

Next Steps:

A School District's Guide to the Essential Elements of Service-Learning

Maryland Student Service Alliance
Maryland State Department of Education

Revised 2004

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Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore

March 2004

Dear Champion of Service:

We are pleased to share a new tool for service-learning. *Next Steps: A School District's Guide to the Essential Elements of Service-Learning* is an excellent guide for state level or school district administrators as they create or improve their service-learning program, regardless of their previous experience in service-learning. Students make a tremendous difference in their schools and communities when they are given the opportunity to use their enthusiasm, energy and ideas to problem solve and contribute to the common good.

Maryland was the first state to require that all students participate in service-learning to graduate from public high school. Educators and community leaders agreed that service-learning allowed students to use knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to meet the needs of their communities. They also found service-learning to be a highly effective teaching method, allowing students to demonstrate classroom learning in an authentic setting.

Since 1992 when we began this educational reform, Maryland's 24 school districts have used Next Steps to strategically plan to strengthen district level infrastructure in order to support quality service-learning experiences for our learners. The experience of creating and revising the delivery of our service-learning programs make our state a leader in the field of service-learning. We are confident that you will benefit from the lessons we have learned.

We want to thank the service-learning leaders from around Maryland and across the nation who worked with the Maryland Student Service Alliance to develop this document.

Thank you for supporting high quality school-based service-learning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nancy S. Grasmick'.

Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of *Next Steps: A Leader's Guide to the Essential Elements of Service-Learning* is to guide state level or school district administrators as they create or improve their service-learning programs, regardless of their previous experience in service-learning. *Next Steps* can also be very useful to the novice or the experienced service-learning program administrator at the school level. However, it does not stand alone as a guide to service-learning. For definitions of service-learning, examples of service-learning projects, suggested activities, and service-learning curricula, you will need to consult other sources, such as those listed at the end of this guide.

Why service-learning?

Service-learning improves youth, communities, schools and school systems because it creates a bridge between “the real world” and the curriculum through the *application of knowledge to address community issues, needs, and social concerns*.. It involves students in their own learning by connecting that learning to their experiences and interests in serving their community – locally and globally. Service-learning allows students to demonstrate mastery of their subjects, and to develop knowledge and skills as they meet community needs. Serving their communities allows students to practice being active, contributing citizens, the kind of citizens the United States and the world needs. It is a way of developing our human resources by developing our youth and meeting needs at the same time.

Brain-based research shows that service-learning is an effective teaching strategy because, along with other forms of experiential education, it involves multiple senses (which helps with retention and accessing information). Additionally, through service-learning, learners have a greater opportunity to engage with the subject matter, thereby addressing the question of relevance: “Why do I need to know this?”

Why does the service-learning field need this guide?

If you want to create or improve service-learning programs on a large scale, *Next Steps: A Leader's Guide to the Essential Elements of Service-Learning* is designed for you. Although you can use it at the school level, we designed the guide especially for school districts, counties, and states. More districts and states are considering making service-learning part of every student's experience; as they do so, communities and schools need help developing an infrastructure to support students and teachers doing service-learning. *Next Steps* offers the experience of administrators who created these infrastructures in their school districts.

Who we are

Service-learning practitioners across Maryland and across the country developed *Next Steps* under the aegis of the Maryland Student Service Alliance (MSSA). MSSA has administered service-learning programs in Maryland since 1988; we have supported

Maryland's graduation requirement since the Maryland State Board of Education passed it in 1992. In 2004 the Maryland Student Service Alliance became fully integrated into the Maryland State Department of Education as the Office of Service-Learning.

This service-learning mandate allowed each of Maryland's 24 school districts to create its own service-learning plan with the approval of the Maryland State Department of Education. As part of the plan, each district chose an administrator to oversee the development and operation of the district's service-learning program.

MSSA staff worked with those administrators, as well as with community groups and teacher and student leaders from each district, to create an infrastructure for service-learning in Maryland. Over time, the state and the school districts trained teachers in service-learning, wrote curriculum to integrate course objectives with service-learning, developed partnerships with community agencies, informed parents about service-learning activities, and more.

Still, there was no one document to spread the word, to allow lessons learned to be shared around the state. There was no description of the components of the infrastructure to guide new administrators, and nothing helped school district service-learning teams evaluate their progress.

