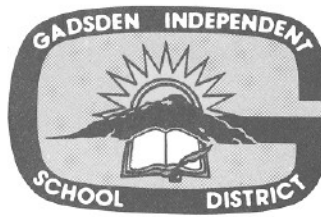


SUPERINTENDENT  
RON HAUGEN



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May 27, 2004

Ms. Iona Regala  
Career-Technical and Community Services Department  
New Mexico Public Education Department  
300 Don Gaspar  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

RE: Gadsden Community Service Learning Initiative  
CERTIFICATION

Dear Ms. Regala:

This is to certify the Gadsden Independent School District is partnering with the E2E Connection, a Dona Ana County based not-for-profit corporation, to offer the Service Learning Proposal referenced above. We accept the general requirements contained in this Request for Proposal and accept the general requirements and standard contract provisions contained in the form contract.

In addition, the GISD hereby accepts the designation of fiscal agent and its responsibilities described in this Request for Proposal.

On, April 29, 2004 the GISD Central Management Team met with Steven W. Givens, executive director of E2E Connection, and Ms. Carolyn Kuhn, president and chief executive officer of Software Mart, Inc., to review the details of the proposed Gadsden Community Service Learning Initiative. We reviewed and thoroughly discussed this program and will be pleased to provide administrative support throughout the term of the grant. The Gadsden School Board met at 6:30 p.m. on May 27, 2004. Both Mr. Givens and Ms. Kuhn attended the session in order to answer questions on the proposal, which was recommended for acceptance. This proposal is an excellent example of a private-public partnership to enhance student learning with innovative and participatory community service efforts. We look forward to adding this valuable service learning system to our K-through-12 career readiness curriculum.

Mr. Ronald J. Haugen  
Superintendent

## **Amendment 1: May 14, 2004**

The purpose of this amendment to the document provided to the Gadsden School Board for review prior to the meeting May 13, 2004 is to address the questions raised by Dr. Garcia during that session and highlight the history between Gadsden and one of the parties in this application. See expanded item 2 and new item 5 below.

### **Proposal for Community Service Learning Initiative, K-12**

#### **RFP April 6, 2004 Public Education Department, Career-Technical and Community Service Unit**

#### **1. What are the scope/requirements of the grant?**

**Purpose:** New Mexico Service Learning grants are provided by the New Mexico Public Education Department, Career-Technical and Community Service Unit to assist in developing high quality service learning programs for elementary and secondary schools that provide youth with opportunities to learn and develop their own capabilities through service learning in the community.

As stated in the RFP, “service learning is an educational method which engages young people in service to their communities as a means of enriching their academic learning, promoting personal growth, and helping them to develop skills needed for productive citizenship...”

“...The NM Service Learning project is intended to enhance existing school curriculum through student involvement in a community service that relates to classroom instruction....Thus, learning through service becomes a tool by which school subjects gain relevance and importance in the student’s perspective.”

**Requirement:** Address the four needs of at-risk youth, literacy, cultural values, and work readiness

**Proponent:** LEA in partnership with one or more community entities, including small business, non-profit organization, faith based organization, etc.

**Duration of grant:** 3 years; August 1, 2004 through June 30, 2007

**Funding level:** range of \$41,800 to \$62,713 per year, if two or three proposals are selected. Total funding requested: \$188,139.00.

#### **2. Why are E2E and Software Mart, Inc. proposing this?**

E2E Connection is a non profit organization that desires to be the connection with educators, employers, and students to achieve workforce readiness through educational excellence and lifelong learning.

E2E Connection is the public name of the Dona Ana Workforce Action Council, which began in 1994. DAWAC helped the Gadsden Independent School District institute its current cluster based learning strategy through efforts by Ann Morgan, the former Dona Ana Branch Community College School-to-Work Liaison. Ms. Morgan continues as an E2E executive board member and provides valuable insight into the E2E program and will assist the Project Director during this proposal. This NM Service Learning initiative proposal builds on the success of the current E2E-GISD efforts.

Software Mart Inc. specializes in computer-based education, assessment, and database tools for program management and implementation.

Together with GISD and community based groups, we can build an outstanding service learning program and capability in Spanish and English that leverages GISD's current goals and student success plan, including existing career readiness curriculum and projects. This capability can be replicated across the state effectively.

### **3. What are the key elements of the proposed program design?**

It builds off of GISD's current technology and programs. It is designed to meet the needs of at risk students in literacy, cultural values, and work readiness.

It uses computer-based materials throughout all phases of the program: orientation, student and adult training, project definition, project implementation, reflection and assessment.

It enables students to apply classroom learning to real world situations and make a difference in the community. Broad range of learning service topics can be linked across the curriculum at all grade levels.

It does not require additional investments by GISD to create and administer the program K-12.

### **4. How will the program work?**

#### **A. General grade level plan:**

K-3: Story based examples of service concepts and activities.

Middle School: biographies of service related people; speakers and interviews of service providers; projects.

Junior High School: speakers, community research, projects, mentoring younger children.

High School: all of the above plus leadership in student service learning program.

## **B. Specific process:**

### 1. Orientation and development phase:

Review of career readiness curriculum and program in GISD

Review and verification of Service Learning scope and sequence with GISD

Implementation of computer based orientation, training, and student materials.

Implementation of database of community organizations for service volunteers

2. Announcement of the initiative to all principals, counselors, and teachers with printed FAQs about the program, ideas on using the program topic(s) in the curriculum and community projects to enhance learning and motivation, and call for participation.

On-line orientation and training will be provided to those who wish to participate. The training will also help teachers and counselors to plan and implement the service learning program into the curriculum and leverage the current GISD career-awareness curriculum with a robust service learning component.

3. Announcement to students and parents to explain the program, its benefits to students, and request permission for student participation in community based activities and parental involvement.

4. Students will be encouraged to complete an Internet based interest profile and tutorial that explores the ideas of volunteerism and service in the community. Each student will receive an individualized report on line that can also be printed. This interest profile will become part of their personal service learning journal. The report will include suggestions of community based organizations they might contact to explore possible service learning projects in their area of interest.

5. Students can contact organizations to request more information and define their service project.

6. Students will define their project following the on-line project planner document. This document can be used with an entire class, student team, or individual student. It will be reviewed by the appropriate teacher or counselor for completeness and appropriateness. Students will have a central role in decision-making throughout the program

7. Students in partnership with the teacher/counselor, will make final project arrangements, including parental permission, schedule, project tasks, community organization approval and student commitment. Students will enter project information and activity completion in their service learning journal

8. Students implement their projects. The journal will be set up to record their activities and progress throughout their project.

- a. Each project will include reflection activities before, during and after the service project. In pre-service activities students will be given the opportunity to examine their beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes. They do this when they examine their interests, when they choose or define a specific project and prepare themselves to engage in service. During a project, students will be given opportunities to share and learn from their peers, ask for and receive feedback, ask questions, and solve problems. After a project is completed, students will look back over their journal and experiences to evaluate how their beliefs, expectations, and assumptions have changed. They may also assess how well the project turned out, apply what they learn, and develop ways to improve the project in the future.

#### 9. Celebrating Gadsden's Service Learning Volunteers:

In the month of April, students in grades K-12 will celebrate their service learning projects in a variety of ways. Examples include art competition to illustrate a success of their project, participation certificates, community service essay contest with savings bonds as prizes, publication of award-winning essays in local press, community recognition of student volunteers by community partners.

#### 10. Data Collection and Project Reporting:

The innovative framework and process design of the Gadsden Service Learning Initiative and its use of computer based tools assure that data collection from each grade level, school, and throughout the district and all districts that use this program will be complete and accurate. Performance measurement is a goal of this program that is built in.

#### 11. Program Enhancement:

One of the requisites for a high quality service learning program is the ability to refine the process and project scope to meet the needs of at risk youth, literacy, community needs and work readiness, and cultural values as they change over time in specific communities. The Gadsden Community Service Learning Initiative will be developed with this flexibility and the data to refine training, process, curriculum linkages, student decision-making and leadership, and community value of service projects by students.

### 5. Addressing Dr. Garcia's comments:

#### A. No Child Left Behind(NCLB) and Service Learning:

NCLB is widely known for its focus on helping students meet core curriculum proficiency standards for all students and its accountability provisions. Many of the provisions in the law encourage or allow service learning to be implemented as a strategy to help children achieve.

These include provisions for Titles I, III, IV, V, and VII. Service learning strategies can be used for Title I program instructional approaches meeting math, reading/language arts, and science standards; meeting bilingual program objectives; meeting objectives of safe and drug free schools; meeting objectives in character education programs; meeting objectives in career readiness programs; energizing parent and community involvement in K-12 education.

As an example, Title III states that LEAs may receive funding for “implementing applied learning activities and service learning to enhance and support comprehensive elementary and secondary language instruction programs”. In addition, Title V provides funding for innovative programs, including service learning programs and projects.

This Service Learning proposal builds on the K-12 GISD career readiness program and offers GISD a substantial opportunity to involve more students at all grade levels in activities that will boost relevance of academic learning.

#### **B. Incidental Learning/Performance Benchmark:**

The Service Learning RFP from NMPED is based on the premise that Contextual Learning, that is, learning within the context of performing actual tasks and practical applications in real-life settings, can be an effective tool for developing an understanding of abstract principles which include not only academic concepts but also individual social and personal skills.

With regard to the performance measures in the RFP, the NMPED has set a benchmark that “By the end of Year 3, at least 25% of participants will have increased Language scores on state mandated standardized tests.” Dr. Garcia is correct to state that this benchmark is substantially lower than the gains we would hope to achieve through student involvement in the proposed service learning program. Our goal is to see every student who participates in the program raise his or her test scores every year. The service learning program is a complementary enhancement to GISD’s focus on career readiness K-12.

### **6. What support do we need from GISD to submit the proposal?**

- A. Willingness to act as fiscal agent for the project
- B. Willingness to coordinate with Project Director from E2E and Software Mart.
- C. Willingness to share information and materials from current career readiness and curriculum with E2E and Software Mart, Inc.



D. Willingness to provide written certification for the proposal from the GISD Superintendent to the effect that the proposed program will have local administrative approval and support throughout the grant period.

