

PART I - FACE SHEET

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE		1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction															
Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to conform to the Corporation's eGrants System)																	
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS):		3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE: 21-JAN-11	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER:														
2b. APPLICATION ID: 11AC124317		4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER: 09ACHFL0010001														
5. APPLICATION INFORMATION																	
LEGAL NAME: Polk Education Foundation DUNS NUMBER: 041766507		NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Vicki Ginda TELEPHONE NUMBER: (863) 519-8638 FAX NUMBER: (863) 519-3791 INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: vickig.ginda@polk-fl.net															
ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 1530 Shumate Drive Bartow FL 33830 - 6418 County: Polk																	
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 592956529		7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Non-Profit 7b. Community-Based Organization School (K-12) Local Education Agency															
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box). <input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONTINUATION <input type="checkbox"/> AMENDMENT If Amendment, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es): <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> A. AUGMENTATION B. BUDGET REVISION C. NO COST EXTENSION D. OTHER (specify below):		9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: Corporation for National and Community Service															
10a. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER:94.006 10b. TITLE: AmeriCorps State		11.a. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: AmeriCorps Polk Reads															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): Polk County, Florida		11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 09/01/11 END DATE: 08/31/12		14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant <input type="text" value="FL 012"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="FL 012"/>															
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;">\$ 422,091.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. APPLICANT</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 299,908.00</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;">\$ 721,999.00</td> </tr> </table>		a. FEDERAL	\$ 422,091.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 299,908.00	c. STATE	\$ 0.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00	e. OTHER	\$ 0.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 721,999.00	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	\$ 422,091.00																
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g. TOTAL	\$ 721,999.00																
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: Vicki Ginda		b. TITLE:	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (863) 519-8638														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 05/04/11															

Narratives

Executive Summary

AmeriCorps Polk Reads members provide reading tutoring and mentoring services to elementary students in grades K-3 in Polk County public schools. The goal of the program is to significantly increase reading skills of low achieving students. Members also recruit and train high school students to tutor younger students and also serve as mentors to improve students' self image and overall attitude toward school. The program also has a volunteer recruitment component in which volunteers provide literacy related services at public schools.

Rationale and Approach

RATIONALE AND APPROACH

Compelling Community Need:

Based on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, the Florida Department of Education reports that statewide 71% of public school students are reading at or above grade level. While in Polk County, only 66% are reading at or above grade level. However, the children at the schools in which we plan to serve with our AmeriCorps program are performing even lower than the county average, for example, Auburndale Elementary, at 42%, and Combee Elementary, at 48%. If no action is taken, it stands to reason they would enter middle and then high school with that same deficiency. Research conducted by the US Department of Education shows that without aggressive support and early intervention efforts, struggling readers face significantly reduced opportunities for academic and socio-economic success. The AmeriCorps Polk Reads program is designed to intervene when students are young and in the formative learning years.

According to data from Polk County Public Schools, eighty percent of Polk County elementary schools have more than 56% of their populations deemed economically disadvantaged. Schools face the obvious challenge of ensuring success of these disadvantaged students, as there is strong correlation between

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students who are below expectations in academics (especially reading) and poverty. Each year, AmeriCorps Polk Reads serves many students that have no books at home or have no one to read to them.

Many of these students have the skills to succeed, but simply lack the resources and support to be successful. By providing additional help in reading for three 30-minute sessions per week, AmeriCorps Polk Reads is combating this dilemma by giving local students the additional support they lack.

The 45 elementary schools that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress in the 2009-2010 school year and that have a school grade of C or lower will be invited to apply to have AmeriCorps tutors at their site in the 2010-2011 school year. AmeriCorps Polk Reads members will serve at 10 school sites. Schools will be selected based on geographical location, school grade as determined by the Florida Department of Education, Adequate Yearly Progress status (AYP) as determined by the US Department of Education, student population on free and reduced lunch as reported by the Polk County Schools Food Services Division, and from information provided by the United Way of Central Florida and Polk Vision Community Survey which has determined three locations in the county designated as targets due to their high poverty, high unemployment, and low performing schools. Those areas include the Lake Wales Ridge, the Crystal Lake community located in Lakeland and the Fort Meade community. At least one service site will be selected from each targeted area.

