

The Human Kind Experiment: *Call to Service Volunteer Mobilization for Education*

Summary

The Human Kind Experiment is a Serve Rhode Island (SRI) effort to mobilize 17,500 new volunteers into service over the 2012-2014 three-year period. Volunteers will be recruited for the whole spectrum of traditional and new volunteer opportunities in schools and community agencies serving to address social, economic and environmental concerns/needs throughout the state. The implementation of the first major impact area of this Experiment, supporting public education, is the focus of this implementation plan.

Statewide, thousands of public school students are failing to be grade-level proficient in reading and math. Among public junior high/middle school youth (grades 6, 7 & 8) alone, 9,548 (30%) had Fall 2010 NECAP reading scores below grade level proficiency and 14,097 (44%) were below proficiency in math. For urban public schools proficiency levels in reading and math is more alarming. Chronic absenteeism is also a serious problem. In Providence in 2010, there were over 9,000 students, K-12, missing ten percent or more of their school days.

Beginning in February 2012, SRI proposes to launch the *Call to Service Volunteer Mobilization for Education* initiative of the Experiment. Based on low reading proficiency NECAP testing, eleven middle schools in the school districts of Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls and Woonsocket have been identified to be the recipients of qualified and trained volunteers, recruited and screened by SRI. For the purposes of this plan, these schools are termed “Tier 1”. In the 2012-2013 school year, Serve Rhode Island proposes to pilot the *Call to Service* in-school volunteer model in four middle schools, two in Providence--Roger Williams and Gilbert Stuart, and two in Pawtucket—Goff and Slater.

In year 2 of the project, in the 2013-2014 school year, SRI intends to expand the model to remaining seven schools in Tier 1. In-school volunteer jobs in the model will initially include: school hall monitors, school greeters, mentor/tutor group leaders, Parent Zone coordinators (Providence), youth engagement/service learning coordinators, service project coordinators and service project participants. The design of this model is based on research and consultation with Providence Public School Department administrators and principals, as well as teachers. The 2012-2013 pilot year will further develop and refine these volunteer jobs based on the needs and coordination of resources in the schools.

This two-year plan will mobilize over 1,000 volunteers to work in these eleven underperforming middle schools, directly benefitting nearly 2,000 students testing below grade level proficiency and improving the school learning environment for a total of 7,000 middle school youth, and the teaching and administrative staff teams of the eleven schools. In Providence, SRI proposes to augment the in-school volunteer resourcing with a central phone bank at SRI's Broad Street offices for assisting in contacting parents of 2,800 chronically absent students annually.