

Service Learning Snapshot for Students and Parents/Guardians

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.

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.

What are the student requirements for credit in Service Learning?

For students entering 9th 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 credit. The nine Standards of Quality Service Learning must be addressed in each Service Learning experience as well.

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 the student and school district.

SD's Standards of Quality

Service Learning:

Meaningful Service

Link to Curriculum

Reflection

Diversity

Youth Voice

Partnerships

Progress Monitoring

Duration and Intensity

Career Development

“Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve.... You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968); Minister, Civil Rights Activist

Student Opportunity and Accountability:

It is the responsibility of the student to choose and create the Service Learning experience, with teachers and coordinators serving as facilitators. The student's voice is critically important and provides the direction of the Service Learning work. Students will need to work independently and/or as a team, be creative, flexible and willing to try something new. Service Learning frequently requires students to work with partners in the community. Students will be responsible for appropriate dress and behavior during their Service Learning experience in all environments.

To access the SD Service Learning Framework and additional resources, visit

<http://doe.sd.gov/octe/servicelearning.asp>