

**What is service learning?**

Service learning is a teaching strategy that integrates service to a community with

academic standards. Students participate in authentic service, their voice is present, they reflect throughout, and they collaborate with stakeholders to complete a meaningful project.   Through these projects and together with partners, students will gain valuable civic leadership skills while performing meaningful work in their community. These projects:

• meet authentic community needs

• develop leadership skills

• address academic standards

• provide structured time for students to reflect

• foster a lifelong commitment to service for the community

• include essential elements of meaningful service learning

**The steps and components of service learning**

* Students have a voice in determining an authentic project focus
* Community partners are located and enlisted
* Students and partners collaborate to create a plan
* The teacher will find or create links to academic standards
* Students will reflect throughout the project in a variety of ways
* The plan is implemented
* Results are assessed and celebrated

**What types of outcomes can be expected?**

* direct service-students interact personally with the people benefitting from the service

(students record the life stories of elderly people and compile a book)

* indirect service-students work to support people or an issue that is remote

(students study water in biology, then fundraise to dig a well in Malia)

* advocacy-students promote action on an issue

(students study domestic animals and have a “spay your pet” drive)

* awareness-students work to raise community awareness of an issue

(students test groundwater and have a campaign on the dangers of pesticides)

**Service learning enhances:**

* Critical thinking skills – identifying issues and analyzing them from various perspectives
* Problem solving skills - exploring how problems can be solved in multiple ways
* Collaboration skills - students will work with a variety of partners on a single issue
* Contextualization skills - students will relate problems and solutions to their community