Meeting a need

To answer that need, MSSA, with the help of many other organizations and individuals, created *Next Steps*. We first convened a group of administrators early in 1996; they put together the first draft of the guide. With the help of Quest International, we brought together a group of state and national experts to revise the document. Then, all the school districts in Maryland tested the document. Another group of school district service-learning coordinators, funded by a Fund for the Advancement of Service Learning grant from the Corporation for National Service, revised the guide. Most of Maryland's school districts again tested it.

To be sure the guide would be useful to educators around the country, we asked audiences at national conferences to give us feedback on it. We also convened a group of national service-learning experts. We are confident that *Next Steps* now shares the experience of Maryland schools without too much emphasis on the particulars of the state's service-learning requirement.

Using *Next Steps*

Administrators and teachers in Maryland made service-learning a part of their entire instructional program. With *Next Steps* to guide them, administrators were able to improve the quality of service-learning in their districts rapidly and comprehensively. Using *Next Steps*, a team of students, educators, and community members can do the same for service-learning in your school, district, or state.

In addition to the 15 components that are fundamental to administering a large-scale service-learning program, this guide also offers:

- A succinct explanation of each element,
- Indicators of effective practice for each element,
- Examples of how school systems may address these elements, and
- A self-assessment rubric for each element so that systems can evaluate their programs' operations.

The first page of each element has the name of the element (such as “Instructional Design”) and its definition. On the left hand side of the page are the indicators of success, each one drawn from the experience of a public school system in Maryland. On the right hand side are examples. The examples are not meant to illustrate each indicator, so don't expect them to line up!

On the second page of each element there is a rubric to assist with your self-assessment and there is room for reflection and an action plan. It may be useful for team members to reflect on the strengths and challenges of a given topic before the group gets together to do a system self-assessment and determine the next steps to take to improve service-learning in that area.

Although any one person can evaluate a service-learning program, we have seen the best results when this guide is used with a representative group of those involved in service-learning in a community, such as an advisory board for service-learning or faculty committee for service-learning. With some preparation, a small group of students, administrators, teachers, and community agency representatives can review each element and develop an action plan for program improvement. A copy of *Next Steps* is available on disk from the Office of Service-Learning, Maryland State Department of Education (410)-767-0353, and it is available on our website: mdservice-learning.org.

Remember, your team doesn't have to tackle every aspect of service-learning at once. You may want to address several elements the first year, then review your progress and move on to a few more elements the following year. Some of the school districts and schools in Maryland develop a three-year plan for strengthening the implementation of service-learning experiences for their students. You can use this tool over and over again, and add your own elements, indicators, and examples, as your program grows.

NEXT STEPS AT A GLANCE

■ Infrastructure: A System Is in Place to Sustain Service-Learning Initiatives

Instructional Design: Developmentally appropriate service-learning model is designed that includes preparation, action, and reflection.

Communication: Information is shared among students, families, community partners, schools, Local Education Agency (LEA) central offices, and the State Department of Education.

Funding & In-Kind Resources: Resources are identified, secured, and distributed to support staff and administration in implementing service-learning.

School-Level Support: Leadership at the school level is developed and supported.

Data Collection: Accurate documentation of student involvement in activities and its relation to other variables is maintained.

■ Instruction: A Method of Teaching and Learning Has Been Developed, and the Parameters for Implementation Are in Place

Organizational Roles & Responsibilities: Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for students, families, teachers, community partners, schools, and local and state education offices.

Connections with Education Initiatives: Service-learning is integrated with other educational improvement initiatives.

Curriculum: Service-learning is established as an integral part of curriculum standards and assessment.

Professional Development & Training: Comprehensive training is provided for all involved in service-learning.

Evaluation: Program appraisal is based on established best practices.

Research: Effective practices, identified through research, are used for improving service-learning quality.

■ **Investment: Interactions Occur Among All Involved in Service-Learning Initiatives, and Successes Are Acknowledged & Celebrated.**

Student Leadership: Students are central to planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning initiatives.

Community Partnerships: Mutually beneficial partnerships are developed with community members and organizations.

Public Support & Involvement: Families and the community participate in the operation of service-learning in the community.

Recognition: Exemplary service-learning experiences of students, teachers, administrators, and community partners are celebrated.

INFRASTRUCTURE:

A system is in place to sustain service-learning initiatives.

