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# Guidance and Learn and Serve Program Partnerships: A View Towards Integration for Classroom Delivery

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# Guidance and Learn and Serve Program Partnerships

## A View Towards Integration for Classroom Delivery

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Harry Drier, Ed.D., Contributing Editor

2006



**NATIONAL CONSORTIUM**  
for *State Guidance Leadership*

***Guidance and Learn and Serve  
Program Partnerships***

***A View Towards Integration for  
Classroom Delivery***

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## **Foreword**

The purpose of this monograph is to stimulate a dialogue between counselors, their guidance programs, and classroom teachers about how they might work together to design or continue to and implement community service-learning efforts. We first will raise a series of questions on service-learning and then turn to exploring how and where guidance programs fit into service learning outcomes and activities. As you review the questions on service learning, think of the ways in which you, in your role as counselor and guidance program manager, might become a more meaningful partner with classroom teachers. This monograph helps us to see many of the logical connections there are between the expected outcomes of service learning and guidance programs.

## **Mission Statement**

### **National Consortium for State Guidance Leadership**

The Consortium is a coalition of guidance representatives for participating state and territorial departments of education. The organization's mission is to enhance career guidance and counseling, leadership and training; support research; and facilitate program improvement. The Consortium's purpose is to provide a framework for improving the effectiveness of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary programs, counselor education and supervision, and administration of comprehensive career guidance programs in school, community, and institutional settings. Specific objectives of the Consortium include the following:

- ▶ Provide opportunities that enable states to collaborate on and support projects of mutual priority, ongoing programs, career development, and pre-vocational services
  - ▶ Promote the development and improvement of career guidance at all levels of education and training
  - ▶ Involve business, industry, and government in creating, operating, and evaluating quality comprehensive career guidance programs
  - ▶ Serve as a clearinghouse through which states can seek assistance from public and private sources for the improvement and expansion of career guidance programs
  - ▶ Offer technical assistance to states in developing their annual and long-term plans related to career guidance and counseling
  - ▶ Provide assistance in the development, implementation, and evaluation of comprehensive guidance programs
  - ▶ Provide evidence of program effects and a forum for promoting career guidance as a program of national significance with business, industry, and governmental entities
  - ▶ Influence career guidance professional literature through research, publishing, and product development
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## School Guidance Programs as Partners in Service Learning

The purpose of this monograph is to stimulate a dialogue between counselors, their guidance programs, and classroom teachers about how they might work together to design or continue to and implement community service-learning efforts. We first will raise a series of questions on service-learning and then turn to exploring how and where guidance programs fit into service learning outcomes and activities. As you review the questions on service learning, think of the ways in which you, in your role as counselor and guidance program manager, might become a more meaningful partner with classroom teachers. This monograph helps us to see many of the logical connections there are between the expected outcomes of service learning and guidance programs.

### What is Service Learning?

As a school counselor, you have heard about community service learning. In the past decade, many schools have expanded student's community service activities with activities that link service directly to the academic curriculum. The difference between *community service* and *community service learning* is that in service learning the services are tied back to the academic curriculum. It is, as former Senator John Glenn, stated, truly "Academics in Action."

The clear understanding of service learning is provided in the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 which suggests service learning as a method whereby students learn through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of communities; is coordinated with an elementary, middle, or secondary school service program and the community; helps foster civic responsibility; is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum; and provides structured time for students to reflect on their service experience.

According to a 1999 survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, 64 percent of all public schools and 83 percent of all public high schools organize some form of community service for their students. Nearly a third of all schools and half of public high schools provide service-learning programs. The survey findings indicated that service learning is used in all regions of the country and in all types of communities: urban, suburban, and rural. It is estimated that approximately 1.5 million students are involved in service-learning programs supported by Learn and Serve America, a unit of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Be sure to check their web site: [www.nationalservice.org](http://www.nationalservice.org).

By directly linking service to the academic curriculum, service learning creates a place for service that is integrated into a school's core mission, namely, enhancing student learning. Instead of becoming one more burden on the busy lives of teachers, service learning strives to make teacher's lives easier by combining academic instruction with civic involvement.

Teachers have been drawn to service learning because they have learned that it produces positive educational results for students, schools, and communities. Talk to teachers who use this approach to learning and you will hear many examples of students becoming more altruistic and caring, becoming more concerned about community issues, and learning more in specific content areas or on such issues as improving the environment and caring for the elderly. Service learning helps to ensure that life-long habits of service are created whether through general

service projects such as food drives and visits to senior citizens or specific projects linked to the curriculum such as cleaning rivers and streams and translating newsletters for non-English speaking people.

