

Maryland's Best Service-Learning Practices

7

- **Meets** a recognized community need
- **Achieves** curricular objectives
- **Provides** opportunity for reflection
- **Develops** student responsibility
- **Establishes** community partnerships
- **Enables** students to plan ahead
- **Equips** students with knowledge, skills

For more information, contact:

*Baltimore County Public Schools
Office of Family & Community Engagement
443.809.4329
www.bcps.org/offices/service_learning*

*Maryland State Department of Education
Youth Development Branch
410.767.0357
www.mdservice-learning.org*

**Baltimore County Public Schools
Office of Family & Community
Engagement
6901 North Charles Street
Towson, Maryland 21204**



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SERVICE-LEARNING In BCPS



*When LEARNING
Comes to LIFE!*

WHAT IS SERVICE-LEARNING

Service-Learning combines meaningful service to the community with curriculum-based instruction. Students improve academic skills by applying what they learn in school to the real world. Then they reflect on their experience to reinforce the link between their service and their learning. It's truly learning by doing!

SERVICE-LEARNING ESSENTIALS

Preparation is the first step. Students work with teachers and community members to:

- *Identify* issues affecting a community
- *Select* a project, site, and type of action: Direct, Indirect, or Advocacy
- *Plan* service-learning reflection
- *Explore* what it means to be a citizen

Action is the next step. Students carry out their projects in school or in the community and give meaning to their academic lessons, such as helping to clean the environment.

Reflection is the final step. Students look back at the project and review what they have learned, either individually through journals or scrapbooks, for instance, or as a group through class evaluation of the project.



WHAT IS REQUIRED

To receive a high school diploma, all students – including those enrolled in special education programs – must complete 75 hours of service-learning (or a determined pro-rated amount for qualifying high schoolers) prior to graduation. Much of the work students will earn already is infused in existing classwork.

COMPLETING THE REQUIREMENT

Students may begin earning service-learning hours the summer before they enter Grade 6. Students can earn hours through required curriculum projects, school-wide projects, or independent service projects. Each school has a service-learning coordinator to assist students.

EARNING CLASSROOM HOURS

Students may earn hours for completing service projects that are required parts of the following courses:

Middle School

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 course projects are worth 10 service-learning hours unless otherwise noted

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Students also may work on independent projects that meet community needs, including direct service or advocacy. A resource directory on the BCPS website can help students locate pre-approved service opportunities.

Approved independent projects may include:

- Tutoring younger students
- Serving at a soup kitchen
- Participating in an organized environmental restoration project
- Working with children at a licensed day care
- Working with a nonprofit on marketing or fundraising events

EARNING AWARDS

We're proud of the work you do! BCPS honors students in Grades 8 and 12 with annual service recognition awards based on the number of completed and documented service hours. Students also may be recognized for their outstanding contributions to school and/or community through award ceremonies each spring.

LINKS TO SERVICE-LEARNING

- **BCPS --**
www.bcps.org/offices/service_learning/
- **Reflection Form -**
www.bcps.org/offices/service_learning/pdf/Independent-Project-Forms.pdf
- **Resource Directory --**
www.bcps.org/offices/service_learning/pdf/Resource-Directory.pdf