

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 Partnerships
- Plan Ahead for Service-Learning
- Equip Students with Knowledge and Skills Needed for Service

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact:

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**SERVICE-
LEARNING
PROGRAM
INFORMATION**

WHAT IS SERVICE-LEARNING?

Service-learning is a teaching method that combines meaningful service to the community with curriculum-based learning. Students improve their academic skills by applying what they learn in school to the real world; they then reflect on their experience to reinforce the link between their service and their learning. -- Learning in Deed

THE THREE STEPS OF SERVICE-LEARNING:

Preparation is the first step of service-learning in which students cooperate with teachers and community members to:

- identify issues affecting the community
- select project site and type of action: Direct, Indirect, or Advocacy
- plan service-learning reflection
- explore the concept of citizenship

Action is the next step of service-learning in which students carry out their service. Projects can take place in school or in the community. Service-learning experiences give meaning to academic lessons, such as addressing environmental issues.

Reflection is the final step of service-learning in which students look back upon the project and review what they have learned. Reflection may be done individually (journals, scrapbooks) or as a group (class evaluation of the project based on the goals and outcomes).

WHAT IS THE SERVICE-LEARNING REQUIREMENT?

All students receiving a Maryland high school diploma are required to complete 75 hours of service-learning (or a determined pro-rated amount) prior to graduation from high school.

HOW WILL BCPS STUDENTS MEET THE REQUIREMENT?

Students may begin earning service-learning hours the summer before Grade 6. Students can earn hours through course projects (curriculum infusion), schoolwide projects, or through independent service projects that address community needs. Each school has a Service-Learning Coordinator that can assist students in this process.

HOW ARE HOURS EARNED IN CLASS?

Students earn hours for completing service projects that are a part of the required curriculum in the following courses:

Middle School

Language Arts 6
Social Studies 6
Health 6
Art 7
Science 8
Health 8
Tech. Ed. (Grades 6 and 7, where offered)
Family and Consumer Sciences (Grades 7 or 8, where offered)

High School

Biology
Government (15 hrs)
English 10
Tech. Ed.

****All projects are worth 10 service-learning hours unless otherwise noted**

WHAT OTHER SERVICE-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS?

In addition to class projects, all students may participate in independent projects that meet community needs. Most community projects are direct service, giving students the opportunity to interact with the population being served.

A resource directory is available at each middle and high school to help students locate pre-approved service-learning opportunities.

Some examples of appropriate independent projects may include:

- tutoring younger students
- volunteering at a soup kitchen
- helping with a community clean-up
- raising money for charitable causes, etc...

CAN STUDENTS EARN AWARDS FOR PARTICIPATING IN SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECTS?

Baltimore County offers the opportunity for students in Grades 8 and 12 to earn Meritorious Service Awards for outstanding service projects. Students may apply for the award by completing an annual application process. A panel of judges reviews all applications and determines the winners. Award winners are invited to attend an awards ceremony, where they will be recognized for their outstanding contributions to the school and/or community.