Arizona State University

Statement of the Problem/Program Narrative

STRENGTHS

- A brief yet informative description of the nature and scope of the problem. Local data was provided as evidence that the problem exists, and demonstrated the size and scope of the problem, and the effects of the problem on the target population and the larger community. Maricopa County has 395 different contracted programs from 58 different contracted providers which makes it very difficult to earmark services appropriately for each juvenile.

- The applicant provides data from the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation centers indicating the extensive scope of the problem within the target area and providing figures of the size of the target population. The information is adequate for the purposes of the grant application.

- The applicant provides evidence of previous attempts to address the problem. The Arizona Detention Transition Project was a four-year model demonstration grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. It was specific to transitioning high risk youth from short term facilities. The applicant also states on page 3 separate agencies work on one high risk component but not all risk components due to funding stipulations.

WEAKNESSES

- Demographic information on the target population is missing in this section of the narrative. General description of target population is given with little or no demographic insights of specific population served and diversity considerations regarding age, gender, race, culture, socio-economic and disabilities.

Impact/Outcomes and Evaluation

STRENGTHS

- Description of goals of the proposed project and identification of its objectives.
• Broad statement, written in general terms, conveying the program's intent to change, reduce the fragmentation of services by the participatory use of dashboard that will help make data driven decisions with the risk factors present and compliance data for tracking how they are doing.

• Detailed explanation of how the program will accomplish its goals. Objectives are specific, quantifiable statements of the desired results of the program, and are clearly connected to the problems identified in the preceding section. Objectives are measurable.

• Detailed table that shows data collection and analysis in support of performance measures listed on page 8. Performance measures clearly reflect the specific problems, goals and objectives, and design associated with the grant. Strong evaluation plan specifically for activities proposed given in this section of the narrative. There is a sound description of how data will be analyzed using a Linear Model.

• The applicant identifies four goals and 14 objectives the program plans to address through the life of the program. The basic information begins on page nine giving ample definitions of both the goals and objectives. The goals and objectives are ambitious but attainable through the design of the program.

• On page eight the applicant provides a general statement indicating the program's intention and resolves to minimize or eradicate the problem in the target area. The proposal will restructure the existing system of resources to ensure more efficient application to and utilization of partner services for those most at risk. The overall objective is to increase understanding what a high risk youth is with all their complexities and strengths. The section is adequate.

• Page 10 provides a chart indicating how the goals and objectives will be measured. The objectives are clear and specific and relate to the problems faced by the target population and the design of the program. The expected outcomes of the program are clearly stated. Performance measures are further discussed on pages 13 and 14.

• The performance measures will provide data in support of page eight of the RFP. This information can be found on pages 13, 14 and 15. The section is adequate.

• The performance measures, as stated in the documentation of the application, clearly reflect the specific problems, goals and objectives associated with the grant. The section satisfies the needs of the grant application.
WEAKNESSES

Project/Program Design and Implementation

STRENGTHS

- Description of specific strategies used to implement the proposed program is given in this section of the narrative. Applicant identifies program’s target population and explains how the strategy will achieve the goals and objectives identified in the previous section.

- Program design clearly facilitates the gathering of data on the required performance measures.

- Detailed description of how project will operate throughout the duration of the funding period is given.

- Description of research or evaluation studies that support the entire project design, or any of its components was given in this section of the narrative.

- A timeline in the attachments that indicates major tasks in the proposed design, assigns responsibility for each major task, and plots completion of these tasks by month or quarter for the duration of the award.

- The applicant describes in details the strategies to implement the goals and objectives beginning on page 17. The applicant proposes to develop an advisory group that includes individuals from juvenile corrections, juvenile probation and parole, community corrections, local law enforcement, faith-based and community based organizations, other intermediaries involved in the project, and other prerelease and community-based service and treatment providers. The section is adequate.

- The program is designed to collect data about the participants on an on-going basis. Each site will create a portfolio assessment and development process for 10 designated youth with the highest risk to recidivate. This type of design facilitates the collection of performance measures.

- The application documentation provides ample information on how the program will operate during the federal funding period. The primary toll for the program is the general database, as stated on page 19. The resource database is a way to organize a complex system of services justice workers have to sift through in deciding how to help the youth. The section meets the requirements of the grant application.
• The applicant provides a number of support letters from different organizations serving the same target population as the project. The letters are provided as separate documents and indicate a commitment to provide assistance to the program.

• The applicant provides a separate two page document providing information on studies validating the design of the plan presented by the project. In addition, the applicant mentions other local efforts within the target area providing additional information.

• The applicant provides a separate document with the timeline for achieving the program’s milestones along with the activities and staff responsible for completion of the activities.

WEAKNESSES

• It is unclear if applicant will include in its target population juveniles who do not have a diagnosed physical or brain related disability. Also what types of disabilities to be served is not discussed in this section of the narrative.

• More discussion is warranted on plans for sustainability.

• The applicant does not provide clear information on what type of resources will be made available to the program by other organizations or grants providing services in the target area.

Capabilities/Competencies

STRENGTHS

• Concise description of the roles and responsibilities of project staff and explanation of the program's organizational structure and operations. Management and staffing patterns are clearly and evidently connected to the project design described in the previous section. Description of the experience and capability of the applicant's organization that will be used to effectively implement and manage the effort and its associated federal funding.

• The applicant provides a separate document stating the roles and responsibilities in detail of all the key staff in the program. The information includes the management structure of the program.
The applicant provides resumes of all key staff showing staffing and management patterns clearly to the project design provided in the documentation. The section is adequate for the purposes of the grant.

The applicant provides in various places of the general narrative the experience of the organization dealing with the identified problem. In addition the application provides a description of the contractors and their experience in dealing with programs funded by federal funds. This information is provided on a separate document. The section is adequate.

WEAKNESSES

Because the applicant did not follow the RFP's outline for selection criteria the narrative tended to jump around from one topic to the next without much flow with the specific selection criteria. Therefore, in reading this section of the proposal it was difficult to determine exact capabilities and competencies and how these assets will be coordinated among the different agencies.

Budget

STRENGTHS

A budget and a budget narrative that is complete, allowable, and cost effective in relation to the proposed activities is included as an attachment.

The applicant provides a budget narrative with adequate information indicating expenditures are cost effective in relationship to the program.

The budget narrative provided by the applicant shows each item and its relationship to project activities. The section is adequate.

The applicant provides a budget worksheet itemizing all costs and expenses of the program.

WEAKNESSES

None noted