

Using Service Learning to Push Children Towards Academic Excellence and the Development of a Sense of Responsibility and Citizenship

Staff from both:

Greendale School District

Oak Creek - Franklin School District

PARTICIPANTS WILL

- ◆ Explore school board policies that encourage support and reward engaging teaching and learning strategies and school-community collaborations;
- ◆ Review how to engage students & staff to schools;
- ◆ Review how to implement a service learning program in your school or district;
- ◆ Review and learn more about service-learning in practice;
- ◆ Learn how small grants can transform schools.

Service Learning -- from a District Perspective

- Definition: A teaching and learning method which fosters:
 - ◆ civic responsibility and links learning in the classroom to communities.
 - ◆ true partnerships with adults & students & community organizations.
 - ◆ opportunities for both staff and students to participate in structured reflection throughout the process while promoting lessons in social change.

Service Learning -- from a District Perspective

- Definition: A teaching and learning method which fosters:
 - ◆ multiple pathways towards understanding the importance of social and economic improvement in developing a better quality of life and for our students' future.
 - ◆ Addresses both academic excellence and building a sense of responsibility

Rationale

- "In the end, the goal is not only to prepare for careers, but to enable students to live lives of dignity and purpose ... not only to give knowledge to the student, but to channel knowledge to humane ends."
 - Ernest Boyer

Factors that Hinder Citizenship Education and SL

- Citizenship education challenges **conventional** beliefs about how students learn and how teachers and schools operate - requires changes to the status quo
- School-wide focus requires integration into all courses and teachers unprepared and lack curricula.
- Requires sustaining sets of relationships within school system and within the community.

District Perspectives

- Mission
 - ◆ How does service learning fit in with the District's mission and vision for increasing student learning and developing a sense of responsibility in all students?
- Policy
 - ◆ What are the roles of the School Board and Superintendent in bringing service learning to a district?
- Resources
 - ◆ What is needed to facilitate service learning in a school district?

Community Perspective

- Community's view of schools
- Students' view of community
- Collaboration/Partnerships between youth, schools, and community

One District's Story: Service Learning in Greendale

Expect, Hire, Train, Plan & Evaluate, Celebrate, and Collaborate!

- EXPECT
 - ◆ Garner school board approval and create policy and expectations
- HIRE:
 - ◆ Interview for it with a Formal Question
 - ◆ Explore VISTA and AmeriCorp opportunities
- TRAIN:
 - ◆ New teacher orientations
 - ◆ Opportunity for workshops -- a priority in professional development
- PLAN and EVALUATE:
 - ◆ Require a strand within EACH curriculum.
 - ◆ Evaluate in Teacher & Administration Model
 - ◆ Require a budget line item at a District level to augment grants

One District's Story: Service Learning in Greendale

Expect, Hire, Train, Plan & Evaluate, Celebrate, and Collaborate!

- CELEBRATE:
 - ◆ Reflection activities capture the learning for the future
 - For both staff and students
 - Involved staff members complete project reflection sheets to be posted on the SL website
 - ◆ Get the press involved
 - ◆ Purposefully acknowledge all efforts in this area
- COLLABORATE:
 - ◆ Within schools and district
 - ◆ With other schools and districts

Service Learning in the Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District

Plan, Hire, Research, Train, Provide Resources, Communicate Experiences, Educate Community, Evaluate and Revise

PLAN AND HIRE:

- Service Learning built into the 2002-2006 District's Strategic Plan.
- Hire a Community Education Coordinator
- RESEARCH:
- What are our schools currently doing? Community Service/Service Learning Assessment
- What do our teachers know about Service Learning? Service Learning Questionnaire at teacher in-service.

Service Learning in the Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District

TRAIN and PROVIDE RESOURCES

- A 3-year plan was mapped
- Introduced the “Green Light” teachers and counselors to service learning on a one-on-one basis and shared information on available service learning grants.
- Started a Service Learning Committee at the District Level to work on implementing the 3 year plan.
- Committee compiled information and created a District Specific Service Learning Tool-kit.
- Provide professional development opportunities
- Membership in the Service Learning Consortium
- Americorp * VISTA opportunities

Service Learning in the Oak Creek- Franklin Joint School District

COMMUNICATE:

- Communicate and celebrate service learning experiences with district.
- Promoted service learning through district newsletters, school newsletters and encourage teachers to share with one another.

