

## **Student Service Learning (SSL) Notes**

**Give a Little Time...Make a Big Difference**

**September 2009**

***Students gain CITIZENSHIP SKILLS from high quality service learning.***

- SSL is a graduation requirement in the state of Maryland. Understand the SSL plan in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) by contacting the SSL coordinator in any middle or high school and exploring the SSL Web site [www.mcpsssl.org](http://www.mcpsssl.org).
- Service performed during the summer for which SSL hours are desired must be documented on MCPS Form 560-51, *Student Service Learning Activity Verification* and turned in to the SSL coordinator by the last Friday in September (September 25).
- All organizations and opportunities for which SSL hours are desired must be preapproved. Check the list of organizations tagged, "Approved SSL MCPS" and opportunities tagged, "MCPS SSL Approved" at the website [www.mcpsssl.org](http://www.mcpsssl.org) or get MCPS Form 560-50, *Request for SSL Preapproval* granted in advance of any involvement.
- The award of SSL hours outside of the instructional day (before school, lunchtime, after school) is one SSL hour for every hour of service within a 24 hours period. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- SSL is provided without financial compensation.

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**October 2009**

***Students FORM COMMUNITY ATTACHMENTS through high quality service learning.***

- All SSL activities must be documented on MCPS Form 560-51, *Student Service Learning Activity Verification* and turned in to the school SSL coordinator according to timelines.
- Students should keep copies of all SSL documents that they turn into the school or community representatives.
- Organizations and opportunities not listed at [www.mcpsssl.org](http://www.mcpsssl.org) must be pre approved using MCPS Form 560-50, *Request for SSL Preapproval*.
- Students may address hunger and homelessness in Montgomery County by preparing bag lunches and dinners in their homes for delivery to homeless facilities. This is an exception to the guideline that all service must occur in a public place. Check out the details at the Questions and Answers section at [www.mcpsssl.org](http://www.mcpsssl.org).
- Stay aware of ways to become involved in the Montgomery County Community Service Day this month.

**Student Service Learning (SSL) Notes**  
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**November 2009**

***Students DEVELOP CIVIC BEHAVIOR from high quality service learning.***

- Check the SSL information on the report card. Contact your school SSL coordinator with any discrepancies. Keep copies of all SSL documentation.
- SSL activities help middle school students achieve curricular objectives in Grade 6 science, Grade 7 English, and Grade 8 social studies.
- High school students enrolled in the National, State, and Local Government course have the opportunity to learn about advocacy in semester 1 and 2. SSL hours are earned for full participation in the SSL activities and successful completion of the course.
- Students may earn SSL hours with school clubs that focus on service. Often times the service activities involve **indirect action**. In indirect action a need is addressed but students do not meet the recipients of their service face-to-face. Examples of indirect service activities include collections of food, clothing, and/or hygiene items, fundraising, and blood drives.
- Plan now to be involved in SSL activities over Winter break. Look for opportunities on the SSL Web site [www.mcpsssl.org](http://www.mcpsssl.org), listen for opportunities promoted at school, or call the Montgomery County Volunteer Center at 240-777-2600.

**Student Service Learning (SSL) Notes**  
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**December 2009**

***Students DEVELOP CAREER AWARENESS through high quality service learning.***

- Verification of service performed during the first semester can be turned in throughout the semester but the **deadline** for turning in documentation to the SSL coordinator of service performed during the first semester is the Friday before first semester exams begin.
- Students find meaningful service-learning opportunities that result from **direct action** with recipients. Activities such as serving food at a soup kitchen, tutoring a child in reading or math, and playing the piano for residents of a hospital are examples of direct action.
- Consider qualifying for MCPS SSL award programs. The Superintendent's SSL Award recognizes students who meet the SSL graduation requirement while in middle school. The Certificate of Meritorious Service recognizes graduating seniors who have documented 260 or more hours of service.
- High school students may earn SSL hours in select elective courses. Check the MCPS Course Bulletin for classes that award SSL hours following full participation in the SSL activities and successful completion of the course.

- All SSL opportunities must be supervised by adults representing nonprofit, tax exempt organizations. For profit nursing homes and assisted living facilities are the only exceptions to the nonprofit rule.

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**January 2010**

***Students practice WORKFORCE ETHICS through high quality service learning.***

- Make a resolution to address real community need through involvement with pre approved organizations and opportunities.
- Service learning activities may involve **advocacy action**. Advocacy activities may include letter writing, public presentations, and involvement in community events to promote one's views on issues of interest. Advocacy action, like all other SSL actions must be supervised by representatives from nonprofit, tax exempt organizations.
- All activities for which SSL hours are awarded must be secular (non-religious) in nature. Service-learning activities sponsored by religious organizations must address real need beyond their membership in the broader community.
- All SSL opportunities should begin with a preparation phase. Students are made aware of the need they will be addressing and what expected of their involvement.
- Writing the reflection statement is the culminating phase of the service-learning experience. Service learning involves three phases: preparation, action and reflection.