

## Part II: Narrative

### SECTION A: NEED FOR PROJECT

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#### I. Need for Academic Enrichment

State and national research have identified two critical challenges in education. The first challenge is in dropout prevention<sup>1</sup> and the second is post-secondary readiness<sup>2</sup>. Through the Colorado Graduates Initiative several agencies are working across the state to reduce dropout rates and increase graduation rates. But this is not enough, because graduates are often underprepared for post-secondary programs. College remediation rates have gone up, particularly in math, indicating that our graduates are not actually college ready. There is a need for academic enrichment at the high school level to not only ensure our students graduate, but that they graduate ready for college.

The Colorado Department of Education data shows that the state's dropout rate for 2010-2011 was 3%. The dropout rate for at-risk students is 22.1% (based on alternative school figures). The dropout rates are even higher for students of color. Graduation rates show similar trends with state figures being 72.4% for the general population and approximately 52% for students with risk factors. Academic enrichment programs can be considered beneficial for all students, but they are critical for at-risk youth. The disparity in graduation and dropout rates between at-risk youth and the general population should be a primary concern for educators. This grant proposal aims to serve up to 150 at-risk high school students who are in greatest need of academic and social support.

We are an alternative high school that helps transform youth-at-risk into college bound youth-of-promise. Each year, the school serves approximately 150 students many of whom are faced with multiple risk factors and need additional academic and social support. According to Colorado State Statute (C.R.S 22-7-604.5 sec. D 1.5) 97% of our students are considered "high risk" for having adjudications, multiple suspensions/expulsions, histories of drug use, gang affiliations, violence in the home and/or teen pregnancies. Fifty-four percent of our population is students of color, primarily Latino and Native American. In May 2011, a self-report survey of our students showed that: 24% do not live with a parent, 39% have been victims of violent crimes, 66% have witnessed domestic violence and 28% have been expelled. Our students are at the greatest risk for dropping out of school and need additional programs to help get them on track to graduation and successful futures.

As an alternative education campus, our 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders take the PLAN by ACT (American College Test) while our Juniors and Seniors take the ACT to measure academic achievement and growth. The benchmark for college readiness on the PLAN is a composite score of 18, yet our students' average score is 15 with math and English scores being the lowest. This is primarily due to past school failures and indicative of the need for remediation. By their senior year, our students make significant gains with graduate ACT averages of 20 which are comparable to national averages. However, many of our students continue to struggle meeting the college readiness benchmarks particularly in math and science. The proposed 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program would provide additional support to help ensure that our students are ready to meet the demands of post-secondary education.

Education News Colorado recently published an article titled "College remediation rates rise" which reported that nearly a third of incoming college students need at least one remediation course primarily in math and only 58% of those who needed remediation actually continue in college<sup>3</sup>. The cost for remediation is estimated at \$22 million for the state and \$24

million for the students. This data shows the need to provide academic enrichment programs for high school youth to make sure they are adequately prepared for college particularly in STEM areas. One of the core values at our school is to use education as rehabilitation and show students that they can overcome their life obstacle through learning. We are a college preparatory program with high academic standards and we require students to be accepted to college as a condition of graduation. Our goal is to not only make sure our students graduate but that they graduate prepared for college and adulthood.

It is particularly important for at-risk youth to have a comprehensive support system that address both academics and social risk factors<sup>1</sup>. Our school has a 16 year track record of success in recovering dropouts and helping them graduate. However, adolescence is complicated and it takes a strong safety net to catch our most at-risk students. Over the years, we have seen the role that parents can play in either supporting or hurting their students. As a way to strengthen our safety net, we will continue to engage parents who are allies and mitigate the damage being done by parents or family situations that are detrimental. Parental involvement can be a very delicate task when working with dysfunctional families. Regardless of the situation, there is a need to strengthen the net by collaborating with families, probation officers, mental health professionals, social services and other allies.

As a small school, we are in a unique position to implement a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Centers Grant to help students build protective factors, overcome the challenges in their lives and achieve academic success. To best meet the needs of our population, we are proposing a comprehensive program offering the following:

- Intensive academic classes afterschool and during breaks for extended learning time
- Service learning projects afterschool and during break
- Tutoring afterschool
- Afterschool field trips that align with the school day
- Academic and Life-Skills workshops afterschool
- Workshops and networking opportunities for families

## **2. Gaps or Weaknesses in Current services**

Last year, our community liaison investigated all of the opportunities and resources available for our students to create a resource manual. What we found was that there are few opportunities for older youth as most programming is directed toward younger students. Our local YMCA does offer an afterschool program for teens that has an arts emphasis. Many of our students are apprehensive about participating, because these activities are held at other schools in the district. There are no formal programs available for our high school students to take academic classes or receive academic support afterschool. Our local library has a teen center where students can go work, but space is limited to no more than 10 youth and there are only three computers.

As schools have grown in size, the connection to students has diminished resulting in students falling behind academically and disengaging from school. Many students come to our school testing at the elementary level in literacy in numeracy. These students may never succeed if they do not receive the additional support needed to close the achievement gap. Most traditional high schools are not staffed to provide additional support for students who have fallen behind. We are in a unique position, as a small school, to know what each students' needs are and provide afterschool programming to close the achievement gap and even help students get ahead.

A major weakness and threat to any afterschool programming for teens is recruitment. Generally, teens are not interested in doing academic work outside of regular school hours

particularly if it is the slight bit out of the way or inconvenient. It is critical for the afterschool programs to be convenient, fun, engaging and worth the students' time<sup>4</sup>. Ultimately, the students must find the activities to be valuable, and that requires a significant amount of strategic effort on planning and recruitment.

### **3. Target Population**

The target population will be 150 high school aged students attending our alternative high school and their families. The ethnic demographic of the students are: 46% White, 39% Latino, 10% Native, 3% Black, 2% Asian. Approximately 44% of our students come from low-income homes and 32% test below academic proficiency in reading, spelling and/or math. We have an equal number of male and female students that range in age from 14 to 20. We serve all grade levels, but most of our students are juniors and seniors, because they typically transfer to us after struggling for a year or two at the mainstream high schools. At least 20% of our students qualify for McKinney-Vento status, and likely more as we complete the identification process.

The proposed 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant program will provide a wide range of afterschool and break-time opportunities for students to support both academic and social development. The programs will be available to all students at our school and will also be made available to District counselors who are working to re-engage dropouts. Certain components of the proposed program will be particularly appealing for transition students or those with daytime obligations. Our school operates on a year-round schedule with four 8-week blocks during the traditional school year and a 6-week block in the summer. Due to the nature of our school and population, new students transition into the school throughout the year. The block schedule provides more entry points for new students, however students who want to transfer after the second week of classes sometime find it overwhelming to catch up in the regular day program. The afterschool program will provide immediate opportunities for transition students to get started on classes and not lose out on academic time. The afterschool intensive classes will also be great for students with daytime obligations. Approximately one third of youth dropout of school, because they have familial obligations during traditional school hours<sup>5</sup>. The proposed afterschool program will give these youth flexible options for continuing their education while meeting their other obligations. Students who are struggling in classes or fall behind in the regular day program will be referred to the afterschool program to receive additional support from the tutors. All students will be strongly encouraged to stay afterschool at least one day per week for tutoring or other activities.

Many of our students come from dysfunctional homes and enjoy opportunities to spend more time with peers and adults through pro-social school sponsored activities. Workshops will be scheduled once per week and field trips will be scheduled once per week on a different day. These will give students the opportunity to bond with peers and staff while expanding learning time. This is particularly appealing for McKinney-Vento students who may not have a safe or stable place to go afterschool.

## **SECTION B: QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN**

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### **1. Collaboration and Partnership**

The school will act as the primary center for this grant and bring several community partners together to design and deliver the activities. The primary partner will be the I Have a Dream Foundation. Their organization has over 20 years of experience operating sites that provide tutoring, mentoring and cultural enrichment for at-risk youth. For this partnership, the I Have A Dream Foundation will facilitate the placement of a full time Americorp service member at the

school. The Americorp member will provide tutoring, help coordinate program activities and complete the required data entry.

