



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

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25 West 4th Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102
www.stpaul.gov/parks

Telephone: 651-266-6400
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April 27, 2011

Yvonne L. Barrett
Saint Paul Foundation
55 Fifth Street East, Ste 600
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Dear Ms. Barrett,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal to support Saint Paul Parks and Recreation's work with the Sprockets network to improve the quality of out-of-school time learning opportunities in Saint Paul.

As we look at our state's changing demographics and its future workforce needs, we are reminded of the fact that more must be done to ensure Minnesota's future education and economic competitiveness. According to Saint Paul Public School data, only 50% of students are proficient in reading and math with the widest gap between African American and Native American youth and White youth. This is unacceptable and it is a community problem. We recognize the measurable results that different learning opportunities have on young people's lives, especially our hardest to reach and serve populations. Out-of-school time learning provides an additional arena for children to explore skills such as critical thinking, team building, leadership and project based learning that are crucial to young people's preparedness for college, work and life. Yet we know that out-of-school time learning opportunities will not be effective at supporting young people's development if they are not of high quality.

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation is proud to join with Saint Paul Public Schools, the City of Saint Paul Mayor's Office, Saint Paul Public Libraries and over 70 community partners as part of Sprockets, Saint Paul's Out-Of-School Time Network. One of Sprockets key strategies is to improve the quality of out-of-school time learning opportunities in Saint Paul. We have crafted a comprehensive plan that will engage many after-school and summer learning providers in the important work of program quality improvement. Together, we will create a common language around quality through use of Minnesota's statewide quality framework, *Once We Know it, We Can Grow it* and the quality assessment tool the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA). We will also provide rich opportunities for professional development through workshops and coaching that builds organizational capacity to create a culture of quality in their organization.



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The Sprockets network, including Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, is committed to ensure all Saint Paul's youth develop their abilities as learners, contributors, and navigators so they can recognize and achieve their greatest potential. We believe that ensuring young people have access to *quality* learning opportunities is tantamount to achieving this vision. Your full consideration of this proposal would be much appreciated. Please feel free to contact the Director of Sprockets, Kari Denissen Cunnien, if you have any additional questions regarding this proposal. She can be reached at (651) 266-6426 or kari.denissen@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Sincerely,

Michael Hahm, CPRP
Director