- Instructional Design**
- Communication**
- Funding & In-Kind Resources**
- School-Level Support**
- Data Collection**

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Developmentally appropriate service-learning model is designed that includes preparation, action, and reflection.

Indicators of effective instructional design:

- Students are involved in design and implementation of program.
- Expectations are developed regarding what students should learn and when, how, and with what instruction and guidance from the school they should learn it.
- A plan is developed for addressing each of the essential elements of the service-learning program.
- An infusion plan is developed and a curriculum written.

Examples:

- A school system's resources, geography, transportation, and culture are considered when setting standards.
- A specified amount of service-learning credit is required for graduation or grade promotion.
- Interdisciplinary or content-area teams are created at each middle and/or high school grade level to design and implement service-learning projects.
- Specific courses and/or grades are identified for service-learning infusion to enhance curricular objectives in those subjects.

Degree to which Instructional Design is being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

COMMUNICATION

Information is shared among students, families, community partners, schools, LEA central offices, and the State Department of Education.

Indicators of effective communication:

■ Information, including explanations about the necessity and/or utility of the information, is shared and exchanged with all involved in service-learning.

■ Clear, consistent, and comprehensive information is provided.

■ The intentions of and the rationale behind decisions are stated.

■ Questions and concerns are addressed promptly.

■ Explanations are given to individuals about how they fit into the big picture and why it is important for them to do their parts well.

■ A point person is designated at each level in the communication chain.

Examples:

■ Service-learning guidelines are distributed to all school system personnel (including administrators, teachers, and support staff).

Information sessions are offered to discuss policies.

■ Model programs that use service-learning as a teaching strategy are documented and shared.

■ An evening open house is held at school for parents to meet school and community representatives, ask questions about service-learning, and provide feedback.

■ A service-learning newsletter is produced that publicizes upcoming service opportunities, highlights outstanding projects, and conveys information about service-learning. It is sent to students, teachers, families, community organizations, and businesses in the school district.

Degree to which Communication is being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

FUNDING & IN-KIND RESOURCES

Resources are identified, secured, and distributed to support staff and administration in implementing service-learning.

Indicators of effective use of resources:

- Service-learning is a priority in the school or district and resources are found to support it.
- Existing state and district resources are used to support service-learning work.
- Resource matching (in-kind contributions and time) is used to leverage additional support and funding.
- Service-learning is linked to other local, state, or national education reform initiatives.

Examples:

- Available school district funds and in-kind resources are used to support service-learning.
- Funds and in-kind resources are sought from the public or private sector.
- Funding from such sources as Career Connections, Character Education, IASA (such as Title I and Safe and Drug Free Schools) is linked to service-learning to enhance each effort.
- State Education Department resources are used, including Learn and Serve funds.

Degree to which Funding & In-Kind Resources are being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

SCHOOL-LEVEL SUPPORT

Leadership at the school level is developed and supported.

Indicators of leadership at the school level:

- Service-learning is seen as a school-wide priority, as indicated on the School Improvement Plan, with support beginning at the principal's office and permeating the school.
- A design team is formed to facilitate the process of integrating service-learning into the school and ensuring the implementation of a quality initiative.
- Professional development opportunities are provided for teachers and school staff.
- Responsibilities are shared among a variety of positions in the system and the building.

Examples:

- Each principal communicates the Board of Education's and superintendent's commitment to service-learning, therefore requiring all teachers to focus on improving the quality of service-learning.
- Monthly meetings are held at which all school-based service-learning coordinators receive training, exchange information and ideas, and troubleshoot.
- All school staff are included in making school-wide decisions.
- A school committee is formed to monitor, recognize, and advocate for high-quality service-learning.

Degree to which School-Level Support is being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

DATA COLLECTION

Accurate documentation of student involvement in activities and its relation to other relevant variables is maintained.

Indicators of accurate data collection:

- A variety of data collection procedures are used (self and other report, outside observations, etc.).
- Reliable, up-to-date, and secure documentation is maintained.
- Service-learning participation is recorded with the same priority and using the same procedure as are attendance, academic data, and disciplinary referrals.
- If service-learning is a requirement, procedures are developed for tracking student progress and communicating relevant information.

Examples:

- An external, unbiased evaluator collects student information (service-learning participation, attendance, disciplinary referrals, grades, etc.).
- The central office and/or the school keeps a record of student participation, grades, attendance, etc.
- The number of service-learning hours completed is noted in student records and on report cards.

Degree to which Data Collection is being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

INSTRUCTION:

A method of teaching and learning has been developed, and the parameters for implementation are in place.

- **Organizational Roles & Responsibilities**
- **Connections with Education Initiatives**
- **Curriculum**
- **Professional Development & Training**
- **Evaluation**
- **Research**

ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for students, families, teachers, community partners, schools, and local and state education offices.

Indicators of clearly defined organizational roles and responsibilities:

- Youth take an active role in all aspects of service-learning design and implementation.
- Individuals are held accountable for performance of service-learning job duties.
- Duties are shared among those at the school level (such as students, teachers, department chairs, counselors, and principals) and among those at the district level (such as policymakers, superintendent, subject area supervisors, grade level coordinators, and information management system).
- Expectations of each job are clearly delineated.

Examples:

- A job description is written for school-based service-learning coordinators that clearly articulates their responsibilities and to whom they report.
- A chain of communication is established for implementing the school or district's service-learning initiative; for example, superintendent to central office coordinator to principal to school building coordinator to teachers to students.
- Specific staff roles and responsibilities are assigned within schools.

Degree to which Organizational Roles & Responsibilities are being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

CONNECTIONS WITH EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Service-learning is integrated with other educational improvement initiatives.

Indicators of connections with other initiatives:

- Various school reform initiatives, including service-learning, complement and strengthen one another.
- Model programs are generated to show connections among educational efforts.
- Teachers are taught to work smarter, not harder.
- Resources are shared among educational initiatives.

Examples:

- Service-learning is used as preparation for a work-based learning opportunity through School to Careers.
- Service-learning is presented in lesson plans as part of Dimension 4 (“real world application of knowledge”) from Dimensions of Learning.
- Service-learning is integrated into curricula for such initiatives as Character Education and Multiculturalism.

Degree to which Connections with Education Initiatives are being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

CURRICULUM

Service-learning is established as an integral part of curriculum standards and assessment.

Indicators of an integrated service-learning curriculum:

- Service-learning is infused into specific courses at designated grade levels and/or used to support independent projects.
- Service-learning reinforces existing course outcomes and indicators and is used to assess student learning.
- Course content is extended to real-life situations through hands-on application of skills and concepts.
- Preparation, action, and reflection are included in curriculum guidelines.
- Curriculum is developed and implemented through collaboration among teachers, administrators, students, and community representatives.

Examples:

- Service-learning is part of every social studies class from kindergarten through 12th grade.
- Curriculum is developed for a service-learning course.
- Service-learning activities are tied to curriculum developed by subject areas.

Degree to which Curriculum is being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

Comprehensive training is provided for all involved in service-learning.

Indicators of comprehensive training:

- Participants engage in three things: an exploration of service-learning purposes and expected results, a description of service-learning in the school or district, and a detailed explanation of the essential elements of service-learning.
- The customized needs of each audience are met.
- Participants are informed about what is expected of them and how they will be held accountable.
- Ongoing opportunities to practice skills and gain new skills are provided.
- Ongoing follow-up training is offered to participants.

Note: See Resource section for professional development and training resources.

Examples:

- A five-day, credit-bearing training workshop is held for teachers each summer.
- Community-based organization training is combined with an agency service fair. Teachers and students from the school or district are invited to attend.
- Service-learning training for pre-service teachers is offered during one of their required education courses.
- A daylong training is held for all staff involved in service-learning implementation.
- Designated staff are offered periodic trainings on specific service-learning topics.

Degree to which Professional Development and Training are being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

EVALUATION

Program appraisal is based on established best practices.

Indicators of effective evaluation:

- Guidelines are developed for service-learning.
- Opportunities are provided for obtaining feedback on service-learning initiatives.
- Feedback is used for project improvement.
- *Next Steps* is used at the district and school level.
- A consistent set of evaluation standards is used to determine excellence.
- Accurate, up-to-date, and secure data is collected about the effects of service on the community, the number of students involved, etc.

Examples:

- Handbooks and brochures defining service-learning criteria (as established by a design team) are distributed annually to school administrators, teachers, students, families, and community partners.
- Teachers who infuse service-learning into their courses are surveyed annually to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the program.
- Supervisors and principals monitor the quality of teachers' service-learning activities based on established guidelines.
- Stakeholders are convened to analyze evaluation information and make adjustments as necessary.