The program will continue to serve kindergarten-3rd grade students who are at least one grade level below in reading. Classroom teachers and school administrators will select students who will benefit most from the one-on-one sessions.

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Description of Activities and Member Roles:

Twenty-five full-time members and 15 half-time members will receive training from Polk County Schools reading resource teachers and the elementary education department and other qualified consultants to serve as literacy tutors in the worst-performing Polk County schools. It is anticipated that eligible schools will include both rural and urban communities spanning the entire county. Members will serve at least 600 kindergarten-3rd grade students who are reading below grade level expectations and who have been recommended by their teachers or school administrators.

AmeriCorps Polk Reads members will receive training from the Polk County school district's "Reading First" coaches for assessment and instruction, as well as from a Building Better Readers program facilitator. Schools will be assessing students using scientifically based, state approved and required tools such as "FAIR". FAIR (Florida Assessments for Instruction in Reading), developed by the Florida Center for Reading Research in collaboration with Just Read, Florida!, will provide teachers screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring information that is essential to guiding instruction. Reading coaches at the target schools will provide training throughout the year for staff, teachers and AmeriCorps members to address the indicators for children who experience reading difficulty.

Students will be tutored three times per week for 30 minute, one-on-one sessions during the school day. These sessions will target the five components of effective reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency and reading comprehension strategies), as identified by scientifically based research from the National Reading Panel.

Harcourt "Trophies" is the core reading program for the district, selected because it is structured according to research-based teaching strategies and meets the Sunshine State Standards for reading

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programs in grades K-3. The series addresses the instructional needs of the majority of students as well as providing intervention strategies for struggling readers. Members will use the Harcourt "Trophies" series as a resource for instruction.

Additionally, members will be trained by the Polk Mentoring Alliance and provide mentoring services to at least one student served by the program 30 minutes per week. The goal of these sessions is for students to show improvement in two areas of personal development, such as "Takes pride in work", "Listens and follows directions", "Completes class assignments", etc. Members will document each session on a mentoring log in order to track performance and improvement during the grading periods.

AmeriCorps Polk Reads members will also recruit, train and/or manage at least 80 literacy volunteers consisting of ongoing reading tutoring, episodic "read aloud" volunteers, and middle and high school literacy mentors. These volunteers will collectively provide at least 530 hours of service as documented by volunteer service logs.

Further, members will provide community service as part of the program's collaboration with United Way of Central Florida, the Polk County Board of County Commissioners, READ Polk, and other area agencies providing services to young children. They will serve after school and at community events, such as "Family Fundamentals" family resource center and the "Help Fort Meade" Literacy Program, providing reading tutoring to students in grades K-3 who have been identified as performing below expectations.

A full time member will report to serve at approximately 7:30 am and serve until approximately 4:00 pm. During a typical day, members will plan individual lessons to meet each child's need, track progress, gather resources and materials, and tutor 7-8 students per day. Schedules will be adjusted to

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accommodate members' college classes if necessary.

Each full time member is assigned 16 students. Members conduct 30 one-on-one reading tutoring sessions 3 times per week. During pre-service training, members will review CFR 2520.25 AmeriCorps Prohibited Activities. Members also review this policy during the signing of their contractual agreement. Periodically, we review the member contract as a reminder of the rules and regulations.

In summary, members will:

- *Be placed in schools and assigned students to tutor. Students will be chosen based on pre-screening (FAIR), FCAT-SSS (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test/Sunshine State Standards--Criterion Reference Test) scores, and teacher assessment. Students who are below expectation in reading will be targeted.
- *Serve students at least 3 times per week for a minimum of 30 minutes per session (a total of 90 minutes per week for each child). The program will target a minimum of 600 students in an effort to increase their abilities in reading.
- *Create individualized plans for students based on their specific needs and rate of progress.
- *Serve 7-8 students per day.
- *Provide service during the regular school day.
- *Recruit, train, utilize and supervise volunteers to serve as additional reading tutors and literacy mentors.
- *Work cooperatively with classroom teachers to meet students' literacy needs.

