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Executive Summary

Future Teacher Initiative AmeriCorps is a volunteer program that addresses the need for educational tutoring in AR serving 28 sites in 14 counties. It gives at-risk PreK students the tools to successfully transition to Kindergarten. FTI members obtain training to prepare for tutoring as well as the opportunity to volunteer and recruit other stakeholders in service projects. FTI is designed to improve lives and strengthen communities.

Rationale and Approach

A. RATIONALE AND APPROACH

PROGRAM STRENGTHS

The Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative (SEARK ESC), in collaboration with the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Preschool Program and individual ABC Preschool Facilities statewide, proposes the SEARK ESC Future Teacher AmeriCorps Program to address identified community needs in education.

The 85 half-time Future Teacher members will each serve no less than 900 support service and training hours that will complement the services provided by the ABC Preschool Facilities efforts to ensure preschool students advancing to kindergarten are socially, emotionally and academically prepared for the kindergarten learning environment and academic requirements.

SEARK ESC Future Teacher AmeriCorps members will integrate national service, parental involvement, community engagement, and individual volunteerism into areas of high economic and educational need.

The SEARK ESC Future Teacher AmeriCorps program collaborates with the SEARK Foster Grandparent Program, the SEARK Smart Start Program, statewide education service cooperative early childhood programs, the Southeast Regional Department of Health's Hometown Health Improvement initiative, and the SEARK HIPPIY program to better serve the disadvantaged students, families, and communities of Arkansas.

COMPELLING COMMUNITY NEED

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Economic Disadvantage: Within the state of Arkansas many children grow up in severely distressed communities and are at higher risk of school failure, unemployment, and persistent poverty due to a need for additional educational resources to complement existing support. The U.S. Census Bureau reported the 2007 average median income in Arkansas to be \$38,239.00. That is 75% of the national average median income. Many rural Arkansas communities such as those in the Delta Region have much lower median income levels. Examples are Chicot and Phillips Counties with median income levels of \$24,921.00 and \$26,261.00. In Arkansas 24% of children six and under live in poverty. According to Lynn Huntley, President of the Southern Education Foundation, "There is a way to help the state's huge numbers of low income students escape from poverty, dependence, and manipulation. There is an educational strategy that expert research shows will have positive impact and outcome." The strategy starts with high quality pre-kindergarten. Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps members volunteer to serve ABC Preschool students in 30 disadvantaged communities in 20 counties across the state of Arkansas. Severely disadvantaged communities such as those in the Arkansas Delta Region of the state have priority for selection as host sites.

Education Disadvantage: Among students entering kindergarten in the state of Arkansas in 1999, >60% did not meet the indicators for kindergarten readiness. Arkansas students must be socially, emotionally, and academically prepared to enter the kindergarten learning environment. While recent legislation has placed emphasis on creating high quality preschool programs, many severely disadvantaged counties continue to be unable to provide the majority of disadvantaged students access to high quality pre-kindergarten programs.

One-on-one tutoring and supplemental learning experiences in ABC Preschool Programs can greatly benefit disadvantaged students and communities. Arkansas Future Teachers AmeriCorps Members can help high risk students to acquire the appropriate academic and social skills indicating a readiness to enter kindergarten.

Shortage of Qualified Teachers: The Arkansas Department of Education indicates there is a problem

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with recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers in rural economically disadvantaged regions of Arkansas. America faces a shortage of qualified teachers, but the problem is particularly acute in Southeast Arkansas and the Delta, according to Dr. Peggy Doss, dean of the School of Education at the University of Arkansas at Monticello. Recruiting Future Teacher AmeriCorps Program members from these disadvantaged regions and providing the members with training and experience in education would be "a grow your own" strategy to encourage members to become teachers in these rural areas.

