

PART I - FACE SHEET

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE <small>Modified Standard Form 424 (Rev.02/07 to confirm to the Corporation's eGrants System)</small>		1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction														
2a. DATE SUBMITTED TO CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (CNCS):	3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE: 24-JAN-11	STATE APPLICATION IDENTIFIER: 11ES124292														
2b. APPLICATION ID: 11ES124479	4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY:	FEDERAL IDENTIFIER: 11ESHMN0010001														
5. APPLICATION INFORMATION																
LEGAL NAME: Duluth Public Schools DUNS NUMBER: 071501092 ADDRESS (give street address, city, state, zip code and county): 215 N. 1st Ave E Duluth MN 55802 - 2069 County: St. Louis	NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PROJECT DIRECTOR OR OTHER PERSON TO BE CONTACTED ON MATTERS INVOLVING THIS APPLICATION (give area codes): NAME: Sarah Dixon TELEPHONE NUMBER: (218) 336-8752 FAX NUMBER: (218) 336-8773 INTERNET E-MAIL ADDRESS: sdixon@mnyouth.net															
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 416003776	7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: 7a. Local Government - Municipal 7b. School (K-12)															
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION (Check appropriate box). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> NEW/PREVIOUS GRANTEE <input 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: Minnesota Alliance with Youth Promise Fellow s 11.b. CNCS PROGRAM INITIATIVE (IF ANY):															
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (List Cities, Counties, States, etc): Statewide	13. PROPOSED PROJECT: START DATE: 08/15/11 END DATE: 08/14/14 14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF: a.Applicant <input type="text" value="MN 008"/> b.Program <input type="text" value="MN 008"/>															
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING: Year #: <input type="text" value="1"/>	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;">\$ 1,033,200.00</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;">\$ 1,033,200.00</td> </tr> </table>	a. FEDERAL	\$ 1,033,200.00	b. APPLICANT	\$ 0.00	c. STATE	\$ 0.00	d. LOCAL	\$ 0.00	e. OTHER	\$ 0.00	f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00	g. TOTAL	\$ 1,033,200.00	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> YES if "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	
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f. PROGRAM INCOME	\$ 0.00															
g. TOTAL	\$ 1,033,200.00															
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: Sarah Dixon	b. TITLE: President & CEO	c. TELEPHONE NUMBER: (218) 336-8752														
d. SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:		e. DATE SIGNED: 04/28/11														

Narratives

Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The vision of Minnesota Alliance With Youth is that all youth graduate prepared for academic, civic and economic success. The Alliance is a recognized leader in Minnesota's drop-out prevention efforts, working in partnership with the Minnesota Dept. of Education and other leaders to address Minnesota's drop-out crisis. Our purpose is for AmeriCorps members to make a measurable difference in reducing Minnesota's drop-out rate by providing evidence-based supports to students in grades 6 - 10.

Rationale and Approach

1. PROGRAM DESIGN

A. PROBLEM

INTRODUCTION

Minnesota Alliance With Youth (the Alliance) was established in 1997 as a strategy for youth -- and organizations that serve youth -- to share resources and collaborate. In order to ensure all youth achieve success in school, work, and life, we focus on three strategies: 1) promoting academic success, 2) increasing civic engagement, and 3) strengthening youth voice. The Alliance is a recognized leader in Minnesota's drop-out prevention efforts, working in partnership with the Minnesota Dept. of Education's Drop-Out Prevention Initiative and other statewide leaders. As a leading state affiliate of America's Promise, we actively participate in the Grad Nation movement, a national effort to end the high school drop-out crisis and prepare young people for college and the 21st century workforce. We believe AmeriCorps members can be part of Minnesota's long-term strategy to address our graduation crisis by providing evidence-based supports to students in grades 6-10.

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THE UNACCEPTABLE DROP-OUT CRISIS IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota's academic achievement gap has grown to be the largest in the nation. Data from the Minnesota Dept. of Education show the graduation rate for white students is 82%, but as noted below, is alarmingly lower for students of color and low-income students. The number of white students enrolled in public schools is shrinking, and non-white student enrollment has increased by almost 60% in the past 10 years. If we do not make changes that better serve all students; we will see even greater gaps between those who succeed and thrive, and a further increase in youth who become disengaged from school and life.

MORE THAN 18,000 (or 25%) OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS DIDN'T GRADUATE ON TIME

Information by sub-group for most recent year for which there was data (08-09):

1,065 or 41% of American Indian students

1,416 or 68% of Asian American students

2,058 or 45% of Hispanic students

4,071 or 44% of Black students

8,610 total for non-White students

10,029 White students (White students made up 77% of all seniors that year, but were only 54% of students who didn't graduate.)

18,639 total didn't graduate 08-09*

* 54% of these students received free or reduced-price lunch

THE BEST ECONOMIC STIMULUS IS A DIPLOMA

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Minnesota's achievement gap and graduation crisis affect the health and well-being of entire communities. For one class of dropouts alone, the lost lifetime earnings totaled more than \$3.6 billion (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2009). Reducing the number of dropouts by just 50% for a single high school class in the Minneapolis metro area, would result in tremendous economic benefits for the region:

*Increased wages: by earning their diplomas and in many cases continuing their education these new graduates would earn an average of over \$81 million per year in additional wages compared to their likely earnings had they dropped out.

*Increased human capital: after earning their high school diplomas, an estimated 55% of these students are projected to continue their education after high school.

*Increased home sales: with their additional degrees and increased wages, these graduates are better positioned to buy homes rather than rent.

In addition, the Alliance for Excellent Education projected that Minnesota's economy would experience crime-related savings and additional revenue of about \$77.8 million each year if the male high school graduation rate increased by just 5%. More than \$224 million in health care costs and \$89 million a year in community college remediation costs would be saved if each class of dropouts earned their diplomas. Growth and Justice, a respected Minnesota economic think-tank, reported in 2008 that dropouts have higher reliance on public programs such as welfare and Medicaid, and are more likely to be involved with the criminal justice system. They conclude, "Prioritizing new investment in our human capital -- based on evidence, directed where improvement is most needed, and focused on interventions that achieve results cost effectively -- is the smartest investment Minnesota can make." Minnesota has a clear and escalating need and AmeriCorps can play a critical role in increasing graduation rates for all students.