The AmeriCorps Polk Reads program brings a unique and innovative approach to remediation efforts in Polk County. Although there are established programs to help students who are reading below level, they are primarily small or even whole group instruction and few are able to work with students during

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the school day. Our program is designed to work in collaboration with the classroom teacher and school personnel to ensure individualized instruction. The most innovative design in our program is frequent progress monitoring (once a month) by using the assessment tool included with the phonics-based Rigby PM Benchmark utilized by the AmeriCorps Polk Reads program. This helps members and teachers plan instruction that targets each child's individual needs.

By receiving the AmeriCorps grant, Polk Reads will continue service to over 600 students and support 40 tutors. Without such monetary contributions, the Polk Education Foundation could not afford to provide services.

Measurable Outputs and Outcomes:

Measurable outcomes include:

*Kindergarten: 80% of students will master 80% of the Language Arts skills section of the Polk County Schools report card

*First grade: 80% of students will read with comprehension on the basic primer level as evidenced by the Rigby PM Benchmark Assessment Kit and recognize by sight at least 80% or more of the Dolch Basic Sight Words through first grade

*Second and third grades: at least 80% or more of students will increase their reading ability by at least one month for each month as outlined in the Rigby PM Benchmark Assessments

We are proposing the Rigby PM Resources and Benchmark Assessments is both valid and reliable instruments. The Rigby PM curriculum was designed to be used with children of all backgrounds. The design has four main components: traditional story structure, a focus on meaning, meticulous grading (leveling of instruction) and illustrations that match the text. Each of these components addresses the

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five elements of reading published in the Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read. The report identified the five areas of instruction in which mastery is required in order to be skilled reader: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

Plan for Self-Assessment and Improvement:

In order for the AmeriCorps Polk Reads program to ensure a high quality of services provided we will:

- * An annual stakeholders' survey including parents, teachers, site administrator, district personnel business/community partners and members
- * The program director will make regular site visits and conduct interviews with site stakeholders
- * Student files will be reviewed by the program director during site visits ensuring adequate progress in be made with students being served
- * Members must attend continuous Professional Development training scheduled by the program office. Training will include information related to effective tutoring, mentoring strategies and other related information required by the Member Contract
- * Participate in the annual program assessment conducted by Volunteer Florida

Community Involvement:

In order to identify the needs and appropriate activities the AmeriCorps Polk Reads program requested input from several Polk County agencies. Agencies providing input include:

- * Polk County Schools Assessment, Accountability and Evaluation Department
- * Division of Learning, K-12 Reading Department

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- * Community Involvement Office of Polk County Schools
- * Florida Department of Education
- * READ Polk, an adult and family literacy program
- * The United Way of Central Florida
- * Polk Vision, a partnership including business, education, community and other individuals committed to the long range planning to improve the quality of life for all stakeholders in Polk County, Florida

During the three year program period we will maintain continuous dialogue regarding student reading outcomes for our service sites through data received from our planning partners. Service sites will be required to provide information regarding student progress in reading and personal development skills.

Relationship to other National and Community Service Programs:

The program will continue to participate in Learn and Serve projects throughout Polk County. We plan to invite recent Polk County grant recipients, such as AmeriCorps "Mentoring Solutions," to participate in training and community service projects. We will continue our active participation in the numerous AmeriCorps VISTA projects sponsored by the Polk County Board of County Commissioners, such as Area Back-to-School Bashes and Black Heritage Festival.

Potential for Replication:

Our partnership with the schools is truly the best key for success. It would be very possible to replicate

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this tutoring and mentoring program with great ease. By following the handbook and video from the Building Better Readers © materials, a tutoring program could be established. We emphasize the relationship with the student's classroom teacher being one of the greatest resources for planning.

