# An Approach to Implementing Community Service Learning

# Arkansas Act 648 of 1993

## Connecting Students and Learning Through the Community

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# FORWARD

Democracy in America was built by volunteers, those who wrote the laws and those who helped neighbors build cabins and harvest crops. Volunteerism is part of our heritage and recognized by the rest of the world. When needs arose, the community rallied to help. Yet, there has been a concern that our generation has not sufficiently demonstrated service to others in such a way that the next generation will pick up the torch. There seems to be more apathy. Two working parents in the home has led to fewer role models of community servants.

**Service to one's community, though, is part of being a good citizen and certainly provides the opportunity to learn the needs and resources available within one's community. Why not make it part of the educational process? Schools are a vital part of every community and service by students would better connect the two.**

This was the thinking that led to proposed legislation and the adoption of Act 648 by the Arkansas General Assembly in 1993, requiring the implementation of a community service program for students in grades nine through twelve by the school year 1996-1997.

Involving youth in service can, and should, be a win-win situation for everyone. Students may get a better perspective on the relationship between class studies and the real world. They can apply the knowledge and skills gained through course work. They may become better acquainted with the opportunities available for careers, challenges faced by those with special needs, and the community resources necessary to address those critical issues. They should begin to demonstrate an interest and increasing concern for others that will carry over to their school environment. Organizations that involve youth in service should get a fresh look at volunteerism. They may see their organizations from a new perspective.

The Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support (DCSNS) have collaborated to assist in the statewide implementation of Act 648. This book was prepared by a committee of educators, agency volunteer coordinators, volunteer program developers, trainers, and state agency staff. It is not law. Many schools have already developed their own processes and forms. As permissive legislation, Act 648 places much responsibility with the individual schools. However, schools must be sure their process is meeting the intent of the law.

It is the hope of the committee that this book will provide the assistance needed. Anything you find of interest may be reproduced. To request special assistance please contact the DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support at 501-682-7540.

# SECTION I

# INTRODUCTION

# Introduction

## Overview of the Implementation Process

This guidebook was written as a collaborative effort between the Arkansas Department of Education and The Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support (DCSNS) to assist school districts and community organizations in the implementation of Arkansas Act 648. It is primarily for people who are responsible for assisting students interested in connecting learning with volunteer service in their community as a means of earning a high school credit. Those most affected will be teachers, principals, and counselors of students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12).

Others who will benefit from this guide are persons in local community-based organizations that may be interested in their programs being a youth community service placement site. We hope it will help organizations to be better prepared for youth volunteers and develop creative community service opportunities with learning perspectives.

This guide may also help parents and students decide whether community service learning is something they wish to pursue.

Prepared by a committee of educators, agency volunteer coordinators, volunteer program developers, students, trainers, and state agency staff, this guidebook is merely a tool. Many schools will have developed their own processes and forms. This guidebook should assist schools in complying with the law and community based organizations in assessing their own needs while determining how youth can best be involved in serving the community.

## Benefits of Community Service Learning

Students may choose to earn credit for service in their community for a wide variety of reasons, all of which can be beneficial to the student, the community, and the school.

A student may use the experience of community service as:

- A topic for college entrance exam essays
- A means of choosing or discarding a career path
- A means of gaining work experiences for use on a resume
- An avenue from which to secure a college recommendation letter
- A means of getting entry-level experience in the job market
- A means of gaining an extra credit needed for graduation

Students may also learn:

- To better apply knowledge from school subject matter to the real world
- Enhanced personal development such as self-esteem, social skills, communication skills, and problem solving abilities, as well as concern for others
- Team-building and character building skills
- To make an easier integration into the community
- A sense of security and empowerment to become active citizens
- An appreciation of diversity
- A better understanding of the adult work environment
- To make positive choices in use of leisure time

Community organizations may see:

- A gain in positive visibility and exposure in the community and school
- Increased intergenerational experiences
- Youth bringing a sense of vitality and excitement to the organization
- New opportunities for funding and other resources
- They are helping nurture the next generation of devoted volunteers

Schools may realize:

- An improved school environment-students learning by doing
- Improved communication with parents and students
- Increased creative opportunities for teachers
- Teachers as mentors and guides
- Facilitated experiential learning
- A decrease in discipline problems
- New partners with community members in educating youth.
- They are seen as resources to the community, building better support

Parents may see:

- Increased maturity in their child
- Increased respect from their child
- Their child's better understanding of the adult work environment
- A safe and supervised environment for their child
- Reasons to brag on their child

With a meaningful placement, everyone gains from this experience.

## History and Overview of Arkansas Act 648

Former Senator Charlie Cole Chaffin of Benton introduced Act 648 to the Arkansas General Assembly in the 1993 session. The legislation required secondary schools to implement a community service program for students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) by the 1996-97 school year, or to file a waiver with the State Board of Education.

