

## City of Orlando - OPASS AmeriCorps

**Executive Summary:** Under the Governor's / Mayor's Initiative, the City of Orlando (COO) proposes to have 40 full-time AmeriCorps members that will provide in-school and out-of-school tutoring and mentoring services to low-performing and at-risk youth at five (5) Orlando public middle schools and five (5) after-school and summer middle school program sites. At the end of the 1st program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for providing services to 1,500 students, and 75% of program completers will improve academic performance in Language Arts and/or Math. This program will focus on the CNCS focus area of Education. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage an additional 50 volunteers who will be engaged in the COO's "Cities of Service" program and assist in multiple COO led projects throughout the year. The CNCS investment of \$523,291 will be matched with \$236,691 (\$150,769 cash / \$85,922 in-kind) from COO in public funding.

**1. Problem/Need:** In 2006, Mayor Buddy Dyer launched an unprecedented effort to build community consensus around goals for children, education, crime prevention, and neighborhood revitalization. Residents participated in the Safe Orlando Task Force, Mayor's Education Action Council, Mayor's Parramore Task Force, and Blue Ribbon Panel on Education. Researchers, business leaders, teachers, neighborhood activists, pastors, social service providers, youth and philanthropists together crafted strategies to solve deeply rooted problems that disproportionately plague certain Orlando neighborhoods, schools and demographic groups. Mayor Dyer and the City's Families, Parks & Recreation Department (FPR) used this input to begin the systematic transformation of the City's children's programming to incorporate evidence-based and evidence-informed practices with the goals of developing an effective neighborhood model to "move the needle" on academic achievement, juvenile crime, teen pregnancies and child abuse and then to eventually to scale up the model's effective practices citywide.

Since that time FPR began the creation of a comprehensive youth development initiative that now includes several new highly successful program components. These include: (1) Parramore Kidz Zone (PKZ), a prototype place-based "Promise Neighborhood" program focused on a "cradle-to-career" pipeline; (2) After-School All-Stars (ASAS), a school based city-wide program that utilizes the 21st Century Community Learning Centers model and focuses on at-risk middle school students; (3) Summer Learning Loss Prevention Program, a collaborative program with the district at all FPR recreation and school based summer programs focused on Language Arts and STEM skill building for elementary and middle school students. Today, the City of Orlando serves over 11,000 children annually at 34 sites including recreation centers, schools, and non-profit partner locations. Yet, limitations and challenges continue to exist in attempting to serve this ever increasing population.

The COO continues to seek out new programs and collaborative partnerships that will specifically increase and enhance evidence based programs for older youth (6-12th

grade), enhance the partnership with school district so as to expand sharing of student performance data, and increase number of high qualified tutors, mentors and community volunteers to work with youth. When the original Governor's / Mayor's Initiative Grant was created in 2013, the COO saw it as a perfect program component to assist in the expansion of FPR's children services model.

Prior to that original application the COO designed a needs assessment process to identify the key areas of focus for the program. The COO organized a multidisciplinary assessment team comprised of COO, Orange County Public Schools (OCPS), FPR and ASAS staff. The team gathered and utilized data from a wide range of sources including: U.S. Census Bureau information; Florida educational attainment data; COO neighborhood data, district and state student academic performance data; and community stakeholder surveys completed. Information about service gaps in the area were gathered from feedback solicited from students, parents and community partners, as well as reviews of publicly available information (e.g., COO neighborhood data, Orange County Health Department, etc.). The purpose of the needs assessment process was to identify and prioritize student, school and community needs and provide the basis for developing a comprehensive, community youth development initiative that is responsive to the identified needs and gaps.

Orlando is Florida's 5th largest city and is located in Orange County. The Central Florida region promotes itself as a vacation and entertainment destination for the world. While the tourism industry fuels the area's growing infrastructure, the low-wage seasonal workforce it employs walk a precarious path of financial stability and ruin every day. During the economic downturn of the past several years, the tourism industry was one of hardest hit markets. Today, with a poverty rate of 16.4%, Orlando ranks 16th out of the top 100 metropolitan areas in the United States for residents living below the poverty line.

Over 56,000 children residing in Orlando live in poverty. In 2014, Orlando ranked 1st among all mid-size cities in the country for its number of chronically homeless residents (NHCHC Orlando Fact Sheet, 2013). Currently, Over 8,000 students in Orange County qualify for additional services for homeless youth through the federal McKinney-Vento Act (OCPS McKinney-Vento Report, 2014). Another important factor in student learning is mobility rates. Low income children face housing instability, moving from home to home during the school year. Frequent transfers make it difficult for students to complete credits, pass tests and meet graduation requirements, resulting in a higher dropout rate.