Organizational Capability

Organizational Capability

The Polk Education Foundation (PEF) was founded in 1988 and is a direct support 501©(3) organization for the Polk County Public School Board. It has raised in excess of \$23,500,000 in the past 20 years and has spent these funds on programs and services that the school system cannot use tax generated dollars to support. The PEF has successfully administered the AmeriCorps grant since the inception of Florida Reads! In 1998 and will continue to serve as the fiscal agent for AmeriCorps Polk Reads.

Program and fiscal oversight has received good reviews from both Volunteer Florida audits and an independent audit study done by the PEF and submitted to the Polk County School Board. Other programs administered by the Polk Education Foundation similar to this grant program include Take Stock in Children, funded partially by Legislative dollars, and our Teacher-to-Teacher Connation program, funded by business partner support. Both also require fiscal oversight like our Polk Reads program and are multi tiered in their design.

Over \$175,000 in teacher grants have been awarded over the last 10 years and hundreds of students have been served in our Take Stock in Children program. These children have received mentoring and tutoring services helping to assure they graduate from high school. The payoff is their award of either a two or four year scholarship. All scholarship funds are raised by the PEF and are not part of the

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legislative funding. As stated above, our past reviews and audits have sited sound accounting and recorded keeping practices. AmeriCorps staff works with the PEF bookkeeper to track incoming and outgoing funds as well as monitor expenditures against the budget allowances. The PEF Board of Directors oversees program accountability, and they receive quarterly reports on the progress and financial standing of our program. They consult with the Program Director and conduct site visits.

The majority of programs or services of the PEF result in higher achievement of students. Our Take Stock In Children Program helps ensure their successes throughout high school then fund a college scholarship. Our Teacher-to-Teacher Connection program provides classroom grants to teachers so they may purchase supplies to better serve their students. Other programs like our FCAT enhancement grants or School Incentive grants provide opportunities for schools to offer additional assistance or support in helping students succeed.

The program staff consists of one full time Program Director and one full time Program Assistant. The current Program Director is Vicki Ginda, who has served as the Program Director for the last six years. She has served as the AmeriCorps Program Director representative on the Volunteer Florida's Inclusion Council for the last 3 years. Mrs. Ginda was previously employed by the Polk County Schools Community Involvement Department, where her duties included countywide School Advisory Council Training and Volunteer Training.

Plan for Self-Assessment or Improvement:

For a self-assessment, Polk County Schools Planning and Evaluation Department has agreed to conduct a systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of our program for continuous improvement. This service will be an in-kind donation of service. The evaluation will specifically target the effectiveness and impact of the reading tutoring service by comparing the results of reading achievement with a sample of

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students who do not receive the service. The Program Staff will set annual goals (a minimum of three each) related to program goals and objectives, which will serve as internal evaluation. The Executive Director, Program Director, and select board members will review the goals and monitor progress and outcomes.

Each host site is monitored by a site-supervisor, who will monitor members and overall program operation. Site supervisors will be a school-designated staff member; such as the assistant principal, principal, reading resource teacher, or instructional support staff member. Supervisors make weekly visits with their team and meet with individual members as needed to provide technical assistance and support. Classroom teachers evaluate weekly lesson plans and provide feedback to ensure quality of service.

Plan for Effective Technical Assistance:

The Polk County School District assists our program by providing numerous in-kind services such as tracking student data, volunteer background checks and tracking. They also provide in-kind member development sessions relating to reading tutoring strategies, computer skills and personal development. Our program staff provides technical assistance to each service site and as requested throughout the program year. The program office schedules various training sessions during the program year to assist the members in their tutoring skills as well as all required member trainings.

Sound Record of Accomplishment as an Organization Volunteer Generation and Support:

Since its inception, this program has continued to show an increase in the number of community volunteers. We will continue to utilize members in the area of volunteer recruitment and management. The diversity of Polk County Schools provides for diversity in the volunteers recruited.