- The State Board of Education is the authorized agent to promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of Act 648.

- By this act, a student who completes a minimum of seventy-five (75) clock hours of documented community service, as certified by the service agency/ program to the school, may receive a maximum of one (1) academic credit toward graduation.

- The community service must be in programs or activities approved by the State Board of Education and the local school board. Community organizations or programs may apply for approval as a student placement site through the completion of a site application submitted to the Arkansas DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support (See Section Five, Sample Forms). Formal lists of interested community-based organizations/ agencies are submitted twice a year to the State Board of Education for approval. No prior site visits are made by the Arkansas DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support.

- All eligible community service learning activities or programs must include preparation, action, and reflection components. Upon notification to the State Board of Education, a school district may choose to waive participation in the community service learning program and the awarding of academic credit for community service.

- Once approved by the State Board, site applications are dispensed to the local school superintendents to submit for approval by the local school board**.** It is recommended that, if a site is unknown or questionable, the local school board authorize a formal site visit prior to granting approval for students to volunteer in such programs/ organizations.

- The Arkansas DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support, in collaboration with the State Department of Education, convened volunteer representatives from education, community organizations, and curriculum staff to develop this guide for training and educating school personnel, community organization, parents, and students on implementing this legislation.

- To schedule training locally or for technical assistance, call the Arkansas DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support at (501) 682-7540.

## Community Service, Service-Learning, or Community Service-Learning??

Community Service: Broadly defined, community service means work done in the community without pay. It is sometimes used as a general term similar to volunteerism or youth service and is also used for court-ordered sentencing programs, which can create misunderstandings. The term implies an emphasis on service and not on any formal structured learning component. **[This could be a student who is looking for something constructive to do in the summer to fill time and volunteers at a local hospital.]**

Service Learning: Service learning is the blending of both academic learning and the service experience in such a way that both occur as part of school learning. Service learning, or helping others, is connected to classroom learning, in which a strong reflective component encourages students to think about and analyze their experiences. Facilitated teacher-directed activities teach students to identify what they learned and what learning means. Credit is received through regular course work. Service learning usually occurs through a classroom curriculum in which a group or class participates in the service and the reflection. [**This could include a student who volunteers at a hospital, working under the direction of a biology teacher and curriculum to learn the connection between lab work at school and its benefits to hospital patients.]**

Community Service Learning: Community service learning in Arkansas is specific to the implementation of Act 648 of 1993, through which students may receive one unit of academic credit. It is best defined as volunteering or serving in a worthwhile capacity in the community while making a conscious effort to reflect, through some thoughtfully designed method, on what is learned from the service experience. Community service learning *may occur individually or as a group or class experience.* In Arkansas, students in grades nine through twelve may receive a maximum of one academic credit for a minimum of 75 hours of service at an approved site or the program when preparation, action, and reflection components are included. This service must be supervised by certified school personnel. **[This could be a student who carefully works out a plan with the hospital volunteer coordinator to volunteer a number of hours and write a special report on how she thinks the hospital can best use volunteers, or how working in the hospital has taught her to be more sensitive to those in trauma.]**

## Other Key Definitions

Action: Actual Steps taken in the process of community service learning. It includes the work done and documented in the community at approved sites to accumulate hours toward high school credit.

DCSNS: The Arkansas Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support is the state office of volunteerism and is housed as a division of the Department of Human Services. Its mission is to encourage, promote, and support volunteerism and community service as a means of problem solving through leadership, information sharing, program development, technical assistance, and training. DCSNS is a collaborating partner in the implementation of Act 648 of 1993.

Celebration: A formal or informal method or recognizing the student's completion of a project or program goal. It is important that it occur with the student's family, within the classroom, and at the community-based organization.

Community-Based Organization: An organization or agency, possibly a 501(c)3, in the community that may choose to apply to be a placement site where students can volunteer and achieve their hours of service.

Preparation: A part of the process that should occur prior to any student engaging in community service learning. There is some form of preparation necessary or advised for students, parents, school, and community based organizations.

Reflection: A thoughtful response, written or verbal, at any stage of the community service learning project. Reflection includes some response from a peer or adult, and allows time for students to express their thoughts, feelings, what they learned, questions, etc.

State Department of Education: The authorized agent to promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of Act 648.

Volunteer Service: Volunteerism refers to people who choose, on their own, to perform some service to others without pay. This may simply be a student who volunteers three hours on Saturday at the hospital.

Youth Service: This is an umbrella term for all the approaches involving youth as resources in the community.

# Act 648 of 1993

" To require by the 1996-97 school year the implementation of a community service program for secondary students."

**BE IT INACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:**

**SECTION 1.**

**(a)** Beginning with the 1996-97 school year, a student who has completed a minimum of seventy-five (75) clock hours of documented community service in grades nine (9) through twelve (12), as certified by the service agency or organization to the school, shall be eligible to receive one (1) academic credit that may be applied toward graduation.