In OCPS, students moved in and out of public schools nearly 80,000 times last year - a turnover rate that would be the equivalent of about 37% of the district's total enrollment. For the target schools in this application, student mobility is even higher at about 48%. Orlando's unemployment rate sits at 4.8%. Conversely, in the neighborhoods of Carver Shores, Catalina, Engelwood, Lee Vista, and Parramore, where the targeted students reside, that number jumps to between 18% -- 27% depending upon the neighborhood.

(Orlando Neighborhood Demographic, Economic Stabilization and Safety Report, 2014). Orange County had nearly 5,700 juvenile arrests in 2013-2014. The juvenile crime rates in these targeted neighborhoods are four to six times higher than the rest of the county. Furthermore, the percentage of arrests for violent crimes, domestic violence and drug related offenses are three to four times higher than in the rest of Orange County (Crime in Florida -- Orange County, 2013). In addition, the Florida Literacy Coalition reports 74% of Orange County adults have received a high school diploma and/or higher education. Conversely, 20% of Orange County adults are considered "functionally illiterate". In the communities targeted in this application only 46% of adults have received a high school diploma and the number of "functionally illiterate" adults increases to 33% (Orange County, FL Population Data, 2013).

These statistics represent a climate of low performance that surrounds disadvantaged students from early learning through adulthood. The neighborhoods and schools targeted in this application contain a substantial number of Orlando's most impoverished and low performing students as evident in their school performance. Data on the targeted schools is as follows: Carver MS (92% free/reduced lunch, 98% minority, D school grade 42% scored at grade level in reading, 36% scored 3 scored at grade level math); Howard MS (74% free/reduced lunch, 71% minority, B school grade, 55% scored 3 at grade level in reading, 57% scored 3 at grade level in math); Jackson MS (88% free/reduced lunch, 87% minority, C school grade, 43% scored at grade level in reading, 48% scored at grade level in math); Lee MS (78% free/reduced lunch, 74% minority, C school grade, 47% scored at grade level in reading, 46% scored at grade level in math), and Odyssey MS (72% free/reduced lunch, 81% minority, B school grade, 57% scored at grade level in reading, 56% scored at grade level in math).

The development team designed three different types of surveys to be completed by students, parents and community stakeholders (school administration, public officials, police officers, church leaders, private schools located within the demographic area, etc.). Over 600 surveys were completed between the targeted school sites. The survey findings were as follows: 99% indicated a high need for safe and free quality programs for kids; 96% indicated a high need for educational assistance for low performing students; 94% indicated a high need for STEM and enrichment programs for students; 96% indicated a high need for family services and educational programs; 92% indicated a high need for increased community involvement among youth; 90% believed their children were not adequately prepared for high school/college; 88% believed their schools were failing to provide adequate services; 79% believed their neighborhoods and schools were not safe for children; 67% reported that at least one family member had been arrested, incarcerated or involved in criminal activities in the past three years; 51% reported that at least one family member suffered from substance abuse; 44% reported that at least one family member had been involved in domestic violence over the past three years.

Once all areas of data were complete and collected, ASAS staff combined the information and created a needs report for review by the development teams. Consensus among the team was that the proposed programs should serve four key program objectives: (1) scholastic development, grade improvement and increased performance on standardized tests; (2) improve behavior and social skills; (3) provide a caring and safe environment, and (4) provide children with more young adults as mentors.

**2.) Theory of Change and Logic Model:** OPASS is a collaborative partnership between the Florida Governor (FG), City of Orlando (COO), Orange County Public Schools (OCPS), and After-School All-Stars (ASAS) submitted under the Governor's and Mayor's Initiative. Governor Rick Scott identified education as a priority for the state and, after careful consideration, selected Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer as his partner for this initiative, with the City of Orlando serving as lead agency. The mission of the project is to expand academic and social supports for at-risk youth in five high poverty neighborhoods during the school day, after school and in the summer time, to improve their academic performance in Language Arts and Math.

COO will deploy forty (40) full-time AmeriCorps members to five city middle school sites to provide services to 1,500 students. Each site team will be made up of 8 members (1 lead and 7 first/second year). These teams will continue the successful programmatic framework created during the first three years of the OPASS program. Part of the COO's application this year includes a request to increase from 32 to 40 members. This increase would allow the OPASS program to add an additional school site (Odyssey M.S.) and provide services to an additional 300 low-performing/at-risk students. The addition of the new program site would allow OPASS to serve residents from all five City of Orlando districts. Both the Mayor's office and Superintendents office seek to grow the program over the next several years. Part of the growth plan is to eventually create a feeder program with the COO's new high school AmeriCorps program, Operation AmeriCorps. Each of the five middle schools identified in this application is the largest middle school feeder into the five high schools that Operation AmeriCorps serves. Thus, allowing us to move closer to the ultimate goal of creating a continuum of care for the students the COO's AmeriCorps programs serve.