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TARGETING THE GREATEST NEEDS

Our proposed statewide program will serve students in grades 6 - 10 at high schools that have the highest annual school drop-out rates and at the middle schools that feed into those schools. Using evidence-based interventions including mentoring, high-quality out-of-school-time activities, academic support and service-learning, we will invest in 214 of Minnesota's 717 schools where annual drop-out rates are greater than the state average. These schools are in both urban and rural areas and include schools in districts such as Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, St. Cloud, Rochester, Bemidji, and schools on American Indian reservations such as White Earth, Leech Lake and Red Lake. The Minnesota Dept. of Education has committed to work closely with the Alliance each year to identify and target the highest need schools. Youth at these schools will be selected for participation based on the "ABC" early warning signs predicting risk of dropping out: Absences, Behavioral referrals, and failing grades in Core academic subjects -- specifically reading and math. ("Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning Signs With Appropriate Interventions" - National High School Center, 2007)

THE NEED FOR MULTIFACETED SOLUTIONS

Dropping out of school is a process, not a one-day event, and often has multiple causes. Students leaving high school often cite lack of motivation, boredom, an unchallenging atmosphere, or an overall lack of engagement in school as reasons they dropped out (National High School Center, 2007). Unfortunately, many classroom teachers lack the necessary training, time, and data to monitor how all students are doing from week to week. Students who are struggling may go unnoticed for some time. Historically, extra supports have not been available to students until their trajectory of failure is almost impossible to reverse. This program is designed to do the opposite-

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intervene as early as possible to greatly increase the chance for success.

The Institute of Education Sciences reported in 2008 that the "greatest success in reducing dropout rates will be achieved where multiple approaches are adopted as part of a comprehensive strategy to increase student engagement." Growth and Justice reports "Rigorous coursework alone will not have the intended effect for those students who are performing at or below proficiency levels. Social supports are often needed, such as tutoring, in-school counseling, and mentoring." (2008) Our program's approach, described in detail below, utilizes the power of AmeriCorps to apply various evidence-based strategies to engage youth and keep them on-track to graduate.

DROP-OUT PREVENTION

Most future dropouts can be identified as early as 6th grade. Research by Dr. Robert Balfanz at Johns Hopkins University and the Philadelphia Education Fund found that a 6th grader with serious difficulties in even one of the early warning sign areas has at least a 75% chance of never finishing high school. These researchers conclude that drop-out prevention efforts should be focused in the middle grades to be most effective and employ evidence-based strategies to address the ABC early warning signs of attendance, behavior and competency in reading and math.

In our work across the state, community leaders have shared the need for increased capacity to support these multi-faceted drop-out prevention efforts, particularly in under-resourced schools. Dr. Balfanz recommends systematically applying targeted interventions until students are on track, and using national service such as AmeriCorps to provide the people power for mentoring and tutoring programs.

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In addition, the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance at the U.S. Dept. of Education recommends using data to identify students most at risk of dropping out, providing targeted intervention (academic support and enrichment) that improve students' classroom behavior and social skills, and connecting students with adult advocates. The National High School Center concurs, reporting proven dropout prevention programs feature tutoring, community engagement, and adults working with small groups of students.

In developing our program, we scanned the country for programs that use national service in effective drop-out prevention efforts and that align with our mission and goals. We identified Diplomas Now as one successful model and conducted a site visit to their Philadelphia office to learn more. Their commitment to provide "the right support to the right student at the right time," using the power of AmeriCorps, mirrors our approach. They collect and analyze student data on attendance, behavioral issues, and academic performance and use the data to determine which students need support. We will integrate this data-driven strategy into our program structure, plus we will support struggling youth within an expanded web of service through school and community partnerships.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

To solve the graduation crisis, entire communities must be engaged. Schools alone cannot provide the multifaceted strategies youth need to thrive. According to the National Drop-Out Prevention Center at Clemson University and the Minnesota Dept. of Education's Drop-Out Prevention Initiative, school-community collaborations are essential to drop-out prevention. The Alliance is uniquely positioned to implement this holistic approach because of our long-standing tradition and experience building relationships with multiple groups including schools, community organizations, government, the private sector and youth themselves. Our expanded AmeriCorps program will enhance communities

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throughout Minnesota where multiple partners from all sectors are dedicated to ending Minnesota's graduation crisis. Many agree that "it takes a village to raise a child", and we put that directive into action. Our deep and sustainable school-community partnerships increase the number of people, organizations, and resources dedicated to ensuring graduation success for all youth.

B. SOLUTION: AMERICORPS MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Since its creation, the Alliance has used the strength of AmeriCorps to tackle difficult problems. The Alliance secured funding through America's Promise and CNCS for its first AmeriCorps members in 1998. The corps, which was dedicated to helping every youth reach their full promise, grew steadily over the years and now has 80 members and a statewide presence. Because many schools are under-resourced, AmeriCorps members are uniquely appropriate for this service, because of the time and dedication needed to reach students in need.

PROVIDING THE RIGHT SUPPORT TO THE RIGHT YOUTH AT THE RIGHT TIME

AmeriCorps members connect high-need youth with critical school and community resources. They will make it possible for increasing numbers of schools to implement a Response To Intervention (RTI) approach. RTI is a relatively new approach used by educators to identify and address academic and behavioral problems before students struggle, fail and drop out. The RTI approach quickly identifies early warning signs in students as well as appropriate and engaging interventions, designed for each student's needs. Members based at both schools and community programs provide the people power to implement the interventions.

AmeriCorps members will make it possible for schools and communities to use RTI to implement effective drop-out prevention strategies that result in higher attendance, fewer behavior problems, and

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improved academic performance. Communities that are eager to create or deepen their school-community partnerships and intensify their school-reform efforts will host small clusters of members.

To help members successfully reach the most-needy youth, a professional site coordinator at each participating school will allocate at least 10% of his/her time to coordinate the program. The site coordinator will review weekly student data on early warning indicators (less than 80% attendance, one or more behavior referrals, or poor course performance in English or Math) and identify youth who are slipping off track. In order to provide the right support to the right youth and the right time, the site coordinator and school team will use this data to determine appropriate interventions for each youth and monitor participant involvement and improvement over time. Members will provide or coordinate support interventions for at least 30 identified youth, ultimately helping them get back on track to graduate. As youth progress, new youth may be added to a member's caseload.

Members will ensure that participants become connected to more caring adults, participate in high-quality activities in school and out of school, engage in meaningful service, and connect them to appropriate academic support as needed. These strategies are detailed below:

CARING ADULTS

AmeriCorps members will increase the number of significant, caring adult relationships experienced by the youth participants. Depending on existing structures and programs in a given school, a member will create or strengthen opportunities where the members or adult volunteers provide mentoring, academic enrichment, project-based learning, or career expertise. Adults will invest at least 30 hours per youth per year. Members will recruit, train, and monitor adult volunteers. At least 5,000 adult volunteers will be mobilized throughout the state.

