



GEORGIA STATEWIDE AFTERSCHOOL NETWORK

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Definition of and Best Practices for K–12 Service Learning

Definition of Service-Learning, from U.S. statute:

The term “service-learning” means a method—

(A) under which students or participants learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that—

- (i) is conducted in and meets the needs of a community;
- (ii) is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program, and with the community; and
- (iii) helps foster civic responsibility; and

(B) that—

- (i) is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students, or the educational components of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled; and
- (ii) provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience. (42 USC § 12511(40))

https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/YYYY_MM_DD_National_Community_Service_Act_Of_1990_as_Amended_by_the_Serve_America_Act ASN.pdf

Stages/Steps of Service-Learning:

- Stage 1: Identify sought youth outcomes—academic, social, work skills, civic, life skills—and design activities that have participants apply knowledge and skills in the selected outcome areas
- Stage 2: Determine evidence and methods to measure outcomes—formative and summative assessment
- Stage 3: Employ the ‘IPARD’ model for student activities and roles:
 1. **Investigation:** Identify and learn about issues and needs in the community.
 2. **Planning:** Work with partners and other stakeholders to design service to address identified need(s).
 3. **Action:** Meaningful service that applies knowledge, skills, behaviors, and habits of citizenship.
 4. **Reflection:** Activity at all stages of the project to consider issues, impacts, levels of learning, outcomes, next steps, thoughts, feelings, and experiences.
 5. **Demonstration:** Show/present to/teach others about the project and what has been learned and accomplished. Also represents another level of service-learning action.

Source: National Youth Leadership Council, [K-12 Standards - National Youth Leadership Council \(nylc.org\)](http://nylc.org)

Service-Learning Best Practices from the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service

This President-appointed Commission encourages organizations to support K–12 service-learning by implementing the following:

- Ensure curricular standards or frameworks contain robust guidelines for service learning, by implementing recognized best practices.
- Integrate service-learning methodologies into K–12 classrooms, including by providing appropriate training to teachers of all subjects.
- Encourage and facilitate extracurricular activities and programs focused on civic responsibility and community service.
- Support teachers who build service-learning opportunities into their regular curricula.
- Commit funds to support service-learning.
- Collaborate with other educational agencies and nonprofits to develop model standards or frameworks for service learning.
- Collaborate with philanthropic, corporate, and nonprofit entities to support service-learning.
- Develop scholarship programs for students to participate in service-learning projects.
- Create a recognition program for schools, teachers, and students who perform exceptionally in service-learning projects.
- Allow students to obtain course credit for service-learning activities in excess of what the state or local education authority already requires.

Source: [Report to Congress of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service \(volckeralliance.org\)](http://volckeralliance.org)