

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 conform to the Corporation's eGrants System)		
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS):	3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE: 13-JAN-11	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:
2b. APPLICATION ID: 11AC125068	4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER: 09ACHAR0010001
5. APPLICATION INFORMATION		
LEGAL NAME: Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative (SEARK) DUNS NUMBER: 112897152	NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Jenny Satterlee TELEPHONE NUMBER: (870) 367-4825 FAX NUMBER: (870) 367-9877 INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: jenny.satterlee@se2.k12.ar.us	
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 1022 Scogin Dr Monticello AR 71655 - 9709 County: Drew		
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 710552055	7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Non-Profit 7b. Local Education Agency State Education Agency	
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: AR Smart Start AmeriCorps Tutoring	
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): Arkansas, Ashley, Cleveland, Calhoun, Drew, Bradley, Chicot, Lincoln, Desha	11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):	
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 09/01/11 END DATE: 08/31/12	14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant <input type="text" value="AR 004"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="AR 004"/>	
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: <input type="text" value="3"/>	16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON: DATE: 13-JAN-11 <input type="checkbox"/> NO. PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372	
a. FEDERAL \$ 458,725.00	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
b. APPLICANT \$ 237,517.00		
c. STATE \$ 0.00		
d. LOCAL \$ 0.00		
e. OTHER \$ 0.00		
f. PROGRAM INCOME \$ 0.00		
g. TOTAL \$ 696,242.00		
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: Jenny Satterlee	b. TITLE: Program Director	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (870) 367-4825
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 05/09/11

Narratives

Executive Summary

Executive Summary:

The SEARK Cooperative in collaboration with fourteen school districts located in nine counties address identified community needs in education through part time members in Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps Program. Smart Start AmeriCorps volunteers provide targeted populations with necessary services to improve student academic performance. The AmeriCorps volunteers receive teacher training and have the opportunity to serve within their own economically distressed communities.

Rationale and Approach

Rationale and Approach:

The Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative (SEARK ESC), in collaboration with fourteen school districts located in nine southeast Arkansas counties, proposes the Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps Program to address identified community needs in education. The 73 half-time members will provide support services and complement the services of the No Child Left Behind Act addressing local educational needs that existing programs do not have the resources to provide.

The SEARK ESC target area is a genuine example of a community which targets the 2006 focus area of "ensuring a brighter future for all of America's youth." In the target area, children grow up in severely distressed communities and are at higher risk of school failure, unemployment, and persistent poverty due to a need for additional educational resources to complement existing support. Southeast Arkansas children live in families with a median income that is one-third that of the median income in the United States. Fifty percent more children in southeast Arkansas live in poverty than the national average (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2002).

NEED: The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program is a comprehensive program that builds upon the successes and lessons learned from the previous AmeriCorps Smart Start program by integrating

Narratives

national service, parental involvement, community engagement, and individual volunteerism into an area of high economic and educational need.

Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program provides a multi-faceted initiative that will engage young people in service; provide K-fourth grade students (including English as a Second Language (ESL) students) with strong role models, mentors, and tutors; and increase opportunities for teacher training and volunteering in the economically depressed Delta area of Southeast Arkansas.

Staff from the Office of Community Engagement at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock have determined that "residents of counties included in the educational target area experience income levels that average between 11 and 31 percent below the state average." A majority of counties covered in this service area fall within the bottom quartile economically on all measures of income, poverty, and education. Additionally, the counties in the target area have a poverty rate that is twice the amount of the overall Arkansas poverty level.

The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program accurately targets high-risk students in school districts with great need for individualized tutoring." By providing additional tutors and mentors directly in the schools, the Arkansas AmeriCorps Smart Start program addresses the needs of at-risk poverty students in 16 local schools that have been placed in school improvement by the Arkansas State Board of Education.

These are Delta schools that generally have fewer resources available because of the economic conditions of the Delta. Providing these additional resources through the Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program is greatly needed and will make a difference. Harold L. Hodgkinson states in his book, *What Should We Call People*, "Low achievement is closely correlated with lack of resources, and numerous studies have documented the correlation between low socioeconomic status and low

Narratives

achievement." (1995).

There is a growing enrollment of English as Second Language (ESL) students in the target area schools. Due to language and cultural barriers, ESL students require more supplemental services than local schools in the target area have resources to provide. The proposed AmeriCorps program provides mentors and tutors with appropriate ESL training in the target area schools for a minimum of five hours per week. Appropriate ESL training is critical to ensure a better success rate for students in the target area. Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program will provide ESL tutoring to all mentors and tutors.