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HIGH-QUALITY IN-SCHOOL & OUT-OF-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

AmeriCorps members will also ensure youth spend at least 16 hours per week in high-quality and engaging activities before, during and/or after-school and in the summer by coordinating academic support (such as homework help, study skills practice) along with enrichment activities such as career and college exploration for a minimum of three months. According to research presented at the Minnesota Governor's After-school Opportunities Summit, middle-school students who regularly attend high-quality after-school programs demonstrate significant gains in both standardized math test scores and work habits.

SERVICE-LEARNING

Depending on existing structures and programs in a given community, members will also engage youth in meaningful service-learning or civic engagement activities, for a minimum of 20 hours per youth each school year. According to the National Drop-Out Prevention Center, "Middle-school students, in particular, benefit from service-learning activities. Students have the opportunity to work as a team, build their self-esteem and self-efficacy, and collaborate with positive adult role models." Members will create or strengthen in-school service-learning programs, community service clubs, youth leadership or youth voice in community decision-making, events for National Days of Service, etc. All members will be trained in service-learning best practices including planning and reflection.

Members will use these interventions to ensure youth are on track for graduation:

* Attendance - Provide attendance coaching, monitor attendance and call home if students miss class; organize field trips and other special events to make learning and being at school more engaging and relevant.

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* Behavior - Coordinate a lunchtime mentoring program; promote youth leadership development through a student ambassador program or student-led peer mediation program.

* Academic support: Provide before, during and after school academic support for individuals and small groups; connect after-school service-learning projects with classroom instruction; connect students with a mentor or tutor to help with math and/or reading skills and support differentiated classroom instruction; incorporate everyday math/reading games into after-school programming.

Members will also help create a positive whole-school environment for graduation through activities such as:

* Creating and distributing certificates for good attendance and recognizing students during announcements

* Recognizing positive behavior at school assemblies

* Organizing a service project for family night

* Reinforcing rules and expectations that are uniformly supported by everyone at the school

* Encouraging participation in after-school clubs

* Working with teachers and students to establish shared expectations posted around school

* Providing individual or small group ad hoc academic support in the classroom or after-school programs

"Although we do not have the ability to change the socioeconomic reality that our students face, we can play an active role in structuring programming that focuses on their academic success." --

Former Alliance AmeriCorps Member

HOST COMMUNITIES

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In order to host AmeriCorps members, host communities (towns, cities, or neighborhoods) must commit to create or strengthen a sustainable partnership among one or more schools and two or more community organizations. This partnership builds interconnected support for youth in schools and communities. When needs and gaps in services are identified, and schools don't have resources to fill them, partners may step in to help. (e.g. a mental health center could provide important counseling services, if the school has let counselors go due to budget cuts).

Our approach implements evidence-based interventions consistently across all sites, and is responsive to the nuances of local communities. In our host site selection process, we will seek those communities that demonstrate a commitment to balance the integration of our proven evidence-based approaches with the interventions they will utilize to advance their particular school reform.

School districts are already seeing results from these approaches and partnerships. The Duluth Public Schools (DPS), a long-standing partner of the Alliance, has adopted the RTI approach to identify students using the early warning indicators and provides multifaceted interventions to help students successfully stay in school. DPS has committed to develop an ongoing data collection system and fund data coaches in all schools to work with teachers to review individual student performance. The data coaches provide site coordination and support to the AmeriCorps members in each school.

In addition, the city of Duluth has identified this as a community-wide priority and the schools, the mayor, the United Way, and nonprofit leaders are meeting on a regular basis to ensure graduation is the expectation for all youth. In addition, the mayor and superintendent convened all youth-serving agencies to develop a comprehensive plan to provide high-quality before and after-school programming. For example, one partner, Lutheran Social Services, is supporting these efforts through

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a school-based attendance program that diverts truancy cases from court to community alternatives. Members will connect in-school instruction and out-of-school activities to ensure there is alignment between the schools and the various community service providers.

"This multi-dimensional model that provides youth the right support at the right time is a fundamental philosophical shift in education. This philosophy creates individualized learning plans for students at risk of dropping out, which is time-consuming yet absolutely essential for success. We're excited to partner with the Alliance through a program that provides immense promise for the students who need it most. We will accomplish so much more together than the district can on its own." - Superintendent, Duluth Public Schools

SCALING WHAT WORKS

There are 314,000 students in 6th-10th grade in Minnesota. We know that unless things change, more than a quarter of them, or 78,500, will not graduate on time or at all. Applying evidence-based interventions is essential to help these students get back on track. This growing problem affects students in communities of all sizes, from the urban core of Minneapolis and St. Paul to small rural towns. We would like to expand our corps to become a significant part of the solution to the drop-out crisis in Minnesota. We completed an extensive internal analysis to determine the Alliance's capacity to support an increased corps, and concluded we have the systems and relationships in place to successfully expand from 80 to 300 full-time members, with potential to increase more in the future. With 300 members, each helping at least 30 youth get back on track to graduate, we will serve 9,000 youth each year. Over three years, we will have a significant impact; reaching one-third of the 6th - 10th graders in Minnesota who are not on track to graduate.

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We currently have to turn away host communities each year, and with an expanded program, we will do additional outreach to the 214 schools that have the lowest graduation rates. We are also confident we can recruit qualified members for an expanded corps. In 2010, we had over 600 applicants for 80 positions.

All members serve full-time due to the high expectations of each position, and for consistency in training and member support.

C. AMERICORPS MEMBER SELECTION, TRAINING, AND SUPERVISION

Members in this program are energetic, compassionate organizers who leave a legacy of sustainable and measurable change after their year of service. Each year their efforts have increased students' GPAs, increased students' commitment to civic engagement, and rebuilt hope in youth who were disengaged from school and life. Many past members have chosen to stay in the field after their year of training and practical experience, taking full-time positions with their host sites or other schools and youth organizations.

MEMBER RECRUITMENT

Because the Alliance believes in maximizing community involvement, a diverse corps is recruited from the host communities. Our proven recruitment strategy relies on these communities using their local networks and publicity sources to secure local applicants. 85% of past members were residents of the communities they served. The Alliance and its statewide partners will also advertise all positions to attract a wide pool of diverse candidates through job search websites (including Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and www.americorps.gov); colleges in the Minnesota Campus Compact network; and diverse media outlets, such as Access Press (for people with disabilities), Asian American Press, and La

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Prensa.

