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Executive Summary

Inspiring Minds, a 47 year-old education agency, requests 10 AmeriCorps Members to tutor K-3rd grade students in four low performing elementary schools in Providence. Members will increase the number of students served over three years and advance existing program outcomes. Members will also work to maximize the efforts of 200 in school volunteers through targeted capacity building activities.

Rationale and Approach

Problem:

Providence Rhode Island is a City whose population is just over 170,000. Providence faces many social and economic challenges that are often associated with larger, more traditional urban cores. According to Rhode Island Kids Count, nearly 45% of children under the age of 18 in the City of Providence live in poverty or extreme poverty. Poverty, and the entire spectrum of attached negative indicators, dramatically affects educational attainment for early learners and this is reflected in a variety of student, school and District wide math and literacy assessments.

The total number of students enrolled in Providence Public Schools is 23,847. 87% of all students in the District qualify for free and reduced lunch (a nationally accepted indicator of overall poverty) according to Federal income standards. According to the Providence School District, students enrolled in schools located in the City's poorest neighborhoods qualify for free and reduced lunch at a rate of 90% to 95%.

Student mobility is a targeted indicator and alarming byproduct of poverty that directly affects early learning. Student mobility is a formula that looks at the number of students enrolled in a specific

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school on October 1st, how many new students are enrolled after October 1st and how many exit after October 1st. According to the Providence School District, mobility rates in many neighborhood schools in Providence range from 15%-25%. This means in a typical class of 27 elementary students in Providence, six will exit during the year and be replaced by eight new students with unique and different needs not often represented by the original students. These transitions are happening in every elementary school classroom in the District.

The New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) is a standardized testing collaborative between the States of Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. The assessment is used to meet No Child Left Behind requirements for testing reading and mathematics proficiency. These assessments are widely accepted and weighed heavily when looking at District level and State wide proficiencies. According to 2009 NECAP results, 47% of 3rd grade students in Providence Public Schools are classified as proficient in reading. Statewide, 68% of students are classified as reading proficient. The same 2009 NECAP results report that 35% of 3rd grade students in Providence Public Schools are classified as proficient in math. Statewide, 62% of students are classified as math proficient. It is clear that the academic needs of this District will not be met through limited, traditional interventions. In a struggling economic climate that includes significant State and City budget deficits, a creative, innovative and targeted approach is required to serve the number of early learners in need of significant academic support.

School Improvement:

The benefit that this proposal presents to students in Providence schools cannot be overstated. With significant momentum around District wide and school level reform, this Corps of 10 is poised to land

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in the middle of and lead four low performing schools towards a level of success that reflects the current spirit of the community, students, teachers and administrators.

In addition to a District-wide classification of "in corrective action", the State of Rhode Island is in the process of implementing education reform models in what have been identified as the persistently lowest performing schools in the State. Four of the five schools identified as persistently lowest-achieving in Rhode Island are in the Providence School District. Two of the schools are elementary (Charlotte Woods/Sgt. Cornell Young and Lillian Feinstein), K-5th grade. One is a middle school (Roger Williams Middle school), 6th-8th grade and one is a high school (William B. Cooley, Sr. Health and Science Technology), 9th-12th grade.

The Providence School District was given the opportunity to present their reform plan (for the four identified schools) to the State Commissioner of Education. The District selected a reform model called the Restart. This model calls for the conversion or closure and reopening of a school under a charter school operator, a charter management organization or an educational management organization. The District chose an education management organization model that expands and strengthens a once contentious relationship between the Providence Teachers Union and the District. A joint labor/management compact has been created that includes a new management structure with shared decision making designed to fully address the needs of each student in the schools. The Restart Model must enroll, within the grades it serves, any former student who wishes to attend the school.

Improving struggling schools is a primary objective in the Rhode Island Department of Education's strategic plan to transform education in Rhode Island. The roll out and early implementation of this reform plan served a dual purpose. First, the five identified schools in Providence became eligible for

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Federal School Improvement Grants in the amount of \$500,000 to \$2 million dollars over the course of three years. The second purpose of this plan was to make Rhode Island competitive for additional funding through the US Department of Education's Race to the Top competition. Rhode Island was awarded \$75,000,000 in funding following the second round of the competition. The Race to the Top funding for Rhode Island has been designated to improve teacher quality. While this should translate into long-term student success resulting from teacher training and evaluation, direct and immediate services for students are not a primary focus of this award.

The school improvement and Race to the Top funding carries with it steep expectations regarding accelerating student performance, school governance, teacher quality and engaging the community through strategic partnerships in order to accelerate student success. Community involvement in the schools is a topic that is often discussed by the State Commissioner of Education and the Superintendent of Providence Public Schools. Within the context of school reform and Race to the Top, Inspiring Minds and specifically the work of its literacy and math intervention volunteers is often mentioned as a model collaborative partnership that can deliver the required, accelerated student achievement.

