

## Request for Consideration of a 3-month No Cost Extension

Submitted by

Diverse Ability Incorporated for the Emerging Me: Middle School Matters project

Diverse Ability Incorporated respectfully requests a 3-month no cost extension for the Emerging Me: Middle School Matters project from Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, RFGA# ADDPC-FFY17-SA-010.

Diverse Ability Incorporated has experienced several unanticipated barriers, which have impacted our ability to make timely progress on this project. Most notably were unexpected personnel changes, which required redistribution of duties and reprioritization of responsibilities. Diverse Ability Incorporated is grateful to Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council for accommodating our request to adjust personnel in order to ensure continued progress was being made on this project.

In addition, although we had little difficulty identifying partners and supporters, we underestimated the challenges we would have with navigating the process of connecting to the decision makers for scheduling intervention, especially at schools. We also did not expect the level of inquiry regarding the curriculum, or the lack of understanding and apprehension about the community planning and parental involvement component, or the general skepticism about this project being offered free of charge. Further, we found that schools were reluctant to help recruit youth to participate at community venues, which is problematic because schools clearly have connection to the greatest numbers of youth who do and do not have disabilities. Jumping through hoops takes time, and perseverance, and just as we finally feel like our hard work is paying off, the clock is running out.

At present, we have 8 interventions scheduled. We have another 3, who would like to schedule, if we can find workable dates. We also feel confident that there are others that we could schedule now for early next school year. It is for these reasons that we seek a 3 month, no cost extension to continue this project that we so strongly believe in.

We are most pleased to report that inclusion did not emerge as a barrier with any of the schools or community organizations we contacted, and in fact, is the greatest selling point. The pervasive lack of connection to middle schoolers

that we have witnessed across the board, during this project has solidified our commitment to making a meaningful impact with this critical age group, and we believe we can. Should Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council see the value in the momentum we are now experiencing and grant our request for a 3 month extension through September 30, 2018, we believe the result will be consequential in all 3 counties. It has not been a smooth path to this point, but we do believe we are on the right path. Given the obstacles we have faced, and are in the process of overcoming, we feel our goal of 250 youth participants is likely too lofty, even if the 3 month extension is granted. We feel 125 is a more realistic goal for us to reach at this time, and would ask Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council to allow us to amend the goal to this number. If we exceed it, all the better, for all of us.

<b>Date of Completion</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Support Documentation</b>	<b>Status Update</b>
07/31/17	Hire and train Youth Engagement Coordinator	Program Director	-Employment file	COMPLETED
07/31/17	Modify Self-Discovery curriculum to better meet the needs of middle school students and for inclusivity	Program Director	-Modified curriculum	COMPLETED
08/31/17	Consult partners for contacts in each county to assist with identification of target communities	Program Director Youth Engagement Coordinator	-Contact lists -Community resource lists	COMPLETED
09/30/17	Complete contact with communities in each county; Gauge interest/investment through informal discussion and community survey	Program Director Youth Engagement Coordinator	-Contact records -Survey results	PARTIALLY COMPLETED/ PROGRESSING
10/31/17	Select implementation communities in each county/confirm Community Captain (main contact person)	Program Director Youth Engagement Coordinator	-Selection metrics	PARTIALLY COMPLETED/ PROGRESSING
11/15/17	Notify communities selected/secure commitment	Program Director Youth Engagement Coordinator	-Engagement Agreement	PARTIALLY COMPLETED/ PROGRESSING

11/30/17	Establish implementation timelines/schedule all training activities and Community Planning Meetings in all counties	Program Director Youth Engagement Coordinator	-Schedule for all activities in each county	PARTIALLY COMPLETED/ PROGRESSING
11/30/17	Develop recruitment materials containing all dates/Implement recruitment activities in each community, using support of partners and community contacts	Program Director Youth Engagement Coordinator	-Flyers, emails, social media posts, meeting schedules	PARTIALLY COMPLETED/ PROGRESSING
12/15/17	Schedule Self-Discovery Trainers and Self-Advocacy Plan Facilitators	Youth Engagement Coordinator	-Schedule for all AZYEA Trainer/Facilitators	PARTIALLY COMPLETED/ PROGRESSING
12/31/17	Interim Status Report to ADDPC	Program Director	-Combination of documentation and reporting to date	COMPLETED
04/30/18	Complete youth intervention in all 3 counties Implement community intervention in all 3 counties	Program Director Youth Engagement Coordinator	-AZYEA Trainer/Facilitator volunteer record -Training sign-in sheets -Pre-and post-surveys -What I learned activity sheets -Self-Advocacy Plan Photos	PROGRESSING <u>Scheduled</u> Maricopa: 4 Mohave: 3 Yavapai: 1  <u>Potential</u> Maricopa: 1 Mohave: 1 Yavapai: 1

05/31/18	Complete community intervention including Facilitator training in each community	Program Director Youth Engagement Coordinator	-Training sign-in sheets	PROGRESSING
06/15/18	Post-intervention satisfaction surveys for students, family members, and support systems completed	Program Director	-Post-intervention satisfaction surveys	NOT YET ADDRESSED
07/15/18	Community Summary Report to all communities	Program Director	-Combination of data collected	NOT YET ADDRESSED
07/31/18	Final financial documentation/Final report submitted to ADDPC	Program Director	-Financial Reconciliation -Final Report	NOT YET ADDRESSED

1. Are any of the schools that you've identified, especially the 8 that you are scheduled to work with, going on strike next week? If so, how will that impact your ability to do this program?

- We have been in contact with both Deer Valley and Mesa Schools. Both schools will be open for our workshops. However, we have no way of knowing how the strike will impact people actually showing up for any of the workshops, not just the two that are at schools. Although most of our workshops are scheduled with community organizations, recruitment efforts have been heavily focused on area schools. We do anticipate that the strike may have an unfavorable impact on the project, but we cannot speculate to what extent.

2. What is the schedule to do the program within the 8 schools? Are they going on now? When will the project be complete with these 8 schools?

The schedule follows:

Raising Special Kids/Ability360: March 27, 28, April 5 (in the process of being rescheduled)

Prescott Valley: April 9, 16, 23 (in the process of being rescheduled)

Bullhead City: April 10, 16, 24

Kingman: April 11, 18, 25 (in the process of being rescheduled)

Mesa: April 30, May 2, 9

Chandler: May 3, 10, 17

Deer Valley: May 7, 8, 15

Peach Springs: May 31

- Following the initial community planning meetings, the workshops at Raising Special Kids/Ability360, and in Prescott Valley, and Kingman were rescheduled. Although participants were registered each set of workshops, we received several last-minute messages from participants who were unable to attend, mostly due to illness, and unanticipated transportation barriers. More information about this can be found under question 3.

3. You stated there are a potential 3 more schools that can be scheduled? Are those for the summer or before school ends?

- Mile Markers in Lake Havasu, Mesa Community College in Mesa, as well as their Red Mountain Campus, and Pendergast Schools have all expressed an interest for August/September, when school resumes. In addition to these, we are maintaining a list of schools and organizations that expressed interest and couldn't commit to scheduling, or who asked us to check back with them next year, such as: MIKID, One-n-Ten, and Chino Valley Schools. Additionally, some of the places we have scheduled with are willing to schedule again in the future, if this option becomes available.

4. How are collaborators working with you to ensure you can complete your objectives? What are each partners doing to assist you right now?

- Raising Special Kids has committed to making a more concerted effort to do targeted outreach and recruitment when we reschedule. We are holding off on rescheduling this workshop until we have the two out of county workshops rescheduled. We are targeting late May or June.

- We are now working with Sharing Down Syndrome and CAPE (Communicate, Advocate, Participate, Educate) in Prescott to reschedule. Members of these organizations attended the community planning meeting, and immediately began brainstorming about other organizations involve. One of the members said she sees this project as “critical” to implement in Yavapai county, as all of their schools are “going inclusive” in 2019, and “nobody has a clue what that means.” They really get the concept we have of having the communities carry this forward, and we feel like we finally found the right people to collaborate with in that area. They are strategizing about meeting and workshop dates, and have other partners, including school personnel on board. We delivered 600 flyers to schools/district offices in Prescott, and Prescott Valley, and we never really got an “in” with the schools. The people we are now working with have those and many more connections, and we feel great about moving forward with them as our partners.
- Participants in Bullhead City have recommended that we contact with the Boys & Girls Club there to see if we can do a second session there over the summer. We have connected with them, and they are determining whether or not they can fit us into their schedule. Cassy Greenwood from the Mohave County Health Department has also been very helpful in spreading the word about this project.
- The CLUB for YOUth in Kingman felt they did not have enough time to adequately recruit for their workshop and requested (while we were there for the community planning meeting) to reschedule. They want us to come and work with the youth they have involved in their summer program (30-35 middle school aged youth). We have provided them our available dates in June, and are awaiting confirmation.
- Rhodes Jr. High is hosting our workshop in Mesa, and all middle schools have been invited by the school district to participate. The process of getting into Mesa Schools was lengthy and required much ongoing discussion. However, they were clear that they wanted this from the beginning, and have been proactive about recruitment. They requested a recruitment flyer in Spanish, and made a point of informing teachers and staff of the opportunity for them to participate.
- Our partner in Chandler is ICAN: Positive Programs for Youth. ICAN has relationships with 4 middle schools in Chandler, where they deliver programming. They have presented this opportunity to key staff, and shared recruitment flyers. We have also provided flyers to all area middle schools.
- Deer Valley Schools have been on board since our first contact with them. Stephanie Johnson has been the catalyst for getting the workshops scheduled and spearheading recruitment. Deer Valley is doing some targeted recruitment of youth who will be able to serve as mentors throughout this process. Deer Valley has also extended this opportunity to Peoria Schools.
- We are working with a Boys & Girls Club in Peach Springs. They are not recruiting outside of their club, due to space constraints, but anticipate having 20-25 middle school-aged youth there to participate.

5. If you do not receive a 3 month no cost extension, can you complete the project with the 8 schools you have identified?

- We are doubtful that we can reach the reduced goal of 125 by the end of June, especially given the strike. However, we can complete all the steps we identified with those we have scheduled through June.

6. When I say completing the project, I mean with the intent that you have worked with each school, identified students to participate, and conduct each task as stated in your proposal, peer to peer activities, person centered planning, and evaluation/follow-up. So are any parts of the project, other than the number of schools and students identified, being changed or eliminated?

- No.