

Greendale School District

Using Service Learning to Further
Push Children Towards Academic
Excellence and Exemplary
Citizenship

Getting Started

- In 1999-2001, through our involvement in AASA's Opening Schoolhouse Doors program and CESA S-L grants (~\$10,000 total), we began the process of moving from strictly service to service learning and the important process of capacity-building.
- Superintendent Dr. William Hughes added S-L as a priority goal for the District and the School Board recognized S-L with policy language.
- Superintendent, administrator, and pioneering teachers begin to travel, learn, and pilot projects
- Collected current practice to show what's already in in District and how they relate to quality S-L projects.

The Next Steps -- Promotion

- 2001-02
- Continued CESA funds (\$8000) and District priority and the overarching challenge of providing all Greendale students with at least one high quality S-L opportunity at each school building.
- For support, a team of District teachers was formed, further inserviced in S-L, and challenged with developing S-L for their students and to support their peers in their early attempts through mini-grants.
- Involved staff and students to Seattle for NYLC conference and to state trainings for new ideas

Changing Our Focus

- 2002-03 Learn and Serve Grant (\$8000)
- Gleaned from Maryland presentation at national conference, HS/MS students and four staff members form a Service Learning Committee to empower students to monitor, grant, encourage, and support projects within the schools.
- Mini-grant program formalized and main vehicle
- All District teaching staff trained by student cadre from SLC
- Travel for staff and students (local, state, nat'l)

Looking Outward

- 2003-04 Learn and Serve Grant (\$5000)
- S-L finds a home in the curriculum review cycle
- Further use of mini-grants and a more mature SLC
 - ◆ Focus on assessment of projects and high quality
- Consortium-building a priority for Greendale
 - ◆ Grant opportunities
 - ◆ Shared resources
- Serving on ECS Professional Judgment Group of S-L and Citizenship Initiatives

Sample Projects

- MS students planning and producing a school orientation video and presentation for incoming fifth grade students and to use with our Open Enrollment and transfer students.
- HS students undertook the huge challenge of an Empty Bowls project – and the cross-curricular applications and connections made were fascinating and this yearly project continues to grow.
- MS students researched biomes in science class, were inserviced behind the scenes at the Milwaukee County Zoo by zookeepers, and then served as tour guides for our elementary students as they took their end-of-the-year zoo field trips. Folded into this were classroom presentations and orientations that took place in the elementary classrooms before the trip.
- HS students prepared presentations on current issues and presented at the MS.

Sample Projects cont.

- MS students worked with emerging elementary readers and then constructed a children's book with their students being the main character.
- 6th and 5th grade teachers and students teamed up with many public entities to study nutrition and the adolescent and then presented to both schools.
- Chemistry project involving household hazardous waste disposal has culminating activity of holding a Hazardous Waste Drop-off in the HS parking lot in May. Students will be raising awareness and surveying community on current practices with these materials.
- Peru Project in Spanish classes raised awareness of living conditions and held a community awareness night and sold handcrafted items to raise money for the area studied

Reflections

Best Practices for Greendale While Implementing S-L

- What We Did Right (Immediately or Eventually)
 - ◆ Realized capacity-building as an important initial step
 - Support of Superintendent and Board
 - Staff and Administrative Travel -- State and National
 - “Take Force” to Greendale-ize our “A-ha’s”
 - Prominence of S-L in Staff Communications
 - ◆ Allowed it to build bottom-up once support and understanding was in place
 - Mini-grant program

Reflections cont.

- ◆ Taking the Show on the Road
 - Allowing staff and administrators opportunities to present and learn
 - Instituting the yearly board report
- ◆ Always Looking for Connections
 - Summer school and Bridge Academy
 - Moving service to service learning in existing curriculum
 - E.g. chemistry project
- ◆ Hooking up with Do Something! and utilizing students (SLC) for training
- ◆ Transfer of Decision-making to the Students
 - SLC and the locus of control

Reflections cont.

- What We Should Have Done or Need to Do Still
 - ◆ Institute a S-L coordinator
 - District or Consortium
- Continue to Develop Consortium Idea
 - ◆ Shared resources (\$ and practice)
 - ◆ Grant clout
 - ◆ Development of staff in leadership roles
- More focus on assessment, data
 - ◆ What kind of achievement difference is all this exactly making?