Lack of Parental Involvement in Child's Education: Parental involvement and engagement is low in most Arkansas schools. According to the National Parent Teacher Association, the lack of parental involvement is the biggest problem facing public schools. According to Involvement in Education by Cotton and Wikeland, the earlier in a child's educational process parent involvement begins, the more powerful the effects. In Online Resources for Parent/Family Involvement, the ERIC Digest by Ngeow 1991, Karen Yeok-Hwa states "Although most parents do not know how to help their children with their education, with guidance and support, they may become increasingly involved in home learning activities and find themselves with opportunities to teach, to be models for and to guide their children. Therefore, providing parents with opportunities and skills to be involved in their child's preschool education can empower them to be involved in their child's education from preschool to college." High quality preschools must include parental involvement activities and opportunities for parents to provide input into their child's educational experience. Parents, educators, and communities must know how meaningful and necessary parental involvement is to a child's education.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES AND MEMBER ROLES

The Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps program supports the AmeriCorps priority area of ensuring a brighter future for America's youth by providing; individualized tutoring for high risk children, promoting parental and community involvement in the education process, and attending training specific to student, preschool program, and community needs.

Tutoring: The SEARK ESC Future Teacher AmeriCorps Program members are trained to tutor high-risk

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students in the early childhood learning environment. These members have the unique opportunity to complete the Arkansas Department of Education Early Childhood Paraprofessional training requirements while enrolled in the AmeriCorps program. This training and orientation to host preschool program ensures cohesiveness between classroom instruction and tutoring.

Tutoring and supplemental education focuses on: Expressiveness and Language Comprehension, Approach to Learning/Cognition, Phonological Awareness Print Knowledge, Social and Emotional Skills, Mathematics, and Physical Development. These are the six indicators of kindergarten readiness. Individualized tutoring will be based on student specific needs to help student successfully complete the Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist prior to entry into Kindergarten.

Members each identify seven disadvantaged preschool students to tutor weekly and three students for supplemental education. These three students may be included in the seven students that member is tutoring. The 85 SEARK ESC Future Teacher AmeriCorps part-time members will provide tutoring to 595 disadvantaged preschool students and supplemental education to 255 disadvantaged preschool students. Members will complete 76,500 service and training hours throughout the 36 weeks of the school year.

Member's schedules are flexible to meet individual students' needs each week. Part-time members provide a minimum of two hours of individualized tutoring to help meet student's individual needs. A Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist (KRIC) is completed on students pre-enrollment into the ABC program. Teaching and tutoring plans are based on student needs. The KRIC is completed on each of the 7-10 students the member is serving at the end of each semester of preschool. Members participate in a mid-year evaluation that includes KRIC results of the seven targeted students they are serving. Tutoring plans are modified to strengthen student weaknesses and continue to support student strengths.

The 2008-2009 school year average results indicate an average of 8% overall improvement in the Kindergarten Readiness Indicators each semester. With improved training, opportunities for members

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these average overall improvement values are expected to improve.

Process Assessment: Member journals will reveal no less than seven targeted students receiving individualized preschool instruction weekly for a total of 700 hours annually.

Outcome Assessment: Post intervention testing of seven targeted students will reveal an average of no less than 10% growth in each of the six indicators of kindergarten readiness per semester. Average student scores will be no less than 75% in the six indicator categories at the end of each school year.

Parental Involvement: The Arkansas Future Teacher Program members will work with ABC Preschool Program Coordinators to plan, prepare, and facilitate monthly parent involvement programs during each school year. These programs will provide parents with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to be actively involved in their child's education.

Process Assessment: Parent/faculty/volunteer sign-in sheets and member journals will reveal parent and member participation.

Outcome Assessment: Host ABC Preschool programs will survey parents at the end of school year to determine their perceptions of parental involvement in schools and whether they feel comfortable playing an active role in their child's education. Greater than 75% of parents will report they feel comfortable being actively involved in their student's education.

