

PROMISE FELLOW VOCAB

AmeriCorps terms

AmeriCorps (pronounced Ameri-core) – AmeriCorps is a civil society program supported by the U.S. federal government, foundations, corporations, and other donors engaging adults in involved public service work with a goal of “helping others and meeting critical needs in the community.” Members commit to full-time or part-time positions offered by a network of nonprofit community organizations and public agencies, to fulfill assignments in the fields of education, public safety, health care, and environmental protection. [AmeriCorps Fact Sheet](#).

AmeriCoach – Promise Fellows have the opportunity to be matched with a Life Coach throughout their Service term to support personal and professional goals. Fellows will note their interest at the second Corps meeting and be matched mid/late October.

Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) – [CNCS](#) is an independent federal agency that funds and oversees VISTA, AmeriCorps State and National programs, and other national service programs.

National Service – This term is used to describe the programs under CNCS where individuals can dedicate a period of time to service in their community. National Service includes AmeriCorps, SeniorCorps, and Learn and Serve. Within AmeriCorps, National Service members in Minnesota include VISTA, Promise Fellows, and NCCC.

Member – Short-hand term for AmeriCorps Promise Fellow or VISTA (or other AmeriCorps member).

Service – Since AmeriCorps members are not employees, terms such as “work” and “job” are not accurate. Instead, we use the word “service”.

Living Allowance – Since AmeriCorps members are not employees, terms such as “paycheck,” “salary,” or “paid” are not accurate. Instead, we say that members receive a living allowance. Also referred to as ‘stipend.’ Members must serve full time to receive.

Ed Award – AmeriCorps members receive an Education Award upon successfully completing their year of service. The Education Award is \$5,775 that may be used towards future education expenses or to pay back qualified student loans. [More information](#).

Qualified Student Loan Forbearance – Forbearance means that you neither have to make payments nor pay interest on qualified loan(s) over a specified period. In other words, you will not have to make payments on your loan(s) while you serve. Because some loans continue to accrue interest while in forbearance, after you successfully complete service you can apply for

the National Service Trust to pay some or all of the interest that accumulated while you were a member. Private loans do not qualify for forbearance. [More information](#).

Public Service Loan Forgiveness – The Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program forgives the remaining balance on your direct federal student loans after you have made 120 qualifying monthly payments under a qualifying repayment plan while working full-time for a qualifying employer. AmeriCorps is a qualifying employer. [More info here](#).

Accompaniment – If any background checks are pending at the start of the Member’s service, a Member serving with access to vulnerable populations must at all times be accompanied. Accompaniment is defined as the constant physical presence and in line of sight of a person cleared for access to such populations. Site Supervisors are responsible for providing continual accompaniment to Members and meeting these requirements.

Minnesota Alliance With Youth Terms

Alliance –Short for Minnesota Alliance With Youth, the organization that sponsors all Minnesota Promise Fellows and Alliance VISTAs.

America’s Promise Alliance – The Alliance’s [national partner](#) devoted to helping create the conditions for success (The Five Promises) for all young people and committed to increasing graduation rates for all youth.

The Five Promises – The collective work of America’s Promise Alliance involves keeping [Five Promises](#) to children and youth that form the conditions they need to achieve adult success: Caring Adults, Safe Places, A Healthy Start, Effective Education, and Opportunities to Help Others.

ServeMinnesota – [Funder](#) for the Promise Fellow program providing federal and state AmeriCorps funding to the Alliance to operate the program.

MDE – [Minnesota Department of Education](#). Great resource on all things Education related in MN. Start by reviewing your school or district’s [graduation rate](#).

Promise Fellow – [Promise Fellows](#), or Fellows, are AmeriCorps members in Minnesota that serve with Minnesota Alliance With Youth. Full time Promise Fellows are placed at a school or community organization, where they serve 1720 hours over the course of an 11 month term of service. Promise Fellows help ensure youth success by connecting young people to caring adults, service and leadership opportunities, and high quality in and out of school supports.

Alliance VISTAs – [Alliance AmeriCorps VISTAs](#) build capacity for organizations and communities to address education inequities, eliminate poverty, and connect and leverage resources already existing in those communities and statewide.

Member Agreement – Agreement that establishes the basic parameters of the relationship between the AmeriCorps Promise Fellow, his/her Host Site, and Minnesota Alliance With Youth for the service year.

Promise Fellow Service Terms

Host Site – the organization/school/district/agency who leads the efforts to support and ensure all Alliance and AmeriCorps requirements are met by their AmeriCorps member(s).

Host Site Agreement – This is a contract between Minnesota Alliance With Youth and the host site where the member will be serving.

Supervisor – the individual assigned to provide day-to-day supervision and support for the AmeriCorps member, and to ensure effective implementation of the Promise Fellow Model at their Host Site. May also function as the data coach who works with the Fellow to provide access to data and information regarding youth being served by the Fellow.

Youth Success Team – a team of staff (e.g. Counselors, Deans, Social Workers, Assistant Principals, Community Partners, etc) at the Host Site that supports Promise Fellows in selecting and supporting Focus List youth. This team may already exist at a site and is often called a Student Support Team or a Response to Intervention Team.

Trainer – Each Promise Fellow has a Trainer at the Alliance whose job it is to support AmeriCorps members in their year of service. Trainers lead small corps meetings, coordinate larger training opportunities, provide site visits, and are Fellows’ go-to person with questions about service.

Small Corps – (pronounced Small Cores) Small cohorts of 15-25 Promise Fellows grouped by geographic location and attend meetings and trainings together. Small Corps are each assigned a specific trainer.

ABCs – The ABCs stand for Attendance, Behavior, and Course Performance. The ABCs are the “early warning indicators” used to identify which youth a Promise Fellow should support.

Focus List – Promise Fellows each work with a focus list of at least 30 youth in grades 6-10 in schools and community organizations. Focus list youth are identified as needing additional support with their ABCs.

OnCorps (pronounced On-core) – [OnCorps](#) is the system where PFs submit timesheets, monthly reflections, and data tracking.

Baseline Data – Baseline data is information about how each youth was performing in school before being added to the focus list and receiving support. This data gives a concise ‘before picture’ of school performance/academic engagement and provides a point of comparison in order to show Promise Fellow impact.

Intervention – A targeted interaction or support that Fellows provide to youth, or an existing opportunity that Fellows connect youth to. Interventions are intentional and specific to the interests and needs of each youth with the goal of increasing a youth’s ABCs. These interventions are tracked in OnCorps using the following categories: Caring Adult, Service/Service-Learning, or Out of School.

Benchmarks – Promise Fellows are to meet specific achievements (benchmarks) throughout service. Having at least 5 student profiles created and completed with baseline data on a Promise Fellow’s Focus List by October 31st is an example of a benchmark. Benchmarks can change from year to year, consult the Training Calendar for current benchmarks.

Monthly Reflections – Numbers can’t tell the full story of the impact you have on your youth. Each month we ask Promise Fellows to submit 2 short narrative reflections on their service via OnCorps, Great Stories and Direct Service Activity Questions. These reflections are stories about the impact PFs have on the youth they serve, what they are working on at their sites, their own personal development, and feedback for the Alliance. These reflections are a core part of your data tracking responsibility. They are a required part of your service and are meant to be shared with your Supervisor. The DUE DATE for each monthly reflection is the last day of the month.

Great Stories – The prompt for this reflection is the same every month and is due the last day of every month of service. Great Stories are used as a tool for Promise Fellows to share their successes with their Focus List youth. Promise Fellows share these stories in OnCorps. Great Stories are generally 3-4 paragraphs each.

Direct Service Activity Questions (DSQ) – The prompt for DSQs change every month and is due the last day of every month of service. You can find updated prompts on the PF Reporting Page. DSQs are 2-3 specific questions about service that relate to Small Corps meetings and larger PF trainings. Promise Fellows submit their responses in OnCorps. DSQs should be at least 1 paragraph per question.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports – The model on which the Promise Fellow program is based.

Timesheets – Due the 16th and 1st of every month. Keep track of hours spent fundraising, training, and serving. In order to successfully complete service and receive the Education Reward, a full time Fellow must serve at least 1720 (~40 hours per week).

Summer Hours – If Promise Fellows are on track to successfully complete service on time (1720 hours), they may participate in Summer Hours (Memorial Day through the end of service). During the summer, Promise Fellows must serve a minimum of 30 hours per week to receive their living allowance. Note that site programming may require Promise Fellows to serve more than 30 hours per week and members are expected to continue to meet the needs

of their site first. Supervisors are asked to support the Promise Fellow in determining their summer schedule, additional opportunities and anticipated hours.

Education Field Terms

Achievement Gap – The achievement gap refers to the observed, persistent disparity of educational measures between the performance of groups of students, especially groups defined by socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity and gender.

Check and Connect – A comprehensive student engagement intervention model designed to enhance student engagement at school and with learning for marginalized, disengaged students in grades K-12, through relationship building, problem solving and capacity building, and persistence. A goal of Check & Connect is to foster school completion with academic and social competence. Many Promise Fellows serve at host sites that implement the Check and Connect Model.

AVID – AVID, Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a method of tutoring/teaching. The AVID model trains educators to use specific practices in order to prepare students for success in high school, college, and a career, especially students traditionally underrepresented in higher education. Promise Fellows often work alongside AVID tutors or implement the AVID model at their Host Site.

Public School – Public schools are universal: They are available to everyone. Public elementary schools, middle schools and high schools are funded and controlled by three levels of government: The United States Department of Education on the federal level, state-level departments of education and by the school district at the local level.

Private School – Private schools are not funded or operated by federal, state or local governments. They are not paid for by public tax dollars and are not subject to the regulations that govern public schools. However, most private schools choose not to stray too far from federal policies and strive to provide a quality of education equal to or better than that available in public schools. Unlike public schools, they are allowed to set their own criteria for admitting students and are not subject to the limits of school districts and zoning laws, allowing families to choose a private school regardless of their location.

Charter School – Charter schools are independent public schools that are not bound by many of the same regulations as traditional public schools. This increased autonomy helps them achieve the specific missions on which they are founded. They are established in their communities alongside existing public schools, and sometimes even inside them. Charter schools are usually founded by parents, educators, entrepreneurs or existing schools, and the fundamental thing that sets them apart from other public schools is the specific mission laid out by their founders. These missions form the school's "charter".

Magnet School – Magnet schools first emerged in the 1960s as part of an effort to racially desegregate schools. The idea was to offer students an alternative education heavily focused

on a particular area of interest to draw students from a variety school districts. Students came together by their shared educational goals, resulting in a sort of voluntary desegregation. Nowadays, magnet schools are still focused on diversity, though their main purpose is no longer desegregation. Magnet schools are highly specialized and emphasize an area of study or a method of teaching. Some magnet schools are geared towards math and science, whereas others have a focus in performing arts. The idea is to draw students who excel in these subjects to a school that will foster their particular interest and encourage achievement.

Area Learning Centers/Alternative Learning Programs – ALCs and ALPs are Alternative education programs designed for students who are at-risk of educational failure. They are characterized by smaller class sizes and using a hands-on/experiential approach to learning. Instruction is designed to meet individual student learning styles as well as their social and emotional needs. Teachers build connections with students and focus on vocational and career skills, including independent study options.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) – SEL is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

IEP – An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written statement of the educational program designed to meet a child’s individual needs. Every child who receives special education services must have an IEP. A Promise Fellow is able to support special education students on his/her focus list if the student meets the criteria for the focus list. A Promise Fellow serving special education students should not displace any existing supports or resources that the student already receives.

PBIS – Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. PBIS is a proactive approach to establishing the behavioral supports and social culture needed for all students in a school to achieve social, emotional, and academic success.

RTI – Response to Intervention (RTI) is a framework to identify students who need additional supports and interventions and are at risk of falling behind in academic achievement.
Service Learning – An educational approach that combines an academic component with the opportunity to serve in the community in order to provide an enriching, hands-on learning experience. Promise Fellows are to provide at least one Service or Leadership Opportunity to each Focus List Youth they support, which could be a service-learning project.

CEU – Continuing Education Unit is a measure used in continuing education programs to assist professionals in maintaining their license. CEU’s are particularly relevant to those in the education field. Many Promise Fellow Professional Development Opportunities and Trainings can count for CEUs, be sure to take advantage of these opportunities.