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Organizational and Community Leadership:

Our organization is represented on numerous community task forces such as the Minority Achievement Board, Professional Development Advisory Council, Rally Against Drugs, Success by Six/Family Fundamentals Partnership Management Board, and READ Polk. We also participate in various community events throughout the year such as Family Fundamentals Back to School Bash, Polk County Schools Spelling Bee, Teacher of the Year/Non-Instructional Employee of the Year, and Volunteer of the Year.

Success in Securing Match Resources:

We have a proven record of accomplishment in securing the match resources to implement this program over the last eleven years.

Success in Securing Community Support:

We have established some strong partnerships with our community. We are continuing to build on the partnerships to create collaboration in meeting the identified need of helping children become better readers. We have developed partnerships with various agencies and faith based organizations, Habitat for Humanity, United Way of Central Florida, Boys and Girls Clubs, Girl's, Inc.

Local Financial and In-Kind Contributions:

We receive cash contributions specifically for this program from Publix Charities, Inc., The Florida Consortium of Education Foundations and Verizon. Polk County Schools has formally acknowledged the value of the program's literacy efforts and has donated money, facilities, utilities, communication expenses and personnel time for implementation of this program. The wide range of Community Stakeholders in the Polk Education Foundation include the PCSB, the Polk Education Foundation Board members, individuals and business members from around the county.

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Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY

The Polk Education Foundation consistently seeks diverse funding from the community, both businesses and individuals, and various state and nationwide organizations. Diversification of cash resources will be coming in from various community agencies such as United Way of Central Florida, The Polk County Public Libraries, and the local Boys & Girls Club who have recognized the benefit of collaborative efforts to reach and meet the county's literacy needs. Such agencies have provided structural and financial resources.

Decreased Reliance on Federal Support:

We are proposing an impressive match in Program Operating Costs and Member Support Costs. Our cost per MSY for this proposal is \$13,082.00 which is under the CNCS maximum cost per MSY. We will make every effort to increase our fundraising and raise our grantee share during the second and third year of the grant cycle.

Budget Adequacy:

The budget submitted is adequate to support the program due to the design of our program. We have strategically designed the program to be implemented primarily at school sites during the school day, which provides us the donated resources mentioned such as space, utilities, etc. Our partnership with Polk County Schools provides many donated resources such as payroll, personnel processing, background checks, etc. thus saving us thousands of cash dollars. The funds requested primarily support the members and staff to provide the direct service. As evidenced in previous grant years, we have planned well and kept spending well within the budget.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

EVALUATION SUMMARY OR PLAN

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PEF has successfully administered the AmeriCorps grant since the inception of Florida Reads! in 1998 and will continue to serve as the fiscal agent for the AmeriCorps Polk Reads program. We have received clean and excellent fiscal audits, state reviews, and local evaluations. We are most proud of our outstanding reviews from Volunteer Florida! The grant has been managed with highly trained and qualified staff.

The Executive Director will conduct site visits at least once per quarter and offer any pertinent feedback for continuous improvement. The Program Director will spend 100% of her time in the capacity of overall operations manager to include responsibility for all reports, fiscal management, supervision of members, and all other duties related to program operation. The Program Director will visit sites at least twice per month. The Full Time Program Assistant will serve as a direct support for the Program Director including assistance in site visitation and monitoring and community mobilization as well as overall office organization, filing, phones and internet communication, etc.

We will also participate in the Volunteer Florida statewide AmeriCorps program evaluation conducted by Florida State University.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

Year 2-- program dates 09/01/2011 through 08/31/2012

Grant year is correct on Application Face Sheet and on Application Info. The grantee has attempted to correct the date on the Budget Review but we have not successfully corrected it.

Is there a difference in the role and activities among full time and half time members? No, there is not a difference except for the total number of students tutored.

How will the program capture the impact of tutoring in the after school programs? The program does

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not have an after school componen. Tutoring sessions are conducted during the instructional day in one on one sessions.