The tiered Response-to-Intervention (RtI) model used by OPASS works collaboratively with the school district's overall strategy and is designed to address the research-based Early Warning Indicators (EWIs) that predict drop out risk: student performance in attendance, behavior, English and math (An Early Warning System, Curran, Neild & Balfanz, 2007). This systematic decision-making process is designed to allow for early and effective responses to student's learning and behavioral difficulties, provide children with a level of instructional intensity matched to their level of need and then provide a data-based method for evaluating the effectiveness of instructional approaches. The core activities and interventions that define this model include; (1) 1:1 & small Group Tutoring in English and Math throughout academic year and summer; (2) general

classroom support; (3) homework help in/out of school; (4) attendance incentive programs; (5) support for school positive reinforcement systems; (6) structured positive reinforcement and intervention; (7) out of school time academic and enrichment programs / activities; (8) mentoring and character education programs / activities; (9) service learning and civic engagement opportunities.

Each member will be assigned a focus list of 35-40 students to work with throughout the year. During the school day (5-6 hours per day) members will be assigned to one or two classrooms where they will provide individual tutoring and in-class academic support to students on their focus list. In the after school program (2 hours per day), members will provide small group tutoring and mentoring activities to their assigned students. During the summer program (7-8 hours per day), members will assist teachers and provide individual tutoring and academic support to students during the morning academic periods and provide a variety of mentoring activities during the afternoon. Mentoring activities during the school year and summer include STEM enrichment, study skills, character education, service learning projects, etc.

All in-school and out-of-school academic/tutoring curriculum provided by the COO is research based, approved by Orange County Public Schools and coincides with the Florida Department of Education's Common Core State Standards. Each school's program will be customized to the school's individual population needs with guidance from the administration. The after school program focuses on the 21st Century Community Learning Center model. This successful tutoring model incorporates all of the OCPS's research based tutoring and training requirements. For example, the literacy program's scope and sequence will include a focus on the six elements of reading (oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension).

**3.) Evidence Base:** OPASS's Rtl model works in conjunction with the OCPS overall school improvement and reform plans for low performing schools and students. OPASS utilizes the core strategies of the "Success for All" (SFA) model when designing all academic and social interventions. SFA (Slavin & Madden, 2001) is the most widely used and extensively evaluated of the CSR models. It provides schools with specific curriculum materials and extensive professional development in core subjects, along with detailed assessment, cross-grade grouping strategies, within-school facilitators, and other school organization elements.

Originally focused on elementary school, SFA now has a middle school (6-8) model. OPASS members are specifically tasked with assisting in the implementation of the following areas of SFA at the individual school sites; 1.) Cooperative and group learning structures, 2.) Reading tutoring that focuses on phonics and comprehension, 3.) Math tutoring that focuses on basic skills, critical thinking and problem solving, 4.) Differentiated instruction for all students on focus lists, and 5.) Non-instructional issues that can affect student learning, such as behavior, attendance, and parental involvement. The ultimate goal is to enable students to learn the skills and strategies

they need to read, comprehend, and analyze the complex content area texts they encounter in middle school. This makes OPASS uniquely equipped and designed to accelerate the academic development of struggling older students until they are achieving at, or above, grade level.

After review of program's past performance with the school district, it was decided not to include the student attendance measures in the new application. Instead, the district asked that the focus be academic assistance since this was the largest area of need within the middle school population. This will not reduce the number of overall students served as we are requesting an increase in students to be served. This will also allow for more intensive training in conjunction with OCPS and seamless integration into the district's school improvement model plans based around SFA.

Borman et al. (2003) identified a total of 46 experimental-control comparisons evaluating SFA, of which 31 were carried out by third-party investigators. A mean effect size of +0.20 (combining Success for All and Roots & Wings) was obtained across all studies and measures. A longitudinal study by Borman & Hewes (2003) found that students who had been in SFA, by eighth grade, still reading significantly better than former control group students and were about half as likely to have been retained or assigned to special education. Since the Borman et al. review, a number of additional studies of SFA have been carried out. Most importantly, a national randomized evaluation of SFA is under way. A total of 41 schools were randomly assigned to use SFA either in grades K-5 or in grades 6-8. First-year results found positive effects for students in kindergarten and first grades on reading measures (Borman, Slavin, Cheung, Chamberlain, Madden, & Chambers, in press).

Preliminary analyses of second-year results are finding stronger impacts. This first large-scale randomized evaluation is particularly important in today's policy environment, which is strongly supporting randomized experiments (Whitehurst, 2002). Taken together, there are now more than 50 experimental-control studies of SFA involving more than 200 schools throughout the U.S. While OCPS is part of the SFA evaluation report, we could not obtain the information on the exact school(s) used in the studies. However, SFA provided us with the following; "Florida middle schools implementing SFA made significant progress on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) -- Reading scale. From 2006 to 2009, Florida middle schools implementing SFA had a 5.4 percentage-point increase in the number of students in grades 6--8 who scored at or above Achievement Level 3. Other Florida middle schools not implementing SFA gained an average of 1.0 percentage point. OCPS which implements SFA, was part of this outstanding achievement. OCPS saw an average gain of 4.9 percentage points among its middle schools during this time frame."

While numerous studies have been carried out to validate the specific features of RtI, the evidence base establishing the effectiveness of various models or approaches to RtI is still emerging (Hughes & Dexter, 2008; Torgeson, 2009; VanDerHeyden, Witt, & Gilbertson, 2007). Available evidence indicates that use of RtI models can improve the

academic performance of at-risk students most notably in the area of early reading skills (e.g., O'Connor, Harty & Fulmer, 2005; Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, & Hickman, 2003). Other studies have shown that students who were involved in programs employing RtI models had reduced rates of special education referral and/or placement (e.g., Bollman, Silberglitt, & Gibbons, 2007; Marston, Muyskens, Lau, & Canter, 2003; O'Conner et al., 2005), or performed better on academic behaviors such as time-on task and task completion (Kovaleski, Gickling, Morrow, & Swank, 1999).

In regards to the after school programming, the evidence-based/evidence-informed practices are as follows: 1) Extending the school day via out-of-school time programming that is both recreational and tightly intertwined with school curricula produces a one-half letter grade improvement in reading and math (Chicago Community Schools Initiative); 2) An experimental evaluation of 21st Century programs found the program effective in increasing parental involvement, frequency of being tutored and fewer afternoons spent watching TV. Dynarski, M., et al (2003); Zief, S.G. (2005); 3) A rich base of evidence supports the efficacy of tutoring programs to extend the learning day or school year and promote/sustain academic achievement, and strong evidence exists on the positive effect of tutoring on academic achievement for low-performing and high-risk students (e.g. Baker et. al., 2000; Landberg et. al. 2006; Morris et al., 1990; Vadasy & Sanders, 2008).

In addition to the national research, COO has developed its own evidence based on its successful experimental youth development programs. This includes the Parramore Kidz Zone, modeled after the Harlem's Children Zone, and the Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC). In both instances results have been impressive. By 2012, PKZ was cited by the White House Council for Community Solutions as one of 12 "Needle-Moving Collaboratives" in its 2012 report Community Solutions for Opportunity Youth, with evaluators documenting an 82.3% decline in juvenile arrests for Parramore youth. As well as increases in the percentage of students proficient in reading and math in elementary (+15% / +18%), middle (+4% / +15%) and high school (+8% / +21%).

Similarly, ASAS experienced noteworthy success since the launch of its 21st CCLC program and as such was recognized as a model 21st CCLC program site for the past five years by the Florida Department of Education. ASAS / FL-DOE 21st CCLC cumulative report shows increases in: FCAT reading scores of 3 or higher (+21%), FCAT math scores of 3 or higher (+23%), FCAT science scores of 3 or higher (+22%), percentage of students missing 3 school day or less (+15%), percentage of students with perfect school attendance (+19%) and 8th grade graduation rate (+23%). The report also illustrates decreases in: school suspensions (-95%), school expulsions (-93%) and juvenile arrests (-100%).

Finally, During OPASS's initial three year phase, the program saw many of the same challenges all new programs face. However, by the end of its first program cycle OPASS has quickly established itself as a leader in AmeriCorps and youth development

programs in the state of Florida. In the first three years, 107 members were enrolled in the program and 22 exited without the educational award. The current retention rate is 79.4%. This is due in large part to the late start of the program in its first year and the resulting low retention rate. In addition, since the program runs an entire school year and summer the members are asked to serve for a longer time frame than most AmeriCorps educational programs. After the first year learning curve, the retention rate has increased by over 15% in the second and third year of the program. The effectiveness of the program on students has been an overwhelming success. OPASS finished its second year by serving 1,217 total students and increasing student performance in several key areas (87% improved math and reading performance, 92% improved school attendance, 81% reduction in school suspensions/expulsions and zero arrests among student participants). OPASS was named the 2014-15 AmeriCorps program of the year in the state of Florida.

**4.) Notice Priority:** The proposed project fits within the Governor and Mayor Initiative funding priority. Florida Governor Rick Scott identified education as a priority for the state and selected Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer as his partner for this initiative, with the City of Orlando serving as lead agency.

**5.) Member Training:** OPASS members must meet AmeriCorps eligibility requirements, have a high school diploma, receive requisite AmeriCorps and OCPS criminal history checks, and successfully complete orientation program. OPASS members will receive a pre-service reading outlining the service model, mandatory trainings for AmeriCorps and an on-site orientation to their assigned service location. All members will take part in a mandatory three week orientation training module. The first two weeks will be taught by COO and the third week will be run by OCPS at the member's school site. During orientation, they will be trained, receive a handbook, and sign a Member Service Agreement with the prohibited activities included. Once members complete their initial training they will take part in monthly trainings throughout the year on a variety of topics.

The 250 hour training program for members includes: Topics related to CNCS, AmeriCorps, and Volunteer Florida, academic and curriculum mapping (a 36 week training program in which members receive 30 topic-based trainings in ELA service delivery, 15 topic-based trainings in math delivery, and 32 topic-based trainings social-emotional learning), program operations, classroom instruction, behavior management and modification, technology and data entry. Additional required trainings available to the OPASS team include disaster preparedness and response (CPR/First Aid), guided leadership development curriculum, community asset mapping, diversity and disability awareness, team building, school observations, conflict resolution, documentation of service, and individual, team, and site AmeriCorps goals. OCPS administrators will provide direct instruction and training to corps members. All pre-service and in-service trainings will be district approved and include topics such as school operations, curriculum, tutoring methods and classroom management. They will also conduct



regular observations throughout the year to assure corps members are maintaining standards in content and academic achievement.

**6.) Member Supervision:** The OPASS team will have a dedicated COO Program Coordinator to provide day-to-day supervision and each team will have one lead member assigned to assist with all programmatic elements and communication with the school site administration. OPASS will be overseen by the COO's AmeriCorps Program Manager and Program Director. The Program Coordinator will conduct daily team check-ins, hold weekly team meetings, and conduct monthly one-on-ones with each member of their team to track progress toward goals and service quality, and address school, service or personal issues.

**Supervisor Oversight:** The COO's AmeriCorps Director and Program Manager will provide direct oversight of OPASS. OCPS administrators and staff will provide additional supervision to corps members during the school day. School staff will meet regularly with program supervisor and individual staff to review student progress, corps member performance and overall effectiveness of the program.

**7.) Member Experience:** OPASS members will participate in COO leadership development program. Through this structured program, members will develop the knowledge and skills to be effective and active citizens. By the end of the year, they will understand their own civic identity and roles they can play, develop civic capacity through competency based learning, training and coaching, and self-directed learning, and demonstrate civic action through implementation of direct service. Part of the foundation of this program will be utilizing the existing Mayor's City Academy. This 10 week program utilizes the City's unique capabilities to teach and empower individuals to discover their own civic identity. Lessons focus on the role of local government, team-based community problem solving, and personal and social development. The program also includes interaction with elected City officials/staff, introduction to City boards and volunteer opportunities and education on effective public policy trends.

**AmeriCorps Connection:** OPASS members will participate in trainings and events that organized in conjunction with other AmeriCorps service organizations (City Year, United Way, etc.) to create a shared learning experience. This partnership will create a corps member committee in order to connect the members working within the multiple agencies. This committee will also schedule volunteer events and activities that all corps members and agencies will participate in. By regularly connecting a wide array of corps members in engaging and meaningful volunteer activities, OPASS will foster the AmeriCorps identity and strengthen each corps member's connection to the national organization. While OPASS recruitment is open to all individuals across the country, there is a specific focus on recruiting members from Orlando and Central Florida. In the first years of the program, over 64% of all members were from Central Florida and of that over half actually attended the schools they served in.

**8.) Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification:** COO will include the AmeriCorps logo on all OPASS member uniforms, recruitment material, and other collateral information. The logo will be displayed at AmeriCorps member service locations (e.g. bulletin boards, AmeriCorps program placards, etc.) and OPASS will be discussed in the media and community through the Office of the Mayor, City Commissioners and Office of Communications. The COO's AmeriCorps program will have its own page on the COO's website and will be regularly updated with program highlights.

**9.) Organization Background and Staffing:** Founded in 1875, the City of Orlando is home to 243,195 residents. Our mission is to enhance the quality of life in Orlando by delivering public services in a knowledgeable, responsive and financially responsible manner. OPASS will be implemented by the City's Families, Parks and Recreation Department (FPR). With an annual budget of approximately \$28 million, FPR operates 111 parks, 50 playgrounds, 53 ball fields, 19 recreation centers, 2 senior centers, 11 pools, and a wide range of programs serving citizens throughout the City. FPR serves over 11,000 children daily, year-round, at 34 sites including 16 City recreation centers, 7 OCPs middle schools, one charter school, and 10 non-profit and university partner locations. Programs are offered free of charge to low income children resulting in a participant population that is overwhelmingly low income. In the City's afterschool and summer programs, 83.7% and 80.9% of participants, respectively, qualify for food stamps.

FPR has the experience, staffing and management structure to plan, implement, administer, evaluate and sustain OPASS, which will operate out of the FPR Director's Office. The project will be managed by the COO's AmeriCorps Program Director and ASAS State Director, Tyler Chandler. Mr. Chandler manages all the school based youth development programs for the COO. In this unique role, he oversees all of the City's AmeriCorps State and National programs and manages the statewide operations for the national non-profit After-School All-Stars. Mr. Chandler designed and created the OPASS and Operation AmeriCorps initiatives. The project budget includes funding for a full-time OPASS Program Coordinator who will report to FPR Director Lisa Early and oversee all recruitment, training and on-going support for the 40 AmeriCorps members.

The OPASS Program Coordinator will be responsible for administrative and reporting functions required under the grant, with support provided by the FPR Fiscal Manager, FPR Grants Manager and FPR Grants Accountant who are collectively responsible for managing the Department's \$28 million annual budget, as well as approximately \$4.7 million in grant and donor funds and in-kind contributions that come to FPR each year. Examples of grants managed by this team include Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants, federal summer feeding and after school feeding grants, and an AmeriCorps VISTA program. 2.)

**Compliance and Accountability:** OPASS will implement a comprehensive quality assurance program to assess all areas of programming including program objectives, data analysis, operations, curriculum, service delivery, and staffing. Staff will take part in

weekly meetings, site monitoring visits and audits conducted internally and by Volunteer Florida.

The OPASS Program Manager will meet weekly with supervisors to discuss issues and program effectiveness. A monthly report will be made to the City's FPR Director and AmeriCorps Director. City of Orlando utilizes standardized rubrics, desk audits, automated systems (e.g. payroll) and site visits to ensure the program is being implemented as designed. The program supervisors are on campuses daily and will meet weekly with corps members to ensure high quality service is being provided and no members have engaged in prohibited activities. Within schools, the daily presence of the OPASS Program Coordinator allows for immediate detection and prevention of potential prohibited activities. Issues of non-compliance are reported to the direct supervisor of the individual responsible. Violation of COO policy is documented on performance plans and can lead to dismissal or termination. OPASS members will not duplicate, displace, or supplant volunteers, staff and/or interns from the COO, OCPS or any other entity involved in the project.

**10.) Cost Effectiveness:** The City of Orlando respectfully requests a grant award of \$549,205 at a cost/MSY of \$13,730. In our first year of operation we will provide a 28% match commitment. Our 2016-17 diversified revenue plan supports 40 corps members and we have identified 100% of our match sources required of which \$209,977 will come from City of Orlando (In-kind \$75,000 / Cash \$134,977). The proposed project accounts for less than 2% of the City's 2016-17 FPR Department total operating budget of \$30,384,000. Percentage of Operating Budget: In the 2015-16 fiscal year, the CNCS grant will account for 72% of the costs to run the project.

CNCS 5 Year Support: City of Orlando FPR Department has received CNCS support for the past 3 years.

Fundraising Experience: During the 2014-15 fiscal year, the City of Orlando FPR Department raised \$5.8M in additional funding to support its community based programs. These funding sources included; local, state and federal grants, corporate grants, foundation grants, large scale fundraisers, in-kind donations and individual donations. The department partners with dozens of non-profits, faith based organizations, local corporations and/or community members in all fundraising and program initiatives.

Match Secured to Date: As noted, we have identified and/or secured 100% of match sources. To date, the City of Orlando has committed \$134,977 in cash and up to \$75,000 of in-kind resources, specifically usage of facilities, standard and web based curriculum software, and student enrichment supplies and/or materials. In all phases of the OPASS initiative there is substantial return on investment. Typical high level intensive tutoring programs in the Central Florida area cost on average \$40/hour per staff and when using this figure to calculate services for the O-PASS population it would cost over \$2M annually to operate. OPASS's proposed rate is less than \$7.50 per tutor

and will be provided at a fourth of the annual cost of a private sector program. In Orange County, the average cost for a student to attend both a high quality after-school and summer program is between \$2,800 and \$3,200 a year. OPASS will allow students to enroll in these programs at no cost and provide enhanced academic and support services to all participants. Finally, according to the Alliance for Education's brief on "The High Cost of High-School Dropouts", "the impact on the country's economy is less visible, but cumulatively its effect is staggering. If the students who dropped out of the Class of 2011 had graduated, the nation's economy would likely benefit from nearly \$154 billion in additional income over the course of their lifetimes." The state of Florida produced 83,516 dropouts in the class of 2011 which would amount to around 9.5 billion dollars of income and economic impact lost.

The proposed budget includes costs necessary to run the program as described. All costs were reviewed by COO as necessary and appropriate to the services provided. The budget includes two full-time staff positions and requisite benefits, corps member living allowances (set at \$13,000 for full-time members, \$14,000 for five lead members), member benefits (FICA/health insurance), corps member background checks (staff checks will be conducted by the hiring agency), training, supplies and uniforms, student expendables, general office and program supplies, use of City community centers and administrative offices, administrative support and management, data management services, transportation services for volunteer projects and/or training, and standard and web based curriculum software. No equipment will be purchased using grant funds or match.

OPASS counts on our community's leaders, including the Mayor, to ensure the program's financial sustainability through a combination of City general revenues, fund-raising and grant writing. The intent is that the City will provide leadership and funding to found and sustain the initiative, while at the same time engaging partners in jointly funding the effort, including private charitable foundations, corporate and individual donors, and local, state and federal governments. The overriding public policy strategy has been that, in order to effectively tackle the most pressing problems facing Orlando's children, including educational achievement and juvenile crime, all sectors must join in a common strategy with all oars rowing the boat in the same direction. An important part of the framework for funding, sustaining and scaling up the City's children's efforts is our ability to administer City funding while at the same time leveraging grants and private donations.

As an example of how we do it, in the case of PKZ, the Orlando City Council created a vehicle for engaging donors by establishing a special fund at the Community Foundation of Central Florida. Since then, a wide range of public and private donors and grant makers have contributed approximately \$2,000,000 to the fund to help support the program including the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, AT&T, Bank of America, Darden Restaurants, Dr. P. Phillips Foundation, Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation, Kiwanis of Orlando, the Orlando Magic, PBS&J, Staples, Track Shack

Foundation, Universal Orlando, Florida Hospital, Walt Disney World, Wayne Densch Charities, Orlando Utilities Commission, the Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida, and others. Most notably, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer has personally raised over \$1 million for PKZ via his signature fundraising event, CityKidz! Buddy's Benefit for Children. This will facilitate the long term sustainability of OPASS.

**11. Evaluation Plan:** Under this application, the OPASS project will participate in the state-wide evaluation of AmeriCorps partnerships organized through Volunteer Florida. The evaluation plan includes annual surveys of service and community partners who will interact with the OPASS project to inform on the strength of the partnerships and integration of the AmeriCorps program into the community. Once the three year program is complete, OPASS proposes to engage in a full program evaluation completed by an external evaluator. The OPASS proposal is firmly rooted in a commitment to continuous improvement of operations, services, and outcomes. The cornerstone is a logical process of planning, data collection, analysis, reporting, and refining. As such, evaluation will include three connected elements to help ensure the OPASS model is effective, efficient, and sustainable: continuous improvement, formative evaluation, and summative evaluation. Ongoing evaluation will be conducted using the Continuous Improvement Model (CIM), a quality-based approach used within educational settings and particularly effective for reducing achievement gaps between student subgroups. The model focuses upon individualized assessment using both formal (e.g., surveys) and informal (e.g., meetings) techniques to guide incremental changes within ongoing services, adopt new ways to improve and measure outcomes, discontinue or adapt activities that have no value, and increase emphasis on program objectives and outcomes.

With the support of the external evaluator, COO will collect and analyze a limited amount of data at least quarterly and compare the obtained data using within-subjects methods to determine individual changes within students. The immediate and individualized feedback provided through CIM is particularly important for implementation of this Rtl model to help guide and ensure the highest impact for each student. The program will also utilize CIM to help guide any immediate operational changes necessary to provide a high quality program, including staffing changes, project-based learning plan adjustments, or increased resources to specific projects or subject areas. Evaluation will also be conducted through formative and summative evaluations, both of which incorporate elements from the CIM process and provide formal reports about processes and outcomes. The evaluation process will provide a structure for (1) generating information needed for ongoing program/activity refinement, (2) assessing progress in meeting outcomes, (3) documenting and analyzing how the model works in practice, and (4) documenting and analyzing changes in targeted student's actions, attitudes, knowledge, and performance.

Formative Evaluations will be completed in accordance with the requirements of CNCS and Volunteer Florida with additional informal and interim evaluations completed after

on-site visits. Formal formative reports will include a review of operational accomplishments and challenges actual versus proposed operation, objective progress, and recommendations for addressing any challenges. Summative Evaluations will have additional information on overall program outcomes and more detailed information about those activities and operations with the greatest impact and success. Summative evaluations will be completed in accordance with the requirements though interim reports will be provided to summarize data and progress towards objectives in the other years. The purpose of the summative evaluation is aimed at recording and developing a model that can be applied in other settings. Summative evaluations will include all elements of program operation; activities; enrollment and attendance; measures of academic performance; federal teacher impact surveys; feeder schools; staff information; and partnerships. Recommendations for program refinement will be based on quantitative and qualitative data.

Evaluation Rubric: The proposed OPASS grant proposes to use an Evaluation Rubric and Questionnaire for Formative Evaluation. The rubric is an evaluation tool that describes and assesses criteria for performance at various levels. It is a performance-based assessment process that is directly linked to the project objectives and accurately reflects the progress toward established goals. The analytic rubric will be utilized to assess specific criteria at each performance level, provide a score for each criterion, and include a composite score for overall performance. The rubric serves several purposes in the assessment process, including: (1) Creating a common framework and language for evaluation; (2) Providing staff with clear expectations about what will be assessed, (3) Increasing the consistency and objectivity of evaluating performances; (4) Providing staff with information about where they are in relation to where they need to be for success; and (5) Giving staff guidance in evaluating and improving their school site program.

Data Collection Methods: The specific objectives and measurements are included in this application. They are not repeated here due to space and formatting limitations, though they remain an integral part of the evaluation plan -- with data collection and analysis founded upon those proposed objectives for successful progression. Although not all metrics are assessed multiple times, sufficient measures are included for each objective to assess progress at least three times per program year (e.g., August, December, and April). All data will be collected by the program and provided to the evaluator, as federal law limits access to identifiable information on students and families (while the evaluator will be included in agreements with parents to view information, it is not possible for evaluators to directly access agency databases). The evaluator will provide substantial direct assistance in setting up databases, creating pre-post assessments, and developing or modifying student, parent, and teacher surveys to support the program.

The OPASS project team, led by the AmeriCorps Program Manager and OPASS Program Coordinator will ensure that accurate data is recorded, including baseline data. This is done by establishing standardized data collection and recording procedures.

Individual student data related to each outcome will be collected in October, February, May and July via online surveys, paper surveys, or secured from the district office via spreadsheet. The data ultimately will be forwarded to the Project Coordinator and made available to the OPASS Evaluation Team via email or website submission. Quarterly data on program outcomes will be analyzed, with significant trends (both positive and negative) highlighted for review. This is returned to the Project Coordinator for remediation of concerns and recommendations.

Feedback and Debriefings: The process for sharing and distributing information is an integral part of the evaluation plan. Distribution will occur at three levels: (1) administrators, (2) staff members, and (3) stakeholders. As part of continuous improvement, monthly conferences will be held with the evaluator, program manager, principals, and any staff wishing to participate. During these meetings, data trends and operations will be reviewed with a focus on program improvement and immediate refinement. Data will also be utilized by the program manager and teachers during weekly meetings to help tailor program offerings to the needs and progress of individual students.

External Program Evaluator: The Center for Assessment, Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Research (CASPER) will manage the OPASS evaluation project. Dr. Charles E. Byrd (President and CEO of CASPER) will oversee all aspects of program evaluation. The lead evaluator was a middle school teacher and has been conducting evaluations of educational programs for over 15 years, with the past ten focused primarily on the evaluation of federal and state funded education programs. Led by a professional evaluator and licensed psychologist, the evaluation firm has overseen the evaluation of over 300 educational programs. As an active member of the American Evaluation Association and American Psychological Association, all evaluations will be conducted under the ethical codes and evaluation firm has no vested interest in the OPASS program. Cost for the full evaluation are approximately \$12,000 per year.