Last year, 97% of the members had some college experience. Desired qualifications for members beyond AmeriCorps eligibility include:

- * Commitment to youth development, service, and education
- * Associate or Bachelor Degree in Education, Community/Youth Development, or related field
- * Volunteer experience
- * Experience working collaboratively with youth
- * Ability to work independently and deal effectively with multiple tasks

Applicants participate in a two-tiered selection process. They must understand both what it means to be an AmeriCorps member and what is needed, provided, and expected by the host community. They are interviewed and screened by Alliance and host site staff. AmeriCorps members serve full-time and receive a \$12,100 living allowance.

MEMBER ORIENTATION & TRAINING

The Alliance and local supervisors provide significant training and professional development while building excellent relationships with and among members. To ensure members are prepared for all activities during their year of service, the Alliance provides over 90 hours of training on key topics at statewide sessions. Training is provided by experts in the fields of education, service, youth development, and community development. Local supervisors also provide additional hours of training customized to the needs of the Host community. Please see details below.

Pre-Service Institute

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Members begin their year in August. Alliance staff and experts present the following topics at a 2-day orientation institute for all members:

- * Mission and goals of the Alliance
- * Understanding the achievement gap and serving diverse youth
- * Working within school cultures; school and community partnerships
- * Drop-out prevention strategies and early warning indicators
- * Reading and math tutoring resources
- * Positive youth development and youth leadership
- * Service-learning and civic engagement
- * High-quality out-of-school time programs
- * Community engagement strategies
- * Volunteer mobilization and management
- * Reporting and evaluation
- * AmeriCorps history, policies and provisions

Additional Training Events

A one-day regional training will take place immediately following the statewide Institute. At this training, members will focus on reflection, planning, leadership development, and building relationships among members before heading back to their sites. One statewide mid-year training retreat will be held in January, and a reflection/Life after AmeriCorps retreat will take place in each region at the end of the year.

Monthly Trainings

Members also meet monthly as a smaller sub-corps for training in their region. The six sub-corps

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include Northern, Southern, and four Twin Cities Metro Corps. Monthly trainings reinforce the topics presented at the Institute (see above). They are coordinated by program staff and utilize local or state experts. Each has a specific skill-building focus, while allowing time for updates and team-building activities. Members are invited to co-facilitate one monthly training session by sharing their own expertise or arranging for an outside expert on that month's topic. In addition, members collaborate to plan and implement activities for all national service days. Communication with members between meetings occurs through email, blogs, webinars, phone calls, and visits.

Evaluations are completed on the effectiveness of each training workshop, plus a mid-year and year-end training survey assess overall training program effectiveness. In 2009, 96% of members agreed that training provided prepared them to fulfill the expectations of their position; this percentage has improved each year for three years.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

A unique aspect of our member support is AmeriCoach -- a national nonprofit organization based in Minnesota providing pro bono coaching and training to AmeriCorps members and staff. AmeriCoach helps members use their year of service as a time of deep reflection on what they can contribute in their lives. Each member can be matched with a professional coach for bi-weekly phone calls to identify their passion and purpose for life, and solidify plans to make their vision a reality.

Each member will create a Professional Growth Plan to outline individual goals for their service year, including 3-5 workshops or activities they will complete. Updates and reflection on the plan are required in progress reports. Members can also apply to a special pool of program funds to support professional development, such as attendance at conferences, in order to develop their skills and better

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serve their sites.

REFLECTION

Members are engaged in reflection throughout their term of service. During the Institute, monthly meetings, progress reports, and site visits, members reflect and process the learning that occurs during their year, verbally and in written form. At both the mid-year and end-of-year retreats, members are led through a series of activities to help them think through, problem solve and reflect on their service as well as integrate and apply their service to life after AmeriCorps.

SITE VISITS & EVALUATION

Members complete three progress reports during the year detailing challenges and successes. They also complete a mid-year and year-end assessment of their site, supervisor and the Alliance. At least two formal site visits take place where Alliance staff facilitate conversations between the member and supervisor, and privately interview members to solicit concerns. Any problems that come to the attention of staff are dealt with immediately through open discussion, seeking solutions for all involved.

SUPERVISION

One of the most important aspects of a member's success is the relationship with his/her supervisor. In their applications, prospective host communities describe the direct supervisor(s) and his/her experience and qualifications. Supervisors provide day-to-day support, help problem-solve and are expected to meet at least weekly with their member. An additional layer of support comes from site coordinators who interpret student data and guide overall efforts. Hosts complete a site agreement committing to all program expectations regarding supervision, training, reporting, and fees. Before

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members begin their service, supervisors and site coordinators meet with program staff for orientation and review of expectations. The local supervisor leads each member's initial orientation at the host site and in the host community, supported by other members of the host community team. In their application, host communities detail the orientation they will provide, emphasizing how they will familiarize members with the community's needs and resources.

"AmeriCorps opened up a lot of career contacts for me. Now I know about a whole different world that I'm interested in and prepared for." -- Former Alliance AmeriCorps Member

D. OUTCOME: PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The overall changes we want to see focus on providing the right support to the right youth at the right time, so that all Minnesota youth graduate successfully prepared for work and life. We are using aligned national performance measures in the Education area.

Our performance measures are:

*9,000 youth will start in an AmeriCorps education program.

*80% (or 7,200) of 9,000 youth will complete participation in an AmeriCorps education program.

*Of those that complete the program, 75% (or 5,400) youth will show improved academic performance.

*Of those that complete the program, 75% (or 5,400) youth will improve their school attendance.

*Of those that complete the program, 75% (or 5,400) youth will decrease or have no disciplinary referrals and suspensions.

* Each year we will mobilize at least 5,000 adult volunteers who will provide at least 150,000 hours of service to support youth, and at least 9,000 youth volunteers who will provide at least 180,000 hours

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of service to their communities.

We measure outcomes for youth by comparing their attendance, behavioral referrals, grades, GPAs, or other comprehensive assessments used by their school before starting our program and after the program is complete. This data is reported by each site in their progress reports and compiled by the Alliance's outside evaluator and program staff. The Minnesota Dept. of Education is developing a statewide early indicator and response system to provide a screening tool that can be used to identify students early (beginning in middle school) who may be off-track to graduate. This system will be ready in 2012 and will enhance our sites' abilities to identify students who are off-track and to monitor student performance in terms of attendance, behavior, and academic performance. AmeriCorps members track the involvement of adult and youth volunteers using volunteer logs that are summarized in each progress report.