## **What are the Benefits of Service Learning?**

Although still in the early stages, research studies suggests that schools with well-designed service-learning programs provide a number of benefits for students, schools, and communities. For example, in 2000, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, a long-time supporter of service learning, appointed a National Commission on Service Learning. The commission, co-sponsored by the John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy at The Ohio State University and chaired by former U.S. Senator John Glenn, spent a year studying the state of service learning in the nation's schools. The following is a brief summary of the Commission's findings relating to the potential benefits of service learning.

***Improved academic achievement.*** When teachers explicitly tie service activities to academic standards and learning objectives, students can show gains on measures of academic achievement, including standardized tests. Service learning that includes environmental activities, for example, can help students apply math skills (e.g., measurement and problem solving) and science skills (e.g., prediction and knowledge of botany) if they are explicitly woven into the experience.

***Increased student engagement.*** Students who participate in high quality service-learning programs can become more active learners. The experience allows them to make critical connections between classroom knowledge and its use in "the real world." Students are taught to think critically, make key decisions, interact with others, and provide services that make a difference both to themselves and the community. As a result, their school attendance and motivation to learn can increase.

***Improved social behavior.*** Students who are active in service programs are less likely to engage in risky behaviors. Service provides a venue in which students can be more successful than they have been in more traditional classroom settings and can also reinforce the kinds of social behaviors that are crucial for success in the workforce.

***Improved character.*** Service learning promotes responsibility, trustworthiness, and caring for others. Students can learn not to let each other down or to disappoint those being served. Those who are involved acquire an ethic of service, volunteer more frequently, and indicate that they plan to continue to serve as they get older.

***Stronger ties to schools, communities, and society.*** Service learning can give students a sense of belonging to and responsibility for improving their communities. Students often come to believe that they can make a difference in their schools and communities. Some studies have established a strong connection between this sense of efficacy and academic achievement as well as greater concern for personal health and well-being.

***Exposure to new careers.*** Many students come into contact with adults in careers that would otherwise remain unknown to them. They may meet social workers, scientists, park rangers, government workers, health workers, and people who work in community agencies. By seeing

how school work relates to what others do, students can acquire more varied career or job aspirations along with a more realistic understanding of what is necessary to attain them.

***Improved thinking skills.*** Service learning helps students improve their ability to analyze complex tasks, draw inferences from data, solve new problems, and make decisions. The degree to which improvements occur in these higher order thinking skills can depend on how well teachers get students to reflect on the service activities they are performing.

***Positive school environments.*** Program experience shows that teachers can feel reinvigorated, dialogue on teaching and learning can be stimulated, and the school climate can improve. Many teachers become advocates for incorporating more service into the curriculum. Service programs also have been associated with reduced negative student behaviors, disciplinary referrals, and dropout rates.

***Stronger community groups.*** When students form connections with community groups, the groups often are the beneficiaries. Students can infuse such groups with energy and inspiration; become members of the volunteer force, staff, or board; help build awareness of the group's mission; and help them gain positive press and media recognition.

***Increased community support for schools.*** Community members who work with students engaged in service activities frequently come to view youth differently, seeing them as assets who contribute to the community in positive ways. Public support for schools can grow as a result of student involvement in community activities.

These benefits do not come about without careful attention to the proper design and implementation of service-learning projects. Educators and community participants must tie the service to specific educational goals and learning standards; facilitate discussion of and reflection on the service and civic principles involved; and give students real choices in planning, implementing, and assessing the projects.

Much of what we have said so far is really about *character education*, helping students know about, care about, and act on core ethical values. While parents and other family members have the primary responsibility for nurturing their children's character, schools also support and emphasize values. Service learning clearly helps students practice the values of compassion, caring, cooperation, responsibility, and citizenship.

### **Do Research Findings Support these Projected Benefits?**

The impact of service learning on participating K-12 students has been reported in-depth over the past several years by a number of people and, particularly, by Shelley Billig and her colleagues at the RMC Research Corporation in Denver. Below is a summary of her conclusions of the research relating to academic achievement, social and personal outcomes, and career outcomes (areas of common interest to teachers and counselors). [Source: *Impacts of Service-learning in Participating K-12 Students*.

[http://servicelearning.org/resources/fact\\_sheets/k12\\_facts/impacts/index.php?search=1&search\\_t  
erm=\]](http://servicelearning.org/resources/fact_sheets/k12_facts/impacts/index.php?search=1&search_term=)



**Academic achievement.** In several studies, students who participated in service learning were found to score higher than non-participating students particularly in social studies, writing, and English/language arts. Students also were found to be more motivated to learn. Studies show great promise for service learning as an avenue for increasing achievement among alternative school students and other students considered at risk of school failure. Studies on school engagement generally show that service-learning students are more cognitively engaged in school. Studies of students' problem-solving abilities show strong increases in cognitive complexity and other related aspects of problem solving. In short, service learning appears to have a positive impact on students by helping them to engage cognitively in school and score higher in certain content areas on state tests. Some of these outcomes are mediated by the quality of the program.

