

# Service Learning Snapshot for School Board Members and Administrators

## What is Service Learning?

Service Learning is a flexible method of teaching and learning that applies academic and real-world skills to create meaningful youth-led experiences with community partnerships. The goal of Service Learning is to empower youth to become engaged in their personal, social and working lives.

“We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.”

-Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945); 32<sup>nd</sup> U.S. President

## What are the Benefits of Service Learning?

Students engaged in Service Learning are more academically proficient. Students who participate in Service Learning experiences are more workforce ready, motivated to learn, committed to civic participation and connected to their schools and communities. Service Learning has proven to develop and improve the following skills: analysis, critical thinking, communication, problem solving, research and public speaking.

## How is Service Learning implemented?

Service Learning experiences can involve a single student, a group of students, a classroom or a whole school district. Goals, resources and administrative support largely determine how a school structures its Service Learning program. Service Learning may be its own stand-alone class or can be incorporated into the curriculum of an existing class. Service

### *SD's Standards of Quality*

#### *Service Learning:*

*Meaningful Service*

*Link to Curriculum*

*Reflection*

*Diversity*

*Youth Voice*

*Partnerships*

*Progress Monitoring*

*Duration and Intensity*

*Career Development*

Learning teachers serve as facilitators and guide students through meaningful experiences.

## What are the student requirements for credit?

For students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the 2010-11 school year, of the 22 credit hours required for graduation, one unit must be comprised of any combination of approved CTE courses, capstone or service learning experiences or world language courses. A total of 60 – 75 hours of work, which can be a combination of learning experiences, service experiences and a project/presentation must be completed to receive .5 service learning credits. The nine Standards of Quality Service Learning must be addressed in each Service Learning experience as well.

## Teacher Certification:

The Service Learning Teacher must have valid 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade OR school counseling certification. The teacher for the learning experience component of Service Learning must be a certified teacher. If a school utilizes Service Learning as part of an approved Career and Technical Education program, the teacher must attend CTE 101 or have certification in a CTE area. The Service Learning Teacher is strongly encouraged to complete training for Service Learning in South Dakota.

## Issues to Consider:

Service Learning experiences which take students out of the school building contain an element of risk. Attention should be paid to the issues of student transportation, confidentiality and safety, with appropriate liability release forms implemented to protect students and the district. District policies, practices and fund allocations should support Service Learning experiences. Costs associated with some Service Learning experiences may be covered by the district or community partners.

*To access the SD Service Learning Framework and additional resources, visit  
<http://doe.sd.gov/octe/servicelearning.asp>.*

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For more information on Service Learning in South Dakota, including training and support, please contact:

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