How will Polk Education Foundation mentoring work build on and not duplicate Mentoring Solutions work? PEF tutors mentor K-3 students served by the tutoring program. Mentoring Solutions mentors serve middle and high school students who are clients in the foster care system. There is no duplication of services.

How has PEF collaborated with Learn and Serve in the past and why was the collaboration successful? PEF has collaborated numerous times in the past through the ongoing Learn & Serve projects directed by the Polk County Schools Community Involvement Department, Lakeland High 3rd Grade Literacy Festivals, Teen Trendsetters (after school mentoring/tutoring program). In 2009-10 PEF conducted training, celebration and reflection activities in 4 separate areas of the the county. PEF uses this as an opportunity for member recruitment as well as exposure to the AC program at school sites not served.

Describe how the program is designed to foster program replication of the PEF tutoring & mentoring program? The program fosters replication of the PEF tutoring and mentoring program by demonstrating to the school district and the community the effectiveness of one-on-one tutoring. Also, the program has demonstrated how the Building Better Readers method used by the program and the leveled Rigby materials can help students significantly improve reading skills.

Explain "extra service opportunities for members". Extra service activities are scheduled on Saturdays and non-scheduled school days. Activities include Children's Festivals, Community Health Fairs, Community Activity Days. Members plan activities such as literacy based make and take projects for the children attending the events. They also provide help to event sponsors and other agencies.

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Please describe member reflection opportunities in conjunction with civic engagement training curricula. Members participate in the Citizenship Training Modules approved by CNCS. Members also participate in the new Civic Reflection program provided by Volunteer Florida.

Will a member who is the volunteer coordinator oversee the volunteer activities of other members? No, program staff will oversee the members during volunteer activities.

Does the Planning and Evaluation Dept. conduct self-assessment and make recommendations for continuous improvement?

Data is collected annually and analyzed by program staff, used for program planning in making improvements in program design.

In addition to the eight hours of in-kind systematic evaluation of the program by the school districts Planning and Evaluation Department, the program is participating in the Volunteer Florida state wide program evaluation. In addition, select board members review progress toward meeting annual goals as part of our internal review.

Continuation Changes

2010/2011 Grant Continuation Changes YEAR 2

Program Start Date 09/01/2011 through 08/31/2012

Rationale and Approach---No changes

Community Outputs and Outcomes---No changes

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Organizational Capacity---We are serving at 11 school services sites in the 2010/2011 program year. We had over 30 schools apply for an AmeriCorps program this school year. The Polk Education Foundation has absorb this extra cost for this program year, however, we are requesting a budget adjustment, adding the extra in-kind charges for the eleventh site in the 2011/2012 program year.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

Increase Cost per MSY Request

We are requesting an increase in the cost per MSY of \$13064 to \$13438 due to increased program costs and the current economic conditions we are experiencing in Polk County, Florida.

The increase program costs include the required increase in the member living allowance and the budget increases listed below. We do not anticipate increased cash support to offset these increases in costs. In fact, we have realized decreased funding support from our community.

We have requested the following increases in our budget for the 2011/2012 program year:

* Section 1.A Personnel Expenses: \$621 increase for Program Director Annual Salary due to an increase in compensation from Polk County Schools for this position.

* Section 1.B Personnel Fringe Benefits: increased \$199 due to an increase in Workmen's Compensation and retirement contributions by Polk County Schools

Match Waiver Request

We are requesting a match waiver to maintain our match at 38% and not increase it to 42% due to our county's classification as a "Severely Economically Distressed County". As such, our community

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financial support has been significantly reduced.

As published in the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Polk County's per capita income is well under the national rate of \$40,757 at \$31,951.

Polk County residents' poverty level also stands at 15.3%, while the national average is 14.3% as stated by the U. S. Census Bureau. Other staggering data published in the Bureau of Labor Statistics tracks Polk County's unemployment rate as 13.3% -- the national average is 9.7%.

Furthermore, the effect of our nation's recent recession has been catastrophic to the fundraising abilities of the Polk Education Foundation. Over the last two years we have endured a loss in contributions in the amount of \$601,961.00.

