



# Benefits of Service-Learning

Service-Learning is the methodology in which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service conducted in response to the needs of communities. Service-learning's key components are: student leadership, meeting a community need, school/community partnerships, preparation, reflection, recognition and clear connections to curricular learning objectives.

The information provided below lists some of the benefits for students, communities and schools who take part in a service-learning curriculum.

## Students

### Personal Growth and Development

- Increased Self-esteem
- Personal efficacy and sense of responsibility
- Moral development and reinforced values and beliefs
- Exploration of new roles, identities, and interests
- Willingness to take risks and accept new challenges
- Intellectual Development and Academic Learning
- Basic skills, including expressing ideas, reading and calculating
- Higher level thinking skills, such as problem-solving and critical thinking
- Skills and issues specific to service experience
- Motivation to learn
- Learning skills, including observation, inquiry, and application of knowledge
- Insight, judgment, and understanding

### Social Growth and Development

- Social responsibility and concern for others
- Political efficacy
- Civic participation
- Knowledge and exploration of service-related careers
- Understanding and appreciation of, and ability to relate to, people from a wide range of backgrounds and life situations

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# Schools

- Paradigm shift – teachers as coaches and facilitators; student responsibility for their own learning.
- Motivated learners engaged in authentic and significant work. Cooperative learning environment.
- Teachers as reflective practitioners engaged in planning, curriculum development, and inquiry.
- Collaborative decision-making among administrators, teachers, parents, students and community members
- Positive, healthy, and caring school climate.

# Communities

- Community involvement resources, and support in the educational process.
- Valuable service to meet direct human, educational, health and environmental needs.
- Schools as resources – School/teacher/student teams serving as researchers and resources in problem-solving and community development.
- Empowerment – School/community partnerships to assess, plan, and collaboratively meet needs.
- Citizenship – Students become active stakeholders in the community.
- Understanding and appreciation of diversity – across generations, cultures, perspectives, and abilities.

*Source: Service Learning Outcomes from The Service Learning Planning and Resource Guide by  
The Council of Chief State School Officers, 1994.*