Performance measure targets were determined by considering the need in our state and reflecting on our experience over the past seven years. It is reasonable for one member to develop significant relationships with 30 youth over the course of one year, and on average can mobilize 15 - 20 caring adult volunteers to serve as mentors, advisors, and partners to the youth.

E. VOLUNTEER GENERATION

A central strategy of our program is to increase the number of caring adult volunteers in relationships with youth who exhibit the early warning signs for dropping out, and to engage these youth in service. Caring adult volunteers are matched individually or with small groups of youth and provide academic enrichment activities, facilitate civic engagement experiences, promote leadership development/career exploration opportunities, and build positive relationships. We will mobilize at least 5,000 adult

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volunteers who commit to spend 30 hours individually or in small groups with each youth. The Alliance understands disadvantaged youth need long-term commitment from adults, not just volunteers going in and out of their lives in short term roles. Additional episodic volunteers serve in shorter-term roles, such as during National Service Days and other special events.

Typical volunteers may be retired people, Baby Boomers, family members, corporate volunteers, college students, faith community volunteers, or other dedicated community members.

AmeriCorps members play key roles in mobilizing a pool of dedicated volunteers. They recruit, orient, and train new volunteers; communicate regularly to assess volunteer and youth experiences; and support on-going volunteers with resources, ideas, and encouragement. The host community team is ultimately responsible for providing needed volunteers.

In addition to adult volunteers, 9,000 youth will engage in service to their communities each year. In order to effectively lead these activities, members are taught best practices in service-learning, including principles such as the importance of youth voice, assessing community needs, and reflection.

F. PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

This proposal builds on over 13 years of experience bringing together schools, organizations, and communities across Minnesota to ensure all young people have the resources needed for success in school, work, and life. As a leading affiliate of America's Promise, we are uniquely and powerfully positioned to influence and support communities as they work with and for youth. Our work is accomplished through a growing network of partners, more than 500 strong, which includes

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statewide organizations, schools and communities. Through community gatherings, focus groups, and surveys, key stakeholders are involved in every aspect of our work. A working group of statewide organization leaders and local community representatives meet frequently to advise on the design of this program. Partners have committed to provide financial resources, technical expertise, and access to local leaders. We have a long history of collaboration with highly respected youth-serving organizations, including the Minnesota Dept. of Education, Search Institute, University of Minnesota's Center for Youth Development, and the League of Minnesota Cities. Representatives of key statewide organizations serve on our board of directors. As new communities learn about our successful approach, they are eager to discuss implementation steps.

G. SUSTAINABILITY

As part of our strategic plan, sustainability planning is an integral part of our ongoing work to remain a relevant and viable resource for Minnesota. While the program cannot yet operate without CNCS funds, we have successfully demonstrated the ability to raise significant amounts of diverse funding. Since 2007, we have increased additional dollars raised by an average of 55% each year, in large part due to measurable results from the members. Our Development Committee is committed to raise private funds at greater levels than in the past.

Our required host community cash match (\$6,200 per member) ensures commitment from local communities to the goals of the program and strong support of members. In the past 10 years, 100% of sites have paid their required cash match. The combination of cash match and local volunteer generation builds commitment in the community to ongoing implementation.

An exciting indicator of our value to the state is a new commitment from several statewide

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organizations to cover a portion of the required local cash match. For communities and schools that would otherwise not be able to participate, the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota Dept. of Education, Youth Intervention Programs Association, Boys & Girls Clubs Alliance, and several other groups will offset the cash match for more than 75 host communities.

Organizational Capability

2. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY

A. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The Alliance and its statewide partners have come together to lead the state's drop-out prevention efforts and sponsor events such as the 2007 and 2009 Statewide Summits on Youth Development and Graduation and 17 follow-up summits throughout Minnesota. These efforts brought together schools, local government agencies and nonprofit organizations working on drop-out prevention to enhance partnerships toward a common goal.

The primary contact for this application is Alliance President & CEO, Sarah Dixon. The secondary contact is Melissa Burwell, Vice President of Partnerships & Evaluation.

EXPERIENCE WITH AMERICORPS

Since 1997, the Alliance has utilized AmeriCorps members on the front line to deliver needed services to youth. At Alliance-sponsored regional youth summits in the late 1990s, community and school leaders frequently cited lack of human resources to create a brighter future for youth. We responded by establishing a corps of 10 members in partnership with America's Promise which grew to 60 statewide members in 2004 and expanded to 80 members in 2010.

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INTEGRATION OF AMERICORPS IN THE ORGANIZATION

AmeriCorps members are central to the Alliance. Members are literally the "front line" for the mission of the Alliance -- they heighten our ability to reach communities and youth across Minnesota with our resources and core values. There is clear alignment between the core beliefs and key strategies of the Alliance and the roles of members.

EXPERIENCE RAISING FUNDS & CURRENT SOURCES OF FUNDING

The President & CEO and key board members lead our development efforts. Board members are selected based on their leadership and support for key program goals, and their affiliation with influential business and governmental entities. As mentioned in the Sustainability section, we have demonstrated great success in raising private funds and developed lasting relationships with foundation and corporate funders. Given the economy, we are very proud of our ability to not only maintain our funding levels, but increase the funds raised.

In addition, the Alliance receives funds from federal, state, and local sources. The AmeriCorps program represents 98% of our total operating budget. We have received AmeriCorps and ARRA funds from CNCS for the past five years. 54% of our total funding comes from CNCS. We also receive a \$750/member cash match from the ServeMinnesota's (our state commission) YouthWorks appropriation.

In 2010, the Alliance raised over \$500,000 from host sites. Sites willingly allocate this expense because of the value of the AmeriCorps members and the powerful leverage of the program. All host sites also provide support that members need to effectively complete their service: mileage reimbursement, training (outside that offered by the program), office space, computer, email, and

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telephone.

FISCAL HOST

In order to be cost effective, the organizations that founded the Alliance agreed to locate the Alliance within a fiscal host organization through which finances could be managed. Duluth Public Schools (DPS), our fiscal host, has been an active partner in National Service programs for years, having received Learn & Serve America grants and partnering with True North AmeriCorps program and VISTA. DPS is a proud partner of the Alliance and was awarded one of MN's Best Communities for Young People Awards.

DPS's general fund budget is \$120 million and has a fund balance in excess of \$30 million. Unlike many districts, DPS is financially stable. DPS has an internal auditor who reports directly to the Superintendent and the board of education. External auditors also review district results annually. DPS is the fiscal agent for a number of federal, state, and local grants, including a \$9 million federal grant to support safe schools and safe families.

The President & CEO of the Alliance meets regularly with DPS's Chief Financial Officer to monitor the AmeriCorps grant. The Business Manager for the Alliance is based in Duluth. To ensure internal control, different staff members approve expenditures, issue checks, and mail payments. The Alliance Board of Directors reviews quarterly financial reports for the program. All CNCS funds will be disbursed directly by DPS to vendors and members. No federal funds flow through host sites.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Since its inception, three Lt. Governors of Minnesota have co-chaired the Alliance alongside youth co-

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chairs. The current co-chair of the Board of Directors is a senior executive with Search Institute and the youth co-chair is a high school student. The Board provides fiscal oversight for the organization, including the AmeriCorps program. Board members are recruited for their expertise in positive youth development, graduation success, civic engagement, school-community partnerships, and connections to valuable resources. Board committees include Communications, Development, Evaluation, and the AmeriCorps Program. Staff roles in managing the AmeriCorps programs are detailed below:

B. STAFFING

Staff will be located in three regional offices (north, south, and Twin Cities). As a statewide program, having experienced staff in geographic proximity to sites is effective for monitoring visits, providing training, and support. Key staff include:

Sarah Dixon, President & CEO, provides overall leadership and development of the strategic plan, leads resource development, supervises/coaches the staff team, develops partnerships, coordinates board relationships, and oversees public relations. During Ms. Dixon's tenure of 9 years, the program grew from 10 to 80 members. Ms. Dixon has successfully administered her present AmeriCorps*State grant along with other federal, state, and foundation grants totaling over \$20 million. During her 26-year career, she has worked in adolescent health including intervention, treatment, counseling, education, and community-wide youth development.

Melissa Burwell, Vice President for Partnerships & Evaluation, oversees the Regional Directors, site development, compliance, and evaluation. Ms Burwell joined the Alliance in 2004 and has a Masters Degree in Counseling and Higher Education.

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Renee Anderson, Senior Regional Director, supports member development & training, and provides host site support. She joined the Alliance in 2010 and has a Masters degree in Social Work and Public Policy.

Program Directors (5 FTEs to be hired) based in regional offices directly support the AmeriCorps members through training, development, and host site support. Their qualifications will combine education and experience, with preference for experience with national service.

Educational Specialist (.5 FTE to be hired) will provide support to all sites to ensure high-quality activities resulting in measurable outcomes. S/he will provide training on the RTI model, early warning indicators, and other technical aspects of our program.

Recruitment Director (1 FTE to be hired) will be charged with recruiting members and host sites throughout the program year, developing materials, attending job fairs, etc. His/her qualifications will combine education and experience in marketing, human resources, and national service.

Julie Muklebust, Business Manager, coordinates fiscal responsibilities for the program. She joined the Alliance in 2008 and has a background in accounting and management.

Stephanie Paumen, Operations Manager, joined the Alliance in 2010 and oversees member files, compliance, and enrollment. She has a background in human resources and leadership.

Additional contracted staff facilitate training and complete program evaluation.

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HOST COMMUNITY SELECTION

As a statewide initiative, the Alliance has worked with over 200 sites in the past 13 years and will continue to work with those that experienced success. Prospective host communities of the 214 target schools will submit an application that is reviewed by staff and board. The Alliance places members where the need is greatest. In addition to demonstrated community need, selection criteria for host communities include their commitment to:

- * Select youth participants based on early warning indicators
- * Implement RTI evidence-based interventions
- * Propose high-quality, innovative, feasible, and sustainable implementation structures
- * Participate in evaluation and reporting
- * Provide strong supervision and appropriate training for members
- * Demonstrate a strength-based approach to youth and community development
- * Provide cash match and additional required support

SITE FINANCIAL AND PROGRAMMATIC ORIENTATION

Program staff visit new sites prior to the program year start. Supervisor orientation covers these topics: developing a strong member/supervisor relationship, allowable activities, member recruitment strategies, best practices in drop-out prevention, evaluation, and resources available in the Alliance network. All supervisors receive a comprehensive manual containing provisions, rules, expectations, and important dates. In addition, an orientation for site coordinators is also provided to review program design, common intervention strategies, and tracking progress using early warning indicators. Supervisors and site coordinators also attend the first day of the Institute and the mid-year retreat to stay informed of requirements and to discuss challenges/successes. Ongoing webinars are

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provided regarding recruiting, supervision, and evaluation.

HOST SITE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & MONITORING

Based at regional offices, Regional Directors are in regular contact with sites providing formal and informal training and support. They make at least two in-person monitoring visits per year, focused on the site's development, supervision, evaluation, member experience, and planning. Directors complete a written report outlining areas strengths and areas needing improvement for the members, supervisors, and site coordinators. Sites that require additional assistance may receive extra visits by staff or be given a "mentor" who is an experienced supervisor.

Members and supervisors jointly complete three progress reports on activities and sustainability. Staff review the reports, note successes and concerns/compliance issues, and provide feedback. Staff communicate weekly with all participants via newsletters and social media.

E. CURRENT GRANTEES ONLY

Throughout the history of the program, our enrollment has always been 100%.

Our strong retention rate (90% for the past two years) is a result of our thorough selection, training, supervision, and support systems. 15 -- 25% of members return for a second year of service. We continue to refine our recruitment and selection process to ensure members receive the most accurate information in advance of their national service experience. We know the 10% who end their service early do so for financial reasons. In this economic climate, serving in a full-time capacity can burden families. The Alliance plan is to provide resources, coaching and continue to make accommodations regarding hours when needed to support members who struggle.

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COST PER MSY \$12,915

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

3. COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY

a. COST EFFECTIVENESS

This program is designed to be a cost-effective strategy for Minnesota to reverse the trend of a widening achievement gap. The Alliance successfully raises funds through host site cash match, grants, and in-kind contributions to complement CNCS funding. Because of the leveraging power of AmeriCorps and a funding model that combines federal, state and private resources, there is a remarkable ROI for each funding partner. The federal share of launching a student on a trajectory of success is as little as \$431.

