

Feasibility Study of the Minnesota Reading Corps

School Principal/Director

School Name:

Site Visitor Name:

Date:

Location:

Interviewee Name(s) and Title(s):

Introduction

Good morning/afternoon. My name is [INSERT NAME] and I am with [NORC at the University of Chicago/Plus Alpha/TIES]. We are working on behalf of the Corporation for National and Community Service to conduct a feasibility study of the Minnesota Reading Corps program.

We are conducting these interviews to provide a quick overview of each project and identify best practices and to better understand the potential effects of the program on both the students and tutors.

This interview will cover these topics and others as we seek to understand your project’s processes and strategies and any aspects of your program that can be replicated in other AmeriCorps programs. The interview should take approximately 30 minutes. Your open and honest opinions are appreciated, but participation is voluntary and you may choose to skip any questions or end the interview at any time. Please also be advised that we will be sharing information on each individual project with CNCS. While we will not use your name or any others in this report, and we will attempt to minimize the use of identifiable information, it may be possible for CNCS to identify you through your position or through other details that you share in your interview.

If you have questions about the study after this interview, please contact the Project Director, Carrie Markovitz, at 301-634-9388. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this research project, please call the NORC Institutional Review Board Administrator at 866-309-0542.

Do you consent to participate in this discussion?

[If “yes” then proceed. If “no” then terminate interview.]

STAFFING/MANAGEMENT OF PROGRAM

History/Purpose

We would first like to ask some background questions on your school. Then we would like to discuss the basic structure of the MRC program within your school. We are interested in understanding the development of the program, the structure of the staffing and the delegation of responsibilities, as well as your relationship with the community.

1. Could you verify that the MRC program was implemented at [school name] in [pre-populate with information from MRC]?
2. Why did your school originally decide to apply for an MRC tutor(s)? Who was involved in deciding to apply?
3. Has your perception about the purpose of the MRC program changed since you originally applied?
4. Did staff have any concerns about adhering to the MRC model as a condition of being an MRC site?
5. Were any school policies and procedures changed to support hosting an AmeriCorps member? If so, what were they?
6. Have you ever asked to have an AmeriCorps Member(s) removed during their year of service?
[PROBE: Details on circumstances, MRC's response, repercussions for school]

STUDENTS

7. How are students, parents, and teachers notified of students' eligibility?
 - a. Do you require parental permission in order to provide services? **YES** **NO**
[If YES] What is the process for obtaining permission (passive or active consent)?

- b. Have any parents declined the offer to have his/her child tutored? **YES NO**
 [IF YES] How does the school handle these cases?

CORE CURRICULUM AND SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION

We would also like to discuss other programs your school uses for serving a similar population.

- 8. What is the core curriculum for literacy instruction at this site/school? Please describe.

- 9. What other supplemental program(s) is/are used in your site/school for students that are struggling? Please identify.
 - a. How is/are it/they similar to or different from MRC?
[PROBE: Eligibility criteria; Time on task; Types of interventions; Assessment processes; etc]

 - b. How many students and what types of students are served by this/these other program(s)?

| | Title | Type/description | Types of students served | # of students served in school year |
|-----------|-------|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Program 1 | | | | |
| Program 2 | | | | |
| Program 3 | | | | |
| Program 4 | | | | |

- 10. If your school had not been selected to receive an AmeriCorps Member to serve as a tutor(s), what would have happened? *[PROBE: Would some other type of assistance be offered? Would you be able to do the same types of activities? Would you be able to serve as many students?]*

MEASURING OUTCOMES/IMPACTS

It is important for any evaluation that we understand the ways that your program defines success. We would also like you to consider how you and other involved parties view the relative effectiveness of the program.

11. What kind of feedback have you received about the program:
 - a. From teachers?
 - b. From parents?
 - c. From community members?
 - d. In each case, what factors do you think contribute to this perception?

12. In your opinion, has MRC helped students better meet their reading proficiency targets? Why or why not?

13. MRC defines a program “completer” as achieving three to five data points above their aim line and meeting their next season’s benchmark target. Has this same definition been consistently applied for the duration of the program at your school?
 - a. In your opinion, is this an adequate measure of success?

14. Is there anything the evaluation team or MRC could provide to help facilitate the evaluation at your school?