The Program:

Inspiring Minds is a dynamic, effective and well respected educational support organization that has stayed true to its mission of helping students succeed in school for more than 47 years. Inspiring Minds accomplishes this goal through well-established community, business and institutional partnerships that enable us to provide tutors, mentors and experiential learning opportunities to underserved students in Providence Public Schools. Inspiring Minds' greatest strength is its ability to

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successfully install high quality programs into the delicate systems that are our City's public schools. Annually, more than 1,200 Inspiring Minds volunteers invest 25,000 hours of service to 3,000 Providence Public School students. Inspiring Minds stands alone in its institutional knowledge of and comprehensive partnership with the Providence School District.

While Inspiring Minds has played an active role in student achievement for 47 years, its launch of the Literacy Intervention Program in 2007 and Math Intervention Program in 2009 placed the organization and these initiatives in the middle of the school reform movement as a progressive, community centered solution to the mandate for accelerated Kindergarten-3rd grade student achievement. In addition to the programs' fit in the reform movement, there is a District-wide implementation of core literacy (Reading Street) and math (Envision) curriculum underway. Inspiring Minds' intervention programs, with the support of an AmeriCorps team of 10 Members, are poised to aid the underfunded District in reaching its required goal of accelerating student achievement.

In 2007 Inspiring Minds planners designed their Kindergarten-3rd grade literacy intervention system based on a University of Virginia researched based intervention strategy that requires the identification of and instruction in targeted deficit areas (literacy) for each student. A Johns Hopkins volunteer tutoring study that cited effective tutoring programs must have well-trained tutors, implement a research based curriculum and continuously assess student progress and tutor effectiveness helped guide this planning process. In 2007 the Inspiring Minds planning team (consisting of educators, trainers, District literacy coaches, curriculum experts and Inspiring Minds staff) developed an intensive tutoring program that is designed to addresses students' specific deficit areas. Using volunteers trained in early literacy acquisition strategies, students meet with their tutors

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in small groups (1-3 students), in 30-45 minute intervals, 1-3 times per week for a minimum of 30 hours. The goal of each intervention group is to support students in attaining proficiency in age appropriate early literacy skills such as Initial Sound Fluency, Oral Reading Fluency, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency and Nonsense Word Fluency.

Data evaluation and collaboration drives the Inspiring Minds literacy and math interventions. Using comprehensive reading assessments and diagnostic tools, literacy coaches and classroom teachers create intervention tracks for individual students. Selected students are carefully evaluated by their teachers and school based literacy coaches who can assess both academic need as well as behavioral factors that act as indicators for student success in the program. Student growth (within the classroom and in their small intervention group) is monitored on a monthly basis and the students are regrouped according to progress made or the need for additional remediation. Because of the close alignment between assessment and instruction, the program is both flexible as well as highly effective in delivering targeted outcomes.

Students enrolled in Inspiring Minds literacy interventions consistently outperform (20%-40%) their non-served peers. Inspiring Minds students consistently show accelerated progress towards reading benchmarks. Consistent with this test data, the number of Inspiring Minds students that advanced an instructional level was 2 to 3 times higher than that of non-participating students. When the number of students who dropped instructional levels was assessed, the number of non-participating students who declined was 2 to 3 times greater compared to the Inspiring Minds students. One partner principal reported that 60% of her 2nd grade students (who were enrolled in Inspiring Minds interventions in kindergarten and 1st grades) tested literacy proficient in contrast to 40% of the entire 2nd grade. The Inspiring Minds literacy interventions are currently operating in 10 elementary

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schools in the District.

As a result of the student success realized in the literacy interventions and lagging 3rd grade math scores, the District's Chief Academic Officer requested Inspiring Minds implement targeted math interventions. In the 2009-2010 school year Inspiring Minds math interventions was piloted in one elementary school. At the start of the 2010-2011 school year, four schools launched the Inspiring Minds Math Interventions Program. The math formula is consistent with the literacy interventions. Trained tutors work with small groups of students who are carefully identified by classroom teachers and school based math coaches. The math intervention activities are taken directly from the District-wide math curriculum, Envision. The 2009-2010 pilot math interventions partner school met their yearly progress math benchmark that was unmet in two previous years.

To date, nearly 1,600 K-3rd grade students have received support through Inspiring Minds reading and math interventions. While 1,600 K-3rd grade students served in these programs seems significant, there is an immediate need to retain proficiencies achieved by this group, grow the number of students served, and increase the number of volunteers engaged all while maintaining existing program outcomes. The District is calling on Inspiring Minds to serve more of the 7,200 K-3rd grade students enrolled in Providence Public Schools. Inspiring Minds and the schools have reached our capacity to manage volunteer tutors and maintain the daily gains being made by students. We now need more full time support to expand existing program models. The unique capacity investment in the form of a high functioning Corps will change the trajectory of hundreds of students for years to come.