Recently, the Alliance received \$30,000 from Delta Dental of Minnesota to support local service projects, \$60,000 from HandsOn Network to expand volunteer mobilization work, \$130,000 from Otto Bremer Foundation to help with cash match and programming in several communities, and \$35,000 from America's Promise. Other funders include State Farm, Ameriprise, 3M, Best Buy, Pillsbury, General Mills, and Target. The board and top staff will continue to aggressively seek private funding.

Significant in-kind commitments are secured from organizations such as AmeriCoach, Duluth Public Schools, MN Dept. of Education, and Search Institute. Total in-kind contributions are valued at \$716,500.

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b. DECREASED RELIANCE ON FEDERAL SUPPORT

Our cash match will increase from 42% to 50% of the budget in the next three years. We continue to raise significant cash match from host sites and partners, and our Development Committee is committed to raise private funds at greater levels than in the past.

c. BUDGET ADEQUACY

We successfully develop budgets based on our needs, program design, and outcomes. We have always balanced revenue and expenditures. Our budget reflects cost-effective programming with a strong emphasis on member training and support. We invest a significant amount in outside evaluation and financial management. Through fiscal responsibility and an aggressive fund development strategy, the Alliance has a modest fund balance to cover short-term cash flow that mirrors standard government accounting practice.

d. FIXED AMOUNT APPLICANTS

The CNCS share of the budget is \$3,874,500. The total budget is \$6,843,698.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

Evaluation Summary has been sent.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

Clarification Response 2011, Part 2

Performance Measurement Clarification Item

The Youth Civic Engagement Performance Measure has been removed in the Performance Measures

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section.

Start Date and Member Enrollment Period

The desired start date for this program is August 15, 2011. Members will begin to be enrolled on August

15, 2011 and serve a one year term through August 14, 2012. We are not a new program, but have operated an AmeriCorps program for 12 years and do not anticipate any issues with being ready to enroll

members on August 15, 2011.

Budget Clarification items

The budget has been updated and revised to reflect the potential award of 80 MSYs and possible grant amount of \$1,033,200.

Programmatic Clarification Items

Site Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

The Alliance takes a tiered approach to member supervision. The direct Supervisor, in collaboration with Site Coordinators and other partners will ensure "layered" supervision and support for AmeriCorps

members. In some instances, one person will perform both roles. Site Coordinators have three main roles:

--Provide access and training to members in using data to identify students for the Focus List

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--Convene school and community partners to discuss interventions, strategies, and supports for students on the Focus List

--Ensure members complete monthly reports on students' progress and interventions used

Professional site coordinators are a full-time staff member at the host organization. The Site Coordinator will provide at a minimum 4-6 hours per week of support to members at their sites. To help

members successfully reach the most-needy youth, a professional site coordinator at each participating school will allocate at least 10% of his/her time to coordinate the program. The site coordinator, along with the member, will review weekly student data on early warning indicators (less than 80% attendance, one or more behavior referrals, or poor course performance in English or Math) and identify youth who are heading off track. The data is used to determine which students are not on track to graduate, which students should receive support, and how students who are receiving support are progressing.

To monitor the progress of the student on the Focus List, each Site Coordinator will bring together a school and community team on a weekly basis to discuss student progress and assess the need for further intervention. The team will consist of AmeriCorps members, teachers, school social workers, school personnel and community partner (i.e. Big Brothers Big Sisters) who use the data to determine appropriate interventions for each youth and monitor participant involvement and improvement over time. The Site Coordinator will be responsible for communicating, organizing and facilitating this meeting -- which may be already an established practice at the site. The AmeriCorps member may also play a role in communicating among the team members about student progress.

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In addition, Site Coordinators will establish or use a system currently in place at the site to review student data on a weekly basis related to attendance and behavior. Site Coordinators will also ensure that members complete monthly progress reports with accuracy and that the interventions used are evidence-based best practices.

The amount of time allocated for the role of site coordinator is based on the input and experience of schools and organizations who already utilize a staff member in this role. Many of our current sites implement the RTI model already and in consulting with them, they stated that it is reasonable that a minimum of 10% (or on average about one hour a day) of the site coordinator's time would be spent on these activities. At sites that do not currently use RTI, we understand it may take more time until systems are in place.

Program Impact on Identified Need in Previous Years

Since 2004, when the Alliance expanded its corps of AmeriCorps members to 60-70 members, over 155,000 youth have been served. The focus of our AmeriCorps members has been to decrease the devastating effects of the academic achievement and civic engagement gaps on students of color and low income students while also engaging youth in service-learning. By engaging youth in school and community, our goal was to provide access and opportunities to help students succeed in school and life. This application represents a refining of that goal to address the broader issue of dropout prevention to

better align our work with our national affiliate, America's Promise Alliance, and the recent launching of the Grad Nation movement. The backgrounds of youth at-risk of dropping out are mirrored in Minnesota's growing academic achievement gap, one of the largest in the country. Therefore not all of our proposed performance measures align with our previous years' data. We have revised our

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proposed performance measures to reflect a strong commitment to using data-driven, evidence-based best practices and measuring their effectiveness accurately.

Over the past six years, our AmeriCorps members have had a sustaining and significant impact on student achievement and engagement. On average, members focused their efforts on a core cohort of 2,400 students (or a total of 14,400) who received all evidenced-based interventions and were connected with caring adults, engaged in service, and received academic supports, including tutoring, homework help, and mentoring. On average, each year 1,440 youth in the cohort (or 60%) showed academic improvement either through increasing their GPA or reducing the number of failing grades for those whose comparison records were available.

In addition to helping students academically, our members engaged youth in service and service-learning. Since 2004, 28,000 youth have been mobilized to serve 248,000 hours of service to their communities. As a result of these efforts, 96% of youth surveyed believe they can make a difference in their communities. 94% believe they can play an important role in improving it, and 92% of youth stated they learned how to make positive changes in the community as a result of their participation in the program.

Finally, Alliance AmeriCorps members have also mobilized 18,000 adult volunteers to serve 224,000 hours of service since 2004.

Additional Note: Please note that space for previous years' data is not an available screen in e-Grants.

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Criminal History Checks

Since all of our members and staff have recurring access to youth (a designated vulnerable population), the Alliance conducts complete background checks on all members and staff according to AmeriCorps regulations. As of 2011, the complete background check for members and staff includes an FBI fingerprint check in addition to a check of the appropriate designated statewide criminal history repository such as the MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension check and the National Sex Offender Public Record check. The Alliance maintains copies of the results of the background check in a secured locked file which is accessible for auditing purposes.

Performance Measure Clarification Items

Updated e-Grants

All of our Performance Measures in e-Grants were changed to reflect the funding and MSY amount listed at the top of our clarification items.

Performance Measures related to: Volunteers Mobilized, Adult Volunteers Hours Served and Youth Volunteer Hours Served were deleted from the Performance Measures and will be reported in the demographics section of the Grantee Progress Report.

Youth Civic Engagement

The Youth Civic Engagement Survey, developed for use with our program participants, is based on questions from the Development Asset Profile (from Search Institute), Minnesota Student Survey (administered by the Minnesota Department of Education), and other surveys used by service learning

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professionals. The Youth Civic Engagement Survey asks students to reflect on their beliefs and behaviors as it relates to the service they have been involved with over the course of the program. It asks students about the likelihood they will continue to serve, whether they believe youth can play a role in improving their community, and if they believe they made a difference to their community.

National Performance Measures -- Education

The National Performance Measure has been aligned correctly so that all outputs and outcome measures are in one performance measure. ED2 has been revised so that it measures only the number of students who complete the program. All percentages have been removed from the outcome measures as well. Finally, grades and GPA were removed from the aligned Education national performance measure.

Continuation Changes

N/A

Performance Measures

SAA Characteristics

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

Priority Areas

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

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 80

Service Categories

Afterschool Programs

Secondary Education

National Performance Measures

Priority Area: Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

AmeriCorps members make it possible for schools and communities to implement multiple effective drop-out prevention strategies that result in higher attendance, fewer behavior problems, and improved academic performance. Using a Response To Intervention (RTI) approach, each AmeriCorps member will impact at least 30 youth through integrated student support interventions. RTI combines assessment and intervention to provide the right support to the right student at the right time. Based on early warning signals (school attendance less than 80%, behavior referrals, poor academic performance in core courses), the site coordinator and school team will use this data to determine appropriate interventions for each youth and monitor participant involvement and improvement over time. Members will provide or coordinate support interventions for at least 30 identified youth, ultimately helping them get back on track to graduate.

Interventions provided by AmeriCorps members include:

* AmeriCorps members will increase the number of significant, caring adult relationships experienced by the youth participants. Depending on existing structures and programs in a given school, a member will create or strengthen opportunities where the members or adult volunteers provide mentoring, academic enrichment, project-based learning, or career expertise.

* AmeriCorps members will also ensure youth spend at least 16 hours per week in high-quality and engaging activities before, during and/or after-school and in the summer by coordinating academic support (such as homework help, study skills practice) along with enrichment activities such as career and college exploration for a minimum of three months. According to research presented at the Minnesota Governor's After-school Opportunities Summit, middle-school students who regularly attend high-quality after-school programs demonstrate significant gains in both standardized math test scores and work habits.

* Engage youth in meaningful service-learning or civic engagement activities, for a minimum of 20 hours per youth. According to the National Drop-Out Prevention Center, "Middle school students, in particular, benefit from service-learning activities. Students have the opportunity to work as a team, build their self-esteem and self-efficacy, and collaborate with positive adult role models."

National Performance Measures

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

Examples of how members connect youth with activities to impact attendance rates and get them on track for graduation:

- * Provide attendance coaching, monitor attendance and call home if students miss class
- * Organize field trips and other special events to make learning and being at school more engaging and relevant.

Examples of how members connect youth with activities to impact behavior and get them on track for graduation:

- * Coordinate a lunchtime mentoring program
- * Promote youth leadership development through a student ambassador program or student-led peer mediation program.

Examples of how members connect youth with activities to impact academic performance and get them on track for graduation:

- * Provide before, during and after school academic support for individuals and small groups
- * Connect after-school service-learning projects with classroom instruction
- * Connect students with a mentor or tutor to help with math and/or reading skills and support differentiated classroom instruction
- * Incorporate everyday math/reading games into after-school programming.

Members will also help create a positive whole-school environment for graduation through activities such as:

- * Creating and distributing certificates for good attendance
- * Recognizing positive behavior at school assemblies
- * Organizing a service project for family night
- * Reinforcing rules and expectations that are uniformly supported by everyone at the school
- * Encouraging participation in after-school clubs

Result: Output

National Performance Measures

Result.

Based on early warning signs that students are at-risk to drop-out (school attendance less than 80%, behavior referrals, poor academic performance in core classes), students will be selected by school personnel to receive educational interventions.

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

Target :30 students per member, or 2,400 will participate in the program.

Target Value: 2400

Instruments: Students participating in the program will be tracked using an on-line tracking system.

PM Statement: Based on early warning signs (school attendance less than 80%, behavior referrals, poor academic performance in core classes), 2,400 students will be selected by school personnel to receive educational interventions and will start participating in the AmeriCorps program.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

Number of youth who complete the program with no or decreased disciplinary referrals and suspensions.

Indicator: ED7: Students with fewer disciplinary referrals or suspensions.

Target :1,680 youth on the members' caseload of 2,400 youth will decrease or have no disciplinary referrals and suspensions.

Target Value: 1680

Instruments: A behavior referral log will track official school records of disciplinary actions taken and these will be compared from before the students begin participation in the AmeriCorps program to after they complete participation.

PM Statement: Through the efforts of AmeriCorps members and adult volunteers, students will receive targeted interventions including increased opportunities for in-school and out-of-school enrichment, service-learning, and increased contact with caring adults. 1,680 youth who complete the program will have no or decreased disciplinary referrals and suspensions.

Result: Output

Result.

Youth who complete at least three months in the program before the end of the year will complete the program.

Most youth will participate all year.

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

Target :1,680 of the youth who start the program and complete at least 3 months before the end of the year will complete the program

Target Value: 1680

Instruments: Students participating in the program will be tracked using an on-line tracking system.

PM Statement: 1,680 youth (out of 2,400) who start the program will complete at least three months in the program before the end of the year will complete the program. Most youth will participate all year.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

National Performance Measures

Result.

Number of youth who have improved their school attendance and have completed the AmeriCorps program.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) ED6: Youth with improved school attendance.

Target :1,680 (of 2,400) youth in the program will improve school attendance.

Target Value: 1680

Instruments: An Attendance log will track official school records of attendance and be compared from before the students begin participation in the AmeriCorps program to after they complete participation.

PM Statement: Through the efforts of AmeriCorps members and adult volunteers, students will receive targeted interventions including increased opportunities for in-school and out-of-school enrichment, service-learning, and increased contact with caring adults. 1,680 youth participants who complete the program will improve their school attendance.

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Sent

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable