

Service Learning

Service Learning is one of four major goals of the St. Johns County School District Strategic Plan for 2010-15. The Strategic Plan states “By the year 2015, all students will consistently and willingly identify community needs and proactively take action for improvement through service learning.” (http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/admin/plan/SP%20Final_2010_Bd%20Approved.pdf)

It is a research-based proven way to motivate students to learn their subject matter while providing a service to meet a community need. (<http://learnandserve.hhp.ufl.edu/resources/research.html>) Community is broadly defined and can include serving other students in your school or doing projects to benefit your school to meeting a need of your neighborhood, city, county, state, etc. It can benefit people, animals, the environment, etc.

Unfortunately, funding for implementing service learning projects is not readily available, so the school district is not putting a strong emphasis on this strategic planning initiative at this time. Because it can be a fun, worthwhile way for students to learn, classes are encouraged to move forward with projects as they are able. Creativity will include keeping costs to a minimum and looking for needed funding from school budgets, PTO's, class fund raising efforts, Horizon Grants from the St. Johns Education Foundation, Civic Clubs, etc. If doing a project to benefit another business or organization, it could be your students provide the manpower and the other business or organization pays for the costs to implement the project.

At this point, there is not anyone at the district level tracking projects being done by classes. As a resource, Kathy Mignerey, District Career Program Specialist, is willing to answer service learning related questions as she has been assisting the Career Academies that have been doing Service Learning projects over the past three years. Her email is mignerker@stjohns.k12.fl.us.

The form below is a tool to help with planning your service learning project, should you decide to implement one.

Project Ideas

5th Grade: Language Arts students developed their oral reading skills and how to find the various parts of a story like the title, main idea, projecting what might happen next, etc.

by reading stories aloud to 1st grade students and then quizzing them about the different parts of the stories. The 5th grade students also made story character puppets from socks, gloves or mittens to help the 1st grade students to retain what they learned from the story by role playing the story back to the 5th grader after the story had been read to them. The 1st grade students learned about the various parts of the story and were able to keep the books and puppets as an incentive for paying attention.

Costs: The socks, gloves, mittens, and decorative items to make the puppets - \$50
Each 5th grader could be asked to donate an old children's book or two that they have at home.

7th grade: Science students researched and implemented strategies to make their school more "green" and cost efficient. Ideas included recycling newspapers, plastic and can, making sure lights are turned out when no one was in a room. Being sure all computers and printers were turned off at night. Then they calculate how much money they earned from the recycling and how much energy they saved during comparable months before and after the project began and how that affected the school's electricity bill.

Costs: Free - Collection containers for the recycled materials, parent volunteers took the recycled materials to the recycling center periodically, other materials were covered by basic classroom materials.

10th Grade Communications Academy: Students produced a DVD, a brochure and newspaper press releases about the dangers of texting while driving. This was sent to each high school in the district to put on their websites and in their school newsletters to help reduce the number of car accidents of those students due to texting while driving.

Costs: Since this fit in with the regular course materials requirements for this program, the budget was covered by the same funding that covered their regular class supplies.

Service Learning Project Planning and Summary Sheet

School year of the project:

School Name:

Teacher Name:

Course this project is infused into:
Period/s or time/s of this course:
Grade/s of students in this course:
Total number of students involved in this project (as service providers):

Project Name:
Project Short Description:

What need will be impacted by this project? (Be as specific as possible.)

(It could be a need of other students at your school, a school need, the environment, of poor, elderly or disabled people in your community, etc.)

How will you assess the effect of your project on meeting that need?

What new information/skills will the service providers (your class) learn? (List as Behavioral Objectives.)

(New knowledge should be related to your class frameworks, reading, math, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, etc.)

The students will be able to:

How will you assess that learning?

Budget Details:

Budget object code	Budget category title	What will be purchased	Cost per item	Total Cost
5300 330	Travel (car mileage, meals)			
5300 390	Other purchased services: (Buses)			
5300 510	Project Materials & Supplies			
5300 750	Other professional services- Substitutes (\$103 per day)			
Total				\$

Where will the funding come from?

Tasks that are a part of the project: (Complete as the project goes along.)

- A. **Determining the need:** (How did students decide on this project? What research was involved to determine this was a real community need?)

- B. **Action Plan:** (Include the action steps and the timeframe and/or dates you plan for the actions to occur.)
- C. **Project Activities:** (The actual dates that activities occurred related to all of the tasks involved with this project - Determining the project need, Action Plan, Project Activities, Reflection, Demonstration)
- D. **Reflection:** (Do individually and as a class effort.)
1. Did the service providers learn what they were supposed to learn?
 2. Did the project meet the identified need?
 3. What went well with the project?
 4. What did not go well with the project?
 5. If you were to do the project again, what changes would make it better?
- E. **Demonstration:** (The students must share their Project Need Research, Action Plan, Project Activities, and Reflection with an audience outside of the classroom students. This could be to parents, other classes of students, the Parent Teacher Organization, business partners, a civic club, school administrators, etc. It could be done just as a verbal presentation or with the help of a DVD, powerpoint, prezi, etc.)

The purpose of the demonstration phase:

1. Students will internalize all of the aspects of the **Service Learning Model** and how it applied to their project.
2. Students will improve their public speaking/presentation skills.
3. Students will encourage others to implement Service Learning projects in the future.

For ideas about service learning projects or more information about Service Learning, go to:

- A. FL Learn and Serve - Matching projects to the Sunshine State Standards
<http://www.fsu.edu/~flserve/sl/standards.html>
- B. National Service Learning Coalition Project Ideas by Grade -
<http://www.servicelearning.org/slice>
- C. Service Learning Clearinghouse – Service Learning Toolkit - -
http://www.servicelearning.org/filemanager/download/8542_K-12_SL_Toolkit_UPDATED.pdf

(FL Learn & Serve and the National Service Learning Coalition lost their funding as of June 2011. These websites are still active, but may no longer be updated. Ignore any advertising about grant opportunities from these sites, as they are no longer available.)