Community Involvement: Members will work with the ABC Preschool Coordinator to plan, prepare, and facilitate a family involvement/community resource night each semester. High school and community members will be solicited by members to help conduct event and make presentations regarding community resources that can provide education, economic, or health services for the families. These activities will include no less than five high school members at each event. Greater than 400 high school members will be recruited to serve no less than two hours each, totaling no less than 800 hours of service. Examples of community resources would include the RX Assistance program, assistance for single parents to return to school, community wellness programs, and workforce development program.

Process Assessment: Member's journals and volunteer sign-in sheets will indicate the success of

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recruiting members. Volunteer sign in sheets will indicate number of members and amount of time served.

Outcome Assessment: Post event assessments will be completed by members for each semester that includes a parental involvement event. Assessments will reveal member's perceptions of the event and benefits to students and families alike.

Training: AmeriCorps members are required to complete a minimum of 48 hours of training. Through partnerships with Arkansas Education Service Cooperatives statewide, these members have the opportunity to complete the Arkansas Department of Education Early Childhood Paraprofessional training requirements while enrolled in the AmeriCorps program. Members must complete this training to ensure cohesiveness between tutoring and classroom instruction. Arkansas Department of Education Early Childhood Paraprofessional Modules includes:

Core Module -- Roles/Responsibilities, Legal, Instruction 2-day training/ 12 hours,

Early Childhood Module 1-day training/ 6 hours,

Secondary Module 1-day training/ 6 hours,

Cultural Awareness Module 1-day training/ 6 hours,

Behavior Module 2-day training/ 12 hours,

Special Health Care Module 1-day training/ 6 hours,

English Language Learners Module 1-day training/ 6 hours

Members will receive training opportunities that include orientation to the SEARK ESC Future Teacher AmeriCorps program, citizenship using the CNCS model, Active Citizens 101, CPR and First Aid, recognizing diversity, parent involvement, personality awareness, and communication.

Process Assessment: Training sign in sheets will indicate members each attended no less than 48 hours of AmeriCorps training annually.

Outcome Assessment: Members will complete a survey providing information regarding the effectiveness of the training in relation to the member's experience as an AmeriCorps member. No less

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than 85% will report training was effective and relevant to their AmeriCorps experience.

NEED FOR SPECIFIC MEMBERS

Arkansas preschool programs are expressing a need for these AmeriCorps members. Participating ABC Preschool programs will recruit potential program members who express a desire to enter the field of education. The 85 part-time members will serve high risk preschool students in disadvantaged communities of Arkansas. Recruited members must meet National AmeriCorps and SEARK ESC AmeriCorps program requirements for enrollment.

COMPLIANCE WITH PROHIBITED SERVICE ACTIVITIES

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

ADDED VALUE TO THE SEARK ESC'S EXISTING SERVICES

The SEARK ESC Future Teacher program fits perfectly with the SEARK Coop's mission and 25 years of experience in providing effective and high quality service to member schools with the overall goal of effectively promoting student achievement.

The SEARK ESC Future Teacher's AmeriCorps Program extends beyond the SEARK ESC region to include disadvantaged communities throughout the state. The SEARK staff, the area school administrators and staff, and the communities of the projected sites are all very familiar and have experience the Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps program while supporting its efforts. Through the

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Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps program, the SEARK ESC has gained new partners in education statewide.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

The SEARK Coop is home to two additional programs funded by the CNCS: Arkansas Foster Grandparents and Arkansas Smart Start programs. The AR Future Teacher Program, Foster Grandparent Program, and Arkansas Smart Start compliment each other's program goals. The Foster Grandparent program engages seniors in one-on-one tutoring with at-risk children at schools also served by the SEARK Coop. The Smart Start Program members provide high-risk students with tutoring in math and literacy. Both programs provide mentors and tutors in the schools yet, the two programs bring two very different skill sets to the target area schools. Both the Smart Start program and the Future Teachers program share the goal of engaging young people in teaching and inspiring a new generation of teachers in an area of severe teacher shortage. The presence of Foster Grandparents and AmeriCorps Smart Start provides additional resources, partnerships, and opportunity for educational improvement to the target schools.