The school will draw from a broad network of agencies and professionals to offer classes, workshops and field trips. It will be important to offer a wide variety of themes for the activities to include STEM subjects, literacy, positive youth development, substance abuse prevention and physical education. All activities will either directly connect back to classroom lessons and academic content standards or enhance learning by providing opportunities for real world application. We have partnerships with various departments at our local University. Their Science Discovery Program will be able to provide intensive classes in diverse subject areas including: biotechnology, nanotechnology, physiology, earth science, robotics and digital media technology. They will also facilitate campus tours and visits to different STEM research labs for our afterschool field trips. This will directly support our goals of reducing dropout and increasing college readiness by providing engaging, interactive and/or project based classes for the students. The campus visits will help bridge high school and college to inspire students to pursue post-secondary degrees in STEM areas. We have also secured a partnership with the University's Mountain Research Station to offer a spring break overnight academic intensive. Students will spend two nights and three days in a professional research setting. They will study snow science, animal science and mountain ecology with time in the evening to prepare dinner as a group and discuss their days' adventures. The school will contract with the Latin American Center for Science and Art Education (CLACE) to also provide some of the STEM based classes afterschool and during the breaks. They will also engage professionals from related organizations to co-facilitate the classes and enhance academic content. Some of the partners that CLACE will work with include: Watershed Outreach, The University's Museum of Natural History, Eco-cycle, UCAR Globe Program, Wildlands Restorations Volunteers, and 4-H Youth Programs.

To help combine the social and emotional needs of the students with literacy skills, we will partner with Art from Ashes, a local non-profit that provides poetry workshops for youth. They will be scheduled for two afterschool workshops per block, one afterschool intensive and one summer intensive. Their courses help students find their voice and express themselves using written and spoken word. They have provided ½ day workshops at the school in the past with great results. Students have often been inspired to take up poetry as a regular practice because of the workshop provided by Art from Ashes. The school will also partner with the Natural High's Program to offer substance abuse prevention workshops for the students and parents. In these workshops, the students and families will learn about the biological impact of drugs on the brain. They will also learn about other ways to promote feelings of satisfaction in the brain. The Natural Highs program is a great way to connect biology, sociology and psychology with a positive youth development component. Another partner for this grant is a former police officer who will provide Assault Prevention workshops for the students and families. In our 2011 annual demographic survey, 66% of the students reported being witness to domestic violence and 39% had actually been victims of violent crimes. This type of living environment can be detrimental to a student's well-being. By providing assault prevention workshops for both the students and family members, we can increase their self-confidence and reduce the chances of such detrimental life experiences which can lead to school dropout. What is unique about this assault prevention program is that it incorporates concepts of kinesiology, biology, power and motion as strategies for escape. These concepts will help the students connect to ideas they may have learned in their regular science classes.

Other partners include the Institute for Generative Leadership to provide communication and parenting workshops for families. The school will also be working closely with District counselors to provide opportunities for students who are at-risk of dropping out of school. As part of this grant, we will expand the work being done by the district's McKinney-Vento Liaison to include one day at the school doing intensive case management to recruit and retain homeless youth in 21<sup>st</sup> Century activities. Finally, food and snacks for the afterschool sessions will be provided by the local food bank which will minimize any food related expenses.

## **2. Roles in Program Design, Delivery and Sustainability Effort**

The overall program design has been a collaborative effort between the school and all of its partners. The framework and scheduling for the program are a result of the school's desire to both expand and increase learning time. The STEM based curriculum and project based activities will be designed by our partners at Science Discovery, the Mountain Research Station and CLACE with feedback from the school's teachers to ensure alignment with content standards. The Program Coordinator will be responsible for all logistical planning and be the primary contact for partnering agencies. The activities will be implemented in collaboration with at least one school staff member to help with classroom management and student related issues while the partnering agency staff will focus on the content. The school will design and deliver enrichment activities including the tutoring program and some of the workshops. We will contract with partnering agencies, such as Assault Prevention or Natural Highs for workshops, but many will be taught by the school faculty such as ACT Prep, study skills and financial aid/scholarship applications. The field trips will be administered by the school with support from partnering agencies as appropriate. For example, the staff at Science Discovery can facilitate lab visits on campus to support and enhance the regular day and afterschool classes.

The school will work collaboratively with partnering agencies and the school district on sustainability efforts. We will look at other potential grants and explore the possibility of corporate sponsorships from the organization we are partnering with. Another option for sustainability is increased student enrollment. Currently, the school is not at a capacity, so additional students would bring more revenue to the school. It is likely that the afterschool program will generate positive word-of-mouth leading to referrals.

## **3. Goals aligned with 21<sup>st</sup> CLCC and measurable outcomes.**

The overarching needs that are being met by the proposed program are interventions for students at risk of dropping out and academic enrichment to improve college readiness. Therefore, our two primary goals will revolve around these themes. Due to the small nature of the school, disaggregated data for program participants as compared to non-participants will not be statistically significant. Additionally, we anticipate that at least 75% of the student body will benefit from 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programming at some point throughout the year. This programming will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the school's overall dropout rate, ACT scores and attendance.

### Goal #1: Reduce the dropout rate for the school by 1% each year

The dropout rate for the school in 2011 was 10.8%. We will use the 2012 rate once it is reported as the baseline for this grant. Our goal will be to reduce this rate by 1% per year incrementally over the five year grant period for a 2015 rate of approximately 5%. In a 2006 report commissioned by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation<sup>5</sup> they identified five primary

reasons why students dropout. They were: boring classes, students fell behind, negative peer pressure, too much freedom and failing classes. The proposed program will provide interesting, experiential learning opportunities for students afterschool and during the breaks to address boredom with school. The afterschool tutoring will help students who fall behind or are failing in class. The field trips and workshops will create positive peer cultures and give students something productive to do with their free time. By addressing the main reasons for dropout, we are confident that our goal of reducing the school's dropout rate is attainable.

Goal #2: Increase post-secondary readiness as demonstrated by 0.5 of a point higher average ACT scores each year as compared to the prior year

Students who participate regularly in the proposed 21st CCLC program will receive tutoring and academic enrichment with an emphasis on STEM subjects. We anticipate that this will lead to higher ACT scores which have been proven, in several studies<sup>6</sup> to correlate with post-secondary preparedness. In 2011, the school's ACT average for seniors was 17.5 and the junior average was 16.5 where the college readiness benchmark is 21.25. We will use 2012 figures as a baseline and measure improvements in the average ACT scores for Juniors and Seniors. Our target is for the average ACT scores for juniors and seniors be .5 point higher in the first year of the grant and increasing by an additional .5 points each year subsequently for the remaining four years. By the fifth year of the grant, students would score on average 2.5 points higher than the 2012 baseline figures. When analyzing our students' ACT scores, we have noticed a trend that Math and Science Reasoning scores are lower than the English and Reading portions of the test. The proposed grant program will provide tutoring in all areas and academic enrichment emphasizing STEM areas. We anticipate that this will directly impact the students' scores on the Math and Science portions of the ACT, and the tutoring will help overall.

Goal #3: Increase the schools' average daily attendance rate by 2% each year for the first two years and 1% each year for the last three years of the grant.

The average daily attendance rate for the school will increase as a result of the proposed activities, because students who participate in the proposed 21st CCLC program will be more engaged in their education and have an increased sense of school connectedness. This will translate into higher average daily attendance. In 2011, the school's average daily attendance was 85%. We will use 2012 figures as a baseline with a target of increasing the overall school attendance rate by 2% each year in the first two years and 1% each year for the remaining three years. By the fifth year of the grant, the attendance rate should be 7% higher than the baseline figure. Subsequently, this goal will support our efforts in achieving goals 1 and 2.

Goal #4: Increase parent's ability to support their student as measured by completion of specialized workshops.

All parents and families will be encouraged to participate in at least one workshop per block regardless of whether their student participates in 21<sup>st</sup> Century programming. The events will focus on improving their parenting skills. Our goal, for the first year, will be for 15% of our parents to attend at least one workshop over the course of the year. We hope to increase the rate of participation by 5% per year in subsequent years with 35% participation by the fifth year. At the end of each workshop, parents will be asked to complete a brief survey assessing the presentation and perceived changes in their own parenting abilities. Since the parent workshops will be new, the first year rate will serve as a baseline for subsequent years.

#### 4. Outreach for Participation

One of the most important pieces of an afterschool program is that it has a clear and regular structure for the participants<sup>7</sup>. The proposed program will have a set schedule of activities that will be consistent throughout the year. The schedule will be posted on a wall calendar in the building and also on the school's website for students, families and teachers. Every morning, the day starts with an all school gathering where teachers and program staff will make regular announcements about the activities for the current week and the upcoming week. Within the set structure, students will be able to choose from the different activities that interest them. Tutoring will be available daily for all students and they will be encouraged to stay at least one day per week.

The rationale that will be used to address student engagement and participation follow the research of Alfie Kohn entitled "Punished by Rewards"<sup>8</sup>. The premise is that intrinsic motivation is more important than incentives or rewards. To generate intrinsic motivation, we will follow Kohn's "3 Cs" approach addressing Content, Community and Choice. The *content* must be worth doing, so our workshops and classes will be designed around students' interests and need. The *community* must provide students with a sense of collaboration and acceptance, so our proposed programming will offer project based activities in pro-social environments. Finally, students must have a *choice*, so our proposed program will have a variety of ways for students to engage that fit with their interests. Ultimately, our goal will be to offer activities that are so exciting that the students will want to participate. Students will not be punished nor bribed into participation. Our hope is that student participation will include planning for the activities. If students are involved in the design of the program, then they are more likely to take ownership of the activities and solicit participation from their peers. We also have opportunities for intensive instructors from CLACE, Science Discovery and Art from Ashes to visit during the regular school day to "tease" upcoming activities. They will be able to do demonstration during the day and also as afterschool workshops to generate interest among students and encourage increased participation.

Programming will be open to all students, however directed outreach efforts will specifically target the following populations:

- New students who are transitioning to the school from other schools can begin their transition process by participating in the afterschool classes and activities until a new block begins.
- Students who have day time obligations including childcare or work will be able to earn credit toward graduation by enrolling in the intensive four-week courses offered afterschool or the four-day courses during the breaks.
- Students who have been identified as needing additional support will be highly encouraged to stay afterschool for tutoring.
- Students who want to get ahead particularly in STEM fields can participate in the intensive academic classes offered afterschool and during the breaks.

Family engagement may be challenging due to the nature of the families that we serve. However, we intend to solicit their input on the types of workshops that would be useful for them. By offering activities they have requested, we anticipate being able to achieve our goal. The school hosts an open house every block during mid-terms where we will solicit feedback from families regarding the types of workshops that they would be interested in and times that would be most convenient for them. We will also encourage parents to help in the planning process so they take ownership of the activities and can recruit other parents to attend. Our plan is to host one workshop each block where we will collect a list of participants and workshop evaluations.

## 5. Academic Activities

Our school is unique in that it operates on a year-round block schedule with four 8-week blocks during the traditional school year and a 6-week summer block that meets Mondays through Thursdays. In between each academic block, there is a break that can be one to four weeks depending on the season. We are proposing activities afterschool and on the breaks to both expand and increase learning time.

The proposed afterschool program will offer intensive, interactive classes that are not offered in the school's regular program. Students will earn credits for the classes which will apply toward their graduation requirements. The curricula will be based on state standards using interactive, instructional strategies that encourage participation and improve learning. The school's teachers will partner with staff from partnering agencies to deliver the classes. The following is a detailed outline of the classes that will be offered for up to 13 students.

- Science Discovery – Topics will range from biotechnology, nanotechnology, physiology, earth science, robotics and digital media technology depending on the availability of the professors from the university. A specific example of a class that will be offered is 3D Video Game Design using AgentCubes™ software. Students will start by taking traditional games like Pac Man or Space Invaders and making them 3-D. Then, they will progress to more complex programming such as 3-D chess as in the original Star Wars movie or see if they can find out where all the oil in the Gulf of Mexico oil spill went.
- Mountain Research – Students will travel to the Mountain Research Station for two nights and three days. Topics for the days will include snow science, animal science, and mountain ecology. Students will collect data and conduct a variety of experiments around these topics. The students will also prepare meals in the community kitchen and debrief during dinner.
- CLACE Green Labs – This course will be broken into the following topics: Energy, Waste, Health, Soil, Air, and Water. Students learn about these topics through hands-on, inquiry-based lessons and will then design a project related to the school's environmental sustainability. This course is strongly supported by the presence of staff from community organizations whose work connects to specific Green Lab topics. For instance, staff from Watershed Outreach help with the Water Green lab to teach students about water as a resource and to design a project to reduce water waste in the school and community.
- CLACE Digital Storytelling Project Based Learning– Digital stories are multimedia projects combining text, images, audio and visual media into a short film. Working in teams, students will choose a topic, conduct a data discovery activity, work with a mentoring scientist or engineering professional and ultimately, create a digital story. The resulting video products will be shared at the school, with the families and the greater community. The process of digital story making empowers and transforms students intellectually, creatively and culturally. For this reason, digital storytelling is emerging as a “signature pedagogy” for the early 21st century.<sup>9</sup>
- Natural Highs – This course discusses healthy alternatives to drugs and alcohol that integrates traditional and alternative approaches to substance abuse and addiction issues. The course will teach teens how to work in intelligent ways with their own brain chemistry through body/mind practices, dance, ritual, meditation, and the creative arts.
- Art From Ashes Poetry Class - The Phoenix Rising writing and spoken word process was developed after extensive research and 14 years of working with high-risk youth. It combines expression — the articulation of painful events or circumstances in their young lives; connection — the ability to release the pain and fear of those experiences among peers and

mentors; and healing — using the power of strong, healthy words to encourage an identity that is not based in victimization. Recent statistics of their work with youth conducted by the National Research Center have shown that 100% of the participants enjoyed the workshops, 73% felt better about themselves, and 80% wanted to be more involved in their community.

By offering students additional opportunities to complete college preparatory course work, particularly in STEM areas, we can improve post-secondary readiness. This notion is further supported in the article “Postsecondary Readiness”<sup>9</sup> that recommends integrating core academics with applied skills rather than teaching the academics in isolation. Additionally, the report on dropout prevention by the Colorado Department of Education<sup>11</sup> suggests that flexible programming can help prevent students from dropping out of school. These intensive classes will offer students an opportunity to continue their education outside of traditional school hours. The notion of academic intensive classes also known as academies or intersessions is highly recommended by the National Association of Year Round Education and modeled after university practices. At the core of this model is the idea of having several hours of uninterrupted time for students to go deeper into the material. They can question, plan, investigate, analyze, apply, create and demonstrate without lag time or interruption between each step in the process. Our academic intensives will be offered afterschool, during breaks and on off days in the summer as follows:

- Afterschool Schedule: M/W for 4 weeks meeting 3 hours per session
- Break Schedule: 6 hours per day for 4 days
- Summer Schedule: Fridays for five weeks meeting 5 hours per session

Each class can have up to 13 students. The curricula will align with Colorado content standards and the delivery methods will be student centered and interactive with sheltering as needed for second language learners. Several of the courses will be project based with a culminating demonstration of the students’ work. Other academic activities will include tutoring, field trips and service learning that align with the school day.

- Tutoring – The Americorp member will coordinate and provide tutoring afterschool with the support of the high school teachers. Each teacher will sign up for one day a week to stay afterschool and work with students. Tutoring will be available for two hours each day during each block. Students would be able to do drop-in tutoring as needed. All student will be encouraged to stay for tutoring at least one day per week. Staff will use this time to explain content in different ways than the classroom to provide a different mode of learning. Often students must hear the same thing in different ways before they internalize the information. In a report published by the Colorado Department of Education entitled “Dropout Prevention and Student Re-Engagement,”<sup>11</sup> academic failure was indicated as a reason for students dropping out of school. The report also recommended tutoring as strategy to keep students in school which is one of the primary goals of this grant. There will be no limit on the number of student who can stay for tutoring.
- Field trips – The Program Coordinator will work with school staff and partnering agencies to design field trips that will align with the school day where students are participating in activities that enhance classroom content. An example might be to have students from the anatomy class go to the cadaver lab at the local university. Another example might be to have students watch a movie for a novel they read in class. After the movie, students could

compare/contrast the different versions. This type of alignment with the school day is recommended by You for Youth as an effective strategy for improving student achievement and school engagement. At least one field trip will be offered per week. Field trips will include the activity, dinner, discussion, reflection and transportation home for up to thirteen students.

## **6. Enrichment Activities**

- Workshops – Each week, the program staff will work with teachers and partnering agencies to offer workshops based on students’ needs and interests. These workshops will cover a wide range of topics including note taking, ACT Prep, study skills, resume writing, photography, music, art, communication skills, assault prevention and substance abuse prevention. One example is a native drumming workshop that will be offered once per month. The school has a strong partnership with the Native community and a high number of Native students. The afterschool drumming workshop will help all students develop an appreciation for other cultures. The school will also offer Natural Highs workshops as a way to promote the Natural Highs intensive class that will be offered in the summer. The students will be encouraged to help plan activities around their interests and needs. These types of activities promote student engagement at school which “has emerged as a critical factor across hundreds of dropout prevention and recovery programs in the United States.”<sup>12</sup> There will be no limit for the number of workshop participants.
- Service Learning Projects – Service learning will be incorporated both as afterschool activities and during the school breaks. These projects will follow the steps outlined in the Service Learning Toolkit published by the Colorado Department of Education. School staff will work with students to identify a community issue that they would like to address. Once they have decided on an issue, they will plan a service activity to make a positive impact on that issue. Once the plan is in place, students will take action and complete the project. At the end of the event, students will celebrate and reflect on their achievement. The service learning project can be completed in one evening or over several weeks as an afterschool project or in 1-2 days during the breaks. These activities can be done in conjunction with regular classes, the Green Labs or as parent involvement projects. One potential service project would be for students to use digital storytelling to present to students at local elementary schools about environmental sustainability. Another service project would be for students to create and deliver a technology based workshop for their parents teaching them valuable computer skills. This would help achieve both our dropout prevention and parent involvement goals. By offering service learning opportunities throughout the year and during the breaks, we can meet the standards for quality practices of having sufficient time and intensity, links to curriculum, youth voice, partnership, diversity and reflection.<sup>13</sup> A maximum of 13 students can participate due to limitations on van space.
- Intensive Case Management for McKinney-Vento Students - As part of this grant, we will be able to expand the hours of the district’s part-time McKinney-Vento Liaison, so she can spend one day at the school doing intensive case management. By having the Liaison work onsite, she will be able to ensure that the needs of our homeless youth are being met so they can fully participate in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century programming without having to worry about life issues. Often, life situations get in the way of students being able to participate in afterschool activities, so the liaison will make sure students have glasses, food, healthcare, school supplies, clothes, stable housing and transportation allowing them to take advantage of the educational opportunities provided.

## **7. How programming engages students and families resulting in regular attendance**

- Parent programming – Workshops will be offered once per block on topics that are of interest to the parents. Each block, the school hosts an informal open house for parents to meet with teachers and discuss students’ progress. During these events, we have already solicited feedback from parents regarding the types of activities they are interested. Substance abuse prevention and communication have been recurring suggestions. We have secured partnerships with the Natural Highs Program to address substance abuse and the Institute for Generative Leadership to teach about more effective ways of communicating with youth. The Program Coordinator will assess whether mornings, evenings or weekends work best for families in scheduling. In addition to workshops, there will be opportunities to bring families in to share results from service learning projects or intensive classes such as digital storytelling.

The notion of afterschool programming being an effective intervention for youth dropout and delinquency is well established. A 2009 report from the After School Alliance showed that afterschool programming: improved school attendance and engagement, improved test scores and grades, made the greatest impact on students with greatest risk, kept kids safe, healthy and on track for success, and helped working families.<sup>4</sup> The Harvard Family Research Project put out a report entitled “Afterschool Programs in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” which stated that criteria for good programs include “appropriate supervision and structure, well-prepared staff, intentional programming with opportunities for autonomy and choice.”<sup>7</sup> Our proposed afterschool program will provide students with unique opportunities, appropriate supervision and structure, trained teachers, academic support, skill building and social programs.

Both the academic and enrichment activities will be built around active learning, where students have a great deal of choice and responsibility within the activities. For example, in the Energy Green Lab, there will be physical activities (e.g. lifting weights, going up and down the stairs); there will be visits to energy production facilities; and a school-based project where students will conserve energy or produce clean energy. This sort of active learning and learning where students have ownership engages students’ interest and helps promote regular attendance.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, by involving the students and families in choosing activities meaningful to them, we will promote engagement and school connectedness which leads to better program participation, attendance and academic achievement.<sup>14</sup>

## **SECTION C: PROJECT EVALUATION**

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### **1. Formative Evaluation**

Since the school operates on an 8-week block schedule, we have formal grading periods every four weeks. During these grading periods, the school’s administrators review each student’s grades and identify students that are in need of intervention. Students who are falling behind with their regular school work will be strongly encouraged to stay afterschool for tutoring. Since the tutors will include regular day-time teachers, we will have a better tracking system to determine how the tutoring impacted the classroom performance. The entire faculty meets weekly for three hours where there is extensive informal discussion regarding students’ behavior and academic progress. During these staff meetings, themes often emerge regarding trends or needs among the student body. This will help inform workshops or field trips that could benefit the students. For example, if there is a noticeable increase in derogatory language, we can schedule an afterschool activity to address that behavior.

The Americorp Member will be responsible for logging participant attendance weekly.

He/She will provide a report to the school's administration so correlations can be made between program participation and regular school performance. Since school faculty will be actively involved in the field trips and workshops, they will be able to assess how well those activities align with the school day. At the end of each field trip or workshop, students and/or families will complete a survey on why they chose to participate in that particular activity, what he/she learned, the best part of the activity, how it could have been better and suggestions for other activities. The staff member facilitating the activity will also be required to complete a report reflecting on the outcomes of the event. This information will be used by the Program Coordinator and school administration to refine and improve activities taking particular note of suggestions from the students.

Formal data on dropout rate, attendance and academic achievement will be assessed at the end of each year since these figures are tracked and reported either by the school district using our student management system or by ACT in our year-end report. Informal tracking of dropout, attendance and ACT scores will be done by the Program Coordinator and the Americorp member mid-year to inform any program adjustments that may be beneficial.

## **2. Evaluation Methods**

Our first goal for this program is dropout prevention. By using the school district's student management system, we can regularly track changes in student enrollment status and assess progress toward achieving our goal of reducing the number of students who dropout. Additionally, our registrar will notify the school administration and the Program Coordinator about any students that formally dropout.

Our second goal of increasing post-secondary readiness will be evaluated using a nationally recognized college entrance exam, the ACT. This test has been evaluated repeatedly for its predictive value on post-secondary success.<sup>6</sup> It has been deemed by universities and independent research to align with college readiness benchmarks. Our juniors take the ACT in April of each year and results are reported within a month. The seniors take the ACT in October, December and/or April each year with results reported within a month. We will be able to track students' progress toward achieving college readiness benchmarks as results are reported to the school.

Our third goal of increasing regular school attendance will be measured using data from our student management software. This software produces real-time reports on average daily attendance that can be reviewed regularly. Program attendance will also be tracked weekly as part of the grant reporting requirements making this data readily available for review.

Our final goal of increasing parent involvement will be tracked and evaluated using workshop attendance data and parent surveys. The Program Coordinator will be responsible for keeping a sign-in sheet for the workshops and collecting parent feedback forms. The Americorp Member will log the attendance and feedback making that data readily available for review. Students will also provide feedback at the end of each class, workshop and field trip which will be logged and available for review.

## **3. How to use evaluation data and make available to public**

Throughout the year, the school and district interventionists identify students who have exited the school system and attempt to re-engage them. This is an ongoing process where every time a student's enrollment status changes to a "code 40" indicating dropout an intervention is initiated. While we anticipate that the proposed programming will help prevent dropouts it can also be used as a strategic tool to re-engage students who have dropped or are disengaged. We

recognize that dropout is not an immediate process rather it is usually a prolonged process of disengagement. Our staff will look for signs of disengagement as a way to mitigate dropout. Those signs will include chronic absences, poor academic performance, delinquency, substance abuse, homelessness and disruptive behavior. The Program Coordinator, with support from school staff will encourage students demonstrating these signs to engage in the afterschool programming as a way to re-connect to school.

School counselors often meet with students to review their ACT scores and identify areas that need improvement. In these meetings, students will be encouraged to participate in 21<sup>st</sup> century programming to help them further develop the skills they need to succeed in college.

Over the years, we have identified trends in attendance with the winter months showing the lowest average daily attendance. Knowing this trend, we can be sure to schedule afterschool classes and activities in the winter that are highly engaging, such as video game design to promote attendance both during the day and afterschool. We also recognize that physical activity is particularly important during winter months, so we will try to schedule academic field trips that incorporate classroom content with physical activity such as indoor rock climbing.

Feedback from the students and parents regarding the activities will be used to plan and improve future activities. Suggestions from students regarding activities will be brought to the regular staff meetings to determine how we can connect their requests to classroom content. It will be important for the students to see our responsiveness to their requests, but this needs to be done in a way that ensures alignment with the regular school day.

At the end of each year, key stakeholders will analyze program data and complete the Quality Improvement Plan. For this process, we will engage two of our Board members who have extensive experience in program evaluation. Many of the results from the proposed projects will be integrated into the school's unified improvement plan and published on the school's website. We will also include a downloadable report of the program's result and the Quality Improvement Plan on the data page of the school's website for public review.

## **SECTION D: QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT**

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### **1. Parent, student and community partner involvement in developing plan**

As a small school with less than 150 students and only 15 staff members, we try to seek input from students, teachers and other stakeholders whenever implementing a program or policy. Students were asked what types of afterschool activities they would be interested in and encouraged to write their ideas on poster paper located on the wall in our common area. The staff took their ideas and discussed, in a staff meeting, how to connect those activities to classroom content. We were able to come up with a list of field trips that would align with the school day and enhance lessons that the teachers had planned. At the staff meeting, teachers also provided input on scheduling for the various activities and volunteered to support in tutoring efforts. At the school's most recent open house, parents were notified of the school's plan to apply for the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant and given an opportunity to provide feedback on types of parent involvement they would like to see and also the activities they would like for their students. School administrators have met and discussed program ideas with partnering agencies, the school district assistant superintendent, the district's McKinney-Vento Liaison, workshop providers and the Americorp partnering agency.

As per federal laws requiring that the community be notified regarding this application, a note was posted to the school's home page regarding the grant with contact information for suggestions. The full application will be made available on the school's website for public review.

## **2. Coordination with school day**

The Program Coordinator will act as the primary liaison between the school teachers and the partnering agencies. He/she will regularly interact with the staff and students to create connections while also working on curriculum development, logistics and community partnerships. Teachers will collaborate with the Program Coordinator and provide copies of their syllabi so field trips and workshops can connect to topics being presented in the regular school day. One example might be to take students from the Native American History class to a Pow Wow to see current Native culture and practices. Another example might be for students from the Geometry class to visit local playgrounds to measure angles on jungle gyms, slides and other equipment. Students can also use design software to create a “playground of the future” allowing them to see real world applications of geometry. This could be extended into a future service learning project where students build a playground for a local housing community. The related school teacher would co-facilitate the field trips with either the Americorp member or Program Coordinator to enhance the experience and ensure learning objectives are being met.

The intensive classes offered afterschool and during the breaks will be co-facilitated by a school teacher and the partnering agency. This will help with classroom management, curricular integration and academic integrity. As a college preparatory high school classes are expected to meet certain standards and students must pass with a 70% or higher to earn credit – D work is not acceptable. By having a regular teacher involved in afterschool or inter-session classes, we can ensure academic integrity and enforcement of school standards. Classrooms will be available for the afterschool classes, workshops and tutoring. The facility will also be available as needed during the breaks for programming. A master calendar will be available at the school and online for coordination of space and collaboration on activities.

## **3. Capacity of program leadership**

The Business Manager for the school will supervise the overall project. She has been with the school for 10 years working in many capacities including science teacher, projects manager, development director and fiscal manager. She has designed and administered two other multi-year grants from the Colorado Department of Education and one from the Colorado Department of Public Health. She has a master’s degree in Business Administration and also a master’s degree in Multicultural Education. The school’s Headmaster has both a law degree and a master’s in education with over 20 years expertise working with delinquent and disenfranchised youth. He will be critical for big-picture planning regarding student engagement and program activities. All of the school’s teachers will be involved in the proposed project as tutors, field trip sponsors or class co-facilitators. Eighty percent of the staff members have graduate degrees and extensive expertise working with at-risk youth.

For this grant, we will hire a Program Coordinator and host an Americorp Vista Member who will both report to the school’s Business Manager. They will be responsible for managing the ongoing day-to-day operation of the program. In hiring for the Program Coordinator position, we will look for a bilingual individual with past experience in teaching, program coordination and work with at-risk youth. The Americorp Member will have a college degree, preferably in a STEM field. Data collection and entry will be managed primarily by the Americorp Member with oversight from the Program Coordinator and Business Manager. Project evaluation and data analysis will be completed by a team of project staff and school administrators. Grant funds will be accounted for through the local school district who will act as the fiscal officer. Program

expenditures will be processed through the school's bookkeeper by the Program Coordinator with oversight by the Business Manager.

The school has two Board members with extensive experience in program evaluation. One member currently works as a professor and director in the School of Education at a local University. As part of his doctoral work, he became quite familiar with conducting education related research and evaluating program results. Our second Board member is a County auditor. While most of her work has revolved around fiscal auditing, she has been doing program auditing for the county for several years. Together, their expertise will lend great insight when evaluating and refining this 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program.

By combining the school's resources with those offered by our partnering agency we have a broad range of expertise to design, deliver and evaluate the proposed program taking into account the academic, social, emotional and behavioral needs of the students.

#### **4. Recruit quality staff**

A significant portion of the program staff is already in place as teachers and partnering agencies, so recruitment needs will be minimal. Upon notification of a grant award, the school will post for the Program Coordinator position on the school's website in addition to various job sites (see job posting in addendum). We will complete an extensive interview process that will include a demonstration of the candidate's ability to review a syllabus and come up with a creative field trip idea to expand learning. The school's Business Manager will partner with the I Have a Dream Foundation to recruit and select a candidate for the Americorp position (see job posting in addendum). The applicants will be interviewed and evaluated with an emphasis on their ability to engage students in tutoring by teaching traditional concepts in non-traditional ways.

Our partnering agencies already bring an extensive network of STEM professionals, including university and national facility scientists and engineers. These individuals will be matched with program activities based on specific subject areas and their ability to work with high school age youth. The Program Coordinator will continue developing partnerships in the community to further enhance our programming.

#### **5. Professional activities for staff**

The school staff meets weekly and if awarded this grant will dedicate at least 45 minutes each week to discussing program activities and best practices. It will be important for this to take place at the staff meetings so that all teachers can benefit from the discussion as they will be involved in the delivery of programming. The Program Coordinator and Americorp Member will be required to complete all the courses and modules on the You for Youth website within the first month of their employment. The teachers will be encouraged to complete one of the You for Youth topics each block with a goal of completing all sections by the end of the school year.

The Program Coordinator will also participate in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC orientation, networking and regional training events. He/she will also meet with teachers from partnering agencies prior to the first day of classes to address classroom management, expectations and best practices for working with high risk youth. They will also discuss strategies for delivering content in culturally appropriate ways to ensure success for linguistically diverse students.

The Americorp Member will have extensive professional development opportunities through the partnership with the I Have a Dream Foundation. They coordinate with many professionals in the community to do trainings on topics such as CPR, First Aid, Bridges out of Poverty, Building Cultural Awareness and Tutoring Strategies.

## 6. Family and Community Connections

Families will be notified regarding any off-site field trips or activities. A formal permission slip will be requested so that parents are well aware of their students' activities. During the parent events, the Program Coordinator and school staff will talk with families to get a better understanding of the “funds of knowledge”<sup>15</sup> that each parent possesses. This can lead to greater opportunities for projects, collaboration and volunteer opportunities that can benefit the school and the students.

In planning for this grant, we have already created a broad network of community resources and partners. The Program Coordinator will continue reaching out to other community agencies to enhance programming and increase opportunities for our students. This will be helpful for broadening the types of field trips that we can offer particularly with the University and STEM organizations. There are many corporations in our community who are involved in research and development that can host tours for students and demonstrate real world application of academic concepts.

## 7. Program implementation timeline

Strategies/Activities	Interim Benchmarks and Timeline	Person Responsible
<b>Hire Program Coordinator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Post for position by 4/6/12</li> <li>- Schedule Interviews upon receipt of resumes</li> <li>- Start date 5/7/12</li> </ul>	Business Manager and Headmaster
<b>Train Program Coordinator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete Y4Y Modules by 6/11/12</li> <li>- Introduce Coordinator to partners by 8/13/12</li> <li>- Introduce Coordinator to students and staff in May</li> </ul>	Business Manager
<b>Select Americorp Member</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review Resumes in May/June</li> <li>- Schedule Interviews upon receipt of resumes</li> <li>- Start Date 8/6/12</li> </ul>	Business Manager and Program Coordinator
<b>Train Americorp Member</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete Y4Y Modules by 9/7/12</li> <li>- Trainings through I Have a Dream – ongoing</li> </ul>	Americorp Member
<b>Summer Programming:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friday Intensive</li> <li>• Break Intensive</li> <li>• Tutoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assess student interest - ongoing</li> <li>- Secure Friday Intensive by 1<sup>st</sup> week of block</li> <li>- Secure Break Intensive by mid-block</li> <li>- Start Friday Intensive Class on 6/22/12</li> <li>- Start summer break intensive on 7/23/12</li> <li>- Faculty sign-up for tutoring by 6/13/12</li> <li>- Tutoring – daily</li> <li>- Research and secure new resources - ongoing</li> </ul>	Program Coordinator, Americorp Member and school staff
<b>Block 1-4 Programming:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Afterschool Intensive</li> <li>• Field Trips</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Tutoring</li> <li>• Break Service Project or Academic Intensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assess student interest - ongoing</li> <li>- Secure afterschool intensive by 1<sup>st</sup> week of block</li> <li>- Coordinate weekly student workshops - ongoing</li> <li>- Coordinate parent workshop by 1<sup>st</sup> week of block</li> <li>- Coordinate field trips – ongoing</li> <li>- Faculty sign-up for tutoring by 1<sup>st</sup> week of block</li> <li>- Prep &amp; recruit for inter-session service project/academic intensive by mid-block</li> <li>- Staff meetings – weekly</li> <li>- Tutoring - daily</li> <li>- Research and secure new resources – ongoing</li> </ul>	Program Coordinator, Americorp Member and school staff

<b>Program Evaluation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Data collection and Data Entry – weekly</li> <li>- Grade and attendance review – monthly</li> <li>- Review student and parent feedback – ongoing</li> <li>- ACT score analysis – quarterly</li> <li>- Dropout data review – ongoing</li> <li>- Comprehensive Program Evaluation – mid year and end of year</li> <li>- Quality Improvement Planning – end of year</li> </ul>	Program Coordinator, Americorp Member, School Administration and Board Members
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### 8. Unified improvement plan alignment

The program goals outlined in this proposal are directly aligned with the schools Unified Improvement Plan. Priority Performance Challenges were attendance, math scores on standardized test, reaching college readiness benchmarks, and some students not feeling positive about school. The proposed tutoring, field trips and STEM based classes will help with math scores and college readiness benchmarks. The availability of afterschool programming is cited in numerous studies for having a positive impact on attendance and attitudes about school<sup>7</sup>. In the action steps of our Unified Improvement Plan, we proposed offering tutoring before school, during lunch and afterschool which directly aligns with the activities in this proposal. Additionally, in the UIP, we proposed offering afterschool field trips to increase school connectedness and attendance which is directly aligned to activities in this grant.

### 9. Program schedule (include hrs/wk and wks/year)

<b>Summer Block</b> 6/11/12 – 7/18/12	What/When	Friday <b>Class</b> from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm (6 hrs/week for 5 Weeks)
	Who	Phoenix Rising Poetry Class provided by Art from Ashes
	What/When	M-Th <b>Tutoring</b> from 1:00-3:00 (8 hrs/week for 6 weeks)
	Who	One staff and one Americorp Tutor will be available during these hours
	What/When	Weekly <b>Workshop</b> from 1:00-3:00 (2 hrs/week for 6 weeks)
	Who	Facilitated by a staff member or guest speaker
	What/When	Parent <b>Workshop</b> time TBD based on family feedback (2 hrs/block)
	Who	Facilitated by partnering agency or guest speaker
<b>Summer Break #2</b> 8/6/12 – 8/9/12	What/When	M-Th <b>Class</b> from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm (6 hrs/day for 4 days)
	Who	Academic Intensive Class focused on STEM by CLACE or Science Disc.
<b>Blocks 1-4 (Repeat)</b> 8/13/12 – 10/4/12 10/15/12 – 12/13/12 1/14/13 – 3/7/13 4/1/13 – 5/23/13	What/When	M-Th <b>Tutoring</b> from 3:00-5:00 (8 hrs/week for 8 weeks)
	Who	One staff and one Americorp Tutor will be available during these hours
	What/When	Weekly <b>Workshop</b> from 3:00-5:00 (2 hrs/week for 8 weeks)
	Who	Facilitated by a staff member or guest speaker
	What/When	Parent <b>Workshop</b> time TBD based on family feedback (2 hrs/block)
	Who	Facilitated by partnering agency or guest speaker
	What/When	<b>Field Trip</b> One day per week either M-F from 3:00-10:00pm or on the weekend (6-10 hrs/event for 8 weeks)
	Who	Staff will sponsor a field trip to expand learning time
	What/When	M/W <b>Class</b> from 3:00pm to 6:00 pm (6 hrs/week for 4 Weeks)
	Who	Academic Intensive Class focused on STEM by CLACE or Science Disc.

<b>Fall Break</b> 10/8/12 – 10/12/12	What/When	1-2 day <b>service learning</b> project from (6-12 hrs)
	Who	Student coordinated service learning project with celebration
<b>Winter Break</b> 1/7/13 – 1/10/13	What/When	M-Th <b>Class</b> from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm (6 hrs/day for 4 days)
	Who	Academic Intensive Class focused on STEM by CLACE or Science Disc.
<b>Spring Break</b> 3/25/13 – 3/28/13	What/When	M-Th <b>Class</b> from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm (6 hrs/day for 4 days)
	Who	Academic Intensive @ Mountain Research Station
<b>Summer Break #1</b> 5/26/13 – 5/29/13	What/When	M-Th <b>Class</b> from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm (6 hrs/day for 4 days)
	Who	Natural Highs Class

### 10. Safe & accessible facility

Program activities will primarily be held at the school facility which has been certified as safe and accessible. Transportation for off-site activities will be provided by the school using a 15 passenger van. The school carries insurance on the van to the maximum amount allowable by the insurance company. Additional insurance is provided as part of the school’s contracted services with the school district. Parents must complete a permission slip and waiver of liability before students can be transported for program activities. After the activities, students will either be picked up after the activity by a parent/guardian, dropped off at home or drive themselves home (if they have a car).

### 11. Encourage and document student attendance

Students will receive notification of activities on a regular basis through daily announcement and posted calendars. They will be highly encouraged to participate as much as possible. As students become involved in planning for activities, they will encourage their peers to also participate. Partnering agencies will have opportunities to come to school during regular school hours to present on upcoming classes as a way to generate interest. Informational lunch sessions will be scheduled to promote the intensives and a “save my spot” activity will be scheduled to ensure commitment. The Program Coordinator and Americorp member will log participation in all activities and enter the data into the reporting site.

## SECTION E: ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

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### 1. Costs of Proposed Project

The attached budget narrative shows the first-year annual grant costs as well as in-kind contributions from the staff and community partners. Costs are broken down into categories based on program activities. Rates for the work done by teachers, partners and guest speakers are competitive and take into account the increased work required to produce secondary-level content particularly in STEM areas. The total program cost is slightly over \$146K per year. We anticipate that at least 75% of our students will participate in activities throughout the year making a cost per student of approximately \$1300. This amount is reasonable based on several reports including Afterschool All Stars, the Wallace Foundation and the Afterschool Alliance.

### 2. Use of Funds Relate to Project

The budget narrative shows costs based on specific programs: Tutoring, Workshops, Field Trips, Academic Intensives and support for McKinney-Vento students. These activities and therefore their costs directly correlate to the goals set forth in the proposal. Cost for intensives will support post-secondary readiness. The workshop related expenses will address dropout prevention and post-secondary readiness. The field trips expenses are related to increasing

attendance, dropout prevention and post-secondary readiness.

### **3. Supplemental Funding**

The school has been operating a student retention grant through Colorado Department of Education. The program had a small component that offered field trips to promote a positive peer culture and sobriety. The field trips have been very popular and students report increased school connectedness as a result of their participation. The initial plan was that after the grant ended that the school would sustain this program. We will be able to sustain 80% of the original amount, however due to state reductions in Per Pupil Operating Revenue over the last two years and next year, we will not have the funds to continue the afterschool component of that grant. Our hope is that we can reinstate these activities as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant and expand on our previous success by offering academic classes, tutoring and specialized workshops for students to catch up and get ahead academically in addition to field trips and family involvement.

### **4. Commitment of Partners**

We recognize that a great deal of time and effort will be required to develop and implement the proposed program. Our program partners have already dedicated time to collaborating on the proposal. The school's teachers have generously agreed to a regular tutoring schedule for no additional pay. Our partners at Science Discovery and CLACE will share in the costs for developing curriculum and coordinating the details of each activity. This grant will only pay for direct costs for the instructor and supplies. The Mountain Research Station will not charge for use of facility and our only expense for that intensive will be for the instructor and related supplies for the students. The school district will provide accounting services and fiscal management at no additional cost. At the site level, additional time for bookkeeping and invoice processing will be paid for by the school.

### **5. Sustainability Plan**

This project has been designed with sustainability in mind. By achieving our goal of reduced dropout we will see an increased enrollment and revenue. The schools dropout rate is approximately 10% of the 150 students served each year. If we recover half of these students the increase per pupil operating revenue alone will cover one third of the grant amount. Additionally, we anticipate that the program activities will generate positive word of mouth in the community leading to overall increased enrollment and revenues. Furthermore, once the workshops, and intensive classes have been designed, delivered and refined their costs will be significantly reduced since planning time is virtually eliminated. Our partnering agencies are all well established in the community and often have access to funding that can help sustain programming for our high needs students. Finally, we will work with local organizations to sign up as corporate sponsors of our workshops and classes as both a charitable act and marketing strategy for their organization.

## **SECTION F: PRIORITY AREAS**

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### **1. STEM Activities**

Recommendations on the You for Youth website regarding STEM include: developing opportunities for application, tapping into local experts, connecting to school-day opportunities and sparking interest. At least 50% of the proposed academic intensives will be STEM courses delivered by Science Discovery, the Mountain Research Station and the Latin American Center

for Science and Art Education. These intensive courses will be experiential giving students opportunities for direct application of concepts. The workshops will also have STEM themes to spark interest among students and the field trips will provide opportunities for connection with the school day. Our current staff also consists of five individuals who bring STEM expertise and will be able to support in developing activities for the students.

## **2. Service-learning approach**

Since the school's fall break is only one week, we have scheduled a 1-2 day service project. During this break, students with staff support will identify an issue that they want to address. Once they have identified that issue, they will plan an activity to make a positive impact and take action. At the end of the service project, students will have a celebration and put together a demonstration of their accomplishment. They will also be able to share their results with families at the next open house and with the entire student body during one of the morning gatherings. Also, we have a staff member who is interested in working with the students to design a technology related workshop where students teach their parents (or even some of the teachers). The students often comment about how their parents, grandparents and teachers are not particularly tech savvy. They can take action by developing and delivering a workshop as part of our parent involvement program and possibly at a local retirement home.

## **3. Project Based Learning approach**

The Green Labs and Digital Storytelling intensives will incorporate project based learning. The students enrolled in these courses will focus on a theme of environmental sustainability. They will come up with plans/proposals for the school community on conservation and take a leadership role among their peers to implement those changes.

## **4. Programming for High School Youth**

Our engagement strategies for working with older adolescents will focus on intrinsic motivation. The activities must be fun, exciting and appealing enough for the students to want to participate. The students will be encouraged to help with planning activities and have regular opportunities for feedback. Teachers will encourage students during class time to come up with extension activities based on classroom content to use for field trips. For example, in the Botany class, a student might say "it would be cool to go to a greenhouse and see how they grow stuff". We could then schedule a field trip to the Botanic Gardens and take a tour of their facility.

## **5. Strategies to Serve McKinney-Vento Students**

The McKinney-Vento page on the CDE Website and the National Center for Homeless Education cites several strategies for supporting homeless youth. Many of these strategies are incorporated into this grant proposal. They recommend flexible instructional opportunities which are offered through the intensive classes, tutoring which will be available daily and support for overcoming obstacles which is offered by the proposed liaison position. Part of the McKinney-Vento program is "clearing the path so students can participate fully."<sup>16</sup> Approximately 20%, and possibly more, of our student population qualify for McKinney Vento. This is over 10 times the state average. Our goal for these students is to help meet their basic needs so they can fully participate in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century activities.

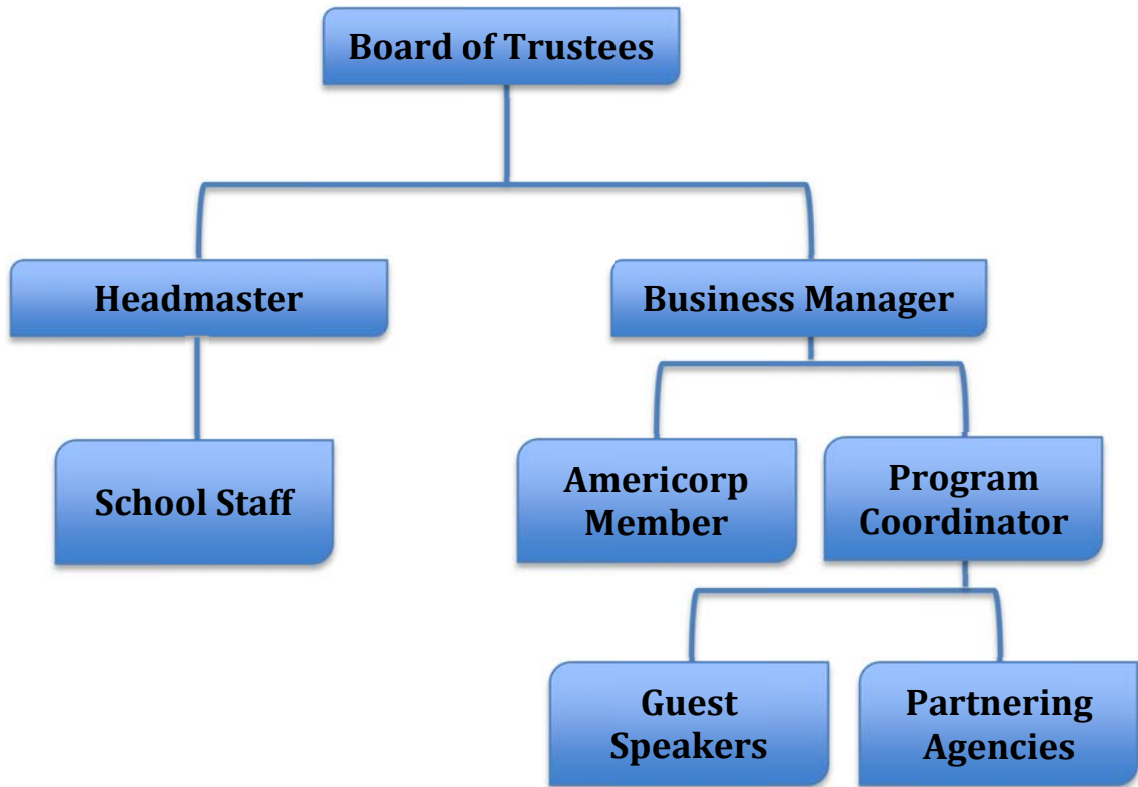
## **Job Descriptions**

**School Business Manager:** Bring key parties together regularly for overall program design, evaluation, improvement and reporting.

**Project Coordinator:** We are seeking a bilingual Spanish and English Project Coordinator to manage a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Grant to provide academic and enrichment activities for at-risk youth afterschool and during school breaks. Primary responsibilities will include but not be limited to coordination with teachers, partnering agencies, students, parents and other key individuals on planning and delivery of activities. The Project Coordinator will be responsible for logistics, recruitment, retention, data collection and reporting for activities. This is a full-time position with non-traditional hours where some activities may extend well into the evening. The ideal candidate will have experience with teaching, project management and working with at-risk youth. This is a 12-month position offering full benefits.

**Americorp Vista Member:** We are seeking a college graduate ready and eager to work with at-risk youth to reduce dropout and improve college readiness. Day-to-day activities will include tutoring in all subject areas, assisting with field trips, workshops and intensive classes afterschool and during the breaks. This position will also be responsible for regular data collection and data entry into a web-based program. This is a full-time position with non-traditional hours where some activities may extend well into the evening. The ideal candidate will have a degree in science, technology, engineering or math with experience in teaching, project management and working with at-risk youth.

Program Organization Chart



## Budget Detail/Budget Narrative

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Afterschool <b>Tutoring</b>	Volunteer	\$18,000	Staff members will sign up to stay afterschool for tutoring at least one day per week. The value of this contribution is calculated at 2 staff/day x 2 hrs/day for 180 days @ \$25/hour
Afterschool <b>Tutoring</b>	Grant	\$10,000	Partnering fee to have a full time Americorp Member for 11 months. This persons will be the primary tutor afterschool each day
Academic <b>Intensives</b> offered afterschool and during breaks	Grant	\$23,400	We will contract with our partners: CLACE, Science Discovery, Art from Ashes, etc... at a rate of \$200 per student x 13 students to provide each academic intensive. 9 intensives will be offered throughout the year. There will be 24 instructional hours per intensive and we estimate planning time is at least 2 hours for each instructional hour particularly for interactive or project based STEM courses. This breaks down to approximately \$36/hour
Academic <b>Intensives</b> Staff Stipend for support /co-facilitation	Grant	\$4,500	A staff member will be present to support and co-facilitate academic intensives. They will be paid at a rate of \$500 per intensive and there will be 9 intensives each year. Each intensive will have 24 contact hours translating to a rate of approximately \$20 per hour for support.
Academic <b>Intensives</b> Staff Benefits support /co-facilitation for	Grant	\$810	PERA, Medicare and LTD must be paid on behalf of the employee at a total rate of 18%
Academic <b>Intensives</b> Supplies	Grant	\$1755	\$15 will be allocated per student for supplies for each intensive. There will be a maximum of 13 students in the class. This is particularly important for STEM based classes.
Student <b>Workshops</b>	Grant	\$5,250	One workshop will be offered each week with various themes for a total of 38 weeks. Teachers or Guest speakers will provide these workshops at a rate of \$150 to include direct contact of at least 2 hours and any preparation time. One partner (The Institute for Generative Leadership) has agreed to provide 3 communication and leadership workshops at no cost to the school so this figure is based on 35 workshops that require funding.
Parent <b>Workshops</b>	Grant	\$600	One workshop will be offered each block for parents. Guest speakers will provide these workshops at a rate of \$150 to include direct contact of at least 2 hours and any preparation time. One partner (The Institute for Generative Leadership) has agreed to provide 1 communication workshop for the parents at no cost to the school so this figure is based on 4 workshops that require funding.
Food	Foodbank	\$5,000	Due to a partnership with the local foodbank, the school receives food that will be used for afterschool snacks and for the parent workshops. This value has been calculated based on \$25/day x 180 days for snacks and \$100/parent workshop x 5 workshops
<b>Field Trips</b> Costs	Grant	\$14,250	One field trip will be schedule each week for a total of 38 weeks. The trip sponsor will have a budget of up to \$25 per person with a maximum of 15 participants (13 students and 2 staff) to include admissions fees, dinner and gas for the van. This will cover simple meals and admissions to places like the museum, planetarium, imax, zoo, etc...

<b>Field Trips Staff Stipends</b>	Grant	\$7,600	Staff sponsors will receive a \$200 stipend for each activity to include planning, implementing, drop-offs and a final report. Each activity will last at least six hours.
<b>Field Trip Staff Benefits</b>	Grant	\$1,368	PERA, Medicare and LTD must be paid on behalf of the employee at a total rate of 18%
<b>Program Coordinator Salary</b>	Grant	\$49,000	The position has been budgeted at an annual rate up to \$42K with the first cycle being 14 months. This rate is competitive for a Program Coordinator position.
<b>Program Coordinator Benefits</b>	Grant	\$14,611	Life = \$35, Dental = \$431, Health = \$5325 plus LTD, Medicare and PERA @ 18%
<b>McKinney-Vento Liaison Salary</b>	Grant	\$8,000	The McKinney Vento Liaison will be hired at .2 FTE (1 day per week) based on an annual salary of \$40K
<b>McKinney-Vento Liaison Benefits</b>	Grant	\$1,440	Only PERA, Medicare and LTD must be paid for part-time employees at a total rate of 18%
<b>McKinney-Vento supplies</b>	Grant	\$1,500	\$50 will be available for basic necessities for each McKinney-Vento student. This can help them with glasses, shoes, clothing, school supplies or other needs. This item is calculated based on 30 students
<b>National Conference Fees</b>	Grant	\$2000	2 staff to attend National 21st Century Conference in Arkansas includes registration \$750, air, hotel, ground transportation @ \$950 and per diem of \$300
<b>Fiscal Management</b>	District & School	\$6000	We anticipate that the time needed to establish the accounts and manage expenditures will be an additional five hours per week shared between the school's bookkeeper and the district's grant accountant. The estimated value of this service is 5 hrs/week x 48 weeks/year at an average rate of \$25/hour
<b>Total Grant Expenses</b>		<b>\$146,084</b>	
<b>Total In Kind</b>		<b>\$29,450</b>	

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