

Student Service-Learning

Service-Learning includes:

Preparation

Action

Direct

Indirect

Advocacy

Reflection

- ◆ Direct Action – students have face-to-face contact with the service recipients. For example: tutoring; serving meals at a homeless shelter; working with the elderly in a nursing home, etc.
- ◆ Indirect Action – students perform a service without having face-to-face contact with the recipient. Usually resources are channeled to help alleviate a problem. For example: food and clothing drives; “a-thins” or fundraisers; environmental projects, etc.
- ◆ Advocacy – students educate others about a particular issue with the goal being to eliminate the cause of a particular problem. For example; writing letters to legislators or editors; preparing and displaying posters, plays, or other educational materials for others, etc.

Reflection

- ◆ To explore the impact and importance of citizen service to the community
- ◆ To understand how the things that are learned in class relate to the “real” world
- ◆ To gain insights into career connections
- ◆ To attend to broader issues as well as personal experience

Maryland’s Seven Best Practices of Service-Learning

- ◆ *Meet a recognized need in the community*
- ◆ *Achieve curricular objectives through service-learning*
- ◆ *Reflect throughout service-learning experience*
- ◆ *Develop student responsibility*
- ◆ *Establish community partner*
- ◆ *Plan ahead for service-learning*
- ◆ *Equip students with knowledge and skills needed for service*

Websites

www.mssa.sailorsite.net

www.servicelearning.org

Canned Food Drive

Making the connection with service learning!



High quality service-learning always involves:

PREPARATION
ACTION
REFLECTION

PREPARATION

Meet a recognized need in the community

- Research the need by calling several food banks and collecting information and data:
 - how much food do they distribute per year
 - what are the times of year when the food bank gets low
 - what are the best types of canned and boxed foods to collect

Achieve curricular objectives through service learning

- Research the effect of hunger on children (malnutrition, learning readiness, etc.)
- Discuss with science, family and consumer sciences, social studies teachers (others) where this type of project ties into the curriculum (socio-economics, contemporary issues, physical education and health, nutrition unit, etc.)
- Explore websites that address topics of hunger (global and/or local)
- Set goals for your project
 - review the success of your past canned food drives
 - do you have data on past drives (number of cans collected or overall weight collected, etc.)
 - use researched information in your publicity drive
 - decide how you will conduct your canned food drive
 - conduct a competition by 1st period/homeroom classes/grade levels (keep charts on the percentages of items per students in the class to keep the competition on a fair competitive level)
 - for every food item a student brings in, enter his/her name in a drawing (to be conducted daily at lunch, during morning announcements, etc.)
 - keep data charts by count cans/boxes of food or weighing the items

- Write Legislation

- Whereas - in the “whereas” clause, be sure to include the research data and curriculum connections. Remember, you are also trying to persuade students to act in a specific way to meet a community need. This is a good opportunity to emphasize the duties and privileges of citizenship!
- Resolved - the “resolved” clause can be a simple statement of having a canned food drive (work out the dates and details in committee after administrative approval)



Reflect throughout service-learning experience



- How is the project going?
- How could this project alter the school and neighboring community?
- What are you learning through this project?
- Why do you feel this project is important?

Develop student responsibility

Plan the logistics

- What are the best dates? Use the information from the food banks to decide when they would most benefit from your collection. Also, look at other calendared events at your school so you don’t overlap activities.
- Who will collect the food? Who will count, weight, sort, and box the food? Who will record the data? Who will call and find out if a Community Food Bank will come to the school to pick up the items? How can you get enough boxes for the collection? Will this take any class time? Can you have a staff competition at the same time?
- Who will make the curriculum connections (meet with teachers, etc.)?
- Who will publicize the project? (Make your posters, PA announcements, flyers, press releases, etc. Use your research in your publicity. Share information gained in your research and data collection. Be sure to get your publicity out in a timely manner so students have plenty of notice!
- ◆ Line up all of the Committee Helpers - Who will be coordinating, advocating and recruiting helpers, etc.?
- Write down all of the tasks, who will do them, and the deadlines (be specific!) – stress the responsibility needed in completing the individual task

Establish community partnerships

- Identify a Community Food Bank (consider if they will come to the school and pick up the food items)
- Establish a clear line of responsibility and communication with partners
- Contact community businesses and organizations to partner by donating small prizes for your competition (coupons, CDs, small gifts, etc.)
- Consider a collective “celebration” with partners after the project is completed

Equip students with the knowledge and skills needed for service

What do students need to know and do to carry out this project? (Telephone etiquette, computer skills, interview skills, communication, teamwork, responsibility, etc.)

Plan ahead for service-learning

As you go through the stages of this project, look for activities that are a natural outgrowth or follow-up to this project (service in soup kitchens, working with local elementary schools to emphasize the importance of a good breakfast, etc.). Are you discovering the many links to existing curriculum (publicity – commercial art; developing legislation – persuasive writing skills and the legislative process; tracking data – math; etc.)

ACTION

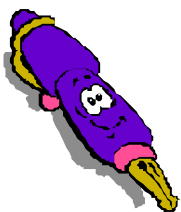
Do the project. This type of project is considered “indirect” action. You are helping to address a need by collecting and donating food items. “Direct” action would be service in a soup kitchen, etc.



- Evaluate & Celebrate
 - What details did you omit in your planning? Were you successful? Did you advertise your success? Did you write thank you notes to all involved? Get all of the records in order for your files. Celebrate the end of a successful project. Even if you didn't reach your goal, you have still accomplished a good deed for the community – and learned a lot in the process!

REFLECTION

Lead students through a reflection process. Remember that service-learning is a method of experiential learning. In most cases, service learning projects are a natural outgrowth of the curriculum. Students study their communities and understand the many ways that their academic studies are related to being involved as a citizen. They also evaluate, discuss and reflect on their service in order to make the connection between their academic subjects and effective action. During a canned food drive, students worked on research, data collection, teambuilding, responsibility, writing skills, etc.



Complete a Service-Learning Form for Credit (if applicable in your school system) At the end of each major activity, work with your students to complete the county's required Service-Learning form so they may have their hours recorded on their record. (MCPS forms attached as a sample.)

Note - Using the attached Project Planning Model will help students in the steps for conducting this event.

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