MEASURABLE OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

The Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps Program will focus area is education. The program members are creating brighter futures for the youth of Arkansas by providing disadvantaged children with a high quality preschool experience and helping these children and their families to develop a strong sense of school connectedness.

Overall Program Outcomes: 1. Tutored students' Kindergarten Readiness Indicator overall scores will indicate student achievement and readiness for kindergarten. 2. Parents will be actively involved in their child's education and preschool program. 3. AmeriCorps Members will develop personally and professionally through newly acquired learning and skills. 4. Community members will be recruited to build on AmeriCorps member's community-based impact and aid in AmeriCorps member recruitment.

Program Outcome Measurement: The Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps program director,

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preschool site coordinators, and members will share responsibility in collecting data for tracking and evaluating progress toward meeting and achieving performance measures. The Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist (KRIC) will be the evaluation tool used to measure student achievement in kindergarten readiness. Evaluation data concerning progress of children in individualized Kindergarten Readiness Indicators are designed to give pre- and post-service scores. The Arkansas Future Teacher program has developed a system for collecting and organizing data on an ongoing basis by reporting progress and generating reports. The program will utilize the AmeriCorps, My AmeriCorps Portal to enroll members.

PLAN FOR SELF ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

Representatives from the Arkansas AmeriCorps Program, the Arkansas Better Chance Program, Arkansas Department of Education's Early Childhood Program, the SEARK ESC HIPPIY Program, the University of Arkansas at Monticello's Department of Education and the directors of each of the SEARK ESC's Corporation of National Community Service funded programs will make up the Arkansas Future Teacher Council. The council will meet two times annually to assess program strengths and weaknesses. Council members will develop strategic plans to address identified weaknesses and build upon program strengths annually. Upon completion of pre-midterm student kindergarten readiness inventory checklist council members will meet to evaluate program progress and make necessary program plan modifications to ensure program success.

Hosting site preschools and members will be surveyed annually post program implementation to determine what they perceived as program strengths and weaknesses. Council will also review the annual report of this data collected. Modifications will be made to the program in response to this data if necessary.

Community Involvement: Community involvement in the SEARK ESC AmeriCorps Future Teacher program is essential to ensure community educational needs are identified and met through the

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program.

The need for high quality preschool programs in Arkansas is an issue that the Arkansas Department of Human Services' Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Preschool Program and the Arkansas Department of Education have been working for since the early 1990's. State legislation over the past six years has provided additional funding for innovative approaches to enhancing preschool programs across the state. Since September of 2007, the SEARK ESC has received funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Arkansas Better Chance Preschool Program to enhance education services provided to disadvantaged preschool students across the state.

Present: Partnerships have been formed with education service cooperatives across the state to provide Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps members with the early childhood education training that will allow members to better serve local preschools and the students they serve.

In June 2009, SEARK ESC Early Childhood, HIPPY, Community Health Nurse Specialist, and Future Teacher Program Coordinator met with representatives from the Arkansas Department of Health's Hometown Health Improvement Program met with Dr. Tom Bruce, Associate Dean of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service to discuss the need to improve access to quality education and health programs in the Delta Region of Arkansas. The outcome of this meeting was a partnership to improve the economy of disadvantaged Arkansas Delta communities through improved access to quality education and health. AmeriCorps member's impact reaches far beyond the educational sector of the target area. Area business leaders and civic organizations look to members for volunteer support and information about national service.

Future: Representatives from the Arkansas AmeriCorps Program, the Arkansas Better Chance Program, Arkansas Department of Education's Early Childhood Program, the SEARK ESC HIPPY Program, the University of Arkansas at Monticello's Department of Education, the Clinton School of Public Service, the Arkansas Department of Health's Hometown Health Improvement Program, and the directors of each of the SEARK ESC's Corporation of National Community Service funded programs will make up

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the Arkansas Future Teacher Council. The council will meet two times annually to assess program strengths and weaknesses. Each of these members has strong ties with education, community service, and/or community health. These members are acutely aware of needs, available resources, and community needs in disadvantaged regions of Arkansas.

To provide awareness and to educate the community about the program, the program director and members will speak at civic meetings and manage booths at college career days, county fairs, and other community venues.

POTENTIAL FOR REPLICATION

The Arkansas Future Teacher program has a growing record of success within the state. This program provides a powerful example of disadvantaged communities and partners striving to provide high quality preschool education with limited resources to help communities gain economic stability in the future. The program and its partners demonstrate their commitment to the mission and vision of national service through leadership and financial support. In addition, the program seeks to empower high school students in service-learning and civic engagement as members in parent and community involvement in the education of children. In a nation experiencing tremendous shifts in population and wealth from rural areas to urban centers, Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps program sets an example of successful national service programming in Arkansas' rural regions of great socioeconomic challenge, not unlike many rural regions across the nation.

Organizational Capability

D. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

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

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The Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative (SEARK ESC) was established in 1981 as one of two education cooperatives established in Arkansas as a result of passage of Act 360 by the Arkansas General Assembly. The SEARK ESC has grown and changed sites from the original site on the University of Arkansas as Monticello campus to its current site at 1022 Scogin Drive in Monticello in 1997. The Cooperative was recently expanded increasing its size from 15,000 sq. ft. to 23,600 sq. ft. to accommodate new programs and other programs requiring more space due to growth. The current number of employees is in excess of 150 with an additional 185 AmeriCorps Members and 128 Foster Grandparent Members. The current annual budget is approximately \$11,000,000.00.

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

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

Karen Eoff, SEARK ESC Director, with 25 years of educational experience, which includes 17 years of administrative experience as assistant director of the SEARK ESC. Ms. Eoff has been the Teacher Center Coordinator for those 17 years as well as the Gifted and Talented Coordinator for two of those years. Ms. Eoff holds several certifications including a Master Degree in School District Administration. Eoff has

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been involved in the Non-Traditional Licensure Program for 18 years and has served as the Co-Coordinator of the SEARK site for six years. She serves on the statewide testing committee and has been involved in the development of target tests. She supervises target testing at the SEAK ESC site.

The SEARK AmeriCorps Program Director, Jenny Satterlee, has 13 years of educational experience. Ms. Satterlee holds a 1-6 grade certification in elementary education and taught elementary grades for 11 years. She has been director of the Smart Start Program for 2 years and the AR Future teacher program for 1 year. She maintains constant communication with site supervisors via, telephone, email, and site visits.

The program director will support and oversee service sites by:

Making annual visits to the school sites and additional visits when necessary. The purpose of these visits is to meet with host supervisors, classroom teachers, and members in order to identify issues, strengths, weaknesses, and make needed service delivery adjustments to ensure high quality service.

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

Members will receive basic computer training, which will include e-mail. Each member will establish an e-mail account during training in order to communicate with the program director and other members.

Members at each service site will be provided access to the internet.

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

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Mentoring teachers and host supervisors from each site will provide technical assistance to AmeriCorps members in developing strategies to tutor individual students and strategies to be used by parents to promote their children's basic skills for kindergarten readiness.

School sites will provide technical assistance to their members through on-site trainings, alongside classroom teachers, and paraprofessionals. The Future Teacher Program director will provide technical assistance to host site supervisors and mentoring teachers at each service site through orientation, training and site- visits.

Host site selections are based on:

Host site schools must provide educational services to disadvantaged children in Arkansas with priority given to sites with previous success in hosting a member.

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

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

TRACK RECORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The SEARK ESC has the experience, and ability to administer a federal grant as indicated in the Independent Auditor's Report to the Legislative Joint Auditing Committee, Division of Legislative Audit of the State of AR, 2003. The report states, "The Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative complied, in all material respects, with the requirements referred to above that are applicable to each of its major federal programs for the year ended June 30, 2003." The SEARK Coop presently administers 65 federal and state grants and approximately 25 other pass-through accounts for a total budget of over \$11,000,000.