EDUCATE COMMUNITY:

- Widen awareness of on-going projects and new projects through the local media
- Involve community through school-community partnerships

EVALUATE AND REVISE:

- Evaluate and revise 3-year plan to introduce service learning as a teaching learning method.
- What could we do differently? How could we enhance what we are already doing.

Growing Service Learning

- Collect current practices to show what's already in in District and how they relate to quality S-L projects.
- Grow leaders through training and support early adopters with resources and acknowledgment
- For support, a team of District teachers can be formed, further inserviced in S-L, and challenged with developing S-L for their students and to support their peers in their early attempts
- Allow for false starts, failed programs and youth voice...

Growing Service Learning

- Pursue state and federal grants to facilitate projects
- Form a Service Learning Committee to empower staff and students to monitor, grant, encourage, and support projects within the schools.
- Create a resource room for teachers interested in learning more about SL or accessing planning materials for projects
- Mini-grant program can be formalized as the main vehicle
 - ◆ Money granted according to the WI 4-point test
 - See example
 - ◆ Reflection piece is required of the facilitator

Growing Service Learning

- Ensure District emphasis permeates K-5, 6-8, AND 9-12.
 - ◆ Provide examples for projects at each level
 - Elementary Reverse BookBuddies/Golden Agers
 - Middle Zoo Buddies Project
 - High Chemistry/Hazardous Waste Project
- Above All: Link to Student Learning and Engagement
 - ◆ Strand in curriculum cycle
 - ◆ Tied to District curriculum and State standards

4- Points of Service-Learning

Youth Leadership: Students identify a problem and create a solution. Youth voice is working with students as partners on a project.

Community Need: Students research and address local problems and issues through service-learning projects.

Curricular Connection: Service-learning connects “real-world” experiences and classroom learning.

Reflection and Celebration: Reflection is a way to involve students in the evaluation process. Celebration activities highlight students’ success.

Elementary Project

- Project: Seeds for the Future
- Content: K-5th
- Contact: Karen Mueller, Guidance counselor
- School: Edgewood Elementary
- District: Oak Creek - Franklin
- Synopsis: Edgewood Elementary students created a school vegetable garden. Students' efforts help Second Harvest Food Pantry feed hungry people in the Milwaukee Area.

Overview of Project

Seeds for the Future



- Students designed a school garden with the purpose of sharing the garden's produce with families in need. In the fall, Edgewood students and teachers put on a community Harvest Dinner. Students and faculty make chili for the dinner and a variety of community members came to the celebration. This year we had the most successful harvest celebration thus far.
- The garden project connects to academic standards at a variety of different levels. Students K-5th grade learn about math, science, language, and character development through participating in the garden project.

Youth Leadership

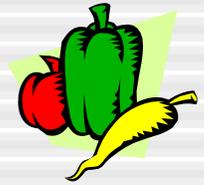
Seeds for the Future



- A committee of students grades K-5th met with a classroom teacher, counselor, and principal to plan this project.
- The committee was able to identify how Edgewood's Community garden could be used to serve hungry families in the Oak Creek community.

Community Need

Seeds for the Future



- With help from the Salvation Army and Second Harvest Food Pantry, students were able to identify a need for food in the community.
- The committee planned a community “Harvest Celebration”.
- The Harvest Celebration not only brings different community members together, but also raises money for Second Harvest.

Curricular Connection

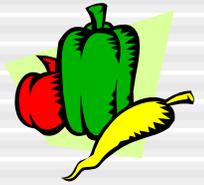
Seeds for the Future



- The garden project has and can be used to teach State Standards in science, math and social studies.
- The garden project also helps children build relationships with students of different ages, genders and abilities, and it helps students build relationships with others in our community.

Reflection and Celebration

Seeds for the Future



- The garden committee publishes a garden newsletter. The newsletter posts student reflections, experiences, and garden updates.
- Teachers and students are working on a *Seeds for the Future* web-page to post information and reflections.

Lessons Learned

Middle Level Project

Project: CivicConnections
Content: All
Contact: Ms. Marlo Dentice
School: Greendale Middle School
District: Greendale
Synopsis:

Overview of Project

Youth Leadership

Community Need

Curricular Connection

Reflection and Celebration

Lessons Learned

High School Project

Project:	Oak Creek Community Choir
Content:	Music/Choir
Contact:	Chris Thompson, Choral Director
School:	Oak Creek High School
District:	Oak Creek - Franklin
Synopsis:	OCHS Choir Students taking on leadership responsibilities at Oak Creek Community Choir Rehearsals and providing performances and performance outlets for Oak Creek Senior Citizens.

Overview of Project

Oak Creek Community Choir

- This service-learning project created the Oak Creek Community Choir. The goal was to strengthen our community by adding a fine arts outlet for community members to showcase performance abilities. Community Choir singers learn and sing along side of the high school choir students. High School Choir students provide direct instruction to adult singers at Community Choir rehearsals. The high school students also diagnose and correct necessary attributes for polished performance.
- High School Choir students also performed music for local senior citizens group. At this performance students taught songs to the seniors so that the entire group could enjoy some multi-age performance together.

Youth Leadership

Oak Creek Community Choir



- High school choir students help plan lessons for community choir participants.
- High school students are responsible for leading sectional rehearsals and teaching music/parts to members of the community choir.

Community Need

Oak Creek Community Choir



- While rapid residential and industrial growth have afforded many opportunities, community based fine arts have not kept pace.
- The Choir addresses this "community need" by contributing an adult performance outlet towards the local fine-arts scene.
- This project brings together different age groups. It affords high school students the opportunity to reach out to the general population and senior citizens through their similar performance talents.

Curricular Connection

Oak Creek Community Choir



- The Community Choir builds high school students' singing and music skills.
- The project develops ensemble skills, technical accuracy, performance techniques, and evaluation skills of quality compositions and arrangements.
- Students are motivated to learn more and at a faster rate when they are preparing for evaluation or presenting newly acquired material to another person or group. The high school choir project builds off of this assumption.

Reflection and Celebration

Oak Creek Community Choir



- Students will have two opportunities each semester (December and May) to celebrate their work through performance.
- Students will also have the opportunity to create written critiques of the choir's rehearsals and performances.

Lessons Learned

Oak Creek Community Choir



- **Building Trust Takes Time:** We slowed down the rate at which students take over leadership expectations so that adults could learn to trust students and their ability to lead in a competent manner.
- **A Student Epiphany:** Students learn that they can participate as “adults” and be taken seriously based upon their own merit.

High School Project

Project: Alto Cayma

Content: Spanish/Foreign Language

Contacts: Theresa Glowacki

Leni Dietrich

School: Greendale High School

District: Greendale

Synopsis:

Overview of Project

Youth Leadership

Community Need

Curricular Connection

- A service-learning project connects real-world experiences and classroom learning. Projects not only provide service to the community, but also meet *Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards*. Specific learning objectives are part of the project's design.

Reflection and Celebration

Lessons Learned

Reflections on Service Learning

Best Practices for Districts

- What We Did Right & Wrong! Realized capacity-building as an important initial step
 - Support of Superintendent and Board
 - Go to State and National Conferences
 - Realize and Celebrate what you already have
 - Emphasis of Service Learning & Citizenship Effort in all 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
 - Evaluate for it and Reward
- ◆ Always Looking for Connections
 - Summer school and Bridge Academy
 - Moving service to service learning in existing curriculum
 - E.g. chemistry project
- ◆ Transfer of Decision-making to the Students
 - SLC and the locus of control

Reflections

- What We Should Have Done or Need to Do Still
 - ◆ Institute a Service Learning coordinator
 - District or Consortium - Americorp or Vista Volunteer?
- Continue to Develop Consortium (SEWSLC) Idea
 - ◆ Shared resources (\$ and practice)
 - ◆ Grant clout
 - ◆ Development of staff in leadership roles
- More focus on assessment, data - Can Principals tell you what they are doing on Service Learning?
 - ◆ What kind of student achievement difference is all this exactly making?