Solution: AmeriCorps Member Roles and Responsibilities

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Ten full time AmeriCorps members will be assigned to four of the lowest-performing elementary schools in the city of Providence. One of the schools has been identified as a Restart School for September 2011 and it is anticipated that at least two of the remaining three will be Restart Schools in September 2012. The four schools have been carefully selected and the placement of Members and their activities has been agreed upon by the Superintendent, principals and literacy/math coaches. All schools are in close proximity to one another and the Inspiring Minds administrative office. The four schools are currently operating reading and/or math intervention programs. These schools have the infrastructure to host and support Members who will lead this direct service and capacity building initiative. The four identified schools and selection criteria are as follows:

Edmund W. Flynn Elementary School serves 600 students in grades K-5 and is located in Upper South Providence. Flynn's mission is to maximize the educational potential of each student so that he or she will become a self-fulfilled, informed productive member of society. In the past, Flynn was a destination school for children in as well as outside the immediate neighborhood. Engaged teachers, administrators and community members made Flynn a fantastic environment for early learners. As a result of leadership transitions, high unemployment and families in crisis, Flynn finds itself on the brink of being classified as a Restart School. Currently, 95% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch, 31% of 3rd grade students are proficient in reading and 44% of 3rd grade students are proficient in math. Through a formal written partnership, Inspiring Minds sends literacy intervention volunteers into the school five days a week to work with 85 students.

Asa Messer Elementary School serves 400 students in grades K-5 and is located in Providence's West End. Messer's mission is to provide high-quality education to a diverse student body. They achieve

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their goals through a challenging curriculum, quality teachers, and an atmosphere that emphasizes communication and cooperation. Students attending Messer live in the neighborhood. Students walk to school with their siblings and parents enjoy participating in school activities. Messer has a high concentration of students who are classified as English Language Learners. Differentiating instruction for as many as five languages within in one classroom is a challenging undertaking for both teachers and students. Currently, 90% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch, 48% of 3rd grade students are proficient in reading and 45% of 3rd grade students are proficient in math. Through a formal written partnership, Inspiring Minds sends literacy intervention volunteers into the school five days a week to work with 85 students.

Mary Fogarty Elementary School serves 400 students in grades K-5 and is located in Providence's Lower South Side. Fogarty's mission is to create an environment where students, teachers, administrators, support staff, parents and community members are motivated to collaborate and strive for educational excellence. Fogarty has experienced relative success in the past. Five years ago the school was led by a highly effective principal. When this principal was reassigned to another struggling school, test scores and parent engagement declined. A newly installed principal, literacy coach and math coach have infused energy and high expectations into this struggling school. Currently, 94% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch, 35% of 3rd grade students are proficient in reading and 25% of 3rd grade students are proficient in math. In the first year of a formal written partnership, Inspiring Minds sends literacy and math intervention volunteers into the school four days a week to work with 70 students.

Charlotte Woods/Sgt. Cornell Young Elementary school serves 700 students in grades K-5 and is located in Providence's Lower South Side. Woods Young's mission is to create an ethical learning

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community where all members are responsible, respectful and ready to learn. Woods Young Elementary School is currently preparing for its Restart in September 2011. With some of the lowest test scores and highest mobility rates in the District, the mandate to increase achievement and engage the community is clear. Currently, 94% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch, 41% of 3rd grade students are proficient in reading and 33% of 3rd grade students are proficient in math. Through a formal written partnership, Inspiring Minds sends literacy and math intervention volunteers into the school five days a week to work with 115 students.

Throughout the three year cycle, each Member will provide direct literacy and math interventions to 12-15 students a day five days a week at their assigned schools. AmeriCorps members will work with small groups (1-3) throughout the school day. This framework will be aligned with the District's literacy and math instructional blocks that take place every day. Each Member will serve students throughout two morning literacy blocks and two afternoon math blocks. Student performance data for the Members' groups will be segregated from the rest of the student data and used as an additional comparison group.

At each of the four schools, Members will support the tutoring activities of 30-50 Inspiring Minds volunteers. Through a variety of feedback sources, Inspiring Minds has determined that the primary barrier to growing into a school and District wide initiative is a school's capacity to support the number of volunteers needed to serve the number K-3rd grade students in need of intervention services. Members will be working side by side with volunteers. They will be available to answer questions, support and guide community members through this important work. Members will be highly trained in curriculum based literacy and math interventions and have the knowledge base to coach community volunteers in their instruction of children. They will support volunteers in their

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documentation of student progress. Members will be a point of contact for volunteers and communicate their successes and concerns to literacy coaches, math coaches and classroom teachers. Inspiring Minds knows that these activities will lead to an increase in students served and volunteer retention rates. There is a direct correlation between volunteers who are well supported and student success. We expect to see outputs and student outcomes at these four schools outperform other Inspiring Minds partners as a result of the direct service performed by this Corps.

AmeriCorps Member Selection, Training and Supervision:

Inspiring Minds plan for recruiting and selecting a diverse Corps includes local and National outreach through social media, community groups, employment media, minority media outlets and local colleges and universities. Specific recruitment efforts will target college students leaving school with an education degree. Inspiring Minds' Program Director, Matthew Billings is part of large, highly networked National Service alumni group who are still in relevant fields working with talented people in search of a meaningful Corps experience. Inspiring Minds will leverage the National AmeriCorps portal to engage an audience who is looking for an education related Corps experience. This post-graduate immersion experience will serve as an excellent bridge for aspiring teachers. This plan reflects our best practices from recruiting nearly 1,200 volunteers on an annual basis.

Inspiring Minds' Program Director, Matthew Billings has extensive experience with and the training of AmeriCorps Members from pre-service orientation to bimonthly Corps development through ongoing reflection and member support. Matthew has oriented, trained and supervised AmeriCorps NCCC Members, City Year Corps Members and AmeriCorps VISTA members for the past ten years. Orienting Members to AmeriCorps policies and procedures and setting the context for their National

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Service and local work will take place during a three week pre-service orientation period. During these three weeks Members will be trained on volunteer management, their roles and responsibilities in the school and Inspiring Minds' goals and expectations for their year of service. Thorough community explorations Members will familiarize themselves with their schools and surrounding community.

In addition to the in-house training community and explorations during the first three weeks, members will be attending a series of six professional development trainings hosted by the Providence School Department. Through these trainings, Members will receive instruction on how to successfully facilitate tutoring activities with students through the district wide literacy (Reading Street) and math (Envision) curriculum. Members will also be trained to lead and support volunteer tutors by District staff. In addition to pre-service training and ongoing support from literacy and math coaches, Members will receive a series of ten targeted professional development trainings from the District throughout the year. These trainings include but are not limited to data collection and analysis, parent engagement and curriculum implementation.

Formal pre-service and in-service training will be complimented by content appropriate trainings offered frequently by reputable community partners (Providence After School Alliance, Rhode Island After School Alliance Plus, Providence Plan, Family Services of Rhode Island and RI Kids Count). These partner agencies will explore issues relating to the social and emotional well-being of students in the District, successful program implementation and how to better understand the needs of their communities through existing social and economic data. Following the initial pre-service orientation, Members will meet twice month as a large group for Member development trainings. One training a month will be facilitated by the District and one by a community partner. It is critical members understand their service at the National, State, City, school and student level.

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Member supervision and reflection will take place at the individual, school and Corps level. Inspiring Minds' Program Director, Member Support Specialist and on-site literacy and math coaches will provide structured, timely opportunities for coaching, support and feedback. Individual meetings with Members will take place monthly. These one on one meetings will be goal driven based on our expectations of the Members and the personal goals they set for themselves during pre-service orientation. While the one on one meetings are goal driven, an atmosphere that is conducive to informal feedback and discussion is critical. These meetings will be 30 to 45 minutes in length. School level meetings will take place every week. These meetings will include a math or literacy coach and will serve as a formal debrief to highlight successes and address and plan in response to challenges that arise. While guided, the strength of these meetings lies in collaboration between members, school staff and Inspiring Minds leadership. An hour to 90 minutes will be set aside for these school level meetings. All-Corps meetings will take place twice a month and rotate sites. This is an opportunity to discuss and communicate high level organizational initiatives with Members. Corps Members from each of the schools will share success and challenges as well as communicate ideas for innovation. This is a time to communicate National AmeriCorps business or initiatives. Informally, these meetings will help build a clear sense team and ownership of this project. Minutes will be taken at all meetings and reviewed by the Inspiring Minds Program Director on an ongoing basis.

Volunteer Generation:

In order to achieve target outputs and outcomes, 150-200 total volunteers will need to be recruited, screened, trained, placed and retained in the four schools identified in this proposal. While Inspiring Minds Corps Members will not be responsible for recruiting this entire group of volunteers, they will be

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charged with ensuring that a minimum 10% - 20% of the community volunteers per site are from the immediate neighborhood. This means that Members will attend events in the schools and neighborhoods to recruit volunteers from the community to participate in Inspiring Minds literacy and math interventions. The District and schools are very interested in engaging citizens from the immediate school community in the process of turning around neighborhood schools. Historically, 60% of all community volunteers apply to Inspiring Minds through a positive word of mouth referral from a current volunteer. Having members serve as an additional layer of volunteer support in these four schools will increase the number of word of mouth referrals from current Inspiring Minds volunteers. Highly engaged volunteers generate more volunteers in addition to advancing desired outputs and outcomes. Through community outreach and ensuring word of mouth referrals, Inspiring Minds Members will be directly responsible for recruiting 20% (30-40) of the 150-200 volunteers who will be placed their the partner schools.

Partnerships and Collaboration:

The Inspiring Minds Corps will access a variety of institutional and community based professional development, training and recruitment partners. Inspiring Minds' relationship with the Providence School Department is our keystone partnership. To successfully implement this proposal, Inspiring Minds will build and expand on current relationships at the District and school level. Navigating the careful implementation of programs as well as formal partner and data contracts is a top priority from an operations standpoint. Our relationships with institutions of higher education include but are not limited to Rhode Island College, the University of Rhode Island, Brown University and the Community College of Rhode Island. Colleges and universities provide volunteers and expertise in exchange for engaging emerging educators in an invaluable field experience. Inspiring Minds has

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hosted five AmeriCorps VISTAS in the past three years and plans to continue this important relationship. Vital roles performed by VISTA members in the past three years have helped to define how we operate today. Inspiring Minds is fortunate to count the Providence After School Alliance, Rhode Island After School Alliance Plus, Providence Plan, Family Services of Rhode Island, RI Kids Count and Ready to Learn Providence as key collaborators and partners in all of our important work. In addition to educational and training partners, Inspiring Minds collaborates with a variety of forward thinking technology and communication groups that ensure we are engaging students and constituents with a timely and effective message. The Providence Geeks, N10 Network, Business Innovation Factory and (add)ventures all support Inspiring Minds in our pursuit of advancing the organization's mission to accelerate student success.

Sustainability:

Inspiring Minds is often invited to participate in large scale initiatives for three reasons. First is our model relationship with the District, second is our ability to recruit a workforce of 1,200 highly effective volunteers and finally is our proven record of advancing student achievement. The organization operates under the belief that we have been in the schools for 47 years and will continue to serve students as long as there is a need. From the moment this Corps steps into their partner schools, we need to look to create a system of volunteer support that can sustain increased numbers and student outcomes after the funding cycle is over. We are going to look to Member innovations and feedback to drive this important planning process.

Tutoring Programs Only:

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Inspiring Minds feels that this proposal fits securely within the framework of requirements for an AmeriCorps tutoring program and supporting National Performance Standards. Accessible and appropriate data and assessments, high quality, research based pre and in-service training by District professionals and ongoing, on-site support from literacy and math coaches will create a perfect environment for Member, program and student success.

Organizational Capability

From 1996 To 1999 Inspiring Minds (then Volunteers In Providence Schools) hosted AmeriCorps VISTA and a team of AmeriCorps State and National Members to assist students in achieving broad academic outcomes. Inspiring Minds managed this team in partnership with the Providence School District. During this time, Inspiring Minds staff served as local and national trainers for AmeriCorps members. In 2006, Inspiring Minds was awarded more than \$170,000 by US Department of Education to launch a mentoring program for low-income Latino students in Providence. Close to 1 million dollars of Inspiring Minds' annual revenue is generated from federal dollars. Inspiring Minds now administers 21st Century; Reading is Fundamental and Supplemental Education Service programs through funding from the US Department of Education. The balance of Inspiring Minds annual budget of 1.8 million dollars has been raised for the past 47 years through state, local and foundation grants, individual donors and seasonal fundraising events. The full award of this grant would represent close to 15% of Inspiring Minds' annual operating budget.

Inspiring Minds' Program Director (Matthew Billings) and Administrative Assistant (Theresa Seddon) will be the primary and secondary contacts for this application. The Director's prior service and work experience includes two years in the AmeriCorps NCCC, Program Director of a Corps of 70 with City Year and Program Director for a Department of Education Mentoring Children of Prisoners program. He has been with Inspiring Minds for three years and has improved how Inspiring Minds executes

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data collection and outcome reporting. He has overseen the expansion of the literacy intervention program while launching and successfully piloting complimentary math interventions. He is currently responsible for managing and retaining 350 community volunteers, overseeing and ensuring the successful delivery of programs to 3,000 students and maintaining trusting relationships with District leadership, principals, teachers and community groups. The Program Director will oversee and be integrally involved in the successful recruitment and retention of 10 high-performing Members, their training and all aspects of their development and service.

The Member Development Coordinator (MDC) has been employed by Inspiring Minds for six years and has extensive experience in program implementation and youth development. The Member Development Coordinator will be primarily responsible for coordinating member development and training initiatives throughout the life of the grant. This includes managing and modifying an established Member training calendar and ensuring that there are adequate, ongoing opportunities for the Corps to access a variety of professional development opportunities that would support Member efforts in the schools. The MDC will leverage her existing relationships with the schools and administration to support Members in their day to day activities by monitoring their transition into and understating of the unique cultures of the individual schools. The MDC will support the Director and Members in the collection and analysis of all student data. The MDC will support the Director in the recruitment, screening and placement of a highly effective Corps and all reporting associated with this grant.

In addition to the work Program Director and Member Development Coordinator, an Assistant Coordinator will be supporting Members in the schools. The Assistant Coordinator has eight years of experience with Inspiring Minds and currently supports collegiate volunteer partnerships with Brown

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University, The University of Rhode Island, Providence College, Rhode Island College and The Community College of Rhode Island. The Assistant Coordinator maintains critical partnerships with the schools and administrations. The assistant coordinator supported the initial implementation of both the literacy and math interventions. She is familiar with both the District wide math and literacy curricula and will work with Members to ensure the highest level of service delivery.

Inspiring Minds is committed to ensuring outputs and outcomes as well as National Performance Measures by developing, training and supporting a highly effective Corps with a complimentary, experienced staff team.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

Individual donors, foundations, and the District are speaking with one voice in their support of our pursuit of increasing the number of students served through full-time direct service and targeted capacity building measures. The budget and staffing for this program proposal has been developed with a careful eye towards implementation. We believe that opting into the education focus priority as well as National Performance Measures requires a significant investment on the part of Inspiring Minds and the Providence School District. The program budget reflects our belief that a highly trained and supported Corps is the only means to ensuring Member retention and performance outcomes.

Inspiring Minds will need to secure \$123,501 total cash and in-kind resources to support this 10 Member project. To date, Inspiring Minds has commitments of in-kind support totaling nearly \$30,000 in space, utilities and training services. Additional cash support will be raised through existing, consistent corporate and foundation partners. Foundation support will include but is not limited to the following: June Rockwell Levy Foundation, Carter Family Charitable Trust, Frank B. Hazard General Charity Fund and CVS Charities. Larger foundations are very interested in

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organizations that are improving larger systems within the public schools. Current corporate partners that will be solicited in support of this program are Textron, Bank of America/Merrill Lynch and Hasbro. Additional funds will be raised through large scale, seasonal fundraising events as well as targeted cultivation events for donors with a specific interest in early childhood education.

Inspiring Minds' 48% match is a clear indicator of our belief that this funding source is a unique opportunity to sustain and grow an established, successful program model. This narrative and supporting budget carefully account for building, training and retaining a skilled Corps that will directly deliver on National Performance Measures as well lead and refine the efforts of a standing volunteer workforce whose passion is academic achievement for traditionally low performing students and schools.

Evaluation Summary or Plan

Program and outcome evaluation is an area of organizational strength. Through a detailed data sharing, collection and analysis agreement with the Providence School District and the support of an outside evaluator, Inspiring Minds has the ability to execute, refine and expand its ongoing studies that explore meaningful intermediate and end outcomes. The statistical analysis and data sharing agreement with the District allows Inspiring Minds to access student, class and school level data. This allows Inspiring Minds to generate comparison groups for all literacy and math intervention programs. Imagine that in a class of 27 first grade students, 11 are receiving small group or individualized support from Inspiring Minds volunteer tutors. Inspiring Minds can compare the academic gains made by a student enrolled in the program to a student who might be receiving a less concentrated academic intervention within the classroom. These comparisons can be expanded to the entire class, grade and school. The academic data generated by DIBELS (Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills) and its math counterpart (Envision) includes beginning, middle and end of year

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literacy and math benchmarks as well as real-time progress monitoring assessments. Social data includes number of days enrolled, number of days absent, gender, race/ethnicity, free and reduced lunch status (income eligible) and if the student is an English Language Learner. This agreement is closely monitored to provide maximum access in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

All outputs and outcome data is closely evaluated by Inspiring Minds staff and program partners on a regular basis. Reading and math intervention outputs include but are not limited to the following: The number of students being serviced, how frequently they are being serviced by Inspiring Minds tutors and for how many hours. Volunteers complete progress logs that detail these outputs. While our intermediate outcome data tells a clear student success story, it is also used to determine best practice service delivery as well as a classroom, grade and a school's capacity to effectively implement literacy and math intervention programs to the maximum number of students. Targeted early literacy and math skills measured include: Initial sound fluency, nonsense word fluency, oral reading fluency, phoneme segmentation fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, number sense, basic numeracy and problem solving. All early literacy and math indicators are derived from District wide research-based curriculum or standardized assessment tools. In addition to charting gains in targeted skills, Inspiring Minds also tracks the size of the gains being made by the students, how fast they are making these gains and if the skills are retained over time. The retention and progression of early learning skills is as vital as the initial acquisition. All data points are measured in comparison to non-served peers in the classroom, grade and school.

Inspiring Minds is growing the scope of its study and will engage Members in evaluating this expanded data set. Inspiring Minds, its Board of Directors, the Providence School District, sponsors

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and volunteers are very interested in the end outcomes of student participation in the math and literacy intervention programs. Inspiring Minds will be collecting individual (3rd Grade) student New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) scores to see if there is a correlation between these scores and past or current participation in Inspiring Minds literacy and math intervention programs. Inspiring Minds will also be evaluating attendance rates to discern if there is a correlation between participating in Inspiring Minds programming, long term academic success and school attendance. Our hope is that this data will suggest that serving students through these targeted programs can have a positive impact on early elementary attendance rates.

Inspiring Minds will train its Corps to understand the vital role data plays in education. Members will be trained by District and Inspiring Minds staff to evaluate their specific programs, chart student progress, and make recommendations for program improvement. Being responsible for and reporting on student data will empower Members to effectively serve their own student groups, lead and support their school based volunteers, and see their work as an important piece of the school reform movement.

Performance Measures:

By the end of this three year funding cycle, Inspiring Minds is expecting to increase the number of students served annually through targeted intervention programming in the four identified schools by 30%. This would increase the number of students served from 375 to 500 annually.

For literacy and math interventions, we will measure the number of students enrolled and how many successfully attain literacy and math proficiency (or at least advance one instructional level within a

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deficit, emerging and established skills framework) within a minimum window of 30 hours of targeted academic support. This 30 hour benchmark identifies students as completing the math or literacy intervention program with the minimum hours required. We anticipate that this cohort of students that receives a minimum of 30 hours of intervention tutoring will outperform their non-served peers by 20%-40% in key assessments throughout the year.

In addition to increasing the number of students served through Inspiring Minds literacy and math interventions, students no longer enrolled in interventions will continue to receive ongoing literacy and math "maintenance" support from Members and Inspiring Minds tutors to ensure that academic proficiencies are successfully retained.

Amendment Justification

N/A

Clarification Summary

Section 1G: Staff and Member Training:

All costs associated with Pre service orientation, ongoing staff specific subject trainings and corps professional development are for external facilitators only. Effective project implementation would include an outside facilitator for guidance around planning for and developing long term outcomes for programs. In addition there are best practice trainers from aligned programs in other states that will be helpful resources as we grow in earnest. Pre service orientation will include facilitators for team building, team dynamic, educating children effectively and technology in the classroom. Ongoing specific trainings and professional development are closely connected to offerings at the Providence Public school District. These will include parent engagement trainings, aligned curriculum trainings and data management and interpretation trainings. The District is committed to making this Corps a

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highly resource for the children in Providence Public Schools,

Section 1H: Evaluation costs do not include the gathering of data to assess student progress

Section 1I: Rate for space at school sties was calculated based on invoices we have received from the Providence Public School District for space.

Section 11B: Rhode Island State Law does not require us to provide worker's compensation.

Programatic Clarification Items:

1. Background checks for three staff have been included in this revised budget proposal.
2. Background checks will include an FBI fingerprint check, a state registry check as well as a check on the National Sex Offender Public Registry.
4. Members will not be tutoring students and supporting volunteers at the same time. They are not competing activities. Academic interventions are occurring in the school throughout the day. While members will be facilitating small group work throughout the day, there will be time between their groups to check in with volunteers who are themselves working with small groups. For example, the average school day is 7 hours long and Members are working with small academic tutoring groups for 6 hours a day, there will be 1 hour of time when they are not tutoring. During this time other community volunteers are tutoring. Members will be supporting volunteers during this time with

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with the following supports:

Members will ensure that the academic activities are being delivered properly, answer questions volunteers might have about their service and check volunteer reporting documents to ensure consistency and frequency. While this support work will reflect a small piece of their overall effort, it will lead to an increase in effectiveness of service to a large number of children.

5. Regarding sustaining services beyond federal support, Inspiring Minds has sustained its work for 48 years through the use of volunteer tutors. When the federal dollars are phased out, our 1,200 annual volunteers will continue the academic interventions that will be established by this funding. While the work of Inspiring Minds volunteers will need to be reorganized to best reflect the work of AmeriCorps Members, Inspiring Minds has the human resources (volunteers) and partnerships (colleges throughout the state) in place to continue this work.

6. Post service civic engagement requires Inspiring Minds to "activate" members through an ongoing action reflection process. This will be achieved by offering regular reflection sessions examining the context of their work, specifically how their activities relate to school reform and student achievement. Ownership over their own success and failures, processing the failures and making improvements all increase their interest as an immediate and long-term stakeholder in this community and beyond. Activating members includes inspiring, meaningful work with tangible outcomes and deliverables. In addition to the direct work that members perform with Inspiring Minds and Providence Schools, members will have opportunities to learn about other agencies and issues facing children and adults in Providence. Members will volunteer with three "other" agencies in the City throughout their time with Inspiring Minds. These individual service projects will be reviewed in member 1:1 meetings. In

Narratives

addition to additional service opportunities, members will receive ongoing trainings from agencies that collaborate with Inspiring Minds and address a variety of community needs. While Inspiring Minds and early childhood education is an immediate interest for members, we will offer multiple opportunities for members to generate interest and knowledge in a variety of community agencies and initiatives.

7. Inspiring Minds will comply with the AmeriCorps requirements for tutor training for its members; as described, a tutoring plan that is both high quality and research-based as identified in 45 CFR 2502.900-2502.940. Members will be trained appropriately during pre-service training and throughout the year to ensure that it meets instructional program requirements of the Providence Public School district, the local education authority and the RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the state education authority. The Inspiring Minds tutoring plan is one that meets the US Department of Education's Section 1111 criteria by providing high quality tutors to support students in addition to instruction provided during the school day and is designed to increase the academic achievement of eligible children on the academic assessments.

Regarding training, members will be attending Providence Public Schools professional development with math and ELA (English Language Arts) as specific topic areas. In addition to the front loaded math and ELA professional development, members will attend ongoing District trainings for teachers that include the following topics: Positive behavior in students, classroom management and best practices in "hands on" ELA and math activities.

At this point, Inspiring Minds is exclusively looking for members with college degrees to fill these positions. There is a diverse enough pool of recent college graduates looking for meaningful work to

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fill these member slots. In addition to college graduates, Inspiring Minds is looking for members who have graduated with education degrees and have experience working with Providence Public Schools or Inspiring Minds in their academic interventions. To date, Inspiring Minds has offered positions to college graduates, newly certified teachers and recent graduates who have interned with Providence Public Schools for more than one year.

Regarding supervision, members will be supervised in their work by on-site by Providence Public School Literacy and Math Coaches who are charged with teaching teachers how to correctly deliver math and literacy curriculum to students. These are professionals with advanced degrees in math and ELA instruction.

85% of members time on site will be dedicated to small group and individual tutoring activities (math and ELA) and they are in no way considered members of an LEA or the Providence Public School District. This distinction all activities have been discussed and approved by the Superintendent's office and all partner schools.

8. To date more than 60% of the cash match has been raised by Inspiring Minds. The 60% reflects gifts in hand from the Collis Foundation, Routhier Foundation, Hazard Foundation and John C Clark Foundation. In addition to foundation gifts, Inspiring Minds has a 21st Century fee for service program that is still realizing revenue reimbursements following the end of the school year. Listed foundations account for \$20,000 and the 21st Century Supplemental Education Service reimbursements account for more than \$40,000. The additional \$40,000 in cash match will come from an ongoing major donor campaign in which individuals can fund the work of AmeriCorps Members. With additional grants and major donor gifts, the outstanding \$40,000 will be raised by

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January 2012. This would account for the \$100,047 cash match in addition to the \$23,450 in Providence Publis School In-Kind support.

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 10

Service Categories

Tutoring and Child (Elementary) Literacy

National Performance Measures

Priority Area: Education

Strategy to Achieve Results

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

According to 2009 NECAP results, 47% of 3rd grade students in Providence Public Schools are classified as proficient in reading. Statewide, 68% of students are classified as reading proficient. The same 2009 NECAP results report that 35% of 3rd grade students in Providence Public Schools are classified as proficient in math. Statewide, 62% of students are classified as math proficient.

With more than 7,000 K-3rd grade students enrolled in Providence Public Schools, there are not enough academic resources to serve the thousands in need of additional math and literacy support. Annually, at the four identified elementary schools in this proposal, 375 K-3rd grade students are carefully screened to participate in Inspiring Minds literacy and math intervention programs. Selected students are carefully evaluated by their teachers and school based literacy and math coaches who can assess both academic need as well as behavioral factors that act as indicators for student success in the program. Tutors use prescriptive materials to reinforce key math and literacy concepts. By the end of this three year funding cycle, Inspiring Minds, led by its Corps, is expecting to increase the number of students served annually through targeted intervention programming in the four identified schools by 30%. This would increase the number of students served from 375 to 500 annually. In the 1st year, Members will increase the number of students by 18% from 375 to 450 through direct service activities that include tutoring students and supporting and managing the efforts of 30-50 site based community volunteers.

Result: Output

Result.

10 Inspiring Minds AmeriCorps Members and 150-200 Inspiring Minds community volunteers will initiate tutoring services for 450 students in the four schools identified in the proposal.

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

Target : Full enrollment of all literacy and math intervention programs (450 students) by February 2012.

375 students in literacy and 75 students in math. Beginning benchmark assessments are completed on all students.

Target Value: 450

Instruments: Student enrollment spreadsheets and performance logs have been completed for 450 students (February 2012). All math and literacy beginning benchmark assessments are completed.

PM Statement: 10 Inspiring Minds AmeriCorps Members and 150-200 Inspiring Minds community volunteers will initiate tutoring services for 450 students in the four schools identified in the proposal by February

National Performance Measures

Result.

2012.

Result: Intermediate Outcome

Result.

The 405 students who receive 30 or more hours of intervention tutoring will improve their academic performance (at least one instructional level within a deficit, emerging and established skills framework) in targeted math and literacy skills. All gains are based on comparisons made between beginning, middle and end of year benchmarks. Assessments are built into the Envision and DIBELS curriculum and measure progress against what a "proficient" student should have mastered at the beginning, middle and end of year benchmarks.

Indicator: (PRIORITY) ED5: Students with improved academic performance.

Target: The 405 students will improve their academic performance (at least one instructional level within a deficit, emerging and established skills framework) in literacy and math skills. A beginning, middle and end of year assessment will be used.

Target Value: 405

Instruments: Researched based math and literacy assessment reports chart academic progress for all of the participating and comparison group students. Volunteer logs will be used gather anecdotal information that details student progress.

PM Statement: Mid-year literacy and math assessment benchmarks will be analyzed to assure that the 405 students who have received 30 or more hours of intervention tutoring will improve their academic performance (at least one instructional level within a deficit, emerging and established skills framework) in targeted math and literacy skills. All progress measured between beginning, middle and end of year benchmarks.

Result: Output

Result.

10 Inspiring Minds AmeriCorps Members and 150-200 Inspiring Minds community volunteers will complete a minimum of 30 hours of tutoring services for each of the 450 students in the four schools identified in this proposal. The 450 students completing the program in the 2011-2012 school year represents a 18% 1st year growth in students served. In past years, Inspiring Minds has had very high retention rates for its academic programs. If there is any attrition, data will be used to replace the slot with another student in need of academic support (using academic data). The number of students starting will be the same as the number of students ending the program.

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

Target: In February 2012, a mid-year program snapshot will be taken to ensure that programs are fully populated and students are progressing towards or have achieved their 30 hour intervention

National Performance Measures

Result.

benchmark.

Target Value: 450

Instruments: Student enrollment spreadsheets and performance logs are being reviewed for the mid-year progress report. DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Early literacy Skills) and Envision (Math) assessments are reviewed as indicators of student growth. Both DIBELS and Envision have been validated through multiple, external research projects including those conducted by Public Research and Evaluation Services.

PM Statement: In February 2012, a mid-year program snapshot will be taken to ensure that programs are fully populated and students are progressing towards or have achieved their 30 hour intervention benchmark. This includes mid-year benchmark assessments. In May 2012, all 450 end of year benchmark assessments are complete.

Required Documents

Document Name

Status

Evaluation

Not Applicable

Labor Union Concurrence

Not Applicable