The SEARK ESC maintains connections between the host sites and ensures the programs overall mission and vision is maintained in the following ways:

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Members are encouraged to communicate with each other and share information regarding positive experiences and successful projects,

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

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

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

E. COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY

CORPORATION COST PER MEMBER SERVICE YEAR

SEARK ESC requests Program Operation costs from Arkansas State AmeriCorps in the amount of \$34,000 annually. Funding will cover the salary and fringe benefits for the Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps Program director. Director is employed at \$34,000.00 including fringe benefits. This amount is based on 85 part-time members ($85 \times .5 = 42.5$ members) multiplied by \$800.00 per member for service to disadvantaged children ($42.5 \times \$800.00 = \$34,000.00$).

DIVERSE NON-FEDERAL SUPPORT

The program will serve 85 part-time members. ABC Preschool Program funding provides members; living allowance, training, travel and per diem for training, uniforms and member identification, and background checks.

ABC funding provides personnel salary and benefits for clerical support, general office supplies, staff travel, program advertising, and other program operating costs such as telephone service, office space, accounting services, and printing.

ABC Preschool Program Funding annually totals \$570,012.84.

Budget Adequacy

The SEARK Coop has a comprehensive six-part plan for sustainability that incorporates current, existing, and future financial resources.

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The Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps Program will focus area is education. The program members are creating brighter futures for the youth of Arkansas by providing disadvantaged children with a high quality preschool experience and helping these children and their families to develop a strong since of school connectedness.

Future Teacher AmeriCorps members provide targeted preschool students tutoring and supplemental education to improve Kindergarten Readiness Indicator overall scores. The requested funding supports 85 members in 33 preschool training sites. ABC Preschool funding supports member recruitment of parental involved in their child's education and preschool program and community volunteers to build on AmeriCorps members' community-based impact and aid in AmeriCorps member recruitment.

Training funded by ABC Preschool Program ensures AmeriCorps Members will develop personally and professionally through newly acquired learning and skills.

Requested AmeriCorps funds will allow an Arkansas Future Teacher AmeriCorps program director to coordinate program implementation and adherence to AmeriCorps and program guidelines. Program director, preschool site coordinators, and members will share responsibility in collecting data for tracking and evaluating progress toward meeting and achieving performance measures.

ABC Preschool Program funding will cover program evaluation costs. AmeriCorps funding will cover the reporting of data collected. The Arkansas Future Teacher program has developed a system for collecting and organizing data on an ongoing basis by reporting progress and generating reports.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

Future Teacher Initiative AmeriCorps is a volunteer program that addresses the need for educational tutoring in AR serving 28 sites in 14 counties. It gives at-risk PreK students the tools to successfully transition to Kindergarten. FTI members obtain training to prepare for tutoring as well as the opportunity to volunteer and recruit other stakeholders in service projects. FTI has 85 part-time slots providing 900 volunteer hours each. FTI is designed to improve lives and strengthen communities.

Amendment Justification

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n/a

Clarification Summary

Programmatic Clarification Issues

1. Please provide a summary of the site monitoring protocol for the proposed program.

Site monitoring protocol for the Future Teacher Initiative Program is one of the most important aspects of the proposed AmeriCorps program. In order to keep this successful program running, the AmeriCorps staff has several tasks ahead. Weekly calls to every site will be made to address issues that need immediate attention. Emails will be sent biweekly to members and supervisors including program updates and new and updated forms. Of course, personal contact is the ideal form of communication; therefore, we will visit each site across the state for evaluation and monitoring. Also, with member and supervisor trainings several times throughout the year, any communication gaps will be filled. More members will be able to attend trainings due to the recent changes in training location. Each quadrant of the state will host trainings in order to better meet the members' needs. Sending regular AmeriCorps newsletters and mail-outs is another form of communication between staff and the members. Members and supervisors are encouraged to keep the AmeriCorps director informed of any problems in the site and to communicate any questions or concerns. The Future Teacher Initiative AmeriCorps staff will go above and beyond to meet the site monitoring goals and requirements. The program has been a great success and is a result of proper site monitoring.

Budget Clarification Issues

1. Section II. AmeriCorps Member Positions: B. Fixed Award: Program Grant Request:: \$42,000.00. Please note that the FY2010 CNCS maximum cost for MSYs \$800/MSY vs. \$1,000.

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We have reduced the per MSY cost to \$800, as requested.

Background Checks

1. Please verify that criminal history checks will be conducted on all members, employees and other individuals as described above. You may revise the budget to include these costs, if necessary but may not exceed the level of funding for which you are under consideration.
2. Please verify that the criminal history checks conducted for members and staff will include an FBI fingerprint check in addition to the state registry check and the NSOPR for anyone with recurring access to vulnerable populations.

All members, employees, and other individuals who receive a salary, education award, living allowance, stipend or similar payment from the grant will have a criminal history check, FBI and state registry, and the NSOPR check. Since this is a fixed amount education-award only program, we cannot itemize the criminal history checks out on the budget, but we have designated funds for all required checks.

Member Positions

1. In the continuation changes response, it states the following:
"This application is under consideration for a grant in the amount of \$34,000, 42.50 Member Service Years (MSYs) and 88 member positions."

The number of member positions AmeriCorps FTI requested is 85.

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Continuation Changes

AmeriCorps Future Teacher Initiative Program did not reach 100% enrollment in the last full service year, 2009-2010. In the past, the program was awarded 100 slots and, in 2009-2010 was only able to fill 83 slots. This issue has since been addressed, and the program now holds 85 total slots for service year 2010-2011; in which 83 were filled. Each year, we have ten slots that are costly to the schools at \$7,600.00 per member slot. These slots can be used in K-8 classrooms, and Arkansas Better Chance funding only covers the cost of members placed in pre-kindergarten classrooms. Therefore, the ten slots costing \$7,600.00 of the 100 slots are harder to fill in the southern, rural Arkansas districts. We plan to reach 100% in the future with new strategies and goals in place. We are advertising those slots more in the northern part of the states where financial distress is not a common issue. As word spreads about how successful the program is running and how it is positively affecting children's lives', the more inquiries we receive. In the program year 2009-2010, enrollment rate was 83%. We have seen significant growth this program year with an enrollment rate of 97.6%.

The FTI program retention rate for the last full service year was 75%. This low retention rate caused the program to lower the request for the number of member slots to be awarded in 2010-2011. After lowering the slots to be filled to 85, the retention rate will increase this program year and in the future. Members are being given more information about the "big picture" of AmeriCorps and history of the program. There is a constant communication flow between members, supervisors, and AmeriCorps staff. We call each site weekly, send emails out weekly, mail newsletters quarterly, and visit sites as much as possible. With the sites being spread out all over the state of Arkansas, it is more difficult to visit them all more than once.

Performance Measures

SAA Characteristics

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

Priority Areas

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

Grand Total of all MSYs entered for all Priority Areas 42.5

Service Categories

Elementary Education Primary Secondary

Volunteer Recruitment

Service Category: Elementary Education

Measure Category: Strengthening Communities

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Communities hosting Arkansas AmeriCorps Future Teacher Initiative members will be strengthened through the presence and service provided by the Arkansas AmeriCorps Future Teacher Initiative members and non-traditional volunteers.

Result: Output

Communities hosting AmeriCorps Future Teacher Initiative members will be strengthened through volunteer service and collaboration between ACMs and community volunteers.

Indicator: community volunteers recruited

Target: ACMs will recruit community volunteers to help implement a Signature Community Service

Project in the community of the school where they are assigned.

Target Value: 375

Instruments: Volunteer recruitment will be measured through completed community service report forms and volunteer attendance logs.

PM Statement: Communities hosting Arkansas AmeriCorps Future Teacher Initiative members will be strengthened through the presence and service provided by the Arkansas AmeriCorps Future Teacher Initiative members. Each year, members will recruit at least 375 volunteers across the state who will provide at least 750 hours of volunteer service within their communities.

Prev. Yrs. Data

Result: End Outcome

ACMs will recruit at least five volunteers each that will volunteer a minimum of two hours each.

Indicator: community volunteers recruited

Target: ACMs will recruit at least five volunteers each generating 800 hours total of service.

Target Value: 800

Instruments: Sign-in sheets will provide an accurate count of volunteers and the hours generated.

PM Statement: Future Teacher Initiative ACMs will recruit five volunteers that will generate a total of 800 hours of community service to strengthen host communities.

Prev. Yrs. Data

Pre-K Services

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.)

Services will be provided to Pre-Kindergarten students through the Arkansas AmeriCorps Future

Teacher Initiative will result in increased academic performance in the classroom.

Result: Output

ACMs will provide tutoring services to students in need of academic assistance in their Pre-

Kindergarten classroom.

Indicator: serving students

Target: During the first year, more than 200 Pre-Kindergarten students will receive tutoring services through the Arkansas AmeriCorps Future Teacher Initiative!

During the second year, more than 400 Pre-Kindergarten students will receive tutoring services

t

Target Value: 525

Instruments: Tally sheet to track students served monthly and pre, mid and post assessments.

PM Statement: Tutoring services provided through the Arkansas AmeriCorps Future Teacher Initiative will result in more Pre-Kindergarten students being prepared to enter Kindergarten.

Prev. Yrs. Data

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Academic improvement

Indicator: serving students

Target: 50% of students served will demonstrate at least moderate improvement on 3-5 areas on the Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist (KRIC).

Target Value: 50%

Instruments: Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist (KRIC)

PM Statement: Targeted students performance will indicate growth in 50% of students mid-term and growth of 70% in end outcome.

Prev. Yrs. Data

Result: End Outcome

Academic improvement

Indicator: serving students

Target: 70% of students served will demonstrate at least moderate improvement on 3-5 areas on the

Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist (KRIC).

Target Value: 70%

Instruments: Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist (KRIC)

PM Statement: Targeted students performance will indicate growth in 50% of students mid-term and growth of 70% in end outcome.

Prev. Yrs. Data

National Performance Measures

Priority Area: Education

Performance Measure Title: PreK Services

Service Category: Elementary Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

Services will be provided to Pre-Kindergarten students through the Arkansas AmeriCorps Future

Teacher Initiative will result in increased academic performance in the classroom.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

ACMs will provide tutoring services to students in need of academic assistance in their Pre-Kindergarten classroom.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) ED5: Students w/ improved academic performance.

Target : 263 or 50% of 525 of students served will demonstrate at least moderate improvement on 3-5

areas on the Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist (KRIC).

Target Value: 263

Instruments: Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist (KRIC)

PM Statement: Targeted students performance will indicate growth in 50% of students mid-term and growth of 70% in end outcome.

Result: Output

Result.

ACMs will provide tutoring services to students in need of academic assistance in their Pre-Kindergarten classroom.

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

Target : Members will enroll 525 students will be receive tutoring services

Target Value: 525

Instruments: tally sheet to track students

PM Statement: Members will enroll 525 students will be receive tutoring services

Result: Output

Result.

75% of students who begin services with the Future Teacher Initiative will complete the tutoring program.

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

Target : 394 or 75% of 525 students who receive service will complete the tutoring program.

Target Value: 394

Instruments: tally sheet to track students

PM Statement: 394 or 75% of 525 students who receive service will complete the tutoring program.

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Not Applicable

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable