

APPLICANT FEEDBACK - Program Design

2011 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: The New Teacher Project, Georgia Teaching Fellows	Application ID: 11ES123994
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Below are the comments from each External Peer Reviewer that read and evaluated the application. While Reviewers did engage in discussion about their evaluations, consensus was not required as part of their review. Therefore, there may be differing views in their feedback on the quality of the proposal.

COMMENTS: The applicant has shown a high need for this project in these high poverty Georgia counties. The model has been a success in other states. Recruitment of member teachers is competitive and assures quality, diverse candidates. The orientation, training , and supervision plans of the members is evidence based and has proven effective. The project will involve Georgia education officials in the planning and administration of the project in the local school districts, which is key to success. Recruiting at Georgia HBCUs will ensure local and racially diverse member recruitment.

COMMENTS: Overall the program links closely with the data provided in the three year timeline and sets realistic goals for service learning projects that can successfully be completed. Proposal has an adequate process for engaging various students and communities in the target areas in the program planning and implementation. Program has a plan for sustainability beyond grant terms.

COMMENTS: This proposal is well supported with plenty of statistical evidence, including appropriate citations, to support the assertions that the targeted communities have significant poverty issues, and that the poverty issues correlate with low educational performance and low graduation rates. The proposal also provides persuasive and current data to illustrate that the community has a teacher shortage in math and science. The applicant illustrates with statistics and data the way the problem of subject-area teacher shortages and low student achievement will be addressed and alleviated by the recruitment of well-qualified and well-trained AmeriCorps members. They link the attraction of well-qualified recruits to the AmeriCorps programs' education award, and have projected the anticipated outcomes of measurable improvement and direct impact to a significant number of students in the targeted population. Despite the fact that the applicant explains how the volunteers will be recruited and used, this proposal is weakened by the fact that there is no discussion regarding the type of training the volunteers will require or receive to enable them to provide small group or one-on-one tutoring or to otherwise meet the students' needs (as distinguished from AmeriCorps members). There was no information regarding the kind of training or supervision to be provided to

volunteers who work directly with students.

COMMENTS: Overall the applicant presents a well thought out plan. The compelling need in the community is well documented through quotes from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Georgia Department of Education Annual Year Progress Report of 2010. The concern for student achievement levels and the fact that most of the 6 counties did not make Adequate Yearly Progress through No Child Left Behind is evidence of how the problem was chosen for the applicant. The applicant has a proven track record in recruiting highly qualified teachers for high poverty schools as evidenced by the volume of teachers they have recruited since 1997, 43,000. The training plan appears effective as it develops and trains the members through a rigorous five to six week summer pre service Training Institute whereby the member completes 75 hours of coursework sessions and 80 hours of field experience. Through participating in the program, participants will develop the following: knowledge, skills and attitudes about service learning and student achievement skills while working as a cohort in a year-long seminar called Teaching for Results. These objectives are clear and will promote an ethic of service and civic responsibility because the members will learn how their efforts will have a lasting impact on the communities they serve. The applicant's evaluation plan for the program appears to be effective with the use of Teacher Track 2 and an in-house evaluation team. The plan for recruiting volunteers is clear and strong as evidenced by the number of volunteers recruited in 2010, 1,050. The applicant presents a plan to sustain the proposed service activities in the community after the grant ends. Key features of this plan are the five years of funding that Georgia Teaching Fellows have already secured, and the gradual shifting of the school districts to maintain the programs. The potential impact of this program on the community is well-supported.