

INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE-LEARNING

PART I CORE CONCEPTS

WHAT IS SERVICE-LEARNING?

- Service-Learning is a teaching and learning strategy in which students participate in thoughtfully planned and organized community service activities, using the knowledge and skills they are learning in their classrooms to address real-world problems.

RELATED DEFINITIONS

- Community Service: is work done either voluntarily or under compulsion, to promote the common good in a community. Community service does not necessarily have any educational purpose.

RELATED DEFINITIONS

- Volunteerism: refers to performing some service without compulsion, and usually without pay. Service-learning does not necessarily involve voluntary student service.

TYPES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Direct Service: Students work face-to-face with people in need of assistance or on-site at an area of community need.
- Indirect Service: Resources are produced or collected at school and then channeled to those in need.
- Advocacy: Students work to raise general awareness about a problem and appeal to responsible officials to take action.

K-12 SERVICE-LEARNING

Standards for Quality Practice

- Meaningful Service
- Link to Curriculum
- Reflection
- Diversity
- Youth Voice
- Partnerships
- Progress Monitoring
- Duration and Intensity

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF SERVICE-LEARNING

- Increased academic engagement
- Improved academic achievement
- Improved thinking skills
- Improved social behavior
- Student exposure to new careers
- Stronger student ties to their communities
- Development of civic competencies
- Improved school climate
- Improved school-community relations
- Stronger communities

WHY IS SERVICE-LEARNING EFFECTIVE?

- Meets three major purposes of schooling
- Uses most effective teaching strategies
- Consistent with learning research

PURPOSES OF SCHOOLING

- PERSONAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT
- PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT
- PREPARATION FOR CITIZENSHIP

THE GOALS OF CIVIC EDUCATION

To help young people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives.

The Civic Mission of Schools Report
Carnegie Corporation of New York/CIRCLE

COMPETENT AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

- Are informed and thoughtful
- Have civic and moral virtues
- Participate in their communities
- Act politically

Six Promising Approaches to Civic Education

- Instruction in government, history, law
- Discussion of current issues and events
- Simulations of democratic processes
- Student participation in school governance
- Extracurricular activities that involve students in their communities
- Service-learning

BEST PRACTICE INSTRUCTION

- AUTHENTIC
- COLLABORATIVE/COOPERATIVE
- CONSTRUCTIVIST
- DEMOCRATIC
- EXPERIENTIAL
- INQUIRY/PROBLEM-BASED
- PROJECT-BASED
- INTEGRATIVE
- REFLECTIVE
- STUDENT-CENTERED

EFFECTIVE LEARNING

LEARNING BY:

- DOING
- ENGAGING EMOTIONS
- REFLECTING
- CONNECTING
- EXPLAINING
- REPRESENTING

INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE-LEARNING

PART II ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

1. Genuine Community Need

The students participate in meaningful service activities designed to impact a real community need.

COMMUNITY SERVICE CATEGORIES (NEEDS)

1. Health and Nutrition
2. Education
3. Environment
4. Homeland Security
5. Public Safety
6. Housing
7. General Human Needs
8. Community and Economic Development

COMMUNITY ASSET CATEGORIES

- History and Traditions
- Residents' Knowledge, Skills and Talents
- Quality of Social Relationships
- Formal and Informal Associations
- Institutions
- Physical Assets
- Economic Assets
- Cultural Assets
- Recreational Assets

ASSETS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT METHODS

- Media Scan
- Research Review
- Community Assets/Needs Map
- Assets/Needs Photo Exhibit
- Documentary Video
- Face-to Face Interviews
- Community Leaders Luncheon
- Telephone Survey
- Paper Survey
- On-Line Survey

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

2. Specific Learning Objectives

Teachers set specific learning objectives for the project and connect the service activities to the school curriculum and state learning standards.

ILLINOIS ACADEMIC STANDARDS

1. Language Arts
2. Mathematics
3. Science
4. Social Studies
5. Physical Development and Health
6. Fine Arts
7. Foreign Language

ILLINOIS SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL STANDARDS

- Self-Awareness and Self-Management
- Social Awareness and Interpersonal Skills
- Decision-Making and Responsible Behaviors

ILLINOIS CAREER DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCIES

1. Self-Knowledge
2. Educational and Occupational
Exploration
3. Career Planning

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

3. Student Voice and Leadership

Teachers provide students with meaningful opportunities for leadership and decision-making.

DEFINITIONS

- What is Leadership?

Leadership is the ability of an individual or a group to motivate, guide and enable others to contribute toward the achievement of some shared goal.

DEFINITIONS

- What is Civic Leadership?

Civic Leadership is leadership exercised in an effort to promote social justice or the common good in a community.

Definitions

- What are Civil Rights?

Civil rights are legally enforceable claims by individuals on a society.

DEFINITIONS

- What are Civic Responsibilities?

Civic responsibilities are society's claims on an individual.

Some are legally enforceable, but most depend on voluntary action.

DEFINITIONS

What is Civic Engagement?

Civic engagement may involve:

- Adding your voice to community conversations
- Advocating on behalf of others
- Participating in public life
- Joining in community service work

Source: Project 540

Best Practices in Promoting Student Leadership

- Provide students in advance with the tools and skills they will need.
- Clearly define the limits of student authority and accountability, but avoid tokenism.
- Listen to students and take their opinions and interests into account .

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

4. Collaboration & Partnerships

The community service and much of the related classroom learning is accomplished by students working in small, cooperative teams.

Students and teachers work in close partnership with one or more community organizations in planning and carrying out the service project.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- Non-Profit Organizations
- Service Clubs
- Local Businesses
- Community Colleges
- Universities
- Governmental Agencies

KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

- Reciprocal Benefits
- Shared Vision/Objectives for the Project
- Clear Expectations re: Partners' Roles
- Collaborative Planning Process
- Clear and Frequent Communication
- Collaborative Problem-Solving Process

Adapted from Youth Outreach materials

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

5. Assessment and Evaluation

Provisions have been made for assessing what students have learned and evaluating the impact of the project on the school and the community.

Assessing Student Learning

- What progress was found in terms of academic, social/emotional and other competencies?
- What methods were used to measure these outcomes?
- What role did students play in assessing their own learning?

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

- Traditional assignments
- Direct observation
- Interviews
- Peer assessment
- Self-assessment
- Products of service
- Student performances

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT TOOLS

- Checklist: a list of criteria which describe a quality performance or product
- Rubric: a grid with descriptive criteria for rating a performance along a measurement scale
- Portfolio: a collection of student work documenting progress over time

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE SERVICE

- To what extent were planned service activities completed?
- What was the impact of this service on the identified community needs?
- How was this impact measured?
- What role did your community partner play in this evaluation?

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

6. Student Reflection

Students enjoy frequent opportunities to reflect on what they are doing and learning.

DEFINITION

- REFLECTION

“The use of creative and critical thinking skills to help prepare for, succeed in, and learn from the service experience, and to examine the larger picture and context in which the service occurs.”

Toole &Toole (1995)

BEST PRACTICES IN REFLECTION

- Before, during and after the service
- Link service to standards and curriculum
- Frequent discussion opportunities
- Challenge students to explore their values
- Incorporate various learning styles
- Students help to plan reflections
- Provide continual feedback

Source: RMC Research Corp. (2003)

REFLECTION METHODS

- READING
- WRITING
- TELLING
- DOING

Eyler, Giles, Schmiede (1996)

BASIC REFLECTION PROMPTS

- What did you see, hear, do?
- What did it mean to you: what thoughts, ideas, questions?
- How did it affect you: what feelings, memories, intentions?
- How will you act on these thoughts and feelings ?

Hierarchy of Reflection Questions

- Knowledge
- Comprehension
- Application
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Evaluation

Source: nylc

INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE LEARNING

PART IV Getting Started

Three Stages of a S/L Project

- Preparation
- Action
- Follow-Up

TEACHER'S PREPARATION

- Identify Point of Entry
- Construct Preliminary Plan
- Identify and Gather Resources
- Identify Potential Partners
- Prepare Students
- Set Educational Objectives
- Plan Assessment/Evaluation

POINTS OF ENTRY

- Curriculum-Based Entry Point

Begin with a set of broad or specific educational goals and then identify service activities that would provide appropriate learning opportunities.

POINTS OF ENTRY

- Service—Based Entry Point

Begin with an existing or proposed community service project and then identify the learning opportunities it would provide

STUDENTS' PREPARATION

- Training and Orientation
- Team-Building
- Explore the Community
- Select/Study the Problem
- Decide on a Course of Action
- Build Partnerships
- Reflection

ACTION

- Service Delivery
- Monitoring, Assessment, Evaluation
- Publicity and Promotion
- Student Reflection

FOLLOW-UP

- Debrief with all Parties
- Assess Impact on Learning
- Assess Impact on Community
- Evaluate Planning and Implementation Process
- Celebration and Demonstration
- Reflection

INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE-LEARNING

Part V
Additional Topics

Discussion Topics

- Scheduling
- Institutionalization
- Sustainability
- Resources
- Technical Assistance
- Staff Development
- Networking
- Other

SERVICE-LEARNING RESOURCES

- Corporation for National and Community Service
www.cns.gov
- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
www.servicelearning.org
- National Service-Learning Exchange
www.nslexchange.org
- National Youth Leadership Council
www.nycl.org

For Technical Assistance

Mike Mangan

The Center: Resources for Teaching and
Learning

2626 South Clearbrook Drive

Arlington Heights, IL 60005

Phone: 224-366-8534

mmangan@cntrmail.org