**Social and personal outcomes.** Over the years, the social and personal impacts of service learning have been frequently documented. Typical outcome areas that were shown to be strongly related to service learning include self-efficacy, respect for diversity, self-confidence, collaborative skills, avoidance of risk behaviors, and resilience. Researchers in the social emotional learning field have embraced service learning as a key strategy for accomplishing five core social emotional competencies: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making that all young people should develop. Social emotional learning theorists believe that social emotional learning provides the skills while service learning provides the opportunities to apply the skills. Other studies affirmed the strong evidence from earlier research indicate that service learning produces an array of positive impacts in the area of pro-social behaviors, acceptance of diversity, connection to cultural heritage, development of ethics, and strengthening of protective factors related to resilience. Service learning, moreover, helps students to develop caring, altruism, and other social emotional learning.

**Career exploration.** Several studies affirmed the value of service learning in helping youth explore career options. For example, students participating in service learning relative to non-participating students had a stronger set of job and career related skills and aspirations, including knowledge of how to plan activities, desire to pursue postsecondary education, and job interview skills. Andy Furco, a researcher at the University of California Berkeley, found strong statistically significant differences on formulation of career plans and emphasis on finding a career that was personally satisfying and/or beneficial to others between the service learning and service groups and the non-participants.

### **What Do K-12 Teachers and Students Do to Implement Service Learning in Their Classrooms?**

When you review publications about service learning, you generally will find references to four common activities: preparation, action, reflection, and demonstration (sometimes referred to as celebration.) In the guidebook, *Students in Service to America* (2002), however, ten steps are listed that encompass the four broad activities. The authors of the guidebook note that teachers may not need to perform all ten or follow them in the order presented since planning and implementing service learning are dynamic processes and projects vary greatly. Here are the suggested steps:

- ▶ **Step 1:** Assess the needs and resources of your community and school. Consult with civic groups, businesses, government officials, school personnel, and students to determine both the needs of your community and the available resources, including partnership opportunities. Find out who else is doing (or has done) something similar.
- ▶ **Step 2:** Form community partnerships. Most successful projects require forming partnerships. Build on existing relationships or develop new ones. Be realistic about your resources, needs and limitations, and make certain your goals are of mutual interest to all your partners. Also specify the roles and responsibilities of each partner.
- ▶ **Step 3:** Set specific educational goals. Determine what you expect students to learn. Establish what content objectives or standards will be addressed and incorporate service and learning objectives into your plans. Devise ways to measure and assess whether those goals are being met, including reflection and assessment activities. When evaluating student performance, assess their effort and mastery of the subject.
- ▶ **Step 4:** Select a project and begin preliminary planning. Pick a project and determine how all partners can work together to achieve the desired goals. Determine your human, financial, physical, and intellectual needs and whether you need additional partners to provide the required resources. Identify people in your school who can coordinate the project and maintain continuity from year to year.
- ▶ **Step 5:** Plan your project in detail. Set up a timeline, create a budget (if needed), and assign tasks. Include your partners in this process. Thorough planning, including creating benchmarks, evaluation and assessment tools, and documentation can identify and correct potential problems.
- ▶ **Step 6:** Acquire necessary funding and resources. If funds, goods, or services are needed, consider seeking assistance from local businesses, national corporations, federal programs (e.g., AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Learn and Serve America, your state department of education), civic groups, and other community organizations.
- ▶ **Step 7:** Implement and manage the project. Put the plan into action and continually assess it to determine what is working well and what could be improved. Involve partners in this process.
- ▶ **Step 8:** Organize reflection activities. Make certain that students are thinking about their service experience on a regular basis (e.g., through journals or classroom assignments) and organize activities that allow them to analyze their service and see how their ideas, knowledge and perceptions might be changing. Use reflections to help assess and improve the project.
- ▶ **Step 9:** Assess and evaluate your service program. Ensure that the evaluation assesses the project outcomes for students, the community, and the organizations involved. Documentation and evaluation will create a legacy for the individuals and the organizations that participated in and benefited from the service. It also may point the way to the next class project and foster activities in other classrooms.
- ▶ **Step 10:** Celebrate achievements. Recognition of students can help build habits of service and lead to a lifetime of community involvement. Also, recognize community partners. This may include displays in school or online, celebratory events, visits by local officials, and participation in national recognition programs.