Degree to which Evaluation is being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

RESEARCH

Effective practices, identified through research, are used for improving service-learning quality.

Indicators of effective research practices:

- The latest research findings from the National Service Learning Clearinghouse, Corporation for National Service, or other national organizations are obtained and incorporated.
- The desired outcomes of service-learning experiences are determined, and service-learning initiatives are designed to meet goals.
- A research study is designed and executed to examine the effects of service-learning on students' and teachers' attitudes, behaviors, and/or knowledge.
- Students and teachers are surveyed for qualitative data, such as their attitudes and opinions about service-learning.
- Opportunities are provided for teachers and students to engage in action research and study groups for reflection and professional development.

Examples:

- Teachers and students are surveyed and/or interviewed to identify effective service-learning practices.
- The attendance records, test scores, etc., of students who received service-learning in their curriculum are compared with those of students in similar academic settings who did not.
- The long-term effects of service-learning on such variables as self-esteem, social responsibility, and continued involvement in volunteer experiences are examined.
- The immediate effect on student attendance, behavioral disturbances, suspension and dropout rates, and grades is studied.

Degree to which Research is being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

INVESTMENT:

Interactions occur among all involved in service-learning initiatives, and successes are acknowledged and celebrated.

- **Student Leadership**
- **Community Partnerships**
- **Public Support & Involvement**
- **Recognition**

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Students are central to planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning initiatives.

Indicators of student involvement:

- Youth are included in school decision-making bodies, including service-learning design teams.
- Youth are involved in training teachers, administrators, families, other students, and community members.
- Youth are provided opportunities to plan and carry out service-learning policies, projects, and curriculum.
- Youth are provided opportunities to advocate for service-learning in the community.
- Youth are encouraged to voice concerns about service-learning.
- Youth are at the center of service-learning activities.

Examples:

- Students organize a service-learning fair.
- A student leader chairs the district's design team for service-learning.
- Students write grant proposals to fund projects that they design.
- The student government association is involved in continuous program improvement initiatives.

Degree to which Student Leadership is being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Mutually beneficial partnerships are developed with community members and organizations.

Indicators of mutually beneficial community partnerships:

- Sustainable relationships are developed with community organizations.
- Identified community needs are met.
- Processes are put in place to encourage sustained and fruitful collaboration.
- Partners are engaged in all aspects of service-learning, including project development, curriculum writing, service delivery, and recognition.
- The relationship between the school system and community organizations is clearly defined.
- School personnel are informed about how to develop partnerships.

Examples:

- Community agency representatives are invited to a meeting with school service-learning coordinators, so that the two groups can plan ways to collaborate and ensure that service-learning is being used as an instructional strategy.
- Partnerships with the local community college allow students to receive college credit for performing exemplary service-learning.
- Partnerships are established with a large non-profit, or consortium of non-profits, to sponsor at least one major service-learning project each month.

Degree to which Community Partnerships are being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

PUBLIC SUPPORT & INVOLVEMENT

Families and the community participate in the operation of service-learning in the community.

Indicators of public support and involvement:

- Families and community members are active participants in service-learning initiatives.
- Input is solicited from students and the community when policies and guidelines are developed.
- Information is made public via printed materials and presentations.
- Opportunities are provided for families and the public to participate in service-learning experiences.
- Relationships are formed with existing non-profit networks.
- Public participation reflects the diversity of the community.

Examples:

- A service-learning video and other publications/media are created to advertise and educate the public about a school or district's service-learning initiative.
- Support is solicited from city councils, county commissioners, other politicians, government agencies, and business leaders.
- An advisory board, with wide representation from the schools and community, is formed to meet regularly and discuss local service-learning issues.
- A resource list is distributed to service-learning practitioners.

Degree to which Public Support and Involvement are being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

RECOGNITION

Exemplary service-learning experiences of students, teachers, administrators, and community partners are celebrated.

Indicators of meaningful recognition:

- All segments of the district are honored, including administrators, teachers, students, families, community organizations, and schools.
- Each project's effects on the school, community, and/or organization are celebrated.
- Both the service and the learning that occurred during a project are celebrated.

Examples:

- Students are given certificates of merit for service-learning. (Students may include the certificates in portfolios for college or job applications.)
- Ceremonies are held to honor those involved in outstanding service-learning projects, including teachers, students, and community organizations.
- District or school service fairs are held at which students exhibit their projects.
- Local businesses sponsor newspaper ads featuring "Student Service Stars."
- Local foundations give service scholarships to seniors.

Degree to which Recognition is being used:

- Not currently used
- Preparing to use
- Some use
- Consistent use
- Exemplary use

Current strengths:

Challenges:

Next Steps:

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!

Let us know what you think! Do you think *Next Steps* is:

■ useful

■ applicable

■ clear?

Do you have any specific suggestions for improving the guide's

■ usefulness

■ applicability

■ clarity?

Which of the essential elements was most useful to the development of your service-learning program?

Please send feedback to:

Julie Ayers (jayers@msde.state.md.us)
Office of Service-Learning
Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore St.
Baltimore, MD 21201
FAX 410-333-2183

RESOURCES

In this section, you will find other sources for publications, training, and technical assistance on service-learning. This resource section is merely a starting point. It is not intended to be comprehensive.

You'll find material in the following five areas:

- Other service-learning guides.
- Resources produced by the Maryland Student Service Alliance, Maryland State Department of Education.
- The National Level Work Group that participated in the creation of *Next Steps: A Leader's Guide to the Essential Elements of Service-Learning*.
- Other national organizations that have produced useful publications for service-learning.
- Examples of standards for high quality service-learning.

Other Guides to the Administration of Service-Learning

As noted in the introduction, service-learning practitioners are just beginning to produce documents on the administration of service-learning. In addition to *Next Steps: A Leader's Guide to the Essential Elements of Service-Learning*, here are a few others you might find useful.

- A guide to service-learning practice as well as organizations implementing service-learning:

Essential Elements of Effective Service-Learning Practice

National Youth Leadership Council

1910 West County Road B

St. Paul, MN 55113-1137

(P) 612-631-3672

(F) 612-631-2955

nylcusa@aol.com

www.nylc.org

- A brochure geared to teacher educators:

Service-Learning Standards

University of South Carolina and the South Carolina Department of Education

906 Rutledge Building

1429 Senate Street

Columbia, SC 29201

(P) 803-734-4915

(F) 803-734-5685

www.state.sc.us/sde

- Tips to guide the creation of partnerships between the school and the entire community:

Tip Sheets of Service-Learning Programs

Practical Steps to Guide District Planning and Implementation

Project Service Leadership

Service-Learning Resources

12703 NW 20th Avenue

Vancouver, WA

(P) 360-576-5069

(F) 360-576-5068

mcphers@pacifier.com

MSSA Resources

- Classroom teacher's guide:
Maryland's Best Practices: An Improvement Guide for School-Based Service-Learning
- Trainer's guide:
The Training Toolbox: A Guide to Service-Learning Training
Teacher Training Manual
Service-Learning Project Plan Book
- Teacher's video:
"The Courage to Care, The Strength to Serve"
- Description of all Maryland's State Service-Learning Programs:
MSSA's Combined Service-Learning Leadership Handbook
- Service-Learning Curricula:
Elementary School Service-Learning
High School Service-Learning
Middle School Service-Learning
Special Education Service-Learning
- Interdisciplinary Service-Learning Activities Guide:
Spinning Interdisciplinary Service-Learning Webs
- Model Program Replication Guides:
Adopt-A-Wetlands
Kids Sew for Kids
Serving Those in Need
Themes in Literature
Serving Seniors
Caring through Communications Technology
Cemetery Preservation
Stream Restoration
Food for the Homeless
Storytellers Serving Others

For more information, contact:

Office of Service-Learning
Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-2595
Phone (410) 767-0358
Fax (410) 333-2183
TDD (410) 333-6442
<http://www.mdservice-learning.org>

The National Level Work Group

The following service-learning experts formed MSSA's national level work group for *Next Steps: A Leader's Guide to the Essential Elements of Service-Learning*. With their organizations, they have produced a multitude of service-learning resources.

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Albany, NY 12230
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Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
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(F) 413-747-5368
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occdick@alink.com

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American Association of School Administrators
1801 N. Moore St.
Arlington, VA 22209
(P) 703-875-0720
(F) 703-807-1849 www.aasa.org

Thomas Ranese
Learn and Serve America
Corporation for National Service
1201 New York Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20525
(P) 202-606-5000
(F) 202-565-2781

Charles Ridgell III
St. Mary's County Public Schools
Department of Instruction
27190 Point Lookout Road
Loveville, MD 20656
(P) 301-475-4230
(F) 301-475-4229

Other National Organizations

The following organizations are another source for service-learning resources, training, and technical assistance.

