

One day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education.

TEACHFORAMERICA

February 7, 2019

Dear Mayor Briley and Ms. Lomax-O'dneal,

Teach For America's vision is to provide all children, regardless of background, with the opportunity to attain an excellent education. With your continued support and the partnership of many organizations and individuals across the city, I have no doubt that we are on a path to realize our vision. I am pleased to submit this request to support our Summer Academies program. On behalf of the 1,000 Teach For America alumni and corps members in Nashville, thank you for your consideration.

What services does your organization provide to the residents of Davidson County? How many residents is your organization currently serving and how do they benefit?

Teach For America (TFA) Nashville finds, develops, and supports a diverse network of leaders who expand opportunity for children from classrooms, schools, and every sector and field that shapes the broader systems in which schools operate. To achieve this mission, we recruit our nation's most promising leaders, and, through a highly selective process, we build a diverse and talented corps of recent college graduates and professionals to teach with a minimum two-year commitment in high-need public schools.

Our process to develop great classroom leaders begins with an intensive 5 week summer training institute where teachers receive over 150 hours of professional development while leading summer classrooms in low-income communities. Our summer training is located in Nashville, allowing TFA Nashville to partner with the local school district, local non-profits, and local education leaders to provide new teachers with contextual knowledge about Nashville students and the community. Additionally, the summer training institute serves as a vital summer learning opportunity for Nashville students. We call the summer school program Summer Academies. For the past 5 years, TFA Nashville has partnered with Metro Nashville schools to provide thousands of students an academic summer program including breakfast, lunch, and transportation at no cost to students and their families.

Throughout the initial two-year corps member commitment, each corps member is matched with an instructional coach who provides regular observations and feedback on corps member classrooms, models instructional and leadership techniques, and recommends strategies for overcoming challenges to help students to achieve goals. Our instructional coaches provide ongoing professional development and support for our full teaching corps of 160 and impact over 12,000 students across Nashville. Our corps members serve in Nashville's highest-needs schools where 65% of the students we serve are considered economically disadvantaged, 1 in 5 are English Language Learners, and over 75% identify as students of color.

Our program's ability to recruit and develop effective teachers and school leaders is proven to be effective. For 9 years, The Tennessee State Board of Education and Tennessee Higher Education



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Commission have rated TFA Nashville among the top providers of new teachers; last year, we produced the highest percentage of highly effective teachers of all pipelines in Tennessee. In addition, based on the 2016-2017 Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS), TFA alumni lead 13 of the top-rated 15 unrestricted entrance schools. With the collective impact of our corps members and alumni, we estimate that 1 in 4 students in Nashville public schools are taught by a TFA teacher or are led by a TFA school leader.

How much funding are you requesting from Metro? If funding is awarded, how many additional residents will be served and how will they benefit? How would you use this funding to help create a more equitable Nashville, where all residents have an opportunity to participate in the city's success?

Teach For America requests \$50,000 from Metro Nashville to support our 2019 Nashville Summer Academies program, where we will develop and support 80-95 new teachers and combat summer learning loss for approximately 400 of Nashville's highest needs students. If we are awarded funding, we anticipate leveraging this investment over 10x through other public and private sources to fully fund the summer program.

Economically disadvantaged students lose about 2 months of learning over the summer. As such, a child's access to quality academic summer programs can impact whether that child ultimately earns a high school diploma and continues on to college. Students who complete a post-secondary education earn \$800,000 more over their lifetime, and studies have shown that the classroom teacher is the most important school-based factor impacting student achievement.

Summer Academies is one of the largest and most rigorous academic summer program in the city, serving approximately 400 low-income 1st-8th graders each summer. It is provided at no cost for students and includes breakfast, lunch, and transportation. We also partner with the Boys and Girls Club to provide after school options for families. TFA Nashville has provided summer learning to over 1,700 students, the majority of whom are economically disadvantaged. Students attending the Nashville Summer Academies grow, on average, 8 weeks in math and reading in the month that they are in the program.

In addition to serving more residents, are there other community benefits Metro funding would help you achieve?

Metro funding helps us benefit the Nashville community in a variety of ways. Metro Nashville Public Schools calculated last year that Summer Academies was their most cost-effective summer program. In addition to hosting Summer Academies for approximately 400 students at no cost to families, hosting our summer training program locally has many benefits. Our teachers are able to work with - and learn from - local community partners, organizations, and families from the very beginning of their training, which ensures they are grounded in the local needs and strengths of our communities. We are also able to produce a partnership effort that extends across sectors in our city: we partner with traditional public schools, with



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charter schools, with local corporations, local nonprofits, local universities, and local individuals to pull off the program. In many aspects this represents the kind of partnership we'd aspire to see happening across the city for any cause that is as important as educating the children of Nashville. In essence, we believe our program serves as a model of positive collective action in our community.

In addition to grounding teacher training in the local context, serving Nashville students, and creating cross-sector partnerships, Summer Academies is an excellent opportunity for Metro educators to develop as leaders. Each year, we hire 50-60 local educators and leaders who we develop and train to be instructional coaches, content facilitators, school directors, and other instructional roles. Our staff members further refine their skills and develop new ones that enable them to be more effective or take on increasing levels of leadership within Metro.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. We know that, with your support, we can continue to work towards a more equitable Nashville through the Summer Academies program. If you have any questions, please contact me at 314.518.9445 or Benjamin.Schumacher@teachforamerica.org.

With deep gratitude,



Ben Schumacher
Executive Director, Teach For America Nashville



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