**(b)** The community service shall be in programs or activities approved by the State Board of Education and the local school board and shall include preparation, action, and reflection components.

**(c)** A local school board may grant a waiver of this requirement with notice to the State Board of Education.

**(d)** The State Board of Education is herby authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this act.

**SECTION 2.** Codification Clause

**SECTION 3**. Severability Clause

**SECTION 4**. Repeating Clause

**ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**
**RULES AND REGULATIONS**
**GOVERNING THE ARKANSAS SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM**

1.0 REGULATORY AUTHORITY

1.01 These regulations shall be known as the Arkansas Department of Education Rules and Regulations Governing the Service Learning Program

1.02 Theses regulations are enacted pursuant to the State Board of Education's authority under Ark. Code Ann. 6-16-120 (Repl. 1993).

2.0 PURPOSE

2.01 The purpose of these regulations is to establish the requirements for the Arkansas Service Learning Program.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.01 "Academic Credit" is credit awarded to a student in grades nine through twelve (9-12) after successfully completing a minimum of seventy-five (75) clock hours of documented community service.

3.02 "Community Service" is a program or activity approved by the state board of Education and the local school board, which includes the components preparation, action, and reflection.

3.03 "Certify" means that a service agency or organization has submitted to the school appropriate documentation that a student has successfully completed sufficient community service to be eligible for academic credit.

4.0 SERVICE LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

4.01 In order for a student to be eligible for academic credit for community service, the agency or organization that will certify completion of such service shall be approved by the Arkansas State Board of Education and the local school board.

4.02 Documentation to certify community service shall be presented to the local school board in the manner and at such time as prescribed by the local board.

4.03 Documentation of community service and/or approval of an agency or organization by the State Board of Education to certify community service for academic credit shall be in a manner and at such time as prescribed by the State Board.

4.04 All public school districts are approved by the State Board of Education to certify community service so long as the community service is under the supervision of a certified employee of the district. If the community service is under the direction or supervision of an agency or organization, the agency or organization must be approved by the State Board of Education to certify community service prior to academic credit being granted for such service.

4.05 Upon notification to the State Board of Education, a school district may choose to waive participation in the community service program and the awarding of academic credit for community service.

## ACT 390 OF 1987

" AN ACT TO PROVIDE THAT QUALIFIED VOLUNTEERS SHALL NOT BE CIVILLY LIABLE FOR PERSONAL INJURY OR PROPERTY DAMAGE RESULTING FROM ANY ACT OR OMISSION IN CARRYING OUT THEIR VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES"

The Arkansas Volunteer Immunity Act includes the following definitions:

- "Qualified volunteer" means any person who, of free will, provides goods or services without financial compensation to or through any volunteer agency in connection with a volunteer program.

- "Volunteer Agency" means any volunteer program of all departments, institutions, and divisions of state government, community volunteer organization, or any not-for-profit corporation which has received a 501(c)3 designation from the US Internal Revenue Service, other than one established principally for the recreational benefit of its stockholders or members.

- "Volunteer Activity" means any activity within the scope of any project, program effort, or other regular activity sponsored by a volunteer agency with the intent to exact a charitable purpose, or confer other public benefit including, but not limited to, enhancement of the cultural, civic, religious, education, scientific or economic resources of the community.

A qualified volunteer cannot be held vicariously liable for the negligence of another. A qualified volunteer also cannot be held liable for injury or damage sustained by anyone who is a participant in, recipient, consumer, or user of benefits of the volunteer services except:

1. Where the volunteer has insurance, in which case the liability is limited to the amount of coverage
2. Where the volunteer acts in bad faith or with gross negligence
3. Where the volunteer negligently operates a motor vehicle, in which the liability is limited to the amount of liability coverage carried
4. Where the volunteer is providing professional services which he is licensed to perform, in which case the liability is limited to the amount of liability coverage carried.

The Act does not limit the liability of any volunteer operating outside the scope of the volunteer program, nor does is limit the liability of any volunteer agency.

Please note: All Arkansas statues are available through the Secretary of State's Office.

## ACT 970 OF 1987

"AN ACT GRANTING LIMITED TORT IMMUNITY TO DIRECTORS OF NONPROFIT CORPORATIONS AND MEMBERS OF BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AGENCIES, AUTHORITIES, AND OTHER GOVERNING BODIES OF ANY GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY."

This Act states that no board member of any governmental entity or nonprofit corporation shall be held personally liable for damages resulting from any negligent act or omission of another employee or board member of the nonprofit corporation or government entity. Athletic officials of any amateur contests shall also enjoy this protection. The protection from vicarious liability does not apply to board members of nonprofit corporations, which are licensed to serve alcohol. This Act does not apply to the nonprofit corporation itself.