The Polk County School District provides a substantial in-kind and cash donation to our program. However, the district is expecting a \$54 million deficit from state funding, due in part to non-reoccurring stimulus funds and other Florida statewide budget cuts.

Retention Rate Improvement Plan

Our retention for 2010-2011 program year was 81%. To increase our member retention rate to 100% we will engage and carefully monitor the following retention strategies:

* Recruit and enroll members committed to service and completion of terms

* Make clear to potential members that AmeriCorps is not an employment program and that it is a

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commitment to a year of service that entails an economic sacrifice

- * Include interview questions that address how members will support themselves given the limited living allowance
- * Refer members to available community and government resources such as Food Stamps to assist members financially.
- * Provide members trainings in money management and budgeting
- * Provide members with frequent and regular updates on service hours
- * Institute strict and early enforcement of attendance and service hours completion
- * Provide members with a service hours benchmark schedule
- * Provide members with service opportunities to bank and make up hours
- * Schedule regular member meetings to allow members to share challenges and accomplishment
- * Conduct team building activities to include planning and implementing service projects (taking ownership of the program)
- * Provide support, guidance and counseling to individual members in resolving personal issues that impact on members being able to complete terms of service.

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Performance Measures

Please note updated changes in the Performance Measures.

Updated changes:

* updates on kindergarten instrument used for documenting progress

* edit language on mentoring services

Performance Measures

SAA Characteristics

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

Priority Areas

- Education Healthy Futures
Selected for National Measure *Selected for National Measure*
 Environmental Stewardship Veterans and Military Families
Selected for National Measure *Selected for National Measure*
 Economic Opportunity Other
Selected for National Measure *Selected for National Measure*

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 32.5

Service Categories

Elementary Education Primary Secondary

Tutoring

Service Category: Elementary Education

Measure Category: Needs and Service Activities

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Members will tutor kindergarten through 3rd grade students who have been identified by school staff as reading below grade level.

Kindergarten students: 80% will master the key language arts skills (upper and lower case alphabet recognition and alphabet sounds) as listed on the Polk County Schools Standards Based Achievement Report (SBAR).

1st grade students: 80% will read with comprehension at the basic primer level (1st grade) as evidenced by the Rigby PM Benchmark Assessment Kit and recognize by sight 80% of the Dolch Basic Sight Words through first grade.

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

2nd& 3rd grade students: 80% will meet the benchmarks established for improvement. Students will make one month's progress for each month served. For example, a 3rd grade student comes in to the program reading on an early 2nd grade level 15, after 4 weeks of service the student should be reading with comprehension on a 2nd grade level 16'as evidenced by the Rigby PM Assessment Kit.

The 80% benchmark for each grade level was established based on school district standards as identified by the Florida Department of Education, and the scientific research based assessment tools as listed above.

Results

Result: Output

Members will provide reading tutoring.

Indicator: serving students

Target: Kindergarten through third grade students who are reading below grade level.

Target Value: 600

Instruments: Student Rosters

PM Statement: Members will tutor at least 600 students as measured by student rosters.

Prev. Yrs. Data

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Students will meet the benchmarks for reading improvement as evidenced by the Rigby PM

Assessments material and the Kindergarten Standards Based Achievement Report (SBAR).

Indicator: improved reading scores

Target: Kindergarten through 3rd grade students who have been identified as reading below grade level by school staff.

Target Value: 80%

Instruments: Kindergarten:Standards Based Achievement Report (SBAR) Language Arts Section (report card) 1st-Rigby PM Benchmark Assessment (Grade level reading curriculum) and the Dolch Sight Words.

2nd & 3rd grade--Rigby PM Benchmark Assessment Kit.

PM Statement: 80% of the K-3rd grade students who have been identified as reading below grade level will meet the benchmarks established for improvement as measured by the Polk County Schools Kindergarten Standards Based Achievement Report (SBAR

Prev. Yrs. Data

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Already on File at CNCS

Labor Union Concurrence

Already on File at CNCS