



Fall 2006

TO: MMSD Principals

FROM: Art Rainwater

RE: Availability of VISTA Volunteer Coordinators -- "Schools of Hope Literacy Project"

As the result of ongoing funding through the United Way of Dane County, twelve VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) members are available to serve as local school volunteer coordinators to facilitate the use of community volunteers and work study tutors.

The primary goal of this program ("Schools of Hope Literacy Project") is to increase the number and expertise of trained literacy tutors serving kindergarten through grade five students to help boost overall academic performance. Starting in fall 2005, volunteer math tutors have also been supported.

Participating schools are selected on the basis of 1) the number of students not scoring above standard on standardized third-grade reading assessments, and 2) the number of free or reduced lunch students. This project offers the following services to your school:

- A part-time coordinator to assist with recruitment, orientation, training, supervision, evaluation and recognition of tutors.
- Coordination with agencies and groups providing volunteer tutors to MMSD schools, after-school and neighborhood center programs.
- District-wide training of new and continuing volunteers under the direction of MMSD Teaching and Learning and ESL / Bilingual staff.

Schools accepting this invitation to participate agree to provide the following:

- Placement of tutors in one-on-one and one-on-two settings whenever possible
- Willingness to collaborate with Schools of Hope community partners
- On-site supervision of VISTA coordinator
- Opportunity for VISTA coordinator to meet with the principal and other staff as appropriate at the start of each semester and as needed to review school priorities and alignment of VISTA resources
- Orientation to individual school policies, procedures and curriculum, and training in conjunction with District-wide offerings
- Time to update staff at least twice a year at staff meetings, and integration of VISTA member as part of school staff team

- Coordination of VISTA resources with after-school programming that may be offered at the school
- Assistance in scheduling a VISTA update to the school parent / family / teacher organization once a semester
- Provision of:
 - Work area (desk, chair, filing space) with access to a computer
 - Phone (may be shared) in work area; message system with VISTA name and number
 - Equivalent of \$200 per year in incidental office supplies, copying costs and materials required by volunteers (record-keeping forms, student materials etc.)

Please contact Kathy Price at 663-4941 with any questions.