Teachers are supported in their planning and implementation efforts by either part-time or full-time service-learning coordinators at the school district level. Often the coordinators are a counselor, a teacher assistant, or an administrator who assist in these ten steps. For example, one service-learning coordinator in a New York City school serving large numbers of students

reached out to several other teachers in the school to help develop a year-long social/political action project. Coordinators also assist in professional development to plan, identify and follow up with community placement sites, monitor student placements, and visit other programs.

### **Why Is Reflection So Important In Service Learning?**

Service-learning practitioners cannot over emphasize the importance of reflection that provides students and teachers with a way to look at their experiences, evaluate them, and apply what is learned to future experiences. Without reflection, students simply report on experiences instead of examining how what they do impacts themselves and those they serve. Reflection is the means by which students integrate prior knowledge and experiences with new experiences to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Reflection outcomes for students generally fall into three categories.

1. **Academic.** Reflection helps students gain a deeper understanding of what they learn, applying what they learn to real life situations, and developing increased problem-solving skills. Students also improve basic skills, such as reading, writing, speaking, and developing higher level thinking.
2. **Personal development.** Personal development outcomes that result from reflection include awareness of changes in oneself, a sense of community, and the ability to take charge of ones own life. Students develop an increased sense of personal power and are better able to clarify and accomplish their goals.
3. **Civic engagement.** Reflection is a predictor of openness to new ideas and the ability to see issues in a new way. Students engaged in critical reflection are more likely to apply what they learn to understanding and solving social problems. [Source. *Reflection: K-12 Service-Learning* (March 2003) the RMC Research Corporation.  
[www.servicelearning.org/resources/fact\\_sheets/k-12\\_facts/reflection/](http://www.servicelearning.org/resources/fact_sheets/k-12_facts/reflection/)]

### **What Are The Characteristics of Effective Service Learning?**

Service learning can be used to teach any subject and meet a variety of community needs. However, to provide valuable service, build civic skills, and increase student achievement, the following practices have been shown to be effective:

- ▶ Service activities should be of sustained or significant duration. Program experience suggests that a minimum of 40 hours over a school year is necessary to yield positive results for students and the community.
- ▶ Teachers need to work with students in order to draw connections between what the students are doing and what they should be learning. It is important to have clear and specific learning objectives.
- ▶ The service that students perform should have a strong connection to the curriculum.
- ▶ The relationship between service and democratic practices, ideas, and history should be made explicit in order that students see service as a civic responsibility.
- ▶ Students should be given time to reflect on their service. This may involve asking them to keep a journal or having teachers and/or service-learning coordinators lead discussions or other activities that get students to analyze and think critically about their service. These activities need to be planned, not left to chance.

- ▶ Students should have a role not only in executing the project but also in making decisions about its development. They should be involved in leadership roles in all phases of the project.
- ▶ In order to ensure that service is useful and strengthens community ties, strong partnerships with community groups based on mutually agreed upon goals, roles, and responsibilities are essential.
- ▶ Overall, the most important feature of effective service and service-learning programs is that both service and learning are emphasized.

### **What Are Some Examples of Quality Service Learning?**

Service learning can take many forms. They may take place during the school day, after school, on weekends, and/or during the summer. They may involve a single class, several classes, the whole school, or an entire district. What most programs have in common is that they begin with one good idea and grow into projects involving many people.

The following is just one example of a school-based program reported in *Students in Service to America*.

Sixth-grade students in one classroom began a program designed to teach active citizenship and participatory skills by polling classmates, family, and neighbors about problems in their community that could be corrected with public policy. The group decided to improve a two-lane road shared by cars, trucks, walkers, skaters, and bikers.

Students measured the road, conducted traffic surveys, questioned drivers and pedestrians, and photographed problem areas. Finally, they proposed a pedestrian bridge and path. They designed a path with a highway engineer, prepared testimony and documentation, and appeared before a meeting of county commissioners to present their plan and request materials and equipment. The students pledged to raise the necessary \$4,500. The county commissioners voted unanimously to authorize the construction of a gravel path.

Not satisfied with gravel, the students approached a construction company that agreed to donate and install asphalt. Construction was completed with the help of the Conservation Corps, and the path was dedicated in less than a year from its conception.... (page 17).

Not all projects are this involved. Here are three brief examples of what some teachers and students have done.

1. A social studies teacher in a community where historical monuments were in disrepair developed a project in which students worked with the local historical society to find ways to repair them. The students researched local history, created exhibits for the public, furthered their civic understanding, and learned preservation techniques.
2. A science teacher in an urban area with little access to fresh produce taught students about botany, biology, and agriculture by having them build and maintain a community garden. The students set up a vegetable stand where they applied the concepts they learned in their math and economics classes.

3. A Spanish language teacher in an area with a growing Spanish-speaking population developed a project to translate brochures and fliers produced by a local social service group. This gave students an opportunity to develop their language skills as well as to learn more about Hispanic culture.

There are scores of “jumping off points” to service learning and we could fill volumes, if we had the space. But since we don’t, let’s just list a few samples that focus on an issue which is on every one’s mind these days, that is, homeland security. The following activities have been suggested by Learn and Serve America, the service-learning unit of the Corporation for National and Community Service. The suggested activities fall within the categories of public safety, public health, and disaster response and preparedness. Students engaged in service learning can:

- ▶ Identify community assets to respond to disasters and identify needs to assure the most effective responses.
- ▶ Help mobilize students to assist police and fire departments and other groups involved in public security, outreach, and public education programs.
- ▶ Identify the need for community immunization programs
- ▶ Counsel younger school children in dealing with the anxiety, stress, and fear that often are associated with disaster planning and response.
- ▶ Help develop school/community crisis plans, family/home preparedness activities and kits, and maintaining emergency supply needs.
- ▶ Develop school safety and security audits for schools, playgrounds, and community parks, and help with school safety exercises and drills.
- ▶ Provide language assistance to non-English speaking populations and serve as liaisons to ethnic communities. Conduct home fire audits and provide ongoing health education to the elderly and non-English speaking people.
- ▶ Develop resources and teaching materials to educate the public through a variety of means to build awareness of and readiness for both natural disasters and terrorist activities. The materials should include a broad range of public safety and health topics.
- ▶ Work in emergency shelters by providing food, assessing and repairing damage, helping families and communities rebuild, assisting in evacuation notification, and inventorying and maintaining emergency supplies.
- ▶ Provide whatever support is needed and feasible to relief agencies responding to a disaster (e.g., relieve rescue workers and provide first aid).
- ▶ Identify and respond to community crime and disorder problems through existing community organizations, law enforcement, and the business community. Such programs could conduct needs assessments and identify resources to create and support Neighborhood Watch initiatives.
- ▶ Assist in recruiting volunteers with specific expertise to support homeland security (e.g., retired persons who worked during their careers in the fields of public safety, public health, and emergency preparedness).

These, obviously, are only the “tip of the iceberg.” For more examples and to read more about service learning, check the references below and also visit the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (<http://www.servicelearning.org>).

## How And Where Does Guidance “Fit In”?

We have suggested activities that teachers and their students do to plan and implement service learning. Now let’s look at some of the basic outcomes of guidance programs that are drawn from the literature in the field. With the background information on service learning presented above, counselors should ask themselves how does what you do in guidance *fit in* with service learning. Check all of the following that are a proper fit.

- Assisting with in-service programs
- Consulting with parents, teachers, administrators, community members, and others to establish and maintain the best possible environments for learning and personal growth
- Coordinating efforts with other school programs
- Coordinating school and community resources on behalf of all students, including those whose special needs require additional and unique services
- Counseling on academic problems or decisions
- Encouraging early exploration of careers
- Helping students evaluate their abilities, interests, talents, and personality characteristics in order to develop realistic academic and career goals
- Participating in curriculum development
- Providing guidance on socialization and group interaction
- Providing special services, including alcohol and drug prevention programs, and classes that teach students to handle conflicts without resorting to violence
- Working in the areas of student appraisal, program evaluation, and planning

One of the most comprehensive documents in the field of guidance and counseling is *A National Framework for State Programs of Guidance and Counseling* published by the National Consortium for State Guidance Leadership in 2000. According to the authors, the framework “is based on the premise that guidance is an integral part of the total educational system of a school and is integrated into all programs of a school district” (p. vii). Moreover, “The content and strategies of the guidance and counseling program will vary with student need, but its primary goal, student learning, never changes” (p. 3).

The framework speaks of the need for building partnerships between educators, parents, business and industry, and community organizations and agencies that promote communication among those concerned about the development and well being of all students.

The bulk of the document focuses on 17 standards for guidance and counseling programs. For example, Standard 1 relates to program content (academic achievement, personal/social development, and career development). Standard 10 deals with student assessment—data and information from a variety of assessments. Standard 11 relates to curriculum (e.g., “School counselors teach, team with teachers, or support teachers in delivering program curriculum through activities or units). The support of the entire faculty is necessary for its successful implementation” (p. 13). Standard 17 deals with results—evaluation that focuses on the program goals and their impact on students. School counselors, in short, provide a vital link to

the total instructional program. The key to success is that everyone is responsible for the academic success of all students.

Appendix II in the Framework presents three major program efforts from the former National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) Guidelines, the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Model-Areas, and the Categories and Competencies and American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Standards, i.e., what students know and will be able to do as a result of participating in a school counseling program. Hence, they present three unique perspectives—national, state, and a professional association.

Since we cannot begin to list all service learning standards and outcomes since the appendix is 16 pages, we will highlight the ones that appear most relevant to our discussion. While the items are presented in varying formats and terminologies of the three organizations noted above and at various school levels, we have combined them since our purpose is not to compare, but to present a brief illustration of a number of student outcomes of guidance counseling programs as they relate to “self-knowledge, knowledge of self and other, personal/social development;” “career planning, career planning and exploration, career development,” and “educational and occupational exploration, educational and vocational development, and academic development. The following are identified as either student competencies and/or indicators. As before, check the ones which “fit in” with the objectives of your service-learning efforts.

### ***1. Self-knowledge, knowledge of self and other, personal/social development***

- Demonstrate a positive attitude about self
- Identify how people are unique
- Demonstrate awareness and understanding of different cultures, lifestyles, attitudes, and abilities
- Identify and select appropriate behaviors to deal with specific emotional situations
- Describe how one’s behavior influences the feelings and actions of others
- Demonstrate respect for the feelings and beliefs of others
- Demonstrate an appreciation for the similarities and differences among people
- Demonstrate effective social skills
- Identify feelings associated with significant experiences
- Demonstrate interpersonal skills required for working with and for others
- Identify personal values, attitudes, and beliefs
- Respect alternative points of view
- Demonstrate when, where, and how to seek help for solving problems and making decisions
- Identify resource people in the school and community and know how to seek their help

### ***2. Career planning, career planning and exploration, career development***

- Describe work related activities in the home, community, and school
- Describe stereotypes, biases, and discriminatory behaviors

- Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills, interests, and motivations
- Learn how to interact and work cooperatively in teams
- Understand the importance of planning
- Acquire employability skills such as working on a team, problem solving, and organizational skills
- Understand the importance of responsibility, dependability, punctuality, integrity, and effort in the workplace

**3. *Educational and occupational exploration, educational and vocational development, and academic development***

- Describe how academic skills can be used in the home, workplace, and community.
- Describe school tasks that are similar to skills essential for job success
- Describe how current learning relates to work
- Describe positive ways of performing work activities
- Describe the importance of cooperation among workers to accomplish a task
- Demonstrate the ability to work with people who are different from oneself (e.g., race, age, gender, people with disabilities)
- Demonstrate personal qualities (e.g., dependability, punctuality, getting along with others, that are needed to get and keep jobs)
- Demonstrate the ability to work independently as well as the ability to work cooperatively with other students
- Demonstrate dependability, productivity, and initiative

Substitute the word “serve” for “work” in these competencies and indicators and you will easily see the parallels to service learning.

The list above is drawn from national resources. The following two items are brief, but very typical examples, from two state guidelines which illustrate where guidance “fit within” service learning. You will recognize a number of “jumping off points” to service learning. [From *Florida’s School Counseling and Guidance Framework* (2001).]

The *Framework* is built to a large degree on ten program standards in such areas as program resources, management and support, coordination, accountability, and curriculum. The curriculum standard has several components including academic achievement, career development, personal and social development, and community involvement. It is the presentation of scope and sequence in the area of community development, beginning in the primary grades, that is most relevant. This is what you will find in the standard relating to community involvement:

**Grades K-5:** The primary competency is to demonstrate an awareness of school and community volunteer needs. In the primary grades, the competency indicators include describing good citizenship skills; identifying various helper roles in the classroom, school,



family, and community; participating in group projects that benefit the community. In grades 4-5, the competency indicators are the same but they add one more, namely, describing the roles and contributions of community volunteers.

**Grades 6-12:** The competencies include understanding and enhancing the community, developing and participating in community volunteer service projects, and developing a sense of community pride. In the middle school grades, there are a number of the competency indicators (e.g., describing positive strengths of a community, describing personal positive attitudes toward the community; describing the personal benefits of community service, describing how the community benefits from volunteerism, discussing examples of achievement by community members that foster community pride, describing in- and out-of-school activities that build a sense of pride in the community, describing concepts and skills related to good citizenship, and describing the role of specific community workers and helpers). At the high school level, the competencies are similar. They include the above items as well as describing the benefits developed from community service projects, describing the importance of community service to both the community and the volunteer, identifying student volunteer activities and specific community needs and ways volunteers can meet those needs, identifying four or five authorized community service projects, and giving examples of community activities that promote community pride. [From New Hampshire's *K-12 Career Development Curriculum Framework* (2000).]

The process of career development provides the context in which students explore a variety of educational and occupational opportunities, learn the realities of the workplace and identify both the technical skills and individual qualities they need to succeed in “the real world.” One of the central proficiency standards noted by the New Hampshire Department of Education is in “Individual and Social Learning,” an area that encompasses self-understanding, understanding of how to work with others, and the ability to develop the social skills that enable them to interact successfully in all settings. Success-enhancing behaviors include individual responsibility, dependability, integrity, respect for oneself and others, perseverance, team skills, and decision-making skills—all of which are behaviors associated with service learning.

With regard to the overall Curriculum Standards, students are expected to demonstrate skill in working cooperatively and collaboratively with others. The specific Proficiency Standards, in part, include the following:

By the end of Grade 4, students will be able to—

- ▶ demonstrate the ability to participate in forming a team and identifying a common goal;
- ▶ work toward a common goal as a member of a team;
- ▶ identify and practice skills needed to resolve conflicts with others;
- ▶ demonstrate an understanding of, appreciation for, and sensitivity to a multi-cultural world; and
- ▶ demonstrate how to express feelings, reactions, and ideas in an appropriate manner.

By the end of Grade 8, in addition to the above, they will be able to—

- ▶ demonstrate skills in working cooperatively and collaboratively with others;
- ▶ demonstrate team skills that lead to successful accomplishments of a common goal;
- ▶ demonstrate the ability to work with people who are different from oneself in terms of race, age, and gender; and

- ▶ demonstrate the ability to present facts that support opinions, to listen to dissenting points of view, and to reach a shared decision.

By the end of Grade 12, in addition to the above, they will be able to—

- ▶ demonstrate consistent, responsive and caring behavior; and
- ▶ demonstrate effective and flexible team skills as a team member or leader.

Can you see additional connections to service learning in these state frameworks or in similar ones in your state?

### **What Are Youth Assets?**

School counselors and classroom teachers are concerned about youth assets. In their widely read and highly influential book, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, John Kretzman and John McKnight present a strong case for releasing individual capacities, not only of senior citizens, people with disabilities, and welfare recipients, but also of youth published by ACTA Publications in Chicago. This book should be available at most libraries. We recommend that you pay particularly close attention to pages 29 to 45 in which the authors discuss the assets which youth bring to the table. These include, among other attributes, available time, ideas and creativity, strong connection to neighborhoods, dreams and desires, and enthusiasm and energy.

The authors of this useful resource have this to say:

Given the proper opportunity... youth can always make a significant contribution to the development of the communities in which they live. What is needed for this to happen are specific projects that will connect youth with the community in ways that will increase their own self-esteem and level of competency while at the same time improving the quality of life of the community as a whole (page 29).

In a related work published in 2005, "Discover Community Power: A Guide to Mobilizing Local Assets and Your Organization's Capacity," the authors, along with several colleagues at the Asset-Based Community Development Institute of Northwestern University, present a capacity inventory which all school personnel, youth included, should be familiar. The inventory is based on the realization that everyone has skills and talents that can be used to benefit communities. The following are several questions which the authors suggest that you ask yourself:

1. Gifts: What positive qualities do people say you have? Who are the people in your life that you give to? How do you do this? What was the last time you shared with someone else? What was it? What do you give that makes you feel good?
2. Skills: What do you enjoy doing? If you could start a business, what would it be? What do you like to do that people would pay you to do? Have you ever made anything? Have you ever fixed anything?
3. Dreams: What are your dreams? If you could snap you fingers and be doing anything, what would it be?

Also, consider the following list of gifts that individuals of all ages can give to their communities:

1. Gifts of the head: Things I know something about and would enjoy sharing with others (e.g., art, animals, books).
2. Gifts of the hands: Things or skills I know how to do and would like to share with others (e.g., cooking, gardening, sports).
3. Gifts of the heart: Things I care deeply about (e.g., protection of the environment, civic life, young children).

Kretzman and McKnight maintain that these often are “hidden treasures.” They are assets to use in serving others—no matter what one’s age.

### **What Is Community Asset Mapping?**

One important way in which counselors have worked with teachers is to assist in community asset mapping. These “maps” are a way of identifying the various community resources that are available to make communities better places to live. Community assets also are services that are available to meet a variety of community needs and might include social service organizations that provide food and shelter to families in need. Assets can be the local government, the fire department, the library, or any number of other services offered in a community. They could be baseball and soccer fields or a skateboard park. Senior centers and after-school-activities also are assets, as are natural resources such as rivers and mountains. Assets also are people who have particular skills and knowledge such as coaches who volunteer for little league and soccer.

One of the first steps in designing service-learning projects is to determine what community assets are available. Here are some questions to consider if the students are interested in projects dealing with hunger: Where are the food banks in the community? How many are there? Whom do they serve? Are there “soup kitchens?” Are there organizations that focus on teen or family hunger? What help do they need? If students are interested in addressing environmental needs, some questions are: Are there environmental organizations in the community? On what do they focus? Are recycling programs available? Are there businesses that provide services?

Students, teachers, and counselors all working together can build asset maps that reflect the services relating to the project. The Yellow Pages in telephone books are a good place to begin looking for resources and assets since they provide lists of businesses and commercial resources, many of which may be willing to partner with the school, provide expertise, and, in some cases, financial support.

### **Is There Common Ground to Establish a Meaningful Dialogue Between Counselors and Teachers?**

The connections between what teachers engaged in service learning do and how counselors and their guidance programs “fit in” should now be very apparent. The connections between what teachers in their educational programs do through service learning and the aligned goals of comprehensive guidance and counseling programs are now hopefully apparent. Counselors and teachers are now on the same page. Both have common goals and objectives. Both ask these similar questions: Are students different because of guidance counseling programs? Are students different because of service-learning programs? Both counselors and teachers seek common

outcomes for their students in these three areas: academic growth, social/personal behaviors, and career/occupational skills.

Guidance counselors and classroom teachers are walking on a one-way street. Service learning is a natural habitat through which school counselors can apply the guidance curriculum. Service learning also is a natural habitat for teachers to apply their skills.

One of the first things I should do as a counselor is to walk down the hall, knock on any teacher's door, and ask "How might I assist you in your service-learning initiatives?" The chances are excellent that you will be greeted with open arms. One possible outcome might be having teachers come to your office and want to be engaged or supportive of what you do.

### **What Are Some Suggested Resources?**

Since there literally are "tons" of resources for counselors to read to gain background knowledge of service learning, we obviously can't begin to list them all. Here is just a brief sampler. Some are older, some newer, and all are worth reviewing.

Bartsch, Julie and Contributing Teacher Authors. (March 2001). *Community Lessons: Integrating Service-Learning into K-12 Classrooms—A Promising Practice Guide*. Boston, MA: Massachusetts Department of Education, Learn and Serve America, and Massachusetts Service Alliance.

Bhaerman, Robert; Cordell, Karin; and Gomez, Barbara. (1998). *The Role of Service-Learning in Educational Reform*. Raleigh, NC: National Society for Experiential Education and Needham, MA: Simon and Shuster, Inc.

Eyler, Janet; Giles, Dwight E.; & Schmiede, Angela. (1996). *A Practitioner's Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning: Student Voices & Reflections*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University.

Furco, Andy. (1996). *Service-Learning: A Balanced Approach to Experiential Education*. In B. Taylor (Ed.), *Expanding Boundaries: Service and Learning*. Washington, DC: Corporation for National Service.

Kaye, Cathryn Berger. (2004). *The Complete Guide to Service Learning*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, Inc.

Kretzman, John P. and McKnight, John. L. (1993). *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path toward Finding and Mobilizing A Community's Assets*. Evanston, IL: The Asset-Based Community Development Institute, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University.

*Learning that Lasts Field Guide*. (2005). Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

*Learning that Lasts: How Service-Learning Can Become an Integral Part of Schools, States, and Communities*. (September 2002). Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States.

National Commission on Service-Learning. (2002). *Learning In Deed: The Power of Service-Learning for American Schools*. Newton, MA: Education Development Center, Inc.

Pearson, Sarah S. (2002). *Finding Common Ground: Service-Learning and Education Reform. A Survey of 28 Leading School Reform Models*. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum.

Schukar, Ron; Johnson, Jacquelyn; and Singleton, Laurel R. and Contributing Authors. (1996). *Service Learning in the Middle School Curriculum: A Resource Book*. Boulder, CO: Social Science Education Consortium.

Stephens, Lillian S. (1995). *The Complete Guide to Learning Through Community Service, Grades K – 9*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

*Students in Service to America*. (August 2002). Washington, DC: Corporation for National and Community Service, United States Department of Education, Points of Light Foundation, and the USA Freedom Corps.

Wade, Rahima. (Ed.), (1997). *Community Service Learning: A Guide to Including Service in the Public School Curriculum*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Welch, Marshall and Billig, Shelley H. (Eds). (2004), *New Perspectives in Service-Learning: Research to Advance the Field*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing, Inc.

Don't stop here, for there is one more place where you should look for resources and that is the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse. There you will find nearly every conceivable resource that has been published on service learning. Here is their web address:

**[www.servicelearning.org](http://www.servicelearning.org)**. Some of the information and tools you will see are funding opportunities, meetings and conferences, a K-!2 Starter Kit, and a list of "A to Z topics" to explore – from Academic Achievement to Youth Voice (well, that not quite A to Z, but it's close!)

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