Please note: All Arkansas statues are available through the Secretary of State's Office.

# Federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997

§543

Public Law: 105-19, (became law 06/18/97)

Sponsor: Sen. Coverdell (introduced 04/09/97)

Related Bill(s): §544

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DIGEST:

(Revised as of 05/21/97) – Passed House, amended)

Volunteer Protection Act of 1997- States that the Act preempts inconsistent State law except when such law provides additional protection from liability relating to volunteers in the performance of services for a nonprofit organization or governmental entity. Makes this Act inapplicable to any civil action in a State court against a volunteer in which all parties are citizens of the State if such State enacts a statute declaring its election that this law not apply.

Exempts a volunteer of a nonprofit organization or governmental entity from liability for harm caused by an act or omission of the volunteer on behalf of such organization or entity if: (1) the volunteer was acting within the scope of his or her responsibilities at the time; (2) the volunteer was properly licensed or otherwise authorized for the activities or practice in the State in which the harm occurred; (3) the harm was not caused by willful or criminal misconduct, gross negligence, reckless misconduct, or a conscious , flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed; and (4) the harm was not cause by the volunteer operating a motor vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or other vehicle for which the State requires the operator or owner to possess an operator's license or maintain insurance.

Specifies conditions of State laws limiting volunteer liability, which shall not be construed as inconsistent with this Act.

Prohibits the award of punitive damages against a volunteer unless the claimant establishes by clear and convincing evidence that the harm was proximately cause by an action of such volunteer which constitutes willful or criminal misconduct or a conscious, flagrant indifference to the rights or safety of the individual harmed.

Provides that the volunteer liability limitations of this Act shall not apply to any misconduct: (1) that constitutes a crime of violence, an act of intentional terrorism, or hate crime; (2) that involves a sexual offense or a violation of civil rights law; or (3) where the defendant was under the influence of intoxicating alcohol or any drug.

Makes each volunteer liable for noneconomic loss only in the amount allocated to such defendant in direct proportion to the percentage of responsibility for the harm for which that defendant is liable. Requires the trier of fact to determine such percentage of responsibility.

# SECTION II

# READINESS

## SITE APPROVAL AND DEVELOPMENT

The first step in site development is approval by the State Board of Education of any community-based organization that wishes to serve as a volunteer site for student performing community service for school credit.

The service site should complete the form "Student Community Service Site Application (Act 648)" produced by the Arkansas DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support (DCSNS). This form should be submitted to DCSNS, which will present it to the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education determines approval for service site twice a year. The service site application should be submitted to DCSNS by June 1 or November 1 to have approval sought at the July and December State Board of Education meetings.

Here are other options for increasing the number of volunteer sites in your community:

- Existing nonprofit agencies
- Businesses
- Volunteer centers
- United Way
- Reading the local paper to find out where there are problems and where help is needed
- Holding a volunteer fair and inviting community-based organizations to set up tables
- Talking to perspective recipients
- Local government officials
- Volunteering within the local school system

Sites included in the State Board of Education's list are those that have submitted an application for inclusion in the list of sites allowed to utilize students who are obtaining school credit.

All sites should be contacted by the local school district to determine their readiness and ability to utilize student volunteers effectively. Ideally, you would visit each site in person. Realistically, time is limited. You may prefer to send a survey or interview the agency by phone. The important thing is that each site be contacted and approved at the local level.

Whether visiting in person or by mail or telephone, you will want to ensure that there is:

- A job description for every volunteer job that provides worthwhile service experiences
- Adequate workspace
- Adequate supervision and training.

Discuss with each site your expectations, as well as its expectations. Decide who will provide the forms to be completed and how often they should be turned in.

Here are some suggestions for community service learning within your school system:

- Tutor younger children
- Become a mentor to a younger child
- Beautify the neighborhood
- Beautify the school and the school grounds
- Start or expand a recycling program
- Design a computer database to keep track of student volunteers and available service opportunities
- Contribute class projects to others, e.g. give artwork to a daycare center or produce a bicycle safety film for an elementary school.

## LIABLITY

School administrators, parents, and program organizers may consider liability to be a key issue in community service learning programs. When liability concerns are not handled properly, they can become a major obstacle to program implementation and the support and safety of students involved. Therefore, the issue of liability should encourage educators to develop more thoughtful effective, and well-managed programs of community service learning.

There are guidelines to follow in assessing this area, whether by a school district, a parent, a student, or a community-based organization. Most of the following suggestions center on pursuing proactive risk management strategies within the work setting. Ultimately it is the responsibility of the school district and the community-based organization to resolve the issue of liability according to local requirements and local district policy.

- The most important point legally is to "not be found negligent." Program administrators need to determine what policies, procedures, and safety measures need to be in place to avoid any appearance of negligence.

- It is imperative to determine who is the liable party for implementation of the community service learning program. The more closely the program is tied to the school's mission and is a model of teaching, the less complicated it may be to seek insurance coverage or, in some cases, to fit under existing school policies.

- The development of a portfolio of agencies/organizations within a community where community service learning may be performed is the district's responsibility. Ensuring that each participating agency or organization has received approval from the State Board of Education as well as from the local school board is a district responsibility. The integration of the community-based organization program with the school's instructional program is also a district responsibility.

- The school district should provide equal opportunity for all students to participate in a community service learning program once it has been adopted as part of the district's instructional plan.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

The design and implementation of risk management strategies recognize that any educational program involves a certain amount of risk. Benefits include critically evaluating a program for such risks and taking action to prevent problems stemming from those risks. The risk management process includes the following steps:

1. Identify the risk for the program and job positions. Consider what could go wrong in the performance of duties or what might occur due to safety issues at the job site. (Tailor position descriptions to avoid or deal with identified risk.)

2. Measure the risk. Prioritize the identified risk in terms of likelihood of occurrence and magnitude of harm. If either of these is great, reassess the appropriateness of the placement as a community service learning position.

3. Select and implement methods to control the risk if a position remains viable. Develop clearly defined policies and procedures. Include training for students and community-based organization personnel. To transfer any remaining risks, parents may be asked to sign additional permission forms, waive responsibility of the agency and/or purchase insurance for the duration of the placement. Common sense, however, suggests that a greater risk factor may result in little or no student placement in such positions.

4. Finally, have a legal advisor for the school district or the community-based organization review the program for areas in which potential liability problems are likely to occur. Continually review and revise program policy and procedures to minimize risk.

## WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

"Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve." –Martin Luther King, Jr.

Students with disabilities-physical, mental, and emotional-benefit greatly from community service, as does the community from them.

For the most part, these individuals can perform the same work as their peers, with little or no special accommodations.

In fact, there are some jobs that students with disabilities can do even better. An example of this would be working with other students who have special needs. Another example would be an activity such as mass mailing. It may be something most students with disabilities would accomplish with pride and a feeling of satisfaction that other students might find repetitious and, therefore, may be inclined to make mistakes. The learning component in a mass mailing for students with disabilities would be working in a group, keeping on task, sequencing, etc. This learning component is a marketable skill that they you will find invaluable, not just as an adult, but now.

## A BILL OF RIGHTS FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. The right to be treated as a co-worker - not just free help, not as a prima donna.

2. The right to a suitable assignment with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education, and employment background.

3. The right to training for the job - thoughtfully planned and effectively presented.

4. The right to know as much about the agency as possible - its policies, its people, its programs.

5. The right to continuing education on the job as a follow-up to the initial training, information about new developments, and training for greater responsibility.

6. The right to sound guidance and direction - by someone who is experienced, well-informed, patient, and thoughtful - by someone who has time to invest in giving guidance.

7. The right to a place to work, an orderly, designated place, conducive to work and worthy of the job to be done.

8. The right to promotion and a variety of experiences, through advancement to assignments of more responsibility, through transfer from one activity to another, through special project assignments.

9. The right to be heard, to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, to have respect shown for an honest opinion.

10. The right to recognition in the form of promotion and awards (or some tangible evidence) through day-by-day expressions of appreciation and by treatment as a bona fide co- worker.

## Transportation

Transportation can be a major organization issue in implementing a community service-learning (CSL) program. Most schools have little experience utilizing the community as an extended classroom. It is important that all stakeholders in the CSL program consider the many options for transportation, as well as the alternative of creating service activities located at the school site. When transportation is required, this is a perfect time to involve the support and creativity of an advisory council, business partner, or parent volunteers.

If a school or district is conducting CSL workshops, it is wise to involve the persons responsible for transportation. An understanding of CSL as a model of instruction may help them to ensure that it receives the same treatment as any course in which transportation is routinely provided by the district. When considering transportation, school personnel and community-based organizations must study liability issues such as driver restrictions, minimum district or state insurance requirements for drivers, background checks, and requirements for any extra training. The school districts legal advisor can often provide background information. Safety training for students should also be explored.

Possible solutions to the issue of providing transportation fall within three categories: stay on site or leave only occasionally, utilize existing school resources, and generate new methods of transportation. Viewed within these contexts, school and community organization personnel may more readily identify answers to transportation dilemmas.

**1. Stay on site or leave once or twice.**

There are numerous instances of k-12 service projects where the students never leave the classroom. Other projects require only occasional trips to volunteer sites.

Examples of CSL opportunities within schools include cross-age tutoring, mentoring or education programs, helping new or foreign students, or conflict mediation.

- Woodworking students could make toys, or home economics students could make clothes for children in homeless shelters.
- Senior citizens could come into the school classrooms for reciprocal help (many senior citizen homes have their own transportation).
- Students could do projects as advocates for particular issue, with most of their work occurring in school setting.

**2. Utilize existing school resources**

What transportation resources already exist within the school? One way to minimize problems when regular transportation is necessary is to choose service sites in the immediate neighborhood surrounding the school. Then a transportation option may be for students to walk to the service site. Other possibilities are:

- Use school buses
- Use other vehicles designated for athletic transportation
- Use district vans or driver education cars
- Build a transportation budget into your building budget to pay CSL transportation costs

**3. Generate new methods of transportation**

A district may develop new approaches to transportation for CSL students which add to existing district resources or which call on community resources. The following ideas involve both approaches.

- Add new options of transportation within the district. One school bought a fleet of bicycles especially for transportation to service sites. If this is done, students should be educated about bicycle safety. Liability issues must also be checked.
- Utilize local community organizations. Local business partners or a service organization (Kiwanis, Optimists, Lions) may be willing to donate a 10-to-15 person van. Again, liability must be considered because the seating capacity of a van affects the licensing requirements of the driver.
- Utilize a van and driver from the nonprofit agency where they students are volunteering to take students to and from the agency.
- Have taxis volunteer X number of hours of transportation per week.
- Utilize existing mass transportation. In some schools, bus companies have supplies bus tokens or fares. In some communities, students have been given a lower rate on the public transportation system, receiving a special identification card.
- Seek ideas from community supporters. Ask the parent-teacher organization, school board, school advisory committee, or similar groups to generate suggestions for ways in which transportation options may increase. Offers of assistance may come from these sources.

# SECTION III

# THE PROCESS

## Key Elements for an Effective Program: Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Celebration

## SCHOOLS
## Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Celebration

## PREPARATION

Preparation lays the groundwork for "learning" to occur while performing community service. Since service is intended to meet a community need, preparation requires an awareness of community needs and ways in which students can address those needs through "Community service with a learning component." The *Cone of Experience* offers a visual representation of the ways in which the experiences of community service learning contribute to student achievement. (See page 34).

Schools need to prepare for student learning through community service by:

1. Understanding Act 648 and its connection to the instructional program through:
    - Curriculum frameworks
    - Drug education
    - Character education
    - School to work transition
    - School systems and outside agencies
    - The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The focus of Act 648 of 1993 is student learning. Community Service learning (CSL) has instructional value because it helps students achieve a variety of learning objectives. Explicit connection with existing district curriculum ensures that this link is present in every aspect of community service. For example, a student's service may involve various forms of writing and opportunities to speak to groups (English/Language Arts) as well as examining persisting community issues (Social Studies). A student can learn how agencies outside the schools support the work of schools and how the Americans with Disabilities Act service the needs of Americans with special needs. Schools must establish those links so school staff, students, parents, and CBOs understand the expectations. Curriculum connections are found on page 35.

2. Clarifying the definition of community service learning (CSL)

A quote from the Alliance for Service-Learning Education Reform (1993) captures the essence of community service learning.

> The transition from community service to community service-learning occurs when… "There is a deliberate connection made between service and learning opportunities which are then accompanied by conscious and thoughtfully-designed occasions for reflecting on the service experience."

3. Identifying the purposes and benefits of CSL

The purposes flow from connections with the district mission and curriculum. All constituencies within the school community- school, student, and parent- benefit from CSL. To earn one unit of academic credit, school districts may choose to require a greater number of hours that the seventy-five hours (75) set forth in Act 648 of 1993.

4. Soliciting necessary support within the school community

Constituencies within the school community may not recognize the value of CSL. Defining the program through its curricular connections, other purposes, and benefits to the school, students, and parents are initial steps in securing support within the school community. Meeting with leadership from the faculty, students, and parents to explain the program builds a base through which wider support may emerge. The key is complete and timely information.

5. Determining the roles of administrators and certified staff

Clarification of the roles is critical to successful implementation of CSL. Administrators must be involved in the process since it relates directly to overall school goals. Rules and regulations require supervision by a certified employee of a district. Certified staff members participating in the program should receive guidelines to direct their work with students. Guidelines may address such areas as manner of student supervision; length of time allowed to fulfill the district's minimum number of hours for one unit of credit; expected results; components of preparation, action, reflection and celebration; and similar issues. See the Position Description for a CSL Supervisor on page 38.

6. Determining the educational setting in the school in which this will occur

In supervision of CSL students, there are choices in scheduling teacher-student interaction time so that students may earn academic credit through community service. A district may prefer that teachers meet with and supervise students through regularly scheduled classes. Or the district may decide to pursue the program through teacher-student conferences set at times determined by the participants. The decision may be left to the discretion of the teacher should there by sufficient flexibility.

7. Reviewing the material in Section III

Section III (Readiness) contains essential materials concerning issues of liability and transportation. School administrators and teachers should review these to ensure smooth operation of the program within the district.

8. Brainstorming possible barriers

Barriers, real or perceived, can hinder the implementation of a successful community service program. Anticipate barriers and be proactive in addressing them. Potential obstacles and possible solutions are addressed on page 36 in "Troubleshooting Tips." Review them to determine whether or not any apply to your school

9. Site identification, visitation, and recruitment

Prior to meeting with CSL students, staff must identify potential community sites as appropriate for the program. Utilized will be the list of approved sites as submitted to the State Board of Education and approved by that body and local school board. Act 648 stipulates that only approved sites may be used for placement when academic credit is granted to a student. New sites can be added by completing a Site Application Form, found on page 58, and returning it to Arkansas DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support (DCSNS). The list of *Approved CSL Sites* is available from DCSNS and Teacher Center Coordinators in the Educational Services Cooperatives.

All sites should be contacted by the local school district to determine their readiness and ability to utilize student CSL volunteers effectively. Ideally, the CSL supervisor or a designee visits each site individually. Realistically, time is limited. The supervisor may prefer to send a survey or interview the agency by telephone. The important thing is that each site be contacted and approved at the local level.

Whether visiting in person or by email or telephone, you will want to ensure that there is:

- A job description for every volunteer job that provides worthwhile service experiences
- Adequate work space
- Adequate supervision and training

The supervisor may discuss with sites the expectations of each party. An example is who provides the forms to be completed by the CSL volunteer and how often they should be turned in. It is an opportunity to establish good communication.

## ACTION

Schools implement CSL through:

1. Scheduling staff development

Staff development at the school level incorporates information as determined during the period of preparation. The program facilitator must be prepared to lead involved staff through a process of identifying and using information critical to the operation of the program at that site. While staff working with students must be more thoroughly initiated, all certified and uncertified staff should be aware of the purposes and benefits of CSL under Act 648.

2. Motivating students

Part of every preparation process is generating student excitement about the opportunity to participate in community service. These are ways in which to accomplish this.

- Include students in the planning. How do they want to help their community?
- Invite an older student who has participated in CSL to speak
- Watch videos such as *Today's Heroes*
- Survey parents and adults doing service
- Invite a community member to speak to the class on related issues
- Invite someone from a community-based organization to speak
- Organize a field trip to service sites so students can see the setting first hand
- Research an issue
- Publicize what last year's CSL students achieved to generate new interest

3. Establishing a calendar/schedule for students' community service to ensure successful completion in a timely manner

A school has the flexibility to require that the 75 or more hours be completed within a shorter or longer time frame. For example, a student may earn the required hours over a four-year period (grades 9-12) or within one semester. Regardless of the time frame, the CSL supervisor and each student should jointly establish a timeline for completion of the community service. This timeline should take into account the graduation date and school calendar as necessary. Students may also earn credit in community service at multiple sites as long as the learning component exists in each instance.

4. Scheduling a conference with parents and students to outline responsibilities and benefits

Since community service entails independent student work, it is important that both parents and students understand the responsibilities inherent in seeking academic credit under Act 648. Both must understand that learning is basic to the process and that successful completion of the required hours requires evidence of learning. The district sets forth the criteria in advance by which student learning will be judged so that earning of the academic credit can be verified. A contract between the school, students, and parent/guardian can state the terms of the student's successful completion of the community service credit and thereby avoid misunderstanding. At the same time, all should be aware of the benefits inherent in program participation. If possible, schools can establish a "group conference" with all interested students, parents or guardians, and school personnel. The CSL supervisor may use this opportunity to explain the roles and responsibilities of students and parents and to stress to parents the academic responsibility their children have to complete their volunteer service in a timely manner.

5. Providing instructional time to guide students

Certified staff should have sufficient time to guide students in CSL, either through regularly scheduled classes or through individual conferences. Students may be assisted in researching available sites, selecting an appropriate site, jointly establishing criteria for a successful community service placement, conferring to verify success of student placement according to established criteria, and simultaneously choosing a means of reflection.

Students can brainstorm projects that would meet curricular objectives as well as be appropriate and interesting. These projects then form the basis of further exploration by students as part of their community service preparation. Students can share the results of research with classmates so that a variety of sites and related issues are addressed within a class setting. If a student is working independently, he/she may discuss research results with staff in conference settings.

The school should provide support to students in their efforts. If students identify, research, and analyze issues in conjunction with the focus of community service sites, staff might:

- Provide materials such as local newspapers or books for student research into community problems and needs
- Accompany students on a "walk-around" of the school and or community to observe needs
- Assist students as they develop a survey for classmates or residents about needs
- Arrange for students to attend a city or council meeting to hear about needs

Learning necessary skills can range from writing techniques to necessary procedures used in the setting of the community service site. For instance, if a student serves in a nursing home, a resource speaker can familiarize the student(s) with the special needs of its residents, activities they enjoy, and the parameters of student service at that site. This can occur in the school setting prior to the service as well as at the site.

