



GEORGIA STATEWIDE AFTERSCHOOL NETWORK

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Service-Learning Examples

In service-learning projects, youth apply curricula or learning goals through hands-on service projects they help design. The service meets real needs and is both a means and an application of learning. Reflecting and then sharing with/teaching others about the project then magnifies both the service and retention of knowledge. The combination of experiential learning and the personal and civic growth youth gain from helping others makes service learning a powerful, effective teaching and learning strategy. The following examples are a non-exhaustive list based on actual past service-learning projects.

Service-Learning Examples—By Service Category

Direct Service Learning (person-to-person, face-to-face service)

Benefits in addition to academics: Develop personal responsibility, care for others, dependability, interpersonal skills, social skills, empathy

- Teaching, leading, or tutoring other students
- Conducting art/music/dance-based lessons for younger students
- Helping other students resolve conflict
- Giving performances on violence and drug prevention
- Creating lessons and presenting them to younger students
- Helping seniors use technology
- Giving tours of local sites
- Volunteering at local clinics to conduct health screenings

Indirect Service Learning (working on local/national issues, environmental projects, advocacy, community development)

Benefits in addition to academics: Cooperation, teamwork skills, playing different roles, organizing, prioritizing, project-specific skills.

- Compiling a town history
- Restoring historic structures or building low-income housing
- Translating documents and online resources for non-English speaking community members
- Removing exotic plants and restoring ecosystems, preparing preserve areas for public use

Research-Based Service Learning (gathering, providing, and sharing information on topics of interest and need)

Benefits in addition to academics: Learn how to find answers/information, make discriminating judgments, assess, evaluate, test hypotheses

- Writing a guide on available community services
- Doing an energy audit of the school or local homes, making recommendations for greater energy efficiency
- Conducting longitudinal studies of things like climate, voting patterns, etc.
- Water testing for local residents
- Gathering info and creating brochures, web content, or videos for non-profit or government agencies
- Mapping state lands and monitoring flora and fauna

Advocacy Service Learning (educating others about topics of public need or interest)

Benefits in addition to academics: Perseverance; understanding rules, systems, processes; engaged citizenship, working with adults, being persuasive, presentation skills

- Planning and putting on public forums on topics of interest in the community
- Conducting public information campaigns on topics of interest or local need
- Working with elected officials to draft ordinances to improve communities
- Training the community in fire safety or disaster preparation

Actual Service-Learning Project Examples

- Fourth grade classes researched and helped restore a nearby 19th Century estate. Students put on plays about the early inhabitants and restored a 19th century garden, selecting heritage plants to attract birds and butterflies. They interviewed companies vying for the sprinkler contract for the garden. Subjects involved included history, science, language arts, and math.
- 125 elementary schoolers helped parents, teachers, retirees, and other students understand and use computers and the Internet. The students became email pals with 50 seniors to create e-history interviews related to units in their history classes.
- 20 students in grades 6-8 were grant administrators for service-learning projects they selected as members of a youth council. Teachers applied to the students for funds. The council reviewed proposals, negotiated budgets, and then monitored mini-grant implementation. The result was 17 service-learning projects.
- Middle schoolers created websites for local non-profits. Other students monitored endangered species on the nearby Atlantic Coast, gave tours at a local environmental park, and taught younger students lessons about self-control and life management.
- At a magnet program, middle and high school students worked in an old house in the downtown historic district. All the work was based on the history of the city, and students published histories, gave museum tours, taught other students, and wrote and performed historical plays for schools and the community.
- 100 environmental studies students mapped a new state wetlands purchase, conducted flora and fauna inventories, built markers and an observation tower for public use, and conducted long-term studies of the water flow for the water management district. After

choosing sites for trails, students cleared trails, built trail markers, made a trail brochure, translated it into 3 languages, and gave tours to visiting students and community members.

- Students and retirees worked together to help reduce crimes against the elderly. Students have gotten bus schedules changed, increased lighting in crime-prone areas, produced PSAs on how to avoid being a victim, and drafted local ordinances and state legislation to reduce crime.
- A high school dropout prevention teacher used service learning to motivate students to stay in school. The class became a leadership course. Students helped 20+ teachers plan and do discipline-based projects, including historical murals, creating books for poor children, tutoring, designing a city logo, building a community gazebo, and teaching sign language. Partners provided \$20,000 match. 800 students participated.