

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: 21-JAN-11	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:														
2b. APPLICATION ID: 11ES122913	4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER: 10ESHTX0010001														
5. APPLICATION INFORMATION																
LEGAL NAME: Teach For America DUNS NUMBER: 621404383	NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Robert Carreon TELEPHONE NUMBER: (956) 630-6781 FAX NUMBER: (956) 682-7619 INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: robert.carreon@teachforamerica.org															
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 315 West 36th Street 7th Floor New York NY 10018 - 6404 County: New York																
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 133541913	7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Non-Profit 7b. Local Education Agency National Non-Profit (Multi-State)															
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 Fixed Amount Grant (State)	11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: Teach For America - Rio Grande Valley															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): Cameron County, Hidalgo County and Starr County in Texas; San Antonio, TX; Dallas, TX; Ft. Worth, TX	11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 08/01/11 END DATE: 07/30/12	14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant <input type="text" value="NY 008"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="TX 025"/>															
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;">\$ 370,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. APPLICANT</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 0.00</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;">\$ 370,000.00</td> </tr> </table>	a. FEDERAL	\$ 370,000.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 0.00	c. STATE	\$ 0.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00	e. OTHER	\$ 0.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 370,000.00	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	\$ 370,000.00															
b. APPLICANT	\$ 0.00															
c. STATE	\$ 0.00															
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e. OTHER	\$ 0.00															
f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00															
g. TOTAL	\$ 370,000.00															
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: Robert Carreon	b. TITLE: Executive Director	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (956) 630-6781														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 05/09/11														

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Executive Summary

The Teach for America State program has been operating in the Rio Grande Valley and is proposing an expansion to Dallas and San Antonio. The Dallas site was chartered in 2009 and the San Antonio site was opened in 2010. Teach For America-Rio Grande Valley opened in 1991, with a corps of 26 teachers. Today, 182 corps members work to unleash the potential of over 15,200 children growing up in low income communities of South Texas. They join 130 alumni working within education as model teachers, innovative school leaders, dynamic district staff, and in the private sector channeling necessary resources towards systemic education reform. Collectively, 500 Teach For America corps members teach in these three regions, impacting the lives of over 42,000 students across Dallas, San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley.

Rationale and Approach

1. RATIONALE & APPROACH

a. Compelling Community Need

Teach For America aims to eliminate educational inequity--the reality that in our country, where a child is born determines his or her educational outcomes and life prospects.

Today, the metropolitan areas of McAllen-Edinburg-Mission and Brownsville-Harlingen are among the fastest growing regions in the nation in terms of population. The percentage of high school and college graduates in these areas is also distinctly lower than those of high school and college graduates in Texas as a whole and the areas have some of the highest levels of income inequality in the nation according to Forbes.com (America's Most Unequal Cities, November 30, 2009).

Across the Valley- in the three county area in which we operate- there are over 300,000 students enrolled in the public school system. Compared to their counterparts in higher income communities, by the age of nine, students in the Rio Grande Valley are already three to four grade levels behind their higher-income peers in reading ability and one to two grade levels behind in math. As these children progress through school, this educational achievement gap only widens, to the point that a child who

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grows up in the low-income community of La Joya, Texas, is twelve times more likely to drop out of school than a child growing up in a more privileged area such as Highland Park, Texas. This means that every year in the Rio Grande Valley, more than 20,000 students drop out of school and nearly two dozen Valley schools were placed on the Texas Education Agency's 2007 list of low-performing schools. In short, students in our communities are already behind as early as the third grade and are most likely to continue to fall further and further behind each year they are in school without immediate intervention.

Research consistently demonstrates that good teaching is the single most important factor in student learning and that if schools can get effective teachers to students who need them, the teachers can impact children's life prospects ('The Real Value of Value Added' Education Trust, 2004). One recent study by prominent education theorists concluded that 'having a high quality teacher throughout elementary school can substantially offset or even eliminate the disadvantage of low socio-economic background' (Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 'Teachers, Schools and Academic Achievement,' 2002).

Despite this evidence, low-income students are less likely to have effective teachers in their classrooms than wealthier students by all measures ('The Real Value of Value Added,' 2004). Moreover, low-income children are also far more likely to have teachers who scored poorly on college and licensure exams (Jerald, 'All Talk, No Action: Putting and End to Out-of-Field Teaching,' Education Trust, 2002).

In Texas, the percentage of high school students classified as college ready is measured by the percent of students achieving commended performance on the 11th grade math and language arts TAKS. From the data below, we can easily see that the standard for proficiency at the 11th grade level -- meaning the required proficiency for graduation- 50 -- 58% is far below what the Texas Education Agency has determined to indicate college readiness (86 -- 90% mastery).

*Brownsville ISD: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency (56-70% Mastery): 78%; 11th Grade TAKS Proficiency (50-58% Mastery): 71%; College Ready Graduates (86-90% Mastery): 36%

*Donna ISD: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 66%;11th Grade Proficiency: 68% College Ready Graduates: 32%

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*Edcouch Elsa ISD: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 70%;11th Grade Proficiency: 64%; College Ready

Graduates: 40%

*Harlingen CISD: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 76%; 11th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 69%; College Ready

Graduates: 41%

*IDEA Public Schools: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 76%; 11th Grade Proficiency: 93%; College Ready

Graduates: 63%

*La Joya ISD: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 70%; 11th Grade Proficiency: 62%; College Ready

Graduates: 31%

*McAllen ISD: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 82%; 11th Grade Proficiency: 73%; College Ready

Graduates: 45%

*Mercedes ISD: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 69%;11th Grade Proficiency: 67%; College Ready

Graduates: 32%

*PSJA ISD: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 80%; 11th Grade Proficiency: 59%; College Ready Graduates:

27%

*Rio Grande City: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 81%; 11th Grade Proficiency: 71%; College Ready

Graduates: 32%

*Roma CISD: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 80%;11th Grade Proficiency: 75% College Ready Graduates:

31%

*San Benito ISD: 4th Grade TAKS Proficiency: 72%; 11th Grade Proficiency: 61%; College Ready

Graduates: 19%

Overall, in Region One, 76% of 4th graders passed the TAKS all subjects (Reading, math and writing). In 11th grade, 58% passed in all subjects (English, math, science and social studies).

Compared with the high performing school district of Highland Park ISD, which has a 4th grade TAKS proficiency of 99%, an 11th grade TAKS proficiency of 99% and 88% of its graduates are college ready, districts in our communities are struggling (TEA AEIS District Reports:

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<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2007/district.srch.html>).

Teach For America is playing a critical role in improving schools and communities across 35 rural and urban regions in our nation. Our mission is to build the movement to eliminate educational inequity by enlisting our nation's most promising future leaders in the effort. We do this by building a corps of outstanding recent college graduates of all academic majors who commit two years to teach in high need urban and rural schools and continue to effect change inside and outside the classroom well beyond their two years of service to ensure educational equity and excellence for all children. This year our 193 teachers teach in over 55 underserved schools in 12 districts across the Rio Grande Valley, impacting over 16,200 students on a daily basis.

b. Description of Activities and Member Roles

Teach for America-Rio Grande Valley recruits, trains and selects a diverse group of talented recent college graduates to teach in high need schools with the aim of effecting academic gains in student achievement. Our teachers, called "corps members," commit to become full-time teachers in K-12 classrooms for at least two years in schools across 11 traditional school districts and 1 charter school network.

The districts we serve are classified as "high-need" local education agencies by the federal government; in the Rio Grande Valley, 95 percent of the students we reach qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and the overwhelming majority of our students are Latino (97 percent).

