

Quality Service Learning Elements

A quality service learning project should include the following elements:

- **Academic Connections:** Curriculum goals and standards should be demonstrated through the service learning activities, involving discussion, problem-solving and planning to address the community need. For academic completion, culminating class and community experiences and evaluations for student achievement occur.
- **Needs Assessment:** Planning and identifying an authentic community need provides real learning experiences for students. Applying academic skills to important community needs makes an impact on the students' academic achievement.
- **Meaningful Service & Civic Engagement:** Meaningful service should be academically appropriate with clear connections to the decision-making/learning skills and content that responds to the authentic community need. Opportunities should be provided for repeated community interactions, community partnerships and developing collaborations.
- **Youth Voice:** Student input, leadership, and decision-making should be throughout the planning, implementation, reflection and the evaluation process. Youth engagement aims to result in more positive student outcomes.
- **Reflection:** Students should have opportunities to reflect before, during, and after the service using multiple methods to improve upon their learning.
- **Community Collaboration:** Students participate in the development of partnerships and share responsibility with parents, teachers, and community organizations presenting opportunities to interact with others of diverse backgrounds. Service learning strengthens the school-community connection.
- **Evaluation:** Throughout the service learning experience, students and adults should analyze the process and the impact of the project. Multiple means of assessment should be used by all involved participants and partners.
- **Recognition:** Service learning assists the learning process of students to make real differences in academic accomplishments and addressing community needs. All participants, for positive student outcomes and community collaboration, should be recognized by the school and community.