Maryland's Seven Best Service-Learning Practices

- Meets a recognized community need.
- Achieves curricular objectives.
- Provides an opportunity for reflection.
- Develop student responsibility.
- Establishes community partnerships.
- Enables students to plan ahead.
- Equips students with knowledge and skills.

For more information, contact:

Maryland State Department of Education
Youth Development Branch
410.767.0357
https://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Service-Learning/index.aspx

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**Baltimore County Public Schools
Department of Communications & Community Outreach**

FACE
OFFICE OF FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of Family & Community Engagement

6901 North Charles Street Towson, Maryland 21204

443-809-4496

For more information:

https://www.bcps.org/cos/communications/FACE/student_service_learning

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Student Service-Learning
Baltimore County Public Schools

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 COMPONENTS

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

- Identify issues affecting the community in areas related to health, education, environment, or public safety.
- Select a project site and how to address the identified issue.
- Plan a service-learning reflection.
- Explore the concept of active citizenship.

This also requires that students and their caregivers carefully read and follow the Independent Project Guidelines in order to ensure that their proposed project meets BCPS & MSDE requirements. *Projects that are completed without following the appropriate guidelines will not be approved and students may not receive service-learning hours.*

Action is the next step of service-learning in which students carry out their service through one of the following:

- *Direct Service* – Students have face-to-face contact with service recipients. Examples include tutoring other students, serving meals at a homeless shelter, working with the elderly in a senior citizen community, etc.
- *Indirect Service* – Students perform a service without having direct contact with the recipient. Usually, resources are channeled to help alleviate a problem. Examples include food and clothing drives, environmental projects, raising money for a cause through activities such as a walk-a-thon, etc…
- *Advocacy* – Students educate others about a selected issue with the goal of eliminating the causes of a particular problem. Examples include writing letters to legislators or newspaper editors, creating web pages, and creating and displaying posters within the community.

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

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 in 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 INFUSED HOURS

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

Middle School	High School
Art 7	American Gov't 9
English 6	Earth Systems 9
Bus/Comp Science 6, 7	English 9
Family/Cons Science 7, 8	Tech Ed 9
Health 6, 8	
Science 8	
Social Studies 8	
Tech Ed 6, 7	

EARNING INDEPENDENT HOURS

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 daycare
- 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 **INDEPENDENT** service hours. County recognition is determined based on independent hours submitted and entered by the end of the 3rd quarter.

Who is recognized?
- The top TEN graduating seniors with no less than 150 independent SSL hours.
- The top FIVE grade 8 with no less than 75 independent SSL hours.