Parental involvement and engagement is low in the target area schools. The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program will address this through classes for parents and parental engagement in the program. It is imperative that parents become involved in the education of their children for schools to meet adequate progress expectations as defined by No Child Left Behind. The National PTA Standards for Parent/Family Involvement cite more than 85 studies that document the "profound and comprehensive benefits for students, families, and schools, when parents and family members become participants in their children's education." (National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs (1998).

Description of Activities and Member Roles: The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program supports the AmeriCorps priority area of ensuring a brighter future for America's youth by providing; individualized tutoring for high risk children, tutoring for ESL children, promoting parental and community involvement in the education process, and attending training specific to school and community needs.

TUTORING: Members will provide support services for the No Child Left Behind Act addressing local educational needs that existing programs do not have the resources to provide. The proposed tutoring

Narratives

activities employ tutoring strategies that are scientifically-based and include the five components of reading instruction identified by the National Reading Panel: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Mentoring teachers in area schools are using Arkansas Reading First strategies based on the five components of reading instruction mandated by No Child Left Behind. Therefore, classroom instruction and tutoring will be cohesive. AmeriCorps members will work with a minimum of 700 students in grades K-4, who are at-risk of academic failure as identified by their teachers. Members will complete at least 25,200 hours of one-on-one tutoring during school hours throughout the 36 weeks of the school year.

A typical part-time AmeriCorps members' day and weekly attendance schedule will be based on the needs of the sponsor teacher as they relate to classroom instruction. Members' schedules will be flexible to meet individual students' needs. Part-time members will provide a minimum of one hour of individualized reading and mathematics instruction to students each week for a total of 700 hours. Students served by an AmeriCorps member are tracked for progress and improvement in mathematics and reading skills.

Outputs: Member journals will reveal targeted students receiving individualized math and reading instruction weekly for a total of 700 hours.

Intermediate Outcome: At least 85% of 700 children will show at least moderate improvement in teacher completed inventories.

End Outcome: 700 students will demonstrate an increase in grade equivalence scores on the stanford 10 achievement tests in reading and/or math.

Output: AmeriCorps Members will spend part of each day in literacy and math activities working with small groups of students. These groups of students are formed on an at-need basis and will not be tracked for progress. The AmeriCorps member, principal, and the program director will work together to determine members' weekly schedules at each school site. Once set, this schedule will be adhered to for the remainder of the program year.

Narratives

* ESL TUTORING: AmeriCorps members will work with the English as a Second Language Coordinator at each service site to provide additional help through individual literacy tutoring for ESL students for a minimum of one hour each week for each student. These students will be tracked separately because of their needs. To determine levels of gain in achievement, students will be pre- and post-tested using Stanford 10 Achievement Test (Sat-10), which has been adopted as the standardized achievement test for Arkansas. High school students in foreign language courses or who have a proficiency in a relevant second language will be recruited to also work with ESL students in grades K-4 as a component of community service outside of the classroom.

Output: Members' daily journal will reveal each ESL students they are assigned was provided a minimum of one hour of tutoring each week.

Intermediate Outcome: Similar to additional at-risk students served by the Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program, sponsor teachers and AmeriCorps members will use performance assessments as benchmarks during the year to assess whether a student has acquired basic knowledge and can apply basic skills. Tutoring effectiveness inventories, completed by teachers, will be used at the end of the first semester to measure increased classroom improvement with respect to academic performance, interest in school, and completion of homework. To determine levels of gain in achievement, students will be pre- and post-tested using Stanford 10 standardized achievement test, which has been adopted as the standardized achievement test for Arkansas.

End Outcome: For each of the three years, 85% (at least 43 students) will show at least moderate improvement as reflected in end of year testing.

* PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program will address parental involvement in two ways: through basic skill sessions for parents and implementation of a parent advisory council.

Members will contact parents and encourage attendance at basic skill sessions which will address

Narratives

particular needs of the parents at the school site. AmeriCorps members and community volunteers will provide parents with materials and planned tutoring activities designed to extend classroom instruction in literacy and mathematics activities at home. Members will hold four evening sessions at each school district site. The AmeriCorps members will work with the Parent Involvement Coordinator in each school district to plan these meetings. A sponsor teacher from each site will provide assistance and supervision during the implementation of these meetings.

Outcome: AmeriCorps members will have parents attending sign in as they attend sessions. No less than 50% of targeted parents will attend sessions.

* COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program is a key component in supporting community volunteerism and engagement in schools within the target area. The program supports 2006 target areas "building armies of compassion" and "building engaged citizens" by creating a mechanism for connecting young people in service to the community. Community volunteer participation is a key component of the program and is intertwined through on-going volunteer recruitment, community engagement within the schools served, and two signature service projects. Seventy three AmeriCorps members will work with approximately five to thirty high school students at each high school in the SEARK target area, dependent on school size. The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program seeks to engage 75 high school students annually in after-school tutoring time and/or service projects with Kindergarten through fourth grade students. Arkansas state accreditation standards require all public schools in the target area to provide an opportunity to students for community service outside the traditional classroom environment. The program will provide a service-learning environment for high school students by connecting young people for mentoring and tutoring with elementary school students. AmeriCorps members will provide tutor training for volunteers based on training provided by the SEARK Coop. This train-the-trainer

Narratives

methodology will enable AmeriCorps members, high school volunteers, and Kindergarten through fourth grade students to receive the benefits of training.

To celebrate and continue successes in the schools and surrounding communities within the target area, AmeriCorps members, along with tutors and mentors, will implement two signature service days.

Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps members will provide information about national service days including, but not limited to, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and National Volunteer Week. With a goal of uniting the signature service projects with national days of service, and the mission of Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program, the community is further connected with national service while also addressing local needs.

Output: Members' will successfully recruit 5% of high school students to assist in after-school tutoring programs and/or service projects. Members and teachers will monitor process through reflective journals.

Each signature service project will be connected to the mission of the program by providing academic intervention to at-risk students in the 16 target school districts. The two signature service projects are a key component to connecting the community at large to the Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program, as well as celebrating the partnership between student volunteers and students served.

Output: Members' will successfully recruit 5% of high school students to assist in after-school tutoring programs and/or service projects. Members and teachers will monitor process through reflective journals.

Intermediate Outcome: AmeriCorps members will complete a program report following each signature activity regarding the effectiveness of the planning process and the outcome of the program.

End Outcome: Seventy Three members will complete no less than two signature projects annually.

* COMPLIANCE WITH PROHIBITED SERVICE ACTIVITIES: The SEARK Coop will ensure

Narratives

compliance with the rules on prohibited service activities as listed in the AmeriCorps Guidelines. Member training at the beginning of the program year will address these issues. Members will sign forms to be placed in member files regarding these activities along with confidentiality and drug-free workplace. Members will also sign a consent form to be tested for drugs at any time during the service year if the program director deems drug testing appropriate. To comply with Arkansas state policy with members having substantial direct contact with children in elementary schools, criminal record checks will be conducted by the Arkansas State Police. A national sex offender check will also be administered on each member. Members will have a tuberculosis (TB) skin test administered at the county health department.

* ADDED VALUE TO THE SEARK ESC'S EXISTING SERVICES: The SEARK AmeriCorps Smart Start program fits perfectly with the SEARK Coop's mission and 25 years of experience in providing effective and high quality service to member schools with the overall goal of effectively promoting student achievement. The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program operated successfully in a three-year cycle of AmeriCorps state-direct funding. The SEARK Coop's full staff, the area school administrators and staff, and the communities of the projected sites are all very familiar and have experience with the Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program while supporting its efforts.

* RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS: The SEARK Coop is home to three additional programs funded by the CNCS: Arkansas Future Teacher Initiative!, Foster Grandparents and Digital Divide Programs. The AR Future Teacher Initiative! and Foster Grandparent Program complements the Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program goals. The AR Future Teacher Initiative Program has members working with preschool aged children preparing them for kindergarten. This program partners with the Arkansas Better Chance Program. The Foster Grandparent program engages seniors in one-on-one tutoring with at-risk children at schools also served by the SEARK Coop. Both programs provide mentors and tutors in the schools yet, the two programs bring two very different skill sets to the target area schools. One of the goals of AR

Narratives

AmeriCorps Smart Start is to engage young people in teaching and inspire a new generation of teachers in an area of severe teacher shortage. The presence of Foster Grandparents and AmeriCorps Smart Start provides additional resources, partnerships, and opportunity for educational improvement to the target schools.

OVERALL PROGRAM OUTCOMES 1. Tutored students' achievement levels in reading and math will increase. 2. ESL students' achievement levels will increase. 3. Parent participation in their child's education will be more effectual. 4. Community and high school volunteers will serve education needs in the target area. 5. AmeriCorps Members will develop personally and professionally through newly acquired learning and skills. 6. Additional volunteers will be recruited to build on AmeriCorps members' community-based impact.

PROGRAM OUTCOME MEASUREMENT: The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program director, school site principals, and members will share responsibility in collecting data for tracking and evaluating progress toward meeting and achieving performance measures. Evaluation data concerning progress of children in individualized reading and mathematics services are designed to give pre- and post-service scores. The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program has developed a system for collecting and organizing data on an ongoing basis by reporting progress and generating reports. The program will utilize the AmeriCorps Web-Based Reporting System to enroll members.

Self Assessment and Improvement: Tutoring effectiveness inventories, completed by each teacher, will be completed at the end of each semester to identify members strengths and weaknesses. Program staff, direct supervisors, and members will develop strategic plans to strengthen identified weaknesses and monitor for improvement.

Involvement in the Community: Community involvement in the SEARK ESC AmeriCorps Smart Start

Narratives

Program is essential to ensure community educational needs are identified and met through the program.

* Past Involvement: The southeast Arkansas area communities' school superintendents, principals, teachers, and AmeriCorps members met on September 1, 2004, with the Corporation for National and Community Service Program Officer, Daniel Barutta; Arkansas Service Commission Director, Albert Schneider; Arkansas Department of Volunteerism Director, Sherry Anderson; Former SEARK Coop Director, Bruce Terry; and former Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps Program Director, Sherry Gregory, to demonstrate support of the Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps Program. This meeting was a testimonial service of how the program met needs of area schools and communities. Teachers and principals praised the work of the AmeriCorps volunteers and all attendees pledged support to its continuation.

AmeriCorps members' impact reaches far beyond the educational sector of the target area. Area business leaders and civic organizations look to members for volunteer support and information about national service.

* Present: A program advisory board will be established which will consist of business and civic leaders, parents, teachers, and AmeriCorps members. This board will meet quarterly with the purpose of providing community-based input and leadership in the program. The advisory board will also interact with AmeriCorps members to understand members' role in the community and the program. In turn, Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program members will work with the community advisory council as well as local businesses and civic leaders to encourage projects which foster community volunteerism and engagement. In past program years, local businesses donated door prizes and money for parent meetings and signature projects.

To provide awareness and to educate the community about the program, the program director and members will speak at civic meetings and manage booths at college career days, county fairs, and other community venues. A community survey will be completed in late spring to provide feedback on the

Narratives

effectiveness of the program.

Potential for replication: The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program has a very strong record of success in the target area. This program provides a powerful example of school districts who, with limited resources, demonstrate their commitment to the mission and vision of national service through leadership and financial support. This program is testament to the substantial number of AmeriCorps alumni in the target area who are now employed in the professional education ranks as a result, in great part, of their term of service and associated experiences. These living successes prove that small group and one-on-one intervention strategies improve at-risk students' performance. In addition, the program now seeks to empower high school students in service-learning and civic engagement as mentors to elementary school children. In a nation experiencing tremendous shifts in population and wealth from rural areas to urban centers, Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program sets an example of successful national service programming in the rural Arkansas Delta, a region of great socioeconomic challenge, not unlike many rural regions.

Organizational Capability

Organizational Capacity:

It is the mission of the Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative to assist the member schools in more effective and more equitable use of their shared resources, and to provide shared services for the better education of children and youth.

The Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative (SEARK ESC) was established in 1981 as one of two education cooperatives established in Arkansas as a result of passage of Act 360 by the Arkansas General Assembly. The SEARK ESC has grown and changed sites from the original site on the University of Arkansas as Monticello campus to its current site at 1022 Scogin Drive in Monticello in 1997. The Cooperative was recently expanded increasing its size from 15,000 sq. ft. to 23,600 sq. ft. to

Narratives

accommodate new programs and other programs requiring more space due to growth. The current number of employees is in excess of 150 with an additional 185 AmeriCorps Volunteers and 128 Foster Grandparent Volunteers. The current annual budget is approximately \$14,000,000.00.

This ESC currently serves 15 public school districts in nine surrounding counties. Not all school districts served are members of the SEARK ESC. The SEARK ESC is governed by its thirteen member school districts. Each of the 13 superintendents is a SEARK ESC Board Member. One of the thirteen board members is elected annually to serve as board president. The board hires a director to oversee program, employees, and services housed at the SEARK ESC. The SEARK ESC has a personnel committee made up of certified and non-certified employees who make recommendations to the director to present to the board. Policies and Procedures are in place to govern both the board and cooperative personnel. Board members meet monthly to address cooperative business. Each program or department within the ESC has a program coordinator or director. Each coordinators/director is responsible for supervising his/her staff. The SEARK ESC would coordinate all activities and provide appropriate financial accounting services through its director and board members.

Key program and fiscal staff responsible for the SEARK AmeriCorps Smart Start Program are highly qualified and effective. Key staff members include:

Karen Eoff, SEARK ESC Director, she has 27 years of educational experience, which includes 17 years of administrative experience as assistant director of the SEARK ESC. Ms. Eoff has been the Teacher Center Coordinated for those 17 years as well as the Gifted and Talented Coordinator for two of those years. Ms. Eoff holds several certifications including district administration. MS. Eoff has been involved in the Non-Traditional Licensure Program for 18 years and has served as the Co-Coordinator of the SEARK site for six years. She serves on the statewide testing committee and has been involved in the development of target tests. She supervises target testing at the SEAK ESC site.

Narratives

The AmeriCorps Program Director, Jenny Satterlee, has 15.5 years of educational experience. Ms. Satterlee holds a 1-6 grade certification in elementary education and taught elementary grades for 11 years. She has been director of the Smart Start Program for 4.5 years and the AR Future teacher program for 1 year. She maintains constant communication with site supervisors via, telephone, email, and site visits.

The program director will support and oversee service sites by:

- * Making monthly visits to the school sites and additional visits when necessary. The purpose of these visits is to meet with sponsor teachers, principals, and members in order to identify issues, strengths, weaknesses, and make needed service delivery adjustments to ensure high quality service.

- * Requiring program members to submit members' time sheets (documented by mentoring teacher and/or site principal), monthly success stories, documentation on parent involvement activities, and signature projects along with other requested documents by the fifth working day of each month to the central office.

- * Members will receive basic computer training, which will include e-mail. Each member will establish an e-mail account during training in order to communicate with the program director and other members. Members at each service site will be provided access to the internet.

- * SEARK ESC will provide training and technical assistance to each member related to their particular member responsibilities.. The SEARK Coop has the ability to provide effective technical assistance. As a member of the established Arkansas Educational Service Cooperative Network, it provides a strong resource base that includes on-site training and technical assistance provided by educational specialists in all areas related to this proposal: math, literacy, parent involvement, technology, early childhood, and health.

- * Mentoring teachers and principals from each site will provide technical assistance to AmeriCorps members in developing strategies to tutor individual students and strategies to be used by parents to promote their children's basic skills in reading and mathematics.

Narratives

* School sites will provide technical assistance to their members through on-site trainings, along side classroom teachers, and paraprofessionals. The program director will provide technical assistance to principals and mentoring teachers at each service site through orientation training and monthly site-visits.

Host site selections are based on:

* Host site schools must provide educational services to children in grades K-fourth in the southeast Arkansas service area with priority given to sites with previous success in hosting a member.

* Member placement sites will focus on schools with the greatest need for improved academic achievement.

* The program director will establish a good working rapport with each principal and superintendent from every site. If there is a question or concern, the program director or SEARK administrator will call or e-mail for clarity.

* In September of the program year, the program director will invoice each school site for cash match through the SEARK Coop accounting/accounts receivable office. Past experience shows cash match funds have been received the following October after September invoices have been sent.

* **TRACK RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS** The SEARK ESC has the experience, and ability to administer a federal grant as indicated in the Independent Auditor's Report to the Legislative Joint Auditing Committee, Division of Legislative Audit of the State of AR, 2003. The report states, "The Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative complied, in all material respects, with the requirements referred to above that are applicable to each of its major federal programs for the year ended June 30, 2003." The SEARK Coop presently administers 65 federal and state grants and approximately 25 other pass-through accounts for a total budget of over \$14,000,000.

Narratives

The SEARK ESC maintains connections between the host sites and ensures the programs overall mission and vision is maintained by each site by:

* Volunteers are encouraged to communicate with each other and share information regarding positive experiences and successful projects.

* Volunteers from each site have more than four training opportunities annually that bring members from multiple sites together giving them the opportunity to network and share ideas.

* Host site supervisors meet annually for orientation to the Smart Start program, its mission and vision, program requirements, program procedures, and volunteer limitations.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

BUDGET/COST EFFECTIVENESS:

Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps has cash and in-kind support from local school districts, an Arkansas-based foundation (WAL-MART FOUNDATION), and a community based nonprofit (SEARK Coop) who are working collaboratively to improve education for children in the Arkansas Delta. Each school districts are committed to providing long-term support to the program through cash and in-kind commitments. The SEARK Coop has a comprehensive six-part plan for sustainability that incorporates current, existing, and future financial resources. Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps engages parents, school administrators, community members, youth, and SEARK staff together to create a diverse, comprehensive, sustainable program. Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps will expand educational opportunities for children by incorporating one-on-one and small group intervention to improve mathematics and reading levels in target schools. The program targets young people who aspire to be

Narratives

professional teachers. It provides experience and training to students while providing opportunities through state wide scholarships to continue their education and achieve teacher certification. This initiative engages young people within their school districts to help others through mentoring, tutoring, and service-learning. Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps creates a network of volunteers who are engaged in improving education in the Delta. Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps has the support of the communities in the SEARK service area, the Wal-Mart Foundation, and the SEARK Coop. The participating school districts will provide \$274,672 in cash and in-kind match for member support. A grant requesting \$50,000 to the Wal-Mart Foundation will be submitted.

In program years, 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 Wal-Mart Foundation donated each year \$100,000 to the Smart Start Program. In 2008-2009 Wal-Mart Foundation donated \$50,000 to the Smart Start Program. Wal-Mart did not provide funding for the 2009-2010 program year due to the fact the SEARK Cooperative has not become a 501-c3 establishment. The cooperative is in the process of acquiring that title.

Smart Start Program was awarded \$5,000 through AR Community Foundation to support an "Oral Health Education Community Service Project." All members have been trained to provide kindergarten through third grade students in 14 schools with oral health education, educational material for parents, and a dental health kit. Smart Start members will collaborate with teachers, school nurses, and local health service agencies to ensure each student had the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain good oral health.

The SEARK Coop supports the program through in-kind and cash support for \$61,357 of the project. Arkansas Smart Start has the comprehensive community based and state-wide support to make a sustainable, long-lasting impact on education in the Arkansas Delta. All partners agree that the need is paramount and the proposed solutions engage the entire community.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

Evaluation Summary or Plan:

Narratives

The SEARK Coop can effectively develop and administer the program with proper supervision, monitoring, evaluation, and financial controls. In 1985, the Arkansas Legislature authorized the establishment of the Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative to provide educational support services in school districts located in seven counties of southeast Arkansas. The SEARK Coop is centrally located in Monticello, Arkansas and serves a large rural population. The SEARK Coop Board of Directors is composed of the 14 school district superintendents. The SEARK Coop Director, Mrs. Karen Eoff, reports to the SEARK Coop Board of Directors and the Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program director reports to Mrs. Eoff. The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program director, school site principals, and members will share responsibility in collecting data for tracking and evaluating progress toward meeting and achieving performance measures. The Arkansas Smart Start AmeriCorps program has developed a system for collecting and organizing data on an ongoing basis, reporting progress, and generating reports. The program will utilize the AmeriCorps Web-Based Reporting System to enroll members. Members will receive a minimum of 48 hours of in-service training, resulting in a member orientation of basic instructional tools needed for providing effective individualized reading and mathematics services. The program director will prepare, administer member training assessments, and post-tests covering in-service material as a method of evaluation of members. Tests will be scored by the director to show member progress. Members will gain practical experience in individual reading and mathematics assistance by working with their mentor teachers, resulting in new tutoring skills. An assessment of member tutoring skill performance will be developed by the program director. Each mentor teacher will measure improved tutoring skills of members using this assessment. Service delivery records documenting member attendance, service delivery, and service results as required for reporting will be completed by members on a daily basis. Each AmeriCorps member's service delivery plan will serve as documentation of experience and planning. AmeriCorps member journals will document success stories, occurring as a result of service delivery at their site. Members will journal at

Narratives

least one success story, concern, or discovery each month. These success stories will be copied and compiled by the program director each month to serve as qualitative data of program success. Student achievement will be monitored through the use of performance assessments and reading inventories on an ongoing basis, and adjustment of individual learning plans for students will be made, as required, at a joint meeting of the sponsor teacher and the member, ensuring maximum educational success. Pre- and post Stanford 10 Achievement Test (SAT-10) scores will document reading and math level gains for the program year. Parent involvement meetings will be documented by signatures of attending parents on a log of attendance form, and members will complete a parent involvement form after each meeting. The summary form and the attendance form will be mailed to the central office. AmeriCorps Signature Projects and student volunteerism will be documented by signatures of volunteers on a log of participation form. Members will complete an AmeriCorps Signature Project form after each community service project. The AmeriCorps Signature Project form and the participation form will be mailed to the central office. According to SEARK Coop policy, a program/program director evaluation form will be mailed to area schools to be completed by the superintendent or principal at the school receiving services. The administrator will complete the form and mail it to the SEARK Coop Director, Mrs. Eoff, for review. Mrs. Eoff and the program director will then conference concerning the evaluation outcomes. The program director will make necessary adjustments to ensure proper program management.

Amendment Justification

n/a

Clarification Summary

CLARIFICATION ITEMS FOR 2011 2012:

Section 1-C: Please itemize estimated expenses for travel to CNCS sponsored meetings to include number of attendees, airfare, hotel, per diem, ground transportation, etc.

Narratives

Itemized expenses for travel associated with CNCS meetings for two Program Staff employees.
Commercial airline tickets @ \$700 + registration fees \$750 + lodging \$460 + mileage \$90 = \$2000.

Section 1-C: Please itemize estimated expenses for meals, registration costs, and hotel fees and indicate the number of attendees associated with the line item.

Itemized expenses for meals, registration costs, and hotel fees are for two program staff employees.
Mileage to events- \$384 (\$.42 x 457 miles x 2) Per diem- \$366 (\$61 x 2 x 3 days) Hotel Fees \$300 and registration fees \$450.

Section 1-C: Please confirm that 2-day trainings @ the coop are all-day events.

Trainings and meetings held at the cooperative are an all day event; 9:00-4:00.

Section 1-F: Please remove the grant writer expense for 10 days at \$450 per day from the budget.

This section has been omitted.

Section 1-G: Please explain the daily rate of \$540 for the math training, literacy training, exit/resume training, technology and orientation training. Please explain the daily rate for the member training on-site at 23 sites, what does the \$540 rate consist of?

Specialists that are located in school districts, our cooperative and other cooperatives help train members to work with kindergarten through fourth grade students using strategies their sites use. Guest speakers and staff are asked to conduct sessions at orientation trainings. The rate consists of daily rate of \$320 (8 hours x \$40), mileage \$100 and room rate of \$120 if guests travel.

PROGRAMMATIC CLARIFICATION ITEMS:

Narratives

Criminal history checks will be conducted on all members, employees, and/or other individuals who receive a salary, education award, living allowance, stipend or similar payment from the grant, regardless of whether these costs are coming from federal or non-federal share.

Section 1-A: Please explain how the host supervision expense of \$1,800 for principals and teachers was determined.

The schools/sites provide site supervision and meetings on an average of 2 hours per week at a rate of \$25 per hour. (\$50 hours per week x (4) x 23 staff members x 9 months = \$41,400.

Section 1-H: Please explain how the calculation for the evaluation expense totaling \$3,650 was determined.

This section will be omitted. Program staff was under the impression the program must include this amount each year for contracted outside agency program evaluation.

Based on experience, SEARK Cooperative participated in a recent statewide evaluation that was charged at the rate of \$100 per MSY.

Section 1-I: Please explain the purpose of the annual Family Fun Fest and associated expenses of \$1,000 related to 2 bouncy gyms and obstacle course rentals given the change in the program design which now exclusively focuses on academic tutoring activities.

This section will be omitted. The program was a sponsor for the event also known as National Children's Week. Children that are tutored and receive services through AmeriCorps were invited and

Narratives

present at this event. AmeriCorps members volunteered at the event each year.

Section 1-I: Please explain the 14 day usage of training facilities. The member training section only identifies 7 days for training in specific topics.

Due to AmeriCorps members attending college classes with many different schedules, members are given a two day option of attending the training. Giving members this option has increased attendance in trainings.

Performance Measure Clarification Items:

The Smart Start Program is in its last year of the funding cycle and as opted not to incorporate national performance measures. However, if awarded in the recompetete application, Smart Start will opt into the national performance measures.

Section 1-C: Please itemize estimated expenses for meals, registration costs, and hotel fees and indicate the number of attendees associated with the line item.

Hotel 2 nights@\$75 = \$150 + registration \$225 + per diem 3 days @ \$61/day = \$183 + 457 miles @ \$.42/mi = \$192; total = \$750 x 2 staff

Continuation Changes

The Smart Start Program will no longer engage members serving as school health members. The Coordinated School Health pilot began with Smart Start program, but is now funded as an independent formula program. The school health activities and performance measures have now been removed from the Smart Start Program. All members in the Smart Start Program will be engaging in academic tutoring activities.

The program recruited all 73 part time member slots. Six of the 73 members quit before the end of the

Narratives

program year. Two of the six members were able to be replaced before reaching 30% of their hours. These two members that were replaced completed their term of service with outstanding evaluations. Four of the six members that quit their term of service were not able to be replaced as they had already completed 30% of their hours. The program completed the year with a 95% retention rate.

Performance Measures have been updated and revised.

Performance Measures

SAA Characteristics

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

Priority Areas

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Futures |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input 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 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 36.5

Service Categories

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Service-Learning | Primary <input type="checkbox"/> | Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tutoring and Child (Elementary) Literacy | Primary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other Education | Primary <input type="checkbox"/> | Secondary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Individual Tutoring for At-Risk Students

Service Category: Tutoring and Child (Elementary) Literacy

Measure Category: Needs and Service Activities

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

73 AmeriCorps members will provide, during 36 weeks of the school year, a minimum of 25,000 hours of individualized reading and /or mathematics tutoring plus additional small group tutoring. Tutoring activities are designed to provide additional assistance in order to meet NO Child Left Behind.

Results

Result: End Outcome

Completion of tutoring will lead to increased academic achievement in reading and math by participating students.

Indicator: student beneficiaries

Target: For each of the three years, 700 students will demonstrate an increase in grade equivalent scores in reading and/or math as recorded by the Stanford 10 Achievement Tests. Students will tracked individually and as a cohort by compari.

Target Value: 700

Result: End Outcome

Instruments: Stanford 10 Achievement tests

PM Statement: For each of the three years, 700 students will demonstrate an increase in grade equivalent scores in reading and/or math as recorded by the Stanford 10 Achievement Tests. Students will be tracked individually and as a cohort by comparison of pre and post tests administered in May of each year.

Prev. Yrs. Data

Result: Output

A minimum of 700 students in grades k-4 at risk for academic failure (as identified by their teachers) will receive during the 36 weeks of the school year at least 25,200 hours of one-on-one tutoring plus additional hours of small group tutoring.

Indicator: student beneficiaries

Target: At least 700 students in grades k-4 at academic risk will complete 25,200 hours of reading/or mathematics tutoring.

Target Value: 700

Instruments: Member logs and time sheets

PM Statement: A minimum of 700 students in grades k-4 at risk for academic failure (as identified by their teachers) will receive during the 36 weeks of the school year at least 25,200 hours of one-on-one tutoring plus additional hours of small group tutoring.

Prev. Yrs. Data

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Completion of tutoring leads to increased classroom improvement with respect to academic performance, interest in school and completion of homework.

Indicator: student beneficiaries

Target: For each of the three years, 85% (at least 595 students) will show at least moderate improvement as reflected in teacher completed inventories created by program director, defined as progressive in 4 of 7 areas.

Target Value: 595

Instruments: Mid year inventories on each student completed by teachers in January.

PM Statement: Completion of tutoring will lead to increased classroom improvement with respect to academic performance, interest in school and completion of homework where 85% of students will show at least moderate improvement as reflected in teacher completed inventories created by director, defined as progressive in 4 of 7 areas.

Prev. Yrs. Data

ESL Tutoring

Service Category: Tutoring and Child (Elementary) Literacy

Measure Category: Needs and Service Activities

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

AmeriCorps members will implement literacy tutoring consisting of one-on-one tutoring for at least

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

three hours each week to 50 ESL students.

Results

Result: Intermediate Outcome

One-on-one tutoring for ESL students leads to increased literacy skills for 50 students.

Indicator: improved reading scores

Target: For each of the three years, 85% (43 students) will show at least moderate improvement as reflected in teacher completed inventories in January defined as progressive in 4 of 7 areas.

Target Value: 50

Instruments: Teacher completed inventories

PM Statement: Completion of tutoring will lead to increased classroom improvement with respect to academic performance, interest in school and completion of homework where 85% of ESL students will show at least moderate improvement as reflected in Stanford 10 Achievement Tests.

Prev. Yrs. Data

Result: End Outcome

Completion of tutoring leads to increased literacy skills of 50 students served.

Indicator: improved reading scores

Target: For each of the three years 85% will show at least moderate improvement as reflected in end of the year testing.

Target Value: 43

Instruments: Stanford 10 Achievement Tests given in the spring.

PM Statement: For each of the three years 85% will show at least moderate improvement as reflected in end of the year testing.

Prev. Yrs. Data

Result: Output

A minimum of 50 at risk ESL students will receive tutoring services

Indicator: student beneficiaries

Target: A minimum of 50 at risk ESL students will receive tutoring services

Target Value: 50

Instruments: Member logs and timesheets

PM Statement: A minimum of 50 at risk ESL students will receive tutoring services

Prev. Yrs. Data

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Not Applicable

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable