California. With their depth of knowledge within specific communities, our board members helped us in the planning process and assisted in our efforts to secure local philanthropic support. They also play an ongoing role as advocates and ambassadors for Reading Partners in the communities we serve.

Our partnership with community stakeholders is an essential part of our day-to-day operations and will

Narratives

continue to be during the proposed grant period. We meet with school leaders on a daily basis and interact with the districts on average at least once per month. Our regional boards meet 2-4 times per year (each region sets its own schedule) and our statewide board of directors meets a minimum of 5 times per year.

Partnerships with National and Community Service Programs

Reading Partners was founded by Teach for America alumni and so has a long history of working with AmeriCorps-funded agencies. TFA helped us to craft a strategic plan for program replication. We also have partnerships with several AmeriCorps agencies in California, including Jumpstart, City Year, and Experience Corps. These partnerships enable us to share best practices for AmeriCorps programs and to learn from organizations with more experience and a broader national reach.

With Jumpstart we operate a pilot collaboration designed to ensure transitions from preschool to kindergarten in areas where our programs overlap. This is currently under study within one school district (San Francisco Unified) and if successful will be replicated to other areas where both of our organizations have a significant presence.

We have worked with Experience Corps for the past three years to coordinate volunteer recruitment at sites where both of our organizations have a presence. Experience Corps members are given the opportunity to participate in the Reading Partners program as part of their service at individual elementary schools. This typically is in addition to their traditional service in the core Experience Corps model.

Replication Strategies

Reading Partners has a strong track record of effectively replicating its program. From 2003-2009, we

Narratives

grew from one program site to 24 sites in 15 school districts throughout California.

The key to our replication strategy is organized planning and a strong emphasis on capacity building.

Based on our experience, we have identified the following key strategies for successful operations:

1. Clear, highly-organized systems and structures for day-to-day operations
2. Regular data collection and analysis that generate real-time feedback on program performance
3. Strong organizational culture in which high expectations are set and individual accountability is essential
4. Strong brand associated with high quality programs that generates demand among school and school districts

We anticipate continuing growth over the next three years. Our current strategic plan calls for us to add at least 4 new program sites each year through 2013, while also expanding enrollment within existing sites. An AmeriCorps grant would be a key factor in achieving these replication goals.

Organizational Capability

1. Sound Organizational Structure

Founded in East Palo Alto, California in 1999, Reading Partners has provided high quality, impactful programs to elementary schools in low-income communities for over a decade. What began with a dedicated group of community volunteers has now grown into a statewide program that will impact over 1,200 students this year in 15 school districts throughout California.

Record of Accomplishment

Over its 10-year history, Reading Partners has provided measurably impactful literacy intervention

Narratives

programs to nearly 3,000 children in some of the most challenged elementary schools in the state of California. Last year, 909 volunteers served 855 students and their standardized assessments showed that 64% of students starting the program up to one year behind in their reading skills completely caught up to grade level by the end of the school year and 72% of students 1-2 years behind made the progress equivalent of one year of reading skills.

In 2009, an externally administered control group study found that Reading Partners students made twice as much progress as their peers over the course of the school year and were three times more likely to catch up to grade level.

According to 2009 teacher surveys, over 90% of Reading Partners students also demonstrate improved self-confidence, greater enthusiasm for reading, and increased classroom participation. Last year, 100% of Reading Partners principals reported school-wide improvement in reading thanks to our program and stated that they would recommend us to another school.

Reading Partners also provides an inspirational experience for its volunteers, engaging them as part of a community effort to improve public education. In 2009, 96% of Reading Partners tutors reported satisfaction with their participation, and 85% reported greater interest in issues facing public schools. Thanks to our strong track record of measurable results, we currently have a 'wait list' of over 50 elementary schools that have requested our program.

The communities Reading Partners serves have also recognized the contributions we have made: In 2009, the Volunteer Center of San Francisco and San Mateo Counties selected Reading Partners for an Excellence in Volunteer Management Award. In 2008, Reading Partners was selected to receive the Mountain View's Mayor's Award for achievements in education. Reading Partners has also received

Narratives

numerous commendations and proclamations from local, state, and federal elected officials.

Reading Partners has also received significant media attention for its work. Over the summer of 2009, an Associated Press wire story featuring our organization was picked up in over 30 news outlets in 11 states. Reading Partners has also appeared in the Los Angeles Times, the San Jose Mercury News, the Pasadena Star-News and nearly a dozen other local publications. Stories featuring Reading Partners have aired on KQED, Comcast NewsMakers, and numerous local television and radio outlets.

AmeriCorps-Specific Experience

Reading Partners has effectively managed AmeriCorps members for 2 years as a host site for three different agencies. This has helped us both learn from the experience of some of our state's top AmeriCorps programs while also developing our own ability to manage the day-to-day logistics of member placements. 100% of our members completed their term of service last year and 67% returned for a second year of service.

Experience with Complex Grants

Reading Partners team is well trained to handle the logistics of managing a large, complex grant. Currently 65% of our revenue comes from foundations and corporations in the form of grants that range as high as \$445,000. These grants require detailed reporting that varies by funder, giving us a breadth of experience with different reporting and compliance requirements.

We also receive 'pass through' state funds from some of our school district partners, which come with a host of reporting and compliance requirements. We have successfully managed these streams of revenue over several years in multiple school districts in different parts of the state.

Narratives

Each year, we engage external auditors who ensure compliance with GAAP for nonprofits, state and federal regulations, as well as best practices for similar organizations. Although we are not currently receiving federal funds, our auditors hold us to the same standard as their other federally funded clients.

Our data driven program model, emphasis on measurable results, and ability to report our outcomes accurately in a timely manner have made it possible for us to be very successful in securing philanthropic support. We also have budgeted for an additional FTE to specifically manage the AmeriCorps grant if awarded, which will further improve our capacity.

Site Support Structure

Reading Partners works closely with school districts to identify sites in need of our program. Once the district finds schools that would directly benefit from our services, Reading Partners interviews principals to find a match. During interviews we discuss space requirements, the "pull out" structure of our program, and existing community involvement.

Reading Partners expects that school sites will establish open lines of communication with our staff, members, and management team. Schools are also responsible for sharing student data so that we can best serve their student population and welcoming members into their school community.

Currently our sites are funded by philanthropic revenue, with a small portion (5%) coming from school district funds. We have developed strong compliance policies as part of our receipt of public funds that are externally audited each year.

Partners and Staff Roles

In addition to our school partners, we have amassed a list of private and community based partners that

Narratives

help to sustain our programs. We have identified the following types of partners:

1. Private Foundations -- Currently Reading Partners receives 60% of its revenue through foundation grants. Our foundation funders have grown increasingly diverse with growth into new regions. Foundation supporters play a key role in making program decisions or providing tactical support.
2. Corporations -- Accounting for 5% of our revenue, corporations are a major asset to our program providing funding, sponsorships, publicity, and volunteer recruitment channels. We receive match dollars for volunteer time from several large corporations.
3. Nonprofits -- Through our partnerships with other nonprofits we share information on best practices, and collaborate to promote our mission. Nonprofits have also been excellent partners to promote our volunteer recruitment efforts.
4. Community-based organizations -- As stated above, high schools, colleges and universities are essential partners in our volunteer recruitment system. Reading Partners has also been fortunate to partner with representatives from the Sacramento mayor's task force to promote volunteerism in the region.

Organization & Staff Structure

As a school-based organization, our structure is designed to provide a network of support for programs throughout the state. Hourly Program Assistants work out of our main office to take care of administrative tasks related to the program such as copying, faxing, and mailing materials to members and tutors. SC Members work directly within schools in teams of 3-5 that are supervised by PMs. This low member-to-manager ratio enables our staff to effectively support members.

PMs have at least a master's degree in education and collectively represent more than 80 years of classroom teaching experience. The role of program managers is to train and support corpsmembers as

Narratives

they perform their service within schools. They also serve as the educational experts at each program site, designing specific intervention plans for students, collecting and analyzing data, and ensuring the overall quality of programming.

PMs are supervised by Regional Program Director [RPD] Lilly Green, our top educational expert. Lilly has over 10 years of experience working in urban public schools and began her career as an AmeriCorps member in San Francisco. She has an M.Ed. from Bank Street College in New York and an M.S.W. from Columbia University.

Lilly is supervised by our Chief Operating Officer [COO] Matt Aguiar, who also oversees all volunteer recruitment throughout the state. Matt came to Reading Partners from UC Berkeley, where he served as Director of Scholarships and oversaw the largest alumni volunteer program in the country. During his time with Reading Partners, Matt has successfully grown the Reading Partners volunteer tutor corps from 230 in 2007-8 to a projected 1,300 in 2009-10. Matt has a degree in economics and business administration from UC Berkeley and has attended the Harvard Business School's executive education program on program measurement and evaluation.

Overseeing our finance and accounting functions is acting Chief Financial Officer [CFO] Nandi Gunning. Nandi has a Harvard MBA and over 10 years of experience in finance, serving previously as the finance director for a San Francisco-based hedge fund and as an auditor for one of the nation's largest accounting firms. The CFO is not included in our budget.

Our fundraising efforts are led by Associate Director of Development [ADOD] Amanda Moore, a Peace Corps alumna with a depth of experience in both program administration and fundraising. Under her leadership, Reading Partners has doubled its fundraising revenue, including a 60% jump in income

Narratives

during the very challenging 2008-9 fiscal year. Amanda is a graduate of the University of California, San Diego. The ADOD is not included in our budget.

Our CEO, Michael Lombardo, came to Reading Partners after a serving for five years as a senior administrator at the University of California, Berkeley. During his tenure, he has transformed Reading Partners from a small organization in Silicon Valley with a staff of just 6 employees to the statewide leader that Reading Partners is today, with sites in 15 school districts and a staff of more than 40. Michael is a graduate of the University of Michigan and the Stanford University Graduate School of Business's Executive Program for Nonprofit Leaders. The CEO is not included in our budget.

We anticipate (and have budgeted for) creating a new position if awarded the requested grant -- an AmeriCorps Program Specialist [APS] who will handle the logistics and management of the grant. Having learned about the requirements of federal grant management from our partner agencies, we feel that this is an essential position. The position will be staffed in the summer of 2010 if the requested grant is awarded.

Board Structure & Governance

The Reading Partners Board of Directors provides overall governance of the organization and supports external relations and fundraising, with 100% of directors making personal contributions to the organization each year. The board also provides strategic support to the CEO, approves and monitors the annual budget, works with staff on long-term planning, and oversees our annual external audit.

Our board represents diverse, exemplary community members from all walks of life including business leaders, nonprofit executives, and community activists. All board members must show a commitment to improving literacy for children in low-income communities and a willingness to share professional

Narratives

expertise, volunteer experience, and personal networks for the advancement of the organization's goals. Board members serve a term that last three years from the date of election by the board and may serve two consecutive three-year terms but then must rotate off from the Board for a period of at least one year.

Self Assessment & Improvement Plans

Reading Partners has worked with foundations to develop systems for internal assessment and improvement. With the support of the Taproot Foundation, we have developed a comprehensive system for staff performance management that is rooted in regular self-evaluation and assessment. All Reading Partners staff members go through an annual goal setting process at the start of every program/fiscal year. Staff and managers meet mid-year and at the end of the year to review progress and accomplishments.

On the financial side, Reading Partners also regularly assesses the cost effectiveness of its programs and ensures that our funds are leveraged for the maximum results. This involves a rigorous budget development process (described below under 'Budget Adequacy') and a monthly financial reporting system that enables our staff and board to monitor expenses.

Technical Assistance Plans

Reading Partners has prioritized organizational capacity building as we have grown. This is largely why we have been able to achieve statewide scale without diluting the quality of our program or the efficiency of our business operations.

The key driver of our technical assistance needs is partnership with agencies and other organizations whose mission it is to provide financial and programmatic support. The most prominent of these has

Narratives

been the Taproot Foundation, which has provided a number of technical assistance service grants to our organization, spanning from human resources to technology development.

For future technical assistance needs, we have cultivated relationships with a number of private funders who are able to make capacity-building grants to support the ongoing technical assistance needs of our organization. These include Tipping Point Community, the Grove Foundation, and the Sobrato Foundation. Each of these funders has made themselves available as resources for future technical assistance projects.

2. Sound Record of Accomplishment as an Organization

Volunteer Generation and Support

Reading Partners has a track record of recruiting large volumes of volunteers to serve as tutors in public schools. Last year, 909 volunteers were recruited through systems described under 'Volunteer Recruitment' donating 35,000 hours to tutor students. Our tutors are the core of our program model and serve as excellent community advocates for the program.

Community Leadership and Collaboration

Reading Partners is a member of numerous local collaboratives and multi-agency partnerships, including the Santa Clara County Partnership for School Readiness, the San Mateo County School Readiness Advisory Committee, the Oakland Literacy Coalition, and the Young Readers Future Leaders Initiative. Our CEO is a peer reviewer for the Corporation for National and Community Service (for non-AmeriCorps programs) and serves on the boards of several other educational nonprofits.

3. Success in Securing Community Support

Narratives

Collaboration

In each region we serve, Reading Partners has also successfully leveraged partnerships with community-based organizations to generate volunteers, in-kind support, and funding. The following are examples of collaborations with community organizations:

1. Rotary Clubs -- Since the inception of Reading Partners, the Palo Alto University Rotary Club has given books, volunteers, and financial grants to support the establishment of the East Palo Alto reading center.
2. Universities/Colleges/High Schools --Reading Partners has utilized local universities, colleges, and high schools to generate volunteers for the program. Since our program is fueled by volunteer support, this enables us to reach more students across the state.
3. Local Corporations -- One of our long-term partnerships has been with Mountain View based Intuit Corporation. Intuit has held numerous volunteer recruitment events, book drives, and supports the organization on a financial level too.

Local Contributions

As Reading Partners has grown, so have the number and size of local contributions. The numbers below illustrate the rapid growth in support from local funders from \$84,925 in 2001 to \$1,492,253 in 2009 from over 250 donors. Reading Partners in-kind support has also grown each year and now includes 146 in-kind supporters who donate over 8,000 books per year.

The San Jose Mercury News has supported Reading Partners with a book drive the last three years. This

Narratives

year, the local Borders bookstore is hosted a holiday book drive to support the students at our schools donating 2,300 books. In addition, numerous corporations have held book drives for our students, including Google, Intuit, Kraft, Morgan Stanley, and Adobe. As a local leader in the area of children's literacy, many local schools, girl scout troops, rotary clubs, and individuals seek out Reading Partners and host book drives, knowing that the books will be put to good use.

Community Stakeholders

Because our mission is to support children in our public schools, the number of people who have a stake in our success is large. Our community stakeholders include teachers, neighbors, and local businesses/corporations.

The community has responded with overwhelming enthusiasm, supporting our efforts with their time. In 2006, we had 225 volunteers. Last year, 909 community members gave at least one hour every week to be a volunteer tutor.

In addition, community members have supported the organization with their specialized services. Reading Partners receives in-kind advertising space from the Silicon Valley Community Newspapers, in-kind legal support, office space, photography, and food and wine for events. Some donations have been individual occurrences, such as event tickets, or food and drinks for volunteer recognition events, but some relationships have been long term, such as office space and legal support.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

1. Cost Effectiveness

Efficient utilization of resources is a central tenet of the Reading Partners model. One-on-one instruction is the most effective form of educational instruction, but also the most expensive. The core

Narratives

concept of the Reading Partners program is provide this sort of high-touch, intensive service at a very low cost.

Effective use of community volunteers is the centerpiece of our cost effectiveness strategy. Last year, our volunteers collectively donated a total of 35,000 hours of tutoring time. If paid for, this much instructional time would cost nearly \$1,000,000--but thanks to Reading Partners service-driven model, it was provided 100% free of cost.

The Reading Partners budgetary model focuses both staff and AmeriCorps member resources on volunteer recruitment, coordination, and management. This enables us to leverage the dollars we spend through the service hours donated by community members. This year the total cash-operating budget for each Reading Partners school site will average \$56,000. Our total cost for a Reading Partners student to receive weekly one-on-one tutoring for the whole school year will average just \$1,200.

Through continued application of rigorous budgeting standards and the integration of AmeriCorps members (contracted through other agencies) into our model, we have reduced our cost per student served by more than 40% over the past three years. If we become directly funded by AmeriCorps we will further reduce our expenses, enabling us to continue serving more students each year. As we continue to grow and achieve economies of scale, we anticipate continuing to improve our cost ratios and have set the goal in our three-year strategic plan of bringing it below \$1,000 per student by 2012.

We also receive significant value in the donated classroom space provided for our programs. If we had paid rent for that space, it would have cost us nearly \$250,000 last year alone. Schools provide us with a dedicated space that is used for AmeriCorps activities only and occupied M-F from 9-5, for the full school year. Reading Partners will use 30 classroom spaces, donated in-kind for the 2010-11 school year.

Narratives

The value of donated space is set by school districts and based on market rates. We also utilize donated professional services, including legal, marketing, human resources, and database development.

Collectively, these donated services have saved us a total of more than \$400,000 over the past three years.

According to the California Department of Education, the average per pupil expense for a school district in California was \$8,594 in 2007-8. Compared to this expenditure, the roughly \$1,200 per student that Reading Partners will spend per student is a real value--especially given that research shows this investment will double the progress our students make in reading.

Diverse Non-Federal Support

Reading Partners organizational budget for FY10 (August 1, 2009 -- July 31, 2010) is \$1.9M. Currently, more than 80% of Reading Partners' revenue (\$1.6M) comes from private sources, whether foundation grants, corporate sponsorships, or individual contributions. Over the past three years, we have built a solid development team to cultivate these private revenue streams and have shown an ability to grow them significantly. Even during the incredibly challenging 2008-9 fundraising year, we were able to increase our revenue from private sources by over 50%.

The key to our ability to develop diverse private revenue streams is the ability to manage complex grants and an organization-wide emphasis on measurable results. Foundation and corporate funders in particular value a clear demonstration of a return on their investment and the data-driven Reading Partners model delivers just that. By showing strong results that are backed up by standardized assessments, we are able to engage a diverse group of institutional funders.

Thanks to this strong track record in fundraising, we are able to provide an almost 3-to-1 match to the

Narratives

requested grant from CNCS. Our largest foundation funders providing match include Tipping Point Community, the Heising-Simons Foundation, the Koret Foundation, the Mountain Winery Kids Fund, the Morgan Foundation, the Simmons Family Fund, the Sobrato Foundation, the Eisner Foundation, the East Bay Community Foundation, and the Sacramento Regional Community Foundation. Our largest corporate funders include Union Bank of California, Symantec, Oracle, SAP, Genentech, Clorox, and Goldman Sachs.

We also receive subsidies from some of our school districts, such as San Francisco Unified and Franklin-McKinley, as well as income through partnerships with other agencies such as Jumpstart.

The grassroots element of our volunteer-driven program model also helps drive fundraising from individuals; last year over 60% of Reading Partners volunteers also made a donation to the organization. Strength in our individual giving program was a key driver of revenue growth last year, with an increase of nearly 300% in total contributions in our last fiscal year.

The final component of our fund development strategy in the communities we serve throughout California is the development of strong regional boards to facilitate ambassadorship and networking with local funders. We have recruited strong regional boards (in Los Angeles, Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area) with diverse backgrounds that span leadership roles in business, law, government, and education. These local ambassadors are a critical support in our efforts to secure new streams of private funds as our growth continues.

Our proposed budget for the three-year grant period reflects a 3:1 match of all AmeriCorps funds from diverse, non-federal sources. For every dollar contributed by California Volunteers, our non-federal funders will contribute \$3. These funds will be a combination of private donations and support from

Narratives

school districts.

We are requesting \$15,675 per MSY in order to provide members with a high level of support and adequate salary relative to the cost of living in California. In turn, we will use philanthropy to leverage funding and make every dollar count. The following are reasons that we have requested the maximum cost per MSY:

- * We provide our members with an unusually high degree of support with a low program manager to member ratio (1:4);
- * We pay our members more than the minimum living allowance because of the relatively high cost of living in California;
- * Since our programs are run in urban areas, the entire cost of doing business is higher; and
- * Our programs are heavily leveraged by philanthropy (3:1 match of requested CNCS funds).

2. Budget Adequacy

With 10 years of experience operating our core program we have developed strong systems for budget development and adherence. These ensure that we have adequately forecasted the expenses necessary to deliver high quality programs that produce our desired outputs.

Our budgeting process begins at the end of the third quarter of our financial year with a review of expenses for the year-to-date and prior year, as well as a revenue forecast for the year ahead. Our CFO analyzes this data and presents it to our management team and board finance committee for feedback and discussion. The goal is to understand how our costs function on a line-by-line basis so that we can develop a cost framework for program sites, as well as for headquarters operations.

Narratives

Once our leadership is in agreement about the cost formulas for each element of our budget, we begin the process of projecting the number of programs and sites we will operate in the year ahead. This process involves our fund development staff, who predict the funding available for the year ahead, and our board strategic planning committee, which sets three-year targets for new site development. We also communicate with our school district partners and individual school site principals to determine whether our existing sites should continue for another year.

Our management team also considers capacity building needs for both our statewide headquarters and regional hubs. As the organization grows in scale and complexity, it is important that we ensure our core business operations (accounting, human resources, information technology, etc.) keep pace. In the case of a new funding stream such as AmeriCorps, specific staff positions may be created to manage grant logistics, as noted above.

The end result of this process is a draft budget template that resembles the eGrants system used by CNCS. We categorize expenses in specific categories, determine the cost per unit, set the number of units needed, and link those expenses to sources of projected revenue. This template is first presented by our CFO to the management team, then our board finance and strategic planning committees, and then the full board of directors. Feedback is taken from each of these stakeholders and used to refine the draft budget template.

Once the draft budget template is complete, our CFO translates it into the chart of accounts our accounting system uses and breaks expenses and revenue down by month. This produces our draft budget, which is again presented to our managers and board members for feedback and fine-tuning. Once all of the Reading Partners leadership is in agreement about the adequacy of the budget and the cost effectiveness of our services, the budget is formally adopted by a vote of our board of directors.

Narratives

The budget is then loaded into our accounting system. Adherence to expense budgets is governed by our comprehensive Accounting Procedures Manual (APM), which is approved by our board finance and audit committees each year and reviewed by our external auditors. The APM delineates all internal controls and procedures, which are divided between 4 staff members: the Accounting & Operations Manager, CFO, COO, and CEO. Included in the APM is a monthly and annual closure checklist, which requires multiple independent reconciliations of expense approvals and budget-to-actuals analysis.

Each year, our board audit committee (which is both Sarbanes-Oxley and CNPIA compliant) engages an external auditing firm to conduct a thorough review of both our financial statements and accounting procedures. Results of the audit are discussed by the board in both public and executive sessions and made available to the general public on our website.

These processes ensure that we adhere to our budget over the course of our program year and that are no surprises when we do our monthly accounting close. Thanks to these processes and the commitment to cost effectiveness discussed above, we finished our last fiscal year with overall expenses 4% below budget.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

Programmatic Clarification Items

Narratives

1. Please clarify issues around tutoring programs (how is this program compliant with CNCS guidelines/requirements?).

The Reading Partners program is compliant with the CNCS guidelines 2522.940 & 2522.910 in the following ways:

1. Reading Partners requires that all members have at least a high school diploma or its equivalent and successfully complete a six-week training program prior to the start of the program year and regular in-service trainings during the program year. Community volunteers also undergo a rigorous training program that consists of both online and in-school instruction. If Reading Partners is awarded the requested grant, it will ensure that volunteers also meet the CNCS criteria. Currently, Reading Partners recruits a diverse group of volunteers including high school students. Reading Partners will work with California Volunteers to establish a policy around training high school students to tutor.
2. Reading Partners uses the RIGBY PM assessment kit, a widely used standardized test, to track student progress and measure student outcomes. Students are assessed three times per year and tutors use the data to guide instruction. On a weekly basis, members review tutoring notes and conference with Program Managers (PMs) to adapt individual student's intervention plans. Volunteers also have the opportunity to conference with members after each session and review student data.
3. For all tutoring, Reading Partners uses a highly structured curriculum designed in partnership with the School of Education at Stanford University and compliant with state content standards. The curriculum focuses on developing students' skills in five critical areas of literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. The program is divided into three skill-level modules consisting of sequenced lesson plans and materials. Upon entry into Reading Partners, every student is assessed and placed into one of the three modules depending on the student's academic needs and reading skill level.

Narratives

4. Reading Partners training program was designed by expert educators to prepare volunteers and members for their work in reading centers. Training materials are drawn from a variety of sources and clearly articulate best practices and connect to state standards.

5. Members are closely supervised by Program Managers (PMs). Every PM has a minimum of 5 years of experience in education and either a current teaching credential, or a Masters Degree in Education or higher.

2. As Reading Partners has been placing AC members through other host organizations, please clarify which organizations have been hosting these members.

Reading Partners has acted as a host site for AmeriCorps members from other agencies including BAYAC (San Francisco Bay Area), Child Abuse Prevention Council (Sacramento), and Public Allies (Los Angeles).

If Reading Partners receives the requested grant from CNCS we will not place members with other host organizations. Reading Partners will recruit and train members to serve only at its own program sites.

3. Please clarify the applicant's plan to recruit diverse members.

Reading Partners works to recruit diverse members by working with a broad range of partners, including community service organizations, faith-based organizations, educational institutions, student groups, government agencies, and private sector companies. From February to June we participate in community service and career fairs throughout the state, emphasizing events that target diverse communities. We craft recruitment materials to underscore the value we place on diversity and the wide range of our current members' backgrounds.

Narratives

During the school year, we also encourage our current members to promote service opportunities in the communities they serve and make recruitment materials available at all of our program sites. 20% of our current members come from the same neighborhoods our programs serve.

This year, we are hosting a total of 25 members (placed from other organizations), 22 of whom we recruited ourselves. The diversity of this group illustrates the success of our recruitment program. Our current members are:

16% African American

28% Asian/Pacific Islander

24% Caucasian

16% Latino

4% Mixed

6% West Asian

Also, 32% of our current members are over the age of 25--and 16% are over the age of 45.

4. Standard assessment program. Clarify how the experience of the members will be considered when continuation improvements are employed

As a host site for members from other organizations, we have worked to ensure that the experience of our members helps to shape and guide improvements in our programs. Each year we anonymously survey all members to gather candid feedback on our training and support systems as well as members' overall experience with Reading Partners. We then form a task group of members in the spring to

Narratives

evaluate our existing training and support programs and to help design improvements. This task group is led by our Regional Program Director and includes member representatives from across our program sites.

Additionally, each member creates a resource binder at his or her program site that is passed down from year to year. Included in this binder are materials documenting the member's learning over the course of their service.

5. Please adjust the end date of the program year; the program has to be one year long.

August 1, 2010 -- July 31, 2011

6. Please clarify the ratio of volunteers to students. The program proposes recruiting 1,550 volunteers, which will enable them to serve 1,400 students. The ratio is more than one volunteer per student.

Each student in the Reading Partners program receives two hours of tutoring each week of the program year. Volunteer tutors commit to a minimum of one hour per week, meaning that some students are tutored by two different volunteers. Conversely, some volunteers commit to more than two hours per week, serving more than one student.

These two factors largely cancel each other out. Last year, our organization-wide ratio of volunteers to students was 1.1 to 1, meaning that we needed 1.1 volunteers for every student we enrolled. We have used this ratio to inform our volunteer recruitment goal for next year.

Narratives

7. Please clarify the recruitment plan, which includes discussion of salary with prospective members.

Reading Partners clearly outlines stipend and benefit packages for members at the beginning of the recruitment process, including full details in all position descriptions and recruitment brochures.

During the job interview our staff reiterate the stipend and benefits for the position to ensure that potential members have a clear understanding.

When offering a position to a member, we again include the stipend and benefits information in our offer letter. Once enrolled, we also provide information and advice to members to help them maintain a comfortable lifestyle within their stipend amount.

8. Please clarify the high cost per MSY rate. Other CA programs do not have this high rate.

Because our program is highly academic in nature and supports large volumes of students and volunteers at each program site, we provide much more support to our members than other programs in California, resulting in our higher cost per MSY.

Reading Partners allocates one full-time employee (a Program Manager) to supervise and support every 4 to 6 members. Similar programs in California (including our host agency partners) typically allocate one full-time employee for every 10 to 20 members.

This 'high touch' approach to member support is necessary because it directly impacts the academic outcomes for students in the program. Maintaining a very low ratio of members to staff enables our Program Managers to visit each program site a minimum of once per week and to provide direct support to members in managing academic progress on a student-by-student basis.

Narratives

Reading Partners also provides a longer and more rigorous training program for members, helping them build the pedagogical skills they will need to effectively support volunteer tutors at their site. Our training program spans six full weeks at the start of the school year (including both off-site and on-site programs) as well as training in-services that take place at least three times per month. The amount and frequency of our training, as well as the amount of training that takes place at the members' program sites further necessitates our very low member to staff ratio.

This large investment in member support is leveraged by our use of non-AmeriCorps volunteers as tutors. Each member will work with 40-80 volunteers at their program site every week, impacting far more students than if the member were tutoring students directly. In a standard tutoring program with a lower cost per MSY, members are generally able to serve 10-20 students per week. Reading Partners members can serve 40-80 students per week, generating academic outcomes for those students that are as good or better than other California programs with lower costs per MSY.

9. In the National Direct application, on page 32, it mentions that Reading Partners will hire an additional RPD for DC/MA. Please clarify if this is true as the way the budget and the narrative for the ND grant read, Lilly Green will be the RPD for all sites in CA as well as DC and MA. And more importantly she will be the RPD not only for this State Program but also for the National Direct program, which on the budget appears that she is at 180% and receiving double salary.

If awarded a National Direct grant, Reading Partners will add a second RPD to oversee DC and MA. This would be in addition to Lilly Green. The new RPD will spend 80% of his or her time overseeing DC and MA, as noted in the ND budget. The remaining 20% of the RPD's time will be tasked to other projects

Narratives

and paid for by private funds.

Budget Clarification Items

1. Section 1-E: Supplies - \$18,000 of office supplies is excessive.

The budgeted amount falls under the grantee's share in the budget. Reading Partners believes this is adequate to serve 1,400 students at 30 schools. Our supply budget is approximately \$12 per student for the entire school year. This is very reasonable given the materials necessary to stock a full classroom space at each school site.

2. Section 1-H: Member Training - Please clarify calculations for member training (4 days of professional development)

As outlined in our member development narrative, Reading Partners will coordinate professional development days every other month throughout the year. Considering vacations and end of year activities, Reading Partners plans to provide 4 professional development days for each member.

3. Section 1-H: Evaluation - Please clarify whether this is an external or internal evaluation plan (an evaluation is not required in the first year).

Reading Partners plans to conduct an external evaluation in years 2 and 3 of our grant agreement. Beginning in September 2010, Reading Partners will collect previous year testing data for students who will be enrolled into the program. At this point, assessments will also be performed on students to be enrolled into the program, as well as "control group" students who have linked pairs who will be

Narratives

enrolled in the program. In May 2011, these same students will be assessed once again to determine gains over the course of the year. Performance of students who participated in Reading Partners will be compared to those who did not, to determine a 1-year effect of the program.

This same process will occur in September 2011 and May 2012, with an external evaluator completing a portion of the assessments each year. Additionally, all California Standardized test results for students participating in Reading Partners and the control group will be collected and compared. Also, at this point, there will be results available for students who were in the program for two years, compared to control group students who were not enrolled in the program for the same period of time.

5. Staff Training - Please clarify 9.8 staff.

9.8 staff members is based on portions of full time employees allocated to project - 9 FTEs plus 80% of Chief Operating Officer's time.

6. Background checks for staff

All staff, AmeriCorps members and volunteers will have background check conducted as required by AmeriCorps regulations (NSOPR, criminal history, fingerprints, FBI background check and TB tests).

Clarification Response FY 11

Budget Clarification Items:

Section I: Other Program Operating Cost, please ensure that your program has appropriately budgeted

Narratives

for required criminal history background checks, including FBI checks for all staff and members supported by this grant. Please make this change directly in the application budget and budget narrative in eGrants.

- Yes, after checking we can confidently say we have appropriately budgeted for all required criminal background checks, including FBI checks.

Programmatic Clarification Items:

Volunteer Recruitment Measure

o This is a main component of the program design because members focus on community volunteers who actually tutor children, please keep this performance measure.

-Per direction with CV we have deleted the Member Development and Volunteer Recruitment PM.

o The Output target and Performance Measure Statement do not agree: the target reflects 1,650 but the statement indicates 85% of this number (1,402). The two should be the same numerical target.

- This has been deleted per direction from CV

o The Intermediate Measure is not well defined: it reads more like a copy of the Output. The same target is included but the only outcome is that volunteers complete one year of tutoring. What is the impact and how does that differ from the Output?

- This has been deleted per direction from CV

Tutoring and Elementary Child Literacy

o The program needs to edit its ED-2 Final PM Statement - it's the PM Statement for ED-5.

- This was a copy and paste error and has been corrected.

Continuation Changes

Narratives

YEAR 2 CONTINUATION CHANGES (2011-12)

Performance Measures

For the 2011-12 school year, Reading Partners will make the following minor changes to its national performance measures:

1. The number of students served and active volunteers will most likely increase since some of our schools are new this year and therefore can expect higher volunteers as they mature beginning next year.
 - a. The number of beneficiaries will increase from 1,500 to 1,600 and the number of high need direct beneficiaries will increase from 1,400 to 1,500.
 - b. The number of target students completing the program will increase from 952 to 1,020.
 - c. The number of volunteers for ongoing tutoring will increase from 1,550 to 1,650 and 45,00 hours to 48,000 hours.
 - d. The number of volunteers for one-time tutoring will increase from 100 to 120 and 150 hours to 200 hours.

2. We've received feedback from our members around our training format. We would like to have monthly trainings instead of every other week. The amount of training hours will stay the same, but the timing will change to make travel time easier on the members.
 - a. The number of ongoing training hours will decrease from 74 to 30 for a total of 990 hours.
 - b. The number of other training hours will increase from 10 to 54 for a total of 1,782.
 - c. Team days will change from once per week to once per month for 3 hrs instead of 2 hrs.
 - d. Bi-monthly training will change to monthly trainings for 6 hours a month, 9 times per year (increased from 2 hours a month, 5 times per year).

Narratives

Budget

Two minor changes were made to the 2011-12 budget:

1. The rent amount was adjusted for 2011-12 based on actual adjustments that we are projecting for next year. The original amounts were created based on estimates when our 2010-11 budget was originally created, and now more accurate numbers are in place to estimate for 2011-12. The corresponding in-kind donation amount for rented space was also adjusted accordingly.
2. The per-member stipend was increased, as we anticipate increasing the overall average member stipend next year. This is a strategy to ensure that we are able to retain highly motivated members for a second year of service who are struggling with the stipend, to make the program a viable option for them.

Enrollment

As of December 6, 2010 our current enrollment is 100%.

Retention

As of December 6, 2010 our retention rate is 100%. This is the first year of our AmeriCorps program.

Compliance with 30 Day Enrollment/Exit Policies

100% of our 33 members were enrolled and 0 had been exited as of December 13, 2010.

Action taken to remedy compliance issues

Not applicable

Explanation for participation in CV audit

Narratives

Not applicable

Performance Measures

SAA Characteristics

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

Priority Areas

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

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 33

Service Categories

Tutoring and Child (Elementary) Literacy

National Performance Measures

Priority Area: Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Members will act as Site Coordinators responsible for overseeing all aspects of the one-to-one tutoring program at a school-based reading center. Daily responsibilities include: coordinating volunteer and student schedules; offering daily 1-on-1 coaching to tutors before, after and during each tutoring session; offering assistance to any tutors who are having difficulty working with their student at any given time; providing initial orientation and training, as well as monthly formal training sessions to volunteers. In addition to daily check-ins with each volunteer at the conclusion of their tutoring session, Members also provide direct support during tutoring sessions to ensure high program quality. Members act as liaisons to facilitate communication with and gather feedback from parents, classroom teachers, literacy coaches and specialized educators. Through this collaborative process, Members develop individualized tutoring plans for each student in the Reading Partners program, which are shared with volunteers and used for the basis of daily and weekly check-ins with volunteers. Members are on-site for 8 hours per day, overseeing 4-8 sessions that last 45 minutes each. During each session, the Member typically oversees 5 tutors working individually with 5 students, resulting in a total average of 20-40 tutors in the center per day. During the time before and after sessions, Members have individual conversations with volunteers to offer feedback based on their own observations or those of teachers in order to monitor progress and maintain high program quality for each student. Each tutor records notes and progress at the conclusion of each tutoring session so that Members (and tutors) can review them on a weekly basis and offer their own feedback in written form. While most centers require one on-site Member, sites that have higher volunteer numbers require multiple Member placements at a single school site. Members oversee a program that provides curriculum-based tutoring for 90 minutes per week to each student. The Reading Partners curriculum was developed in-house by literacy experts in partnership with the Stanford School of Education. Members assess all students' literacy levels using the Rigby Ultra PM Benchmark assessment three times per year to determine progress.

Result: Output

Result.

Students will receive literacy tutoring.

Indicator: ED1: Students who start in an AC ED program.

Target : 1600 students (1500 high-need target population) will participate in our AmeriCorps Education program.

Target Value: 1600

National Performance Measures

Result.

Instruments: tudent attendance log to collect data on number of students in program.

Completed by Members.
Frequency: Updated daily

PM Statement: 1600 students (1500 high-need target population) will participate in our AmeriCorps Education program.

Result: Output

Result.

Students will receive literacy tutoring.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) ED2: Number of students who complete an AC ED program.

Target : 1,020 high-need target population students will complete participation of the AmeriCorps

Education program (16 hours).

Target Value: 1020

Instruments: Student attendance log to collect data on number of students in program.

Completed by Members.
Frequency: Updated daily

PM Statement: 1,020 high-need target population students will complete participation of the AmeriCorps Education program (16 hours).

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Students who receive tutoring will increase their literacy skills.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) ED5: Students w/ improved academic performance.

Target : 1. 65% of 1020 (663) high-need target students receiving at least 16 hours of tutoring will

increase their literacy skills by 1 grade level or more.

Target Value: 663

Instruments: Rigby PM Ultra Benchmark literacy assessment to collect data on student progress in literacy skills.
Rigby assessment results correlate to CST ELA improvement (regression run annually).

Completed by: Members
Frequency: Beginning, middle & end of year

PM Statement: 1. 65% of 1020 (663) high-need target students receiving at least 16 hours of tutoring will increase their literacy skills by 1 grade level or more.

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Not Applicable

Labor Union Concurrence

Sent