

orals
6-14-11

Jackie Henderson

From: Gwendolyn Hubbard Lewis <ccnalewis@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2011 2:40 PM
To: William Euille; Frank Fannon; Kerry Donley; Alicia Hughes; Del Pepper; Paul Smedberg; Rose Boyd; Jackie Henderson; Elaine Scott; Rob Krupicka; Linda Owens; Elizabeth Jones
Subject: COA Contact Us: Supplemental Formal Request for Funding in the amount of \$10,000.00 from Council
Attachments: 7d40d62a85a7f5d2d257e65cff902647.pdf; ATT00001..txt

COA Contact Us: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members

Time: [Tue Jun 14, 2011 14:40:15] Message ID: [31014]

Issue Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council Members
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Last Name: Lewis
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Email Address: ccnalewis@gmail.com
Subject: Supplemental Formal Request for Funding in the amount of \$10,000.00 from Council
Thank you for the opportunity to make this request. I hope you will
Comments: support our mission.
Gwendolyn Hubbard Lewis
Attachment: 7d40d62a85a7f5d2d257e65cff902647.pdf



CONCERNED CITIZEN NETWORK OF ALEXANDRIA
A COMMUNITY WIDE INITIATIVE TO BUILD TOMORROW'S LEADERS TODAY

Orals
6-14-11

June 14, 2011

VIA E-MAIL and HAND DELIVERY
The Honorable Mayor William D. Euille and
Members of the Alexandria City Council
Alexandria City Hall
301 King Street – Suite 301
Alexandria, Virginia 22304

RE: Supplemental Formal Request for Funding in the amount of \$10,000.00 from
Council's Contingent Reserve in the current budget cycle

Dear Mayor Euille and Members of Council:

Over the course of the past two years, I have had a number of conversations with you, Mayor Euille and various members of the Council requesting financial support to address a critical need for our many "at promise" middle school students who are being left behind. CCNA is a 501(c)(3) organization designed to engage and empower students and to serve as a bridge to reduce the "minority achievement gap". We were fortunate to receive a \$10,000 contribution from the school board and based on a previous pledge more than a year ago, we are asking the City for a \$10,000 match so that we can help more students.

Our signature program, "Reach and Rise for Excellence" (RARE) was launched as a pilot at Hammond Middle School on March 14, 2011. RARE includes homework strategies, heavy nutritional snacks, on-line math tutoring, an interactive online Civics and advocacy program, and an on-line historical and cultural awareness program. The program is being used to increase student achievement and computer literacy and students meet 4 days a week after school. Substantial research has shown that technology is a powerful enabling tool that can support critical thinking and other developmental skills when matched with trained facilitators. Our facilitators are also licensed teachers. Parent involvement and training is also a major CCNA initiative through RARE. We also provide resource information where needed to support the "whole child".

RARE is a unique after school program in the City of Alexandria. Statistics show that our children need more time on task. They need the consistent presence of adults in the community, outside of the home, that care about them. They need to learn about themselves to provide the self confidence and self esteem needed to live happy productive lives. We provide that kind of nurturing that many of our children do not otherwise get at home. But we need the funds to sustain this wonderful program. Our students have worked hard. They've solved over 4,000 math word problems which included 27, 40-minute math classes, about the equivalent to a school semester in just 2

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½ months! And that's just one example. Please give us a chance to show you the impact of that work and the impact of having these students for another year.

As a follow up to a number of meetings I have had, an e-mail was sent requesting this funding. This funding was to match what was then contemplated, but now realized, as the school board contribution during the last budget cycle. While the City's budget was under consideration, we also submitted a proposal to the Community Services Grant Fund, which was encouraged by some members of Council. Unfortunately, we were not one of the 53 successful organizations to receive funding.

I write today to formally request that you make the RARE program a priority now by matching the School Board contribution of \$10,000 for the next two years. I have attached for your reference an overview of the RARE Program. These funds will allow us to replicate our RARE program model at George Washington Middle School where the need is at least as great as the need at Hammond. While we are investigating additional sources of funding, at this critical juncture, our ability to continue helping our children is in jeopardy.

I invite you to come visit our program and hope you know that we look forward to working with you to improve and enhance the many "students at promise" in the Alexandria Schools. This is not a partisan issue. This is an Alexandria child education issue. Therefore, I hope that we can count on your support.

Thank you,

Gwen Lewis

Gwendolyn Hubbard Lewis
Former Member ACPS School Board
CCNA Board Co-chair/Executive Director



CONCERNED CITIZEN NETWORK OF ALEXANDRIA

A COMMUNITY WIDE INITIATIVE TO BUILD TOMORROW'S LEADERS TODAY

“Reach and Rise for Excellence” (RARE) Program

Index of Content

- A. Project Description
- B. Programs Description
- C. Population Group Served
- D. Participant Selection Process
- E. Project Evaluation
- F. Budget

A. Project Description

“Reach and Rise for Excellence” is an after school program that will target “at promise” students to improve academics and social skills, while exposing them to lifelong learning experiences, in a structured environment. This program is meant to provide an otherwise unavailable experience and bridge the digital divide among “at promise” students while seeking to increase student achievement levels. In order to cultivate this willingness to achieve using information technologies, we will incorporate the following elements:

*Programming flexibility: CCNA is in the position and has the opportunity to explore issues that may not be a part of the standard school curriculum because it is a community organization. We intend to leverage this position to incorporate healthy lifestyles, the historical study of ethnic groups and research-based prevention programs within our activity choices. Although this program will remain an educational focused program, we believe that being able to bring these issues into our program will enable our participants to have a better understanding of each other and their community.

*Technology tools: Our program will be using two programs, Apangea Math & Writing and ePals, to increase student achievement as well as computer literacy. As one of the goals of our program, we believe that technology is a powerful enabling tool that can support critical thinking and other developmental skills.

*Community Partnerships: Some activities will be facilitated by community partners using a diverse range of community-based organizations. The following are our some suggested partners:

- Alexandria Arts Commission - connect RARE students to arts. “At Promise” students will have the opportunity to be exposed to various Medias of art.
- Dream In Color - will provide dance and theatre to the students. This will allow the students to develop skills and be exposed to another media of art.
- Chamber of Commerce - will connect RARE to the numerous businesses.
- City of Alexandria Youth Services Department - connect students with additional services.
- City of Alexandria Health Dept - connect students and family members with additional services.
- City of Alexandria Parks and Recreation - connect students with additional programs and services.
- Alexandria City Public Schools - provide program space, refer students, etc.
- Alexandria Black History Museum –Cultural and Historical Education.
- Virginia Retired Teachers Association volunteers- assist with homework and Mentoring.
- Juvenile court - refer students, provide career speakers.
- Parent Leadership Training Institute-- partners with RARE to provide parent Advocacy.

B. Description of Programs

“Reach and Rise for Excellence” seeks to bring computer access, enrichment and economic opportunity to “at promise” students at George Washington and Hammond Middle Schools through a variety of programs including Apangea Math and Writing, an online enrichment tool and the ePals Global Community.

Apangea: Apangea Math provides one-student-to-one-teacher differentiated math instruction through a unique integration of proprietary tutoring technology and live, online certified teachers. As a web-based solution, Apangea Math can be accessed from any computer with an internet connection – ensuring students can learn math anytime, anywhere. Apangea Writing offers differentiated instruction paired with one-on-one tutoring from live, certified English teachers making for a powerful educational combination. The stepped writing process teaches students the critical skills necessary to become strong, successful writers. As a web-based solution, Apangea Writing will run on any computer with an internet connection – ensuring students can learn writing anytime, anywhere.

Homework Assistance: RARE will contain a homework assistance piece that will allow students to have access to grade level teachers and school staff in order to complete homework and other enrichment work. Students will have access to computers

in order to complete online coursework. Program Monitors will oversee the homework assistance time, ensuring that homework is completed.

ePals: The ePals Global Community is the world's largest network of K-12 classrooms, enabling students and teachers to safely connect and collaborate with classrooms in more than 200 countries and territories. Offered at no cost to classrooms, educators can access the community to find collaborative projects, join discussions in the community forums, and search thousands of classroom profiles to engage with others in authentic exchanges - all within a safe, protected online environment.

Leadership Development: Tenants and Workers United will be partnering with CCNA and the RARE program to provide a Leadership Development series. This weekly Leadership Series will help improve participant's communication, social teamwork and leadership skills.

Cultural Education: The Alexandria Black History Museum will be partnering with the RARE program to provide a Cultural Education series. This weekly series will be designed to support all participants through an affirmation of their culture. The series will help participants to be aware of their heritage as well as other cultures and to value the accomplishments of their family, their community and their ancestors. It builds a sense of pride and self-esteem, as well as an understanding of other participants' perspectives and background.

Parent Involvement: We plan to offer monthly workshops, in cooperation with our community partners, for participants' families in a variety of areas including: financial literacy, health and nutrition, continuing education, communication, etc.

C. Population Groups Served

Out of the Alexandria Public School System's 2,253 middle school students, the RARE program will initially serve up to 96 students, with the intent of reaching out to "at-risk" students, while having the diversity of participants reflect the diversity of students in the school system.

Our chosen student population is approximately 43% African-American, 27% Hispanic/Latino, 6% Pacific Islander and 20% Caucasian.

D. Participant Selection Process and Criteria

The "Reach and Rise for Excellence" (RARE) program is initially designed to accommodate 96 students. Students will be ultimately targeted for this program through the assistance of guidance counselors, school administration, parent, juvenile court and peer referrals. Students who are having issues in the following areas will be targeted: Low grades, Behavior problems, Irregular attendance or those students with an Individual Education Plan.

Currently, the school system has identified numerous students that would fit within the framework for the after school program. While marketing will be implemented for the entire school site proposal, the selection process would be weighted so that those who are the most at-risk are the students that receive the most attention.

E. RARE Evaluation Plan

While the content varies from activity to activity, we will measure our success in achieving the programs' goals in the following ways:

By keeping attendance sheets for all activities: Attendance sheets will be compiled into weekly program reports, which will show a connection between the dosage of this program and a participant's success.

By receiving quarterly interim and grade reports: The RARE program staff will work with school officials to receive quarterly grade reports for the participants, to ensure that participants are making progress, especially in math.

By keeping a portfolio for each student: We will track the academic and behavioral progress of each student

By conducting beginning, mid-year and end of the year surveys for students and parents: Students and parents will be asked to complete surveys about the structure of the programs and activities.

F. Budgets

Please see the attached pages for RARE's program budget. While a 3-day and 5-day budget have been included, it is our recommendation that the RARE program be held 5 days a week, if full funding is achieved.

In light of some of the funding challenges, we will be preparing a leaner budget that would suit holding the program at one site.