

APPLICANT FEEDBACK - Program Design

2011 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Save the Bay, Inc., Ocean State Environmental Education Collaborative	Application ID: 11AC124251
Below are the comments from each External Peer Reviewer that read and evaluated the application. While Reviewers did engage in discussion about their evaluations, consensus was not required as part of their review. Therefore, there may be differing views in their feedback on the quality of the proposal.	
COMMENTS: The applicant provides a well-developed proposal to change future environmental attitudes and practices by education young school children in the classroom as well as in practical exercises. A proposed by-product is an overall improvement in their academic performance, particularly for those who have been identified as poor performers, or are in high risk groups. The applicant provides compelling outcome data on a seven year program history and a strong plan to track future outcomes.	
COMMENTS: (+) The applicant identified the problem of lack of environmental science education for children in the target area. The applicant proposed to recruit members in relevant proficiencies to provide education to these students. The applicant provides relevant data to directly support the need for environmental science education to the students in the target service area (i.e., those students score below the state average of proficiency in science). (+) The applicant provided five relevant outcome measures linking to students receiving environmental education and the impact of the program in their studies and school engagement.	
COMMENTS: The applicant demonstrates previous relevant success. The applicant represents a strategic effort by Rhode Island's leading environmental organizations to improve science proficiency and environmental literacy among students in the state's urban core cities. Members' roles are well-defined and compatible with the program design. Upon completion of pre-serve training, members report to their individual services sites for two weeks of site-specific training. Member supervision information appears to be adequate. The Program Director helps the members to reflect on both positive and negative elements related to their service, teaching skills, training and experiences. By participating in the program, participants will be given the highest level of training in environmental education. The applicant has an innovative approach to environmental education. The applicant plans to develop a tangible model that can be used by other states.	

COMMENTS: (+) The applicant presented quantifiable, current data that clearly demonstrated that science proficiency is a problem in Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick and Woonsocket. (+) The applicant comprehensively described the recruitment, orientation, training, and supervision process. The varied trainings have a high likelihood at achieving the desired results. (+) The applicant clearly described member activities and linked them to active civic participation. (+/-) Although the applicant demonstrated that engaging AmeriCorps members has had a positive short-term impact on environmental awareness, the applicant did not demonstrate that there had been long-term impacts either for children or for members over the seven years of the program. The redesigned program measurements also do not clearly address long-term impact.

COMMENTS: The applicant presents a clear link between the critical need for science education in urban low-income areas and how they will utilize members for activities related to in-school programming, after-school programming and summer camps. Specifics related to anticipated outcomes and the inclusion of past experience statistics supports the effectiveness of the program design.