While exact placement numbers change annually based on the needs of our partner school districts, the chart below shows our impact in the 2008-09 academic year:

*Brownsville ISD:17 Corps Members, 1,430 Students Impacted

*Harlingen CISD:4 Corps Members, 340 Students Impacted

*Donna ISD:33 Corps Members, 7,770 Students Impacted

*Edcouch-Elsa ISD:17 Corps Members, 1,430 Students Impacted

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*IDEA Public Schools:22 Corps Members, 1,850 Students Impacted

*La Joya ISD:12 Corps Members, 1,010 Students Impacted

*McAllen ISD:4 Corps Members, 340 Students Impacted

*Mercedes ISD:6 Corps Members, 500 Students Impacted

*PSJA ISD:25 Corps Members, 2100 Students Impacted

*San Benito CISD:5 Corps Members, 420 Students Impacted

*Rio Grande City CISD:13 Corps Members, 1,100 Students Impacted

*Roma ISD:16 Corps Members, 1,344 Students Impacted

Teach For America is helping to improve teacher quality in south Texas, our mission far exceeds filling classrooms. Corps members go above and beyond traditional expectations to ensure that more students facing the challenges of poverty are given the tools, encouragement and high expectations they require in order to succeed academically. From a qualification standpoint, 100 percent are considered "highly qualified" until the No Child Left Behind act upon entering the classroom and attend numerous trainings outside of school hours to improve their effectiveness. From a curriculum standpoint, they follow the teaching curriculum outlined by their individual schools while using the trainings and resources we provide in order to lead their students to ambitious academic goals and close the achievement gap between them and students in higher-income districts across Texas. And from a student investment standpoint, corps members frequently engage parents and families of their students, bringing them into classrooms and schools as volunteers.

In their service as full-time teachers, 200 full-time members will reach over 16,500 students every school day, build meaningful relationships with parents and school administration and fellow teachers, and provide extra instruction and opportunities for students that seek to maximize their academic achievement. In order to effect immediate and long term benefits for more students each year, the national and regional Teach For America staff executes the following key program activities:

*Recruiting and Selecting a talented and diverse group of candidates through an intensive admissions

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process.

*Training the corps through a residential summer institute in Houston where corps members teach in summer schools in Houston ISD, participate in content-area workshops and study our six-part curriculum.

*Placing the new teachers in the Rio Grande Valley's highest-need schools.

*Supporting teachers with local professional development and coaching for their first two years of teaching

*Continuing to motivate and connect them to our mission through an alumni program.

Please see Section C.2.b, Member Development, Training and Supervision for greater detail.

Our corps members utilize the resources, training and professional development support that we provide to help them achieve their goals. All of our corps members establish goals of leading their students to more than one academic year of growth in one school year to catch them up with their wealthier peers. In addition, they engage families of their students and other community members, bringing them into classrooms and schools as volunteers. Members also participate and lead extracurricular clubs and activities in their schools and engage in continually developing their citizenship and leadership skills. Starting and leading extracurricular activities for students in areas in which they excel (e.g., SAT preparation, coaching for sports, music groups, etc.) increases the richness of their students' educational experience and life opportunities. As a result of their work in the classroom and communities, corps members grow as active, informed citizens who contribute to communities in the Rio Grande Valley beyond their corps commitments.

Given the structure of our professional corps and our members' terms of service, we request 200 full-time member slots for our corps members. Due to the intensity of these positions and the fact that our corps members typically work 60+ hours per week, we are requesting full-time member slots. Our members will use these full-time awards to attain full professional certification during their service, and in many cases they will pursue an M.A. degree in education to advance their long-term interests. That

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they are part of the Americorps network, receiving Education Awards and bearing the Americorps name, drives our corps members that much more to excel and represent both Americorps and Teach For America in a positive light.

Throughout their service, our corps members work within the guidelines of the Americorps service activities. All members receive and must sign a corps member contract that includes information on prohibited service activities. All incoming corps members to Teach For America-Rio Grande Valley participate in a series of orientation sessions led by our staff that are designed to familiarize them with the expectations, requirements, and benefits of being an AmeriCorps member and to create an understanding of the community responsibilities and prohibited activities, as well as the rationale underpinning these obligations. In addition, we will continue to reinforce these requirements for member compliance during monthly email blasts and during periodic corps member general meetings. Finally, our local program directors interact with corps members directly, supporting their classroom performance and their professional development experience and ensuring they meet appropriate AmeriCorps standards. The orientation sessions and ongoing discussions with program staff help corps members develop a deeper understanding of their role as part of a national service movement as AmeriCorps members.

We also seek to instill in our corps members an ethic of service that will drive them to work towards this important cause well beyond their two-year commitments to Teach For America and Americorps. In fact, in the 2008-09 year, an overwhelming 98% of our AmeriCorps members reported that through their service as AmeriCorps members, they had developed an ethic of service that extends beyond their term of service and that they would use the skills they have developed in future education, service, or employment opportunities as reported on the Texas National Service End of Year Assessment.

Receiving a grant from AmeriCorps allows us to continue to have the resources to meet our targets and ultimately to change the academic trajectories of over 16,000 students in the schools we serve. It would allow us to identify additional opportunities for collaboration so that our teachers could partner with

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existing AmeriCorps programs serving similar populations, members will become part of a larger movement to effect change for low-income people within multiple service areas, and (3) support from AmeriCorps sends a public signal of its commitment to ensuring Teach For America remains an enduring part of the educational landscape of South Texas, helping to enable us to attract the additional resources necessary to sustain our work at scale for years to come.

c. Measurable Outputs and Outcomes

Our program will address the Education priority area and we will be using standard performance measures.

*Measure 1: Number of students who start in an AmeriCorps education program

*Measure 2: Number of students who complete participation in an AmeriCorps program

*Measure 12: Number of AmeriCorps members who begin serving as teachers through a Teacher Corps Program

*Measure 13: Number of AmeriCorps members who completed serving as teachers through a Teacher Corps program

*Measure 14: Number of individuals teaching in high need public schools

*Measure 15: Number of students in AmeriCorps teacher classrooms with improved academic performance

*Measure 16: Number of individuals teaching in public schools in the year after term of service

*Measure 17: Number of teachers remaining in the education field, but not teaching in the public school

d. Plan For Self-Assessment and Improvement

Teach For America-Rio Grande Valley is deeply engaged in a process of continuous improvement - measuring our progress against our goals, analyzing our program approach, and adapting that approach accordingly to increase our impact. We also believe strongly in the need for accountability to our goals.

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We have partnered with many external organizations and community members to continue our efforts towards improvement.

At the core of our efforts towards ongoing improvement is what we call the "formal observation cycle" that allows for program directors to support corps members on one-to-one level. At critical points throughout the year, Program Directors engage individually with corps members through observations and conversations to analyze student data, identify and address both strengths and weaknesses of members, and evaluate progress towards academic goals. Program Directors maintain an internal database that tracks member progress towards performance measure targets and that is used to guide individual member development. Program Directors are also visiting service sites and gathering feedback from school and district personnel who supervise members. Following each academic year, we use our wealth of data to identify key traits that our most successful corps members exhibit and subsequently work to improve our ability to identify these traits during our recruitment and admissions processes. As such, our student achievement data is the driving force behind every decision that we make.

We also employ a number of tools for self-assessment: internally managed corps member surveys and independent surveys of the principals in the schools in which corps members teach. These tools allow us to measure the effectiveness of our training and support program and the impact our teachers have in schools in low-income communities. We also continue to work with independent research firms to enable studies that gauge corps member impact on schools in low-income communities.

Corps member online surveys are conducted at the middle and at the end of the academic year to poll our teachers on a wide range of issues from satisfaction to the effectiveness of Teach For America's training and support model to corps member involvement with parents and extra-curricular activities. We also survey corps members after our professional development content seminars and workshops to assess the success of our support systems and continue to work to improve them. The surveys also offer corps members the opportunity to provide written feedback on all aspects of the program. We track all

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of this data and evaluate it regionally and nationally to improve our work.

To measure the impact of our corps members on students and the schools where they work, Teach For America contracts with an independent firm, Policy Studies Associates, to survey principals every other year. The company develops and implements a tool to gauge whether corps members have a positive impact on student achievement and the school community. The most recent results of this study, released in June 2009, reported that 96% of principals in our local partner schools were satisfied with the training Teach For America corps members received, with nearly 80 percent reporting that Teach For America teachers were better prepared than other first year teachers at their schools.

In aligning ourselves with our value of continuous improvement, we actively use the results of these surveys, corps member meetings, and periodic conversations with our school district partners to strengthen our program. We collect and analyze the data to identify key successes and challenges, step back and reflect on their meaning, and identify key levers to enable us to increase student achievement and member satisfaction as we constantly strive to improve each element of our program from recruitment to alumni involvement.

e. Community Involvement

The communities we serve play a critical role in many aspects of our program. Nearly twenty years ago, before Teach For America first established a site in the Rio Grange Valley, we engaged community leaders and district superintendents in discussions about combating the educational achievement gap, the benefits of establishing a pipeline into educational leadership, and, specifically, the needs of our potential partner districts. In doing so, we are able to invest the superintendents and leverage a wide network of community support around the idea of attracting our nation's top college graduates to teach the students who are most in need to excellent teachers.

*Recruitment in Local Universities: Teach For America - Rio Grande Valley is participating in a pilot initiative designed to increase the diversity of our corps nationally and to increase the number of corps

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members from similar backgrounds as our student population. Our work involves identifying and cultivating top prospects throughout the admissions process through opportunities to participate in events, meetings with staff and alumni, and visits to corps member classrooms. For example, during the last week in December, Latino students from University of Texas -- Pan American and other local colleges visited our corps members' classrooms as part of our efforts to engage local college students in our work and inspire them to apply to teach with Teach For America next year.

*School Districts and Schools: However, because we recognize the important role our districts play, we seek to cultivate these relationships on an ongoing basis, rather than just as needed. We foster an ongoing relationship with each partner through at least 3 meetings a year with each principal and 2 meetings a year with district personnel including the Superintendent of each district. The 12 districts we serve in the Rio Grande Valley also determine our recruitment priorities. For example, if our partner districts have a shortage of qualified math and science teachers, we make a concerted effort to recruit more math and science teachers. Once corps members are committed to teach in the Rio Grande Valley, we again engage our principals in the hiring process. Local principals interview corps members both by phone and in person, and our program staff works with the principals throughout the year to ensure that they are satisfied with the teachers' performance.

*Professional Development Partners: Our staff works with state and local teacher education officials at Region One Education Service Center and Project PaCE to partner in designing a professional development program that meets state standards, maximizes community resources and meets local needs. As a result, members' professional development is driven in part through the standards and needs of local districts and states. Because we recruit and place teachers every year, we envision this collaboration continuing in the same form throughout our three-year grant cycle.

*Support of our regional advisory board helps us to determine additional potential supporters, develop the program's directional strategies and connect with key members of the communities we planned to serve. They are active members of a variety of the communities we serve. Moving forward, we plan to

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continue our collaborations with our partners and stakeholders in order to cultivate further relationships, effectively support our corps members, build our leadership pipeline in the Rio Grande Valley. We are actively cultivating three additional board prospects to expand our presence in areas such as Harlingen.

f. Relationship To Other National and Community Service Programs

Teach For America - Rio Grande Valley values its relationship with AmeriCorps and to the other important programs that operate with its national and community support. We maintain informal relationships with other national service organizations, such as City Year, Jumpstart, and the Breakthrough Collaborative, with whom we share information and best practices. Our alumni have also gone on to start many charter school networks with whom we maintain informal and formal connections. These include the IDEA Public Schools, KIPP Academies, YES Prep and the New Teacher Project.

In instances where there are national or community service projects that bring together members of service programs across the Valley in active service, we encourage our members to participate and provide support to programs. Our weekly email blast to members lists a variety of volunteer opportunities for members. In addition, we are also coordinating an all corps and alumni service project in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity on February 6, 2010. Not only will the project engage members and alumni of the program, but we also seek to engage some of our corporate partners by recruiting their employees to work along side our members on this community service project

In 2007, Teach For America and DonorsChoose began a new partnership to provide a simple way to fulfill needs and foster innovation in our public schools. DonorsChoose is a nonprofit organization which aims to improve public education by engaging citizens in an online marketplace where teachers (both from Teach For America and those who come to the profession through more conventional routes) describe classroom needs, and individuals can fund specific student projects. Together, we launched a

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co-branded website that allows Teach For America supporters a way to reach out directly to corps members by funding their requested projects, and thereby helping them in their mission to eliminate educational inequity.

g. Potential for Replication

Teach For America- Rio Grande Valley is part of the Teach For America national program which operates sites in 35 regions. Each Teach For America site is developed around one national program model, and adapted to fit a particular regional context. From the very beginning, Teach For America designed its program with internal replication and expansion in mind. We have been successful over the past 16 years in opening and developing regional sites and look forward to even greater expansion over the next several years. Replication leads to our ability to recruit, train, and support even more citizen-leaders, addressing the needs of thousands of students across the country.

In addition to our internal replication, our model has influenced the creation of other non-profits that share our mission. Upon the founding of Teach For America in 1990, it was unusual for people who did not major in education or attend a traditional college of education to enter the public school teaching profession. There was no clear alternative path toward licensure, and the barriers to entry into the profession were quite high. Now, a number of organizations are bringing college graduates of all academic majors into teaching in low-income school districts at unprecedented rates. Programs such as The New Teacher Project, the New York City Teaching Fellows and Oakland Teaching Fellows are modeled after Teach For America's idea that it is essential to bring the most talented recruits into the profession.

We are also exploring a model for sharing our key learning in teacher professional development with partner school districts so that all teachers can benefit from the coaching and resources available to our corps members. In addition, we are investing in creating a Teaching As Leadership textbook and publicly available online resource for the purposes of not only better supporting our corps member

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training and professional development effort, but also sharing our knowledge base with other teachers, school districts, and teacher education organizations. While this is not an effort to replicate our program, we are proud to be a resource in raising the level of teaching in classrooms across the country.

In 2007, Teach For All was created in response to requests from groups in several countries that are inspired by the Teach For America and Teach First model and want to replicate it in their respective countries. Organizations that are part of the Teach For All network are independent, locally governed and locally funded. These organizations recruit and develop their countries' top recent college graduates of all academic majors and career interests to commit two years to teach in low-income communities and become lifelong leaders for educational excellence and equity. Teach For All supports initiatives all over the globe, including those in India, South Africa, Estonia, Israel, Chile, and Germany among others.

Organizational Capability

1) Sound Organizational Structure

a. Ability to Provide Sound Programmatic and Fiscal Oversight

Programmatic Oversight: Our theory of teacher development is that teachers on a mission to close the achievement gap between their students and students in wealthy communities must first map out their intentions for the year, determine how to assess their goals, develop strong plans to lead students to goals, and track progress ongoing. From there, our teachers must engage in frequent data-driven problem solving to determine the most important student outcomes and teacher actions to prioritize in their class that will result in significant academic achievement. Our key focus in the fall was to position corps members to collect meaningful student achievement data earlier in the year so that they can use data to make strategic decisions. As you read earlier, The Formal Cycle then positions program directors to engage in data-driven problem solving with their corps members.

At the beginning of each academic year, each of our teachers participates in a goal setting process, facilitated by our regional staff. Goals are set according to a combination of research into the anticipated growth in student performance for students in the classrooms of top quintile teachers, as

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well as a grounded understanding of the context of the specific school and content setting our teachers will lead.

In settings where reading growth is the most appropriate measure (usually lower elementary classrooms, but also when middle grade students are more than three grade levels behind) goals are typically at least 1.5 years growth in reading. These teachers use ongoing reading assessments (such as the Diagnostic Reading Assessment or Reading A -- Z) to determine a base reading level for each student and determine growth over the course of the year.

For example: Frances Wells (Corps '08) teaches English at Travis Middle School in McAllen ISD. When they started the 6th grade, her students were reading on roughly a third grade level. By the end of one school year, her students had grown approximately 1.5 years in reading. In addition, 92 percent of her students passed the Reading TAKS, 44 percent of whom received a commended score. As a comparison, in the previous year, only 89 percent of 6th graders in the Rio Grande Valley had passed the state TAKS and 9 percent were commended.

In settings where a state mandated assessment does not exist goals are typically at least 80% average mastery of objectives. These teachers use a series of district provided or teacher created (each of which are reviewed to ensure an appropriate level of rigor) assessments to measure mastery of objectives.

For example: Marco Martinez (Corps '08) teaches 5th grade science at PFC David Ybarra Middle School in Edcouch-Elsa ISD. 100% of his students met the 80% mastery goal that he had set by the end of the year and as a whole, his students increased an average of 20% in science based knowledge and skills.

In settings where a state mandated assessment does exist, goals are typically closing the gap in performance between students in low-income settings and their higher income peers by 20% on the state assessment. These teachers use their end of year state assessment results to determine their students' progress.

For example: Carly Alford (Corps '07) teaches 5th grade math at Donna ISD. For students in Donna

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ISD, the average scale score on the 5th grade science TAKS was 2208, while for non-economically disadvantaged students across the state, the average scale score was 2358. On the TAKS test, her students averaged a 2385, which is the equivalent of almost a 90% mastery, and most importantly, outperformed high income students in wealthier parts of the state such as Plano, Texas -- her students closed over 100% of the achievement gap. Carly was also a one of two corps members from the Rio Grande Valley to be nominated for the prestigious Sue Lehmann prize in teaching.

To build a case for strong implementation of this program, we must look to the student achievement data over the last three years:

*2006-07: Sig. gains Goal 44%; Actual 21%; Sig + solid Goal 92%; Actual 61%

*2007-08: Sig. gains Goal 39%; Actual 44%; Sig + solid Goal 76%; Actual 71%

*2008-09: Sig. gains Goal 51%; Actual 55%; Sig + solid Goal 78%; Actual 77%

Significant gains represents teachers who have met the big goal for student achievement. Solid gains refers to (a) at least 1 year growth in reading, (b) at least 70% average mastery of objectives or (c) closing the gap in performance between students in low-income settings and their higher income peers by 10% on the state assessment depending on classroom context.

In a system where, as early as the 4th grade, there are differences in student achievement between low income students and their higher income peers that only increase for each year of schooling, the achievement of students in our corps members classrooms is effectively reversing the trend of lowered academic achievement in low income communities.

Throughout the Rio Grande Valley, we find that clustering corps members and alumni on a campus can lead to an overall improvement in the school's performance. Since 2002, Teach For America has placed 21 corps members at W.A. Todd 9th Grade Campus. In 2005, W.A. Todd was one of two schools in Texas to be labeled a "persistently dangerous" campus under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Just two years later, W.A. Todd qualified for mention in the 2007 Texas Monthly list of the best public schools in Texas for its improvement in student math TAKS results. During the 2006-07 school

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year, Teach For America placed five corps members at W.A. Todd, including two corps members teaching math. Today, eight corps members teach at W.A. Todd in all content areas and continue to work towards closing the achievement gap between their students and their peers in the state of Texas. Further, in 2002-2003, there was a 17% gap in proficiency on the 9th grade Math TAKS between W.A. Todd and the Texas average; in 2007-2008, this gap was only 1%.

Fiscal Oversight: Teach for America's national staff provides support to our regional sites in a number of different areas, including finance and grants management. At the national office, a number of well-qualified specialists are available to meet and guide regional staff on AmeriCorps compliance, filling out standard forms, budget creation, and general grant management. Our finance team reports to the auditing and finance committees of our board, and works closely with our development team and budget trackers to coordinate cash-in and expenses throughout the organization. Our fiscal management and oversight is coordinated by our central finance team, which includes our Senior Vice President of Finance, Vice President of Finance and Administration, Finance Directors, Controller and Accountants. This structure allows for the appropriate breakdown of responsibilities and a system of checks and balances needed to ensure accurate financial accounting, coordination of regional fundraising and spending and the accurate tracking of all finances across the country.

In particular, our finance team coordinates our A-133 audit, our annual audit and our monthly reconciliation processes, and produces and monitors our projected budgets for each site and the organization. We have implemented accurate financial management systems and use our Financial Edge database to help track funding streams and expenses by department and program element. This centralization allows us to provide assistance to, and oversight of, our regional operating sites in their compliance with federal budget requirements; our central program team helps ensure compliance with the programmatic elements of federal grants.

Worth Magazine recently also named Teach For America one of the top 10 most fiscally responsible

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charities.

b. Board of Directors, Administrators, and Staff

Teach For America-Rio Grande Valley benefits from national and local leadership, as well as the talents of our regionally-based staff. Teach For America's national office, based in New York City, works in conjunction with its regional operating sites, including Rio Grande Valley, to ensure the success of our teacher corps.

Andrea Stouder is the Vice President of Regional Operations and our regional office's link to the national office and her responsibilities include managing the Executive Director. Christine Koidin is the Business Analyst in our Grants and Contracts division of the Finance Department assigned to this grant. She has several years of budget and contract management. She is supported by a staff accountant assigned to report on and monitor the expenditures of this grant. In our national office, Doug Stay, Direct of Contracts Reporting and Compliance, and Reshma Singh, Vice President of Development Operations, are responsible for supporting the regional office in all the fiduciary responsibilities associated with AmeriCorps.

Rio Grande Valley also has an advisory board, comprised of a diverse group of community leaders who guide and support our efforts to build relationships with the local education community, maximize our programmatic impact, raise funding and help us connect further to all stakeholders in the community. Our community advisory board is a diverse group of 5 community leaders who guide and support our efforts to build relationships with the local community. At present, we have regular involvement through e-mail communication, quarterly meetings, strategic planning meetings, and check-ins. Please see section D.2.a.

Of our 13 regional staff members, 9 were former corps members in Teach For America. These alumni of Teach For America have chosen to work on staff as a continued investment in the mission of our organization. Our regional staff members who are not Teach For America alumni participate (as do all

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staff members) in a "New Hire Orientation" at the beginning of their tenure. This orientation serves to provide the history of Teach For America, outline our strategic priorities and begin a conversation that continues to regional staff meetings and retreats that consistently serve as opportunities for our staff to fully own the goals and outcomes of our organization.

Our Executive Director, Robert Carreon, leads our regional office by maximizing program quality, building a sustainable funding base and raising public visibility through community partnerships with institutions and individuals in public and private sectors. He is responsible as the AmeriCorps program manager for overseeing program activities. He was a 2003 Teach For America Rio Grande Valley corps member who taught 10th grade world history at Jimmy Carter High School (now Palmview High School) in La Joya ISD. During the 2006-2007 school year, he supported 20 corps members as a program director, leading a large number of his corps members to achieve significant or solid gains with their students. He also served as the manager of professional development and district strategy in the RGV for two years; in this capacity he was responsible for planning and executing the professional development cycle for corps members, including monthly content seminars and literacy seminars, as well as facilitating the transition of our incoming corps and hiring with our partner districts.

Ida Rodriguez, Manager of District Strategy and Teacher Professional Development - ensures professional development structures for corps members lead towards gains in student achievement and maintains relationships with the district and campus partners. Ida Rodriguez has served in this capacity since August 2008. She is a Rio Grande Valley native with seven years of experience in the elementary school classroom and three years as a senior instructional specialist at the University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College. After earning her B.A. degree in education, Ida pursued her M.A. to become a reading specialist. During her years in the classroom, Ida led her students meet and exceeded school district literacy and TAKS goals. While at UTB/TSC, Ida developed and conducted professional development training for early childhood teachers in the areas of literacy and writing.

Nicholas Garcia, Managing Director of Program, Rio Grande Valley -- ensures that the region achieves

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its vision for student achievement and corps member effectiveness. He is originally from the Rio Grande Valley and has served as the senior program leader in this region since June 2008. He graduated from Austin College in North Texas with a degree in Religion and Sociology before joining Teach For America New York City as a corps member. He was a 4th grade teacher at P.S. 156 in Brownsville, Brooklyn. Nick's students grew over two years in reading and averaged nearly 90 percent on their 4th grade math objectives. He also worked with the school's math coach to create data-driven assessment cycles for the upper grades.

He manages our six program directors: Isaac Cardona (Houston Corps '05), Jon Stevens (RGV Corps '06), Vicky Wu (RGV Corps '06), Evan Smith (RGV Corps '06), Brynn Meyers (RGV Corps '07) and Jennifer Fox (DC Corps '07), all of whom are high-achieving former corps members. Each member of the program team undergoes extensive professional development through two annual conferences facilitated by the Regional Program Team and is supported by a National Program Consultant who works directly to support the regions programmatic efforts. Four out of the six program directors have served in this capacity for at least one year each.

Rachel Wieland, Director of Alumni Affairs- works to foster the development of the alumni network in the Rio Grande Valley and Austin as a force for social change. Rachel was a 2003 Corps Member in Phoenix, Arizona, where she taught a kindergarten through third grade self-contained special education class at Laveen Elementary School, in Laveen, Arizona. Rachel was the special education department head during her second and third years of teaching at Laveen. She was also a member of the school leadership team. In her first year as a program director Rachel supported 59 corps members in all grade and content levels in the Mid and East Valley. In her second year, she managed 35 elementary and special education teachers to achieve significant results with their students.

c. Plan For Self-Assessment or Improvement

Throughout the year, Teach For America will collect data regarding our progress against the

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performance metrics agreed upon with AmeriCorps. Please see Plan for Self-Assessment and Improvement under the Rationale and Approach section for more details. Our national management team will reflect on this data along with our local executive director. This process allows us to see which operating sites have developed strategies that are truly effective and share them across the organization. It also allows us to determine if any region's performance is inadequate by providing an objective comparison against other regions, providing us the ability to intervene if a site begins to face challenges.

To assess and improve staff capacity on an ongoing basis, Teach For America employs assessment tools which allow managers to quickly and effectively hone in on the key levers for staff growth and development. We believe that engaging in regular reflection on performance and competency acquisition is a key strategy for attaining our goals and developing the leadership potential of our staff members. Thus, staff members and their managers engage in structured reflection, providing constructive feedback and targeting areas for improvement. Performance reviews happen twice a year.

We will continue to reflect upon our needed improvements and hire additional program staff to support more corps members if need be. We plan to continually assess the growing needs of the The Rio Grande Valley corps and manage our staff projects through weekly staff check-ins, staff and corps member surveys, and review meetings to identify any further organizational changes that may be necessary.

d. Plan for Effective Technical Assistance

Teach for America's national staff provides support to our regional sites in a number of different areas, including finance, grants management, and program support. At the national office, a number of well-qualified specialists are available to guide regional staff on AmeriCorps compliance, filling out standard forms, budget creation, and general grant management. In addition to these specialists, the Teach For America national server is constantly being updated with document resources and tutorials on these same topics. Additionally, the national team provides on-going trainings and assistance for all regional

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staff positions via conference calls, regional and national conferences, and on-line tutorials.

The national office of Teach For America in New York City also includes a well-staffed technology department that is available to assist with any technical problems that should arise at the regional level. Our staff in the Rio Grande Valley reaches out to the technology team via email and telephone and have the capacity to interface with our personal computers in the Valley. As part of standard new staff training, Teach For America-Rio Grande Valley personnel are trained on all software and programs that enable and improve work function.

2) Sound Organizational Structure

a. Volunteer Generation and Support: Community Advisory Board members represent our strongest group of volunteers who increase our organizational capacity. These individuals play an important role in decisions of management, regional growth, and building relationships with local organizations. As leaders in various sectors of our community that include law, education, business, health and public service, their voices are heard at our annual strategic planning retreat. During the course of the year, our executive director communicates to our board our progress to our programmatic and development goals, consults with them on any necessary course corrections and engages their input on any new initiatives.

b. Organizational and Community Leadership: At a National level, both the Teach For America program and its members have received recognition for successfully combating one of the nation's most challenging domestic issues. Teach For America was selected as a winner of the 2007 and 2006 Fast Company/Monitor Group Social Capitalist Award. The award honors U.S. nonprofits, or "social entrepreneurs," who combine creativity and ingenuity with business solutions to address today's most challenging social problems.

Most recently, the Urban Institute, a highly regarded independent research organization, conducted a

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methodologically rigorous study of the impact of Teach For America corps members on high school students. Researchers analyzed end-of-course student exam data from 2000 through 2006 in North Carolina. The study examined differences between the student achievement impact of Teach For America teachers and other comparison groups composed of non-Teach For America teachers. The study found that high school students taught by Teach For America teachers outperform their peers, even those taught by instructors fully certified in their subject area. The positive impact of having a Teach For America teacher was three times that of having a teacher with three or more years of experience.

Our local corps members have received recognition for the leadership qualities as well. For example, Alumnus Tom Torkelson (Corps '96) was nominated for the Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People of 2009 for his leadership at IDEA and in June 2009. Alejandro Delgado (Corps '09) was selected to be a School Board Fellow with Brownsville ISD; Brandi Thompson (Corps '08) was chosen to participate in the prestigious South Texas Research Internships for the Development of Educators in Science (STRIDES) program over the summer at the University of Texas-Pan American; Nikhil Angelo (Corps '08) and several other members have been recognized for their excellence in teaching as well.

Furthermore, several of our corps members and staff have participated in community events such as the Cactus Country Festival, which an alumnus organized and several staff members helped administer. Likewise, our executive director serves as a member of the Rio Grande Valley Partnership, a local chamber; this provides an opportunity to share our organizational perspective with the broader community and he is also in the Leadership McAllen Class of XXIX, a local group of future community leaders who seek to address problems and opportunities facing the city of McAllen. Further, members of our regional staff participated in a forum at a local community college focused on creating a college going culture in our community, a leadership symposium at a local university, and a career fair for college seniors.

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3) Success in Securing Community Support that Recurs, Expands in Scope, Increases in Amount, and is More Diverse

a. Collaboration: Teach For America-Rio Grande Valley's primary collaborations are with the local public schools and districts where our teachers serve, and the local certification provider that we partner with to build professional development and to ensure certification of the teachers. Our collaboration with districts has enabled us to place nearly 1,000 corps members in classrooms across the Valley since our program was first chartered in 1991. Teach For America-Rio Grande Valley also strives to build additional local partnerships with other key organizations in the community, including non-profit and community-based organizations.

The partnerships we have established help us to more effectively execute our program activities and increase the quality of our services. See section C.2)b. and C.1)e.

b. Local Financial and In-Kind Contributions: We have indicated our local financial supporters in Section 3.a Community Outcomes and Outputs - Sustainability. This mix of financial supporters represents a diversified funding base that we are in the process of continuing to grow. Further, we consistently receive in-kind donations of classroom space at South Texas College and numerous of our partner campuses in order to facilitate group professional development and meetings of our corps members.

In September 2009, TechTurn, a company that refurbishes computers and resells them at lower prices donated laptops and desktops to Teach For America corps members -- for use in their classrooms, or for members who want to collaborate with their schools to get donated computers for classrooms or school computer labs. These computers give students access to reading and math programs and access to technology to complete research and write papers.

c. Wide Range of Community Stakeholders: Our organization represents a truly public -- private

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partnership, bringing together public institutions such as our partner schools, with private stakeholders such as our partner foundations, corporations and individuals. With this synergy, we are able to leverage the strengths of each of our partners in service of increasing academic achievement in the Rio Grande Valley.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

E. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

1) Cost Effectiveness: Teach For America is an efficient and cost-effective program. While we are confident that we have budgeted sufficient resources for our program needs based on our experience operating a professional corps, we are very cognizant of the need to be cautious and efficient in our spending to justify the significant investment that the public and private sector makes in our program. Teach For America is recognized by outside groups for its efficiency. Charity Navigator, a non-profit watchdog group, gave Teach For America its highest 4-star rating in past years; and Worth magazine named Teach For America one of its top 100 charities in America based partially on financial efficiency.

a. Corporation Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

We are requesting 200 full time members slots in year 1 of this proposed grant beginning in 2010. Our corporation cost per MSY will be \$2000.

b. Diverse Non-Federal Support

Teach For America-RGV works to raise money from a wide array of funding streams. Last year, in fiscal year 2009, we raised over \$1.42M from public and private sources. Over \$300,000 came from non-federal support and we aim to grow this private funding even further over the next three years. This year, we are looking to raise \$2.52M, of which at least \$625,000 will be from private foundations, corporations and individual donors. We currently already have \$393,000 in commitments from private sources, including a 3-year grant of \$1,000,000 from the Robert J. Kleberg, Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg

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Foundation.

2) Budget Adequacy

Our total cost per member is approximately \$20,675 for all costs, of which only a small portion is on our attached budget. Because we are a professional corps, we leverage salaries and benefits from the school districts, and our costs relate solely to recruiting, selecting, training, placing and supporting our members. Our proposed budget is based on the size of our projected corps for the 2009-2010 school year and includes the regional portion of costs associated with national recruitment, selection, and training, as well as local management costs and regional corps member support costs.

Our budget in the Rio Grande Valley is structured around the projected corps size and includes the regional portion of recruitment, selection, and training costs; national administrative services costs; and local management costs. Budget management is implemented and overseen on both a regional and national level and is subject to an annual independent audit as well as review by the national Board of Directors, the regional Advisory Board, and all of Teach For America-Rio Grande Valley's private funders.

Teach For America-Rio Grande Valley's operating budget for FY09 was \$3.082M. This included all the costs to recruit, select, and train the 2009 corps members who came to the Rio Grande Valley in July to begin teaching. It also included all costs associated with supporting and developing the RGV corps during the 2008-2009 school year, as well as local management and administrative costs. In the Rio Grande Valley, we raised \$1.42M as our remaining funding is provided through national fundraising.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

N/A

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

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FY11 CLARIFICATION ITEMS:

- Labor Union concurrence

Labor union concurrence forms are required for program applicants who:

- (1) Propose to serve as the placement site for AmeriCorps members; and
- (2) Have employees engaged in the same or substantially similar work as that proposed to be carried out by AmeriCorps members; and
- (3) Those employees are represented by a local labor organization, must include in their application the written concurrence of the local labor organization representing those employees. Written concurrence can be in the form of a letter or e-mail from the local union leadership.

As stated above, the labor concurrence requirement applies to programs that are serving as both program applicant and service site. This requirement does not apply to Teach For America-RGV because we do not serve as the placement site for AmeriCorps members.

- Please clarify the plan to achieve 100% enrollment of the members.

In past years, a variety of factors kept us from reaching our corps enrollment target. In light of these challenges, we have strengthened our new corps member communication and onboarding plan so we can keep our future corps members invested during the months between their acceptance of our offer and their completion of their AmeriCorps applications. The major components of the plan include:

* Communicate regional context and need clearly and Inspire them to join: We sent a welcome packet to the 2011 corps members that includes a letter from a Valley student, a letter from Congressman Hinojosa, a letter from the RGV staff, a postcard from an RGV corps member or alum, and a CD of Valley music.

* Build knowledge about our Program and Expectations: Corps member communication was structured

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into a series of transition calls, webinars, and emails that set the vision of Teach For America in South Texas. Through the calls, our staff address certification, testing, hiring requirements and next steps, explain what professional development will look like from Institute through their two year commitment and encourage 2011 corps members to start formulating their classroom visions. CMs have received information and study resources for their TExES exams and are encouraged to take these exams as early as possible to facilitate the hiring process.

* Connect with Current Rio Grande Valley Corps and Alumni: To help the 2011 corps transition to the Valley, we have charged current corps members to lead a transition call to share their perspectives. We also have a team of ten alumni who are providing one-on-one resume feedback and mock interview feedback to every 2011 CM. In June, when the corps members arrive in our region, we will also have current CMs and alums lead study workshops for their TExES exams.

-In signing the certifications and assurances regarding displacement, you certified that no member will be placed into a position for which a recently resigned or discharged employee has recall rights as a result of a collective bargaining agreement, from which a recently resigned or discharged employee was removed as a result of a reduction in force, or from which a recently resigned/discharged employee is on leave or strike.

Yes, we are confident that we are in compliance with this requirement. In districts where there are collective bargaining agreements in place, these agreements govern the ways in which districts hire new teachers, including Teach For America teachers. Because Teach For America works with school district leadership to fill new and vacant positions through the district's routine hiring processes, our teachers operate within the structures set up by the collective bargaining agreement. We do not receive any special hiring arrangement beyond those permissible by collective bargaining agreements.

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-The applicant can make this assurance, understanding that if we receive notice that a member has been placed in such a position, we may consider it a material noncompliance and have grounds to reduce funding to or terminate the program?

Yes, we understand that placing a member where an individual has recall rights will result in non-compliance, which would be grounds to reduce or terminate funding to our program.

FY10 CLARIFICATION ITEMS:

Please clarify the cost of \$2,000 per MSY which is higher than the proposed cost per MSY submitted in TFA's national proposal.

The variance in cost/MSY between multi-state and single state applications have to do with (1) slight variances in the cost per corps member in various regions, and (2) the funding needs of the particular regions.

TFA's cost per corps member is approximately \$22,000 nationally; the actual cost varies from region to region. In the Rio Grande Valley, the actual cost per corps member is approximately \$19,000. Therefore in either the multi-state or single-state instance, AmeriCorps funding only covers a fraction of the cost associated with supporting our corps members.

AmeriCorps funding provided through the multi-state grant generally support national initiatives such as recruitment and summer trainings. Whereas the costs on single state application cover the costs directly related to supporting corps in that state. Our regions work to raise as close to 100% of their regional costs as possible locally. This year, Rio Grande Valley is projecting to raise approximately 70% of the costs required to operate a program locally. The proposed cost/MSY in our South Texas grants are higher than the multi-state grant because region is in semi-rural area with limited funding opportunities. State AmeriCorps is a valuable funding resource in this context, and some regions do so by requesting a higher cost/MSY.

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Criminal history checks are required for all grant funded staff and AmeriCorps members. A detailed description of the requirements can be found at: <http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/criminal-history>. Please verify that you will conduct criminal history checks on all staff that are funded under this grant.

Teach For America corps members receive FBI background checks. We are applying for a Professional Corps fixed amount grant and as such checks are not required for staff per CNCS' Frequently Asked Questions National Service Criminal History Checks (updated April 15, 2010).

Continuation Changes

NEW SITE LOCATIONS & REQUEST FOR EXPANSION

We seek to amplify our impact in Texas by expanding to Dallas-Ft. Worth and San Antonio. According to a 2008 estimate by the U.S. Census Bureau, 29 and 22% of students served by the Dallas Independent School District and Fort Worth Independent School District, respectively, live at or below the poverty line. Comparatively, just 5% of students served by the Highland Park Independent School District, located in Dallas County, live at or below the poverty line. In San Antonio Independent School District, 90% of students live at or below the poverty line. In neighboring Alamo Heights Independent School District, 17% of live at or believe the poverty line.

The economic disparity between neighboring districts in Texas manifests itself in an educational achievement gap. Nowhere are these differences illuminated more than in students' performance on the 2009 Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). By fifth grade, approximately 75% of DISD and FWISD students meet the state standard in reading, while 99% of students attending Highland Park schools do so. In math, 20% fewer Dallas students and 25% fewer Ft. Worth students meet the state standard than their wealthier peers in Highland Park. By 10th grade, this gap widens to 41% and 47% respectively. In San Antonio, approximately 79% of 5th graders meet state reading standards, compared

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to 96% in Alamo Heights; in math the figures at 77% on San Antonio to 95% in Alamo Heights. By 10th grade, this gap in math has widened by 30 percentage points.

Teach For America addresses this disparity by placing corps members as full-time teachers in low-income schools in Dallas-Ft. Worth and San Antonio who make significant academic gains of one year or more with their students. We expect 200 incoming corps members in Dallas-Ft. Worth and 100 in San Antonio for the 2011-2012 school year.

Research has demonstrated the impact of Teach For America corps members. Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. released an independent study in 2004 using a research methodology widely regarded as the gold standard. This study found that students of TFA corps members made more progress in a year in both reading and math than would typically be expected. The study also found that corps members were working in the highest-need classrooms in the country, where students begin the year on average at the 14th percentile against the national norm. ("The Effects of Teach For America on Students: Findings from a National Evaluation," Mathematica Policy Research, June 2004)

A 2008-2009 Urban Institute study found that TFA corps members were, on average, more effective than non-TFA teachers in all subject areas even when compared with experienced and traditionally certified teachers. Additionally, the study found the positive impact of having a Teach For America teacher was two to three times that of having a teacher with three or more years of experience. (The Urban Institute/CALDER Research Center, 2009)

To accommodate our growth, TFA-RGV requests an expansion to our Texas state AmeriCorps grant from 200 full-time member slots to 500 full-time member slots to cover incoming corps members in Dallas and San Antonio.

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Full-time education awards are critical to our members' success. This is particularly true as our corps becomes more diverse. Currently, 28% of our corps members come from a low socioeconomic background, and do not have the additional support needed to offset loan payments and certification costs. Our corps members often use their education awards to counterbalance the cost of attaining the required certification and licensure, and many corps members depend on the loan forbearance and interest accrual payments afforded to AmeriCorps members.

As a professional corps we do not provide housing or living stipends to our members. Members receive a first year teacher's salary, which they use to support themselves. Most of our members join the corps immediately after college, and begin paying their loans during their first year of teaching. Although salaries vary depending on region and cost of living within that region, first year teachers' salaries are generally low. Often the cost of loan payments puts additional stress on our corps members; loan forbearance and interest accrual payments relieve some of this pressure and allow our members to concentrate more fully on their service.

Additionally, full time enrollment in AmeriCorps accurately reflects our members' service as full-time teachers, with numerous responsibilities, who work long hours throughout the year.

ENROLLMENT

In the last completed program year (2009-2010), TFA-RGV filled 93.9% of the slots that we were awarded, maintaining our enrollment rate from the previous program year. Due to the timing of AmeriCorps application deadlines as compared to our admissions cycle, we are never certain of our final corps size at the time of application. Due to the nature of our professional corps, with centralized admissions and intensive training required prior to service, we are unable to fill additional slots after

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awards have been announced. Therefore, our request for MSYs is always based on our best estimate of the number of slots we will need.

The high enrollment rate cited above demonstrates our accuracy in projecting our need, indicating tight internal systems and expertise in the midst of many moving parts. It is, however, difficult to reach a 100% enrollment rate because we encountered a challenge in attracting corps members to highly preference the Rio Grande Valley region during the Teach For America application process, as opposed to Teach For America regions located in larger metropolitan areas. In order to address this challenge, we will focus on investing incoming corps members in long-term leadership in the Rio Grande Valley. This means we will be explicit in articulating our emerging 5 year vision, so that potential corps members are more knowledgeable about the Valley, the unique need for educational leaders in the classroom now, and understand how they will be critical contributors to the movement in the long term and what that will mean for students in South Texas.

Teach For America - San Antonio started placing teachers in high need schools in San Antonio in August 2010. So far, the program has retained 95% of corps members (or 103 members).

RETENTION

In the Rio Grande Valley our member retention rate for the 2009-2010 school year was 95.7% and in Dallas it was 97% - both rates markedly higher than the estimated average retention for first-year teachers in low-income communities in general (82%) and the overall average for all first-year teachers regardless of school setting (86%) ("No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children" (2003) National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. Washington, D.C.). Teach For America - San Antonio started placing teachers in high need schools in San Antonio in August 2010. So far, the program has retained 95% of corps members (or 103 members).

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As full time teachers in high-need schools, our corps members work long hours in highly stressful situations both in and outside of school. Our corps members combat the myriad of challenges facing under served schools, operating with a strong sense of possibility and energy to succeed despite many obstacles.

Although Teach For America's retention rate is higher than the national average, we are constantly working to improve our program and thus our retention rates through three major initiatives.

First, our Program Directors proactively identify members who may be retention risks, effectively articulate a clear plan of action when handling cases of retention risks, and we have streamlined retention conversations when they are necessary. We have steadily improved our retention rates by focusing on continuously improving our effectiveness in this area. We have been especially in decreasing the number of corps members who resign during the first three months of school. During the 2007-08 year, 6 members resigned during the first three months of school; in 2008-09, 3 members resigned during the first three months of school; and in 2009-10, we did not see any members resign during this crucial time of year.

Second, we also work vigorously to improve our selection process to make sure we are selecting members who will relentlessly pursue our mission in the face of steep odds. At the beginning of the year, corps members set ambitious academic goals for students. They assess their students and analyze student data regularly with their Program Director (PD). At the end of the year PDs and corps members evaluate final assessments to determine student academic gains. As a program, we roll up that data and bucket corps members by the evidence of their students' gains into three categories (significant, solid and limited gains). By doing this, we not only are able to track performance over time, we are able to

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regress the data against our admissions criteria. Essentially, we are able to see which factors are most predictive of success with students, and then to re-engineer our admissions, training and professional development functions in an effort to increase our impact.

Third, we regularly survey our members as to their satisfaction with their initial training as well as the support they receive regionally throughout the year. According to TFA-RGV's 2009-2010 end of year survey results, 85% of corps members agreed that the training and support they received from our staff was crucial to their success in the classroom. Through surveying we have found that corps members who feel valued by our staff as individuals and have a space to provide feedback on the training and the support they receive from our program staff are more likely to complete their terms of service. This finding has led us to focus on (1) strengthening the corps member/Program Director relationship and (2) our executive director and managing director of program to prioritizing one-on-one conversations with corps members throughout the year, thus giving members a space to voice their concerns.

DALLAS & SAN ANTONIO PERFORMANCE

Teach For America is driven by its focus on setting ambitious goals while producing measurable and sustainable results. Academic gains are measured through the "gap closure" method in all TAKS tested subjects, in which the Big Goal for those subject areas is to demonstrate a class average scale score that closes the gap between their students and their higher income peers by 20% at the elementary school level and 24% at the secondary level. For non-TAKS tested subject areas we measure significant gains by tracking for 80% mastery of prioritized TEK objectives, and for the lower grade levels we measure reading growth gains using the Developmental Reading Assessment®, with a goal of 1.5 years growth. The Dallas regional program team set a 2009-2010 school year goal of 33% significant gains and 66% significant/solid gains for its charter corps members. Dallas corps members impacted the lives of 19,000 students on a daily basis.

Narratives

oSince the 2010-11 year is the first year of operation for Teach For America - San Antonio, we will not have academic performance measurement results from the site until July 2011, shortly after the end of the school year. The San Antonio regional program team set a 2010-2011 school year goal of 40% significant gains and 74% significant/solid gains for its charter corps members. San Antonio corps members impact the lives of approximately 6,200 students on a daily basis.

SUPERVISORY STRUCTURE

The Teach For America -- Dallas region currently operates with 17 full-time staff members. The region is led by Executive Director Charles Glover; a leadership team comprised of a Managing Director of Program, Director of Teaching and Learning, and Director of Talent, Strategy, and Operations; and a newly-formed, seven-member regional advisory board. Our program team consists of 9 program directors who directly support corps members in their classrooms and one program associate. Functional members round out our regional team with two development staff, one operations associate, and one assistant to the executive director.

The Teach For America -- San Antonio region currently operates with 7 full-time staff members. The region is led by Executive Director Laura Saldivar; all program-related efforts are overseen by Managing Director of Program Ryan Smith. The program team consists of 3 program directors.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Services | |
| <i>Selected for National Measure</i> <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 500

Service Categories

Other Education Primary Secondary

Improved Academic Achievement

Service Category: Other Education

Measure Category: Needs and Service Activities

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Teach For America-RGV is placing corps members as the teacher of record in low income schools in the Rio Grande Valley. Teach For America-RGV is using the uniform performance measures for teacher corps programs within the Education Corps.

Result: End Outcome

N/A

Indicator:

Target: N/A

Target Value: 0

Instruments: N/A

PM Statement: N/A

Prev. Yrs. Data N/A

Result: Intermediate Outcome

N/A

Indicator:

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Target: N/A

Target Value: 0

Instruments: N/A

PM Statement: N/A

Prev. Yrs. Data N/A

Result: Output

N/A

Indicator:

Target: N/A

Target Value: 0

Instruments: N/A

PM Statement: N/A

Prev. Yrs. Data N/A

National Performance Measures

Priority Area: Education

Performance Measure Title: ED1: Number of students who start in an AmeriCorps education program

Service Category: Other Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Teach For America ' Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of students each corps member teaches.

Result: Output

Result.

Teach For America ' Texas estimates that 15,540 students will start the year in our corps members' classrooms.

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

Target : Teach For America - Texas estimates that 15,540 students will start the year in our corps members' classrooms.

Target Value: 15540

Instruments: Teach For America - Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of students each corps member teaches.

PM Statement: Teach For America - Texas will use an internal tracking system to track the number of students being taught by Teach For America corps members, estimating that this will be 15,540 students.

Priority Area: Education

Performance Measure Title: ED2: Number of unduplicated students who complete participation in an AmeriCorps education program

Service Category: Other Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Teach For America ' Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of students each corps member teaches.

Result: Output

Result.

Teach For America ' Texas estimates that 14,868 students will complete the year in our corps members' classrooms.

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

Target : Teach For America - Texas estimates that 14,868 students will complete the year in our corps members' classrooms.

Target Value: 14868

Instruments: Teach For America - Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of students each corps member teaches.

PM Statement: Teach For America - Texas will use an internal tracking system to track the number of students who complete the year being taught by Teach For America corps members, estimating that this will be 14,868 students.

National Performance Measures

Priority Area: Education

Performance Measure Title: ED12: Number of unduplicated AmeriCorps members who begin serving as teachers through a Teacher Corps program

Service Category: Other Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Teach For America ' Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of corps members placed as teachers.

Result: Output

Result.

Teach For America ' Texas will place 185 AmeriCorps members as teachers.

Indicator: ED12: AmeriCorps members who begin serving as teachers.

Target : Teach For America - Texas will place 185 AmeriCorps members as teachers.

Target Value: 185

Instruments: Teach For America - Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of corps members placed as teachers.

PM Statement: Teach For America - Texas will use an internal tracking system to track the placement of 185 AmeriCorps members as teachers.

Priority Area: Education

Performance Measure Title: ED13: Number of unduplicated AmeriCorps members who completed serving as teachers through a Teacher Corps program

Service Category: Other Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Teach For America ' Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of corps members who complete serving as teachers.

Result: Output

Result.

Teach For America ' Texas estimates that 177 AmeriCorps members complete their service as teachers.

Indicator: ED13: AmeriCorps members who complete serving as teachers.

Target : Teach For America ¿ Texas estimates that 177 AmeriCorps members complete their service as teachers.

Target Value: 177

Instruments: Teach For America ¿ Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of corps members who complete serving as teachers.

PM Statement: Teach For America ¿ Texas will use an internal tracking system to track the number of corps members who complete their year of service as teachers, estimating that 177 will do so.

Priority Area: Education

Performance Measure Title: ED14: Number of unduplicated individuals (AmeriCorps members) teaching in high need public schools

Service Category: Other Education

National Performance Measures

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Teach For America ' Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of corps members who teach in high-need public schools.

Result: Output

Result.

Teach For America ' Texas will place 185 AmeriCorps members as teachers in high-need public schools.

Indicator: ED14: Individuals teaching in high-need schools.

Target : Teach For America ç Texas will place 185 AmeriCorps members as teachers in high-need public schools.

Target Value: 185

Instruments: Teach For America ç Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of corps members who teach in high-need public schools.

PM Statement: Teach For America - Texas will use an internal tracking system to track the placement of 185 AmeriCorps members as teachers in high-need public schools.

Priority Area: Education

Performance Measure Title: ED16: Number of unduplicated individuals (former AmeriCorps members) teaching in public schools in the year after term of service

Service Category: Other Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Teach For America-Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of alumni (former AmeriCorps members) who continue teaching in public schools in the year after their term of service.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Teach For America-Texas estimates that 70 former AmeriCorps members will remain teaching in the year after term of service.

Indicator: (DELETED) ED16: Teachers in schools in the year after service

Target : Teach For America-Texas estimates that 70 former AmeriCorps members will remain teaching in the year after term of service.

Target Value: 70

Instruments: Teach For America-Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of alumni (former AmeriCorps members) who continue teaching in public schools in the year after their term of service.

PM Statement: Teach For America-Texas will use an internal tracking system to track the number of alumni (former AmeriCorps members) who continue teaching in public schools in the year after their term of service, an estimated 70 members.

Priority Area: Education

ED17: Number of teachers (former AmeriCorps members) remaining in the

National Performance Measures

Performance Measure Title: education field, but not teaching in a public school (i.e., teaching in a private school serving a predominately low-income community, school support staff, school administration, district administration, policy, education non-profits, etc.) after their term of service

Other Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Teach For America-Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of alumni (former AmeriCorps members) who continue remain in the education field after their term of service.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Teach For America-Texas estimates that 21 former AmeriCorps members will remain in the education field after their term of service.

Target : Teach For America-Texas estimates that 21 former AmeriCorps members will remain in the education field after their term of service.

Target Value: 21

Instruments: Teach For America-Texas uses an internal tracking system to track the number of alumni (former AmeriCorps members) who continue remain in the education field after their term of service.

PM Statement: Teach For America-Texas will use an internal tracking system to track the number of alumni (former AmeriCorps members) who remaining in the education field in the year after their term of service, an estimated 21 members.

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Not Applicable

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable