



Application – First Baptist Church of Hilliard/Azure Coaching/Columbus North International School

Application Section I: Community Connectors Program Description

1. The target population is students grades 5-12. Identify the grade level or levels at each school that your program will be targeting. Programs may serve students in one or more grade levels.

This proposed program will be implemented at Columbus North International School, initially targeting students in grades 7-9.

2. Provide the number of youth in each grade level and at each school your program proposes to serve.

Enrollment in Columbus North International School totals approximately 750 students in grades 7-12. In its first year, this program aims to serve approximately 72 students in grades 7-9 (24 in each grade), and will target continual growth to a total of 96 students by the end of year three.

Total projected student enrollment at Columbus North International for 2015/16 is as follows:

7th – 120

8th – 100

9th – 100

10th – 120

11th – 125

12th – 120

3. Select one: Which of the following best describes the proposed project? Select one.

A. *Totally new program developed by this organization*

B. Replication of an existing model in use by others

- Please provide the name of this model.

C. Expansion of an existing program within the applicant organization

D. Extension of an existing program to a new setting

4. Please describe your project. How will it address each of the five Community Connectors core principles and what outcomes will you use to measure success.

As described in greater detail below, this grant will facilitate the establishment of an “in-residence” mentoring program at Columbus North Internal School. In broad terms, the program consists of bi-weekly one-on-one meetings between the students and the mentor. The sessions focus primarily on specific technical skills (study skills, textbook reading skills, time management, organization, professional communication, etc.), but also leave flexibility in the curriculum for students to seek advice from the mentor on individual difficulties throughout the school year.

Goal Setting

Goal setting forms an important part of this program's core curriculum. After the initial intake process, the mentor and mentee will work together to set goals for the student's improvement throughout the year. The SMART paradigm will be used as a foundation for technical instruction in goal setting. The mentor will track student's progress in meeting their goals over time. "Task-oriented" goals are expressly taught as one of the "skill module" topics that students will discuss with their mentor. In addition, the concept of "mastery" goals is developed through the deliberate process of practicing a specific skill in each of the various modules. For example, the program's professional communications module teaches not only the key characteristics of effective professional communication; but more importantly, the process of analyzing and improving upon one's own future performance in that area through continued self-reflection. Mentors are trained to recognize patterns of success and failure and to address those issues in individual mentoring sessions.

Building Character

This program aims to increase each student's sense of self-efficacy by giving them the skill set they need to achieve success independently. By teaching students skills pertaining to time management, goal setting, analytic reasoning, etc., we hope to empower students not only in the classroom, but in their career after graduation as well. Apart from the technical aspects of our curriculum, we also have leadership development modules that help students identify their individual strengths and weaknesses, while also learning about various aspects of their personality and how to work effectively on a team. We strive to foster self-awareness, discipline, and other positive character traits.

Decision Making and Critical Thinking

This program seeks to emphasize the positive consequences of good decisions, rather than only the negative consequences of bad decisions. For example, students learn that practicing memory skills can improve a student's performance in a variety of areas of life. Additionally, the program allows for "open" sessions, in which the student and mentor can discuss other issues that may be relevant to the student, such as navigating a tricky situation between friends or learning to better communicate with teachers. If a family issue is affecting the student's performance, for example, the mentor may use an open session to discuss that issue with the student and help the student to understand how the issue may be impacting other areas of his or her life.

We train our mentors to recognize when they have encountered a situation with a mentee that is outside the mentor's scope of practice. In this way, mentors can help students with day to day difficulties and decision making, but know when to refer students to more specialized services; for example, seeing the school guidance counselor if the student reports abuse.

Resiliency

Learning to effectively respond to adversity is a crucial part of developing a mindset for success. By confronting both strengths and weaknesses in a matter-of-fact way during individual sessions, this program teaches students that failures are not fatal, but rather are an opportunity to grow. Because our mentors are either still in college, or are recent college graduates, they can relate to many of the issues that middle and high school students are facing in today's world.

Believing in a Positive Future

Rather than lecturing students, this program is designed to allow students to have input into the structure of their mentoring sessions. Students work *with* their mentor to identify areas that they would like to work on and to develop their own goals. By doing so, students see that their input is valuable, and that they can help control their own future.

5. Please describe the specific activities your program will conduct.

The First Baptist Church of Hilliard, Azure Coaching, LLC (a for-profit company owned by two members of First Baptist Church), and the Columbus City Schools will implement a new mentoring program at Columbus North International School.

Students will be referred to the mentoring program either by the school's faculty advisors or through voluntary enrollment. Enrolled students are then assigned a mentor, who will meet bi-weekly with the student in one-on-one sessions for at least one semester.

The first meeting between the student and the mentor is an intake/evaluation meeting. The mentor will ask the student to complete a self-assessment worksheet, in which the student rates himself or herself in a variety of categories (see **Attachment A**). The mentor will also review with the student any information provided by the school's faculty regarding the student's strengths and weaknesses. After completing the self-assessment and reviewing faculty input, the mentor will work with the student to choose several "skill modules," which correspond to the categories on the self-assessment, to be completed over the course of the mentoring program.

Each "skill module" is a self-contained lesson plan designed to strengthen a particular skill. Modules are approximately fifty minutes in length so that they can be completed within a standard school period. Each module begins with an evaluation of the student's current skill set, and progresses through simple discussion and exercises designed to allow the student to understand the key components of the skill, as well as explore ways in which they can improve and hone their skills. (See **Attachment B** for an example lesson plan).

Finally, in addition to specific skill modules, the program is also designed to allow for "open" sessions, in which the student may simply talk with the mentor or address a specific issue not already scheduled. For example, if a family issue is affecting the student's performance in school, the mentor may use an open session to discuss that issue with the student. These open sessions allow the student to build a relationship with the mentor and also allows for flexibility within the program's schedule.

6. Discuss how the program will utilize [best practices](#) to ensure program success. Are there successful mentor programs after which you will model your program? Please name the program and describe what makes it successful.

This program is loosely modeled on the academic coaching program that is currently in existence at the University of Cincinnati's (UC) Learning Assistance Center. The program at UC is designed to serve two primary student populations: (1) high achieving students who would like exposure to advanced academic opportunities, and (2) probation students who need skill instruction in order to enhance their academic performance. At UC, students schedule weekly appointments with their coach, for one hour in duration, and typically attend sessions for 5-7 weeks. Over the course of their time working with an academic coach, the student is assessed in various areas, and is introduced to various strategies designed to meet their specific needs. Coaches commonly help students with study skills, time management, organization, goal setting, procrastination, and essay writing. Additionally, in working with the more advanced student population, coaches can help students get involved in extracurricular activities, prepare college essays and applications, think about career options, and search for scholarships. Data from UC demonstrates that students who participate in the program see an increase in semester GPA by 0.8 points.

One unique aspect of UC's coaching program that makes it successful is its use of "motivational interviewing" techniques to gauge and facilitate self-directed change in participating students.

Additionally, the students have control over their academic progress with client-centered and self-scheduled sessions. As the students take increased ownership over their success, they become more motivated to achieve and to hold themselves accountable for their future. The program is also successful because coaches are able to provide one-on-one attention to students that is otherwise not available in the classroom. They are able to create a less formal space where there is room for students to explore personal barriers to success.

The program proposed in this grant application is designed to adapt UC's program to the needs of middle and high school students through the addition of a stronger mentoring component. For example, while UC's program is based upon a 5-7 week model, with most emphasis on teaching technical skills, this program is designed to teach technical skills while also providing flexible time for mentor-specific relationships to be formed. Ultimately, it aims to follow students for at least one academic year (and ideally, throughout their time at the school).

The motivation to do this comes from the realization that many students require support services in college because their secondary educational experience did not prepare them for success at the collegiate level. Thus, by extending support services into the secondary education setting, we hope to better facilitate a successful transition for students from high school into college, as is consistent with current conceptualization of the K-16 paradigm for education.

7. Describe your organization's previous experience with this type of program OR a program of a similar scale, including previous evaluations, size and duration of previously implemented programs, goals, and outcomes.

Although this will be a new program, this program's leadership team have relevant experience with similar endeavors. James Barnett has previously served as an academic coach with the University of Cincinnati's Learning Assistance Center (LAC). Mr. Barnett has designed and implemented individualized intervention strategies to improve the academic performance of more than 75 college students and collaborated with

university faculty to optimize student performance in the classroom. During his time with the LAC, he was also involved in research on the at-risk college student population, and has presented research findings at both UC's undergraduate research conference and 6th annual diversity conference.

Jon Hsu has been an active volunteer with the Ohio Center for Law-Related Education since 2011. He has judged numerous competitions, and has served on the mock trial case committee. He has served as co-chair of the high school mock trial case committee since 2014. In addition, Mr. Hsu has coached soccer at Columbus Academy since 2009, helping to not only teach the game of soccer, but also to develop resilience, teamwork, and other important leadership traits in his players.

Jerome Cromwell is currently the Program Director for the daycare program at the First Baptist Church of Hilliard. He has two years of experience developing curriculum for students grades K-8, along with organizing summer programs to facilitate student engagement. Mr. Cromwell has also been heavily involved with leadership development initiatives in his student population.

8. What will make this collaboration successful? What will the indicator(s) of success be for this collaboration?

This collaboration will be successful because the program's leadership team has experience in providing student support and engagement services and because it is focused on quality assurance.

This program will track student GPA as well as scores on individual assignments. In addition, the intake process includes an evaluation to be completed by both the student and teachers, assessing the student's performance in a number of areas. A key indicator of success will be improvement in these areas, as measured by an exit evaluation to be completed at the end of the term.

Mentors will be evaluated by Azure Coaching, First Baptist Church of Hilliard, and faculty at Columbus North International School, with a program of continual improvement and continuing education to be implemented over the course of the program.

Application Section II: Program Management

9. Leadership Team: The leadership team should be comprised of no less than one member of each partnering organization. Please provide a brief bio of each leadership team member, including a brief description of the team member's passion for the program and interest in working with young people. Bios should also include:

- Name and title
- Responsibilities for this grant project. (Percent of time should be included in the budget document.)
- Qualifications
- Prior relevant experience

James Barnett – Co-Owner, Azure Coaching

Primary Responsibilities: curriculum development, mentor training, lead mentor, coordination with program partners

Qualifications: See attached resume (**Attachment C**)

Prior relevant experience and reason for involvement in this program: James Barnett has served as an academic coach and onsite coordinator with the LeaderShape institute. In addition, he has

participated in the Bearcat Buddies tutoring program, teaching reading and math to elementary children in Cincinnati Public Schools. He also spent several years providing private music instruction to disadvantaged youth during his time in Cincinnati. Mr. Barnett is most excited to participate in this grant opportunity because it offers the potential to provide an even greater impact in the community, providing much needed support service to students who would not otherwise have access to it.

Jon Hsu – Co-Owner, Azure Coaching

Primary Responsibilities: coordination with program partners, program evaluation, financial management and grant coordination

Qualifications: See attached resume (**Attachment D**)

Prior relevant experience and reason for involvement in this program: Jon Hsu has been active volunteer with the Ohio Center for Law Related Education since 2011. He has judged numerous competitions and has most recently served as the co-chair of the high school mock trial case committee. Mr. Hsu has also been an assistant soccer coach at Columbus Academy since 2009, and became involved with this program to bring the same disciplined, skill-driven approach to training commonly seen in sports to students in disadvantaged school districts.

Jerome Cromwell – Daycare Program Director, First Baptist Church of Hilliard

Primary Responsibilities: program evaluation and quality assurance

Qualifications: See attached resume (**Attachment E**)

Prior relevant experience and reason for involvement in this program: For the past two years, Jerome Cromwell has served as the Program Director at the First Baptist Church of Hilliard Daycare, which primarily serves lower-income families. In his role in the daycare, Mr. Cromwell gained experience in childcare, leadership development, and student engagement. He is excited about the opportunity to participate in this program because it will allow the church to expand its service area and have a positive impact in the community.

Ingrid Luft – Assistant Principal, Columbus North International School

Primary Responsibilities: coordination with mentors, program evaluation and data tracking

Qualifications: BA (Education 1-8), Otterbein College

Prior relevant experience: taught math, science, and social studies in Columbus for 8 years prior to entering the Leadership Intern Program offered by Columbus City Schools; 1 year as assistant principal at Mifflin Middle School; assistant principal at Sherwood Middle School for 6 years

10. A timeline of all major activities must be provided. Assessment, planning and initial training must be completed by September 7, 2015. Services must begin by September 7, 2015.

March 31, 2015 – Complete initial assessment of need with Columbus City Schools

May 30, 2015 – Complete planning phase, including development of curriculum and training modules

July 31, 2015 – Complete initial mentor training

August 31, 2015 – Complete selection of initial students to participate in the program

September 7, 2015 – Year 1 services begin

Dec 2015/Jan 2016 – Midterm assessment of program indicators; make adjustments to program as necessary

June 2016 – Year 1 review of program indicators; recruitment and training of two part-time mentors

June-August 2016 – Continuing education for mentors

September 2016 – Year 2 services begin

December 2016/January 2017 – Midterm assessment

June 2017 – Year 2 review; recruitment and training of one part-time mentor

June-August 2017 – Continuing education for mentors

September 2017 – Year 3 services begin

December 2017/January 2018 – Midterm assessment

June 2018 – Final project review

11. Describe the implementation process for reaching the following milestones:

- a. Screening, orientation, supporting, and monitoring process for mentors and other personnel working directly with youth;

This program will follow existing district policies for the screening and supervision of mentors working directly with students.

In the summer prior to the first academic year, mentors will complete 25 hours of comprehensive training. This instruction will include exposure to recent research in cognition, learning, motivational interviewing, motivation, and other areas specified in our curriculum. Additionally, the training will be a time when mentors can practice the skills they have learned in mock-sessions. Mentors will be managed directly by Azure Coaching and will have access to its leadership team for support at all times throughout the academic year.

Once mentoring has begun, mentors will be responsible for documenting their sessions. Specifically, after each session, the mentor will complete a form indicating what was discussed in the session, while also completing lesson planning worksheets for future sessions. Data will be recorded regarding each participating student's progress on both individual assignments and cumulative GPA.

- b. Identification and intake process for mentees;

As discussed above, faculty and staff from Columbus North International School will assist in referring students to this program.

The initial session with each new student will be devoted to intake. The mentor will interview the student, first learning about their academic history and the current state of their coursework/performance. Additionally, the mentor will review any input from faculty and guide the student through a list of common barriers to academic success, allowing the student to identify and elaborate on whichever barriers they find particularly challenging. This information will be used to plan future coaching and mentoring sessions based on the unique needs of the student. Additional sessions will be left open for individual difficulties that may arise for the student over the course of the academic year.

- c. The means by which you will involve families of youth in your program; ongoing training of mentors throughout the life of the program, including topics and frequency;

Mentors will work with faculty at Columbus North International School to develop a mechanism to involve the families of students. Currently, we propose to prepare regular progress reports for parents and/or meet with parents to discuss their child's performance and allow input from the family. Integration between the mentoring process and the student's family life will allow parents to support and reinforce what has been discussed during the sessions.

Regarding ongoing professional development, mentors will attend monthly weekend training seminars. Some seminars will reinforce the most common topics (e.g., study skills, time management, procrastination, etc.) by going into greater depth about the

topic, while others will serve to broaden the mentor's knowledge and skill set (e.g., negotiation skills, resume preparation, knowledge of scholarship opportunities, etc.)

- d. Assessing fiscal accountability and faithful implementation of project plans; and

This program will utilize accepted accounting principles to track grant funds and expenditures throughout the course of the implementation of this project. Jon Hsu will hold the primary responsibility of tracking funds and overseeing the accounting process.

- e. Any other critical information you would want the Community Connectors team to know.

N/A

12. Describe how each applicant partner plans to contribute to the overall program plan including, but not limited to, time contribution, personnel contribution, monetary contribution, shared responsibilities, use of facilities, etc. Complete the Roles and Responsibilities worksheet attachment.

First Baptist Church of Hilliard – will provide facilities for mentor training, as well as assist with the recruitment of new mentors.

Azure Coaching – bears the primary responsibility for providing local matching funds, developing curriculum and training materials, and supplying mentors for the program.

Columbus North International School – will provide space to meet with students and assist in identifying students to be enrolled in the program; will also assist mentors in evaluating individual student needs

(See **Attachment F** for Roles and Responsibilities Worksheet).

Application Section III: Evaluation Plan

13. The evaluation plan is intended to provide lead organizations with a framework that will ensure the program is on track to positively impact the lives of students and identify needs for additional support when challenges arise. Each evaluation plan must list the scope of work and describe the following:

- a. Plans for keeping records of mentor contact hours, unduplicated count of students served each month, mentor training hours, etc. for ongoing reporting;

Mentors will be required to complete a report detailing each mentoring session, including preparation time, the specific material covered with the student during the session, and debriefing time. Records of mentoring sessions will be maintained for review by both Columbus North International School and Azure Coaching. Additionally, Azure Coaching will maintain records of mentor training and continuing education hours.

- b. Gathering of data to measure progress of program towards meeting the selected goals;

Mentors will work directly with school administrators to gather relevant data on student performance while maintaining student privacy. Additionally, student performance will be measured through both intake and exit self-assessments.

c. Projected indicators of success

This program will track student GPA as well as scores on individual assignments. In addition, the intake process includes an evaluation to be completed by both the student and teachers, assessing the student's performance in a number of areas, including professional communication, decision making, etc. A key indicator of success will be improvement in these areas, as measured by an exit evaluation to be completed at the end of the term.

d. Anticipated barriers to successful evaluation including data collection and measurement of progress toward outcomes.

The applicant anticipates successful evaluation of the project through the collection of data as discussed above. However, we recognize that numeric data does not always accurately reflect a student's true performance or predict future success. Both this program and individual mentors will be continually evaluated so that we can continue to improve and refine our model.

14. Applicants are to complete the program model.

(See **Attachment G** for Program Model Worksheet).

Application Section IV: Sustainability

15. Describe how you plan to maintain the program after the grant funding period. Include a discussion about financial sustainability and sustainability of the partnership commitment. Applicants are not required to include cash as part of their local contributions; however, funding sustainability is critical to the Community Connectors program. Applicants that show the potential for funding sustainability will be given preference in application scoring.

This project is structured to become fully self-sustainable by the end of the third year of the grant period. In order to accomplish this, the owners of Azure Coaching will encourage its staff to participate in this program and expects to fund up to three part-time staff who will remain working at the school following completion of the grant.

Application Section V: Program Budget

16. Complete the budget form attachment and justify each of the budget items by creating a budget justification.

(See **Attachment H** for Budget Worksheet).

By clicking this box, I Jerome Cromwell, Program Director, First Baptist Church of Hilliard agree, on behalf of this applicant, and any or all identified partners, that this application and all supporting documents contain information approved by a relevant executive board or its equivalent.