The Hitachi Foundation
1509 22nd St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20037-1073
(P) 202-457-0588
(F) 202-296-1098

Learn and Serve America
Corporation for National Service
1201 New York Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20525
(P) 202-606-5000 x 136
(F) 202-565-2781
www.learnandserve.org

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
University of Minnesota, Vocational and Technical Education Building
1954 Buford, Ave, R-290
St. Paul, MN 55108
(P) 800-808-SERV
(F) 612-625-6277
serve@maroon.tc.umn.edu
www.nicsl.coled.umn.edu

National Society of Experiential Education
515 King Street, Suite 420
Alexandria, VA 22314
(P) 800-803-4170
(F) 800-528-3492
www.nsee.org

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Points of Light Foundation
1400 I Street, NW Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20005
(P) 202.729.8000
(F) 202.729.8100
www.pointsoflight.org
Email: info@pointsoflight.org

Lions-Quest Programs (formerly Quest International)
P.O. Box 566
Annapolis Junction, MD 20701-0304
(P) 800-446-2700
(F) 240-646-7023
www.lions-quest.org
Email: www@lions-quest.org

RMC Research Corporation
1512 Larimer St., Suite 540
Denver, CO 80202
(P) 800-922-3636
(F) 303-825-1626
www.csn.net/RMC

Youth Service America
1101 15th St., NW ~ Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20005
(P) 202-296-2992
(F) 202-296-4030
info@ysa.org
www.servenet.org

Examples of Standards for High Quality Service-Learning

In addition to those developed by the Maryland Student Service Alliance and the Alliance for Service-Learning in Education Reform, there are many other publications that give guidelines for making a volunteer experience into high quality service-learning.

Standards of Quality for School-Based Service-Learning from the Alliance for Service-Learning in Education Reform (ASLER) Chester, Vermont 1993

- I. Effective service-learning efforts strengthen service and academic learning
- II. Model service-learning provides concrete opportunities for youth to learn new skills,
to think critically, and to test new roles in an environment that encourages risk-taking and rewards competence.
- III. Preparation and reflection are essential elements in service-learning.
- IV. Students' efforts are recognized by their peers and the community they serve.
- V. Youth are involved in the planning.
- VI. The service students perform makes a meaningful contribution to the community.
- VII. Effective service-learning integrates systemic formative and summative evaluation.
- VIII. Service-learning connects school and its community in new and positive ways.
- IX. Service-learning is understood and supported as an integral element in the life of a school and its community.
- X. Skilled adult guidance and supervision is essential to the success of service-learning.
- XI. Pre-service and staff development which includes the philosophy and methodology of service-learning best ensure that program quality and continuity are maintained.

The Maryland School-Based Service-Learning Best Practices

1. Meet a Recognized Need in the Community

Approach 1: Provide short-term assistance addressing a community need

Approach 2: Provide ongoing assistance addressing a community need

Approach 3: Work toward a lasting solution to a community problem

2. Achieve Curricular Objectives through Service-Learning

Approach 1: Incorporate service-learning into a unit

Approach 2: Use service-learning to unify the teaching of content and skills throughout the year

Approach 3: Teach content and/or skills in different disciplines using service-learning throughout the year

3. Reflect throughout Service-Learning Experience

Approach 1: At the end of the experience, students contemplate their service-learning experience and receive response

Approach 2: Throughout the process, students contemplate their service-learning experience and receive response

4. Develop Student Responsibility

Approach 1: Establish choices for students in how they implement the teacher-planned service-learning

Approach 2: Share responsibility with students for service-learning development and implementation

Approach 3: Facilitate student definition, coordination, and implementation of service-learning

5. Establish Community Partnerships

Approach 1: A teacher consults with community partner for information and resources

Approach 2: Students interact with community partners

Approach 3: Students, teachers, and community partners collaborate as an action team

6. Plan Ahead for Service-Learning

Approach 1: Plan service-learning independently

Approach 2: Collaborate with colleagues, students, and others to plan service-learning

7. Equip Students with Knowledge and Skills Needed for Service

Approach 1: Equip students with knowledge and skills at the beginning of the experience

Approach 2: Equip students with knowledge and skills as needs arise or as the project changes