6. Providing students the opportunity to share their reflections in the school setting as appropriate. "Student Reflection" offers suggestions of ways in which this may take place. (See pages 39-45).

## REFLECTION

Just as students benefit from reflection, so do the school administration and faculty benefit from evaluation of the community service learning program. This process will help to determine strengths and weaknesses.

Evaluation can include looking at students' reflection, communicating with the site supervisor, communicating with other school personnel, communicating with parents, and/or a perceptual survey of teachers and parents. Results may be shared with school, students, parents, and sites. A key resource is *Reflection: The Key to Service Learning,* available from the National Helpers Network, 25 West 43rd Street, Room 612, New York, NY 10036-8099.

## CELEBRATION

While Celebration is a responsibility of the community-based organization, it is also appropriate at the school level. Celebration may take many forms, elaborate to simple. Essentially it is recognition of a successful program completion in a manner that meets criteria established by the school and which contributes to personal growth of students involved. The process of celebration recognizes the achievement of student participants in community service.

There is a continuum of recognition from least powerful to most powerful, with efforts which range from perfunctory formality to systematic and proper use of praise, reprimand, and celebration. The most effective recognition moves beyond the perfunctory stage to systematic planned recognition. Specific means include acknowledgment at school assemblies, recognition in the local paper, or a display of reflection pieces within a school setting. These can reflect the range of recognition cited earlier.

Celebration or recognition succeeds best when it is matched to the person and to the achievement. It should also be timely and specific. Celebration can be a collaborative effort with the volunteer site.

## TROUBLE SHOOTING TIPS

Perceived or real barriers to the implementation of Act 648 of 1993 may exist at the local level. Some common problems are listed below with possible solutions for a Community Service Learning (CSL) Program.

### Lack of Time for Certified Staff

- Do Service after school
- Do service during class time, study hall, or lunch
- Rotate periods for service
- Block off chunks of time; prioritize
- Team with other staff; divide the work
- Use student interns to assist you; Their service project would be to assist in coordinating the group's project
- Use parents to help with organization and preparation

### Conflict in Students' Schedules

- Do in-school projects during CSL scheduled class time
- Do mini projects over several semesters
- Offer Incentives or rewards in addition to academic credit
- Negotiate with coaches and or other advisors

### Reservations among Parents about Service

- Give them complete and timely information about CSL
- Educate them with a parent workshop or video about service
- Invite them to participate along with their kids

### Lack of Transportation

- Do projects within walking distance
- Get bus tickets
- Ask parents to drive
- Have students drive if they are licensed
- Get special insurance and drive them yourself
- Learn the school bus schedule and see about intercepting buses that pass your school
- Check with teachers at your school who get buses frequently to find out how they do it
- Solicit donations of rides from bus companies
- Use the transportation of the agency you are serving
- Have those being served come to the school

## Limited Teacher Energy

- Set limits for yourself
- Accept small gains
- Be flexible
- Have a sounding board
- Delegate tasks
- Recruit volunteers

## Lack of Money

- Put on a fundraiser
- Apply for a grant (local business, fraternal organizations)
- Get “adopted” by a local business
- Ask for PTA or other school funding
- Have a “serve-a-thon”; collect pledges for hours of service provided on a certain day

*From Maryland Student Service Alliance*

## SCHEDULING OPTIONS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING

Scheduling can become a major organizational concern when implementing a community service learning (CSL) program. Educators are particularly sensitive to issues of time. The question becomes "How am I going to fit community service learning into an already busy schedule?" An answer may be exploring alternative ways to incorporate service as part of a daily schedule.

Educators committed to implementation of community service learning may be stymied by the constraints of an existing schedule. School staff can engage in one or more of the following activities in seeking to develop a workable model for inclusion of community service-learning as an elective for students.

- Staff may collaborate to create the ideal schedule for incorporating community service learning at the school site. Sharing the current dilemmas presented by the schedule provides an opportunity for suggestions to work within an existing schedule. Beyond that, the staff may move to develop an ideal schedule for incorporating CSL and suggest steps to implement that plan. This is an ideal opportunity for faculty to work in small groups as problem solvers, sharing what they gain in a large group setting.

- Individual faculty members may also post their daily schedules, showing ways in which to include CSL. After an opportunity to review the schedules, faculty and administrators may offer comments, observations, or questions about proposed solutions.

- Faculty and administrators may also react to the following prompt: "What are your greatest concerns when you think of adding community service learning to the school day?"

School faculty and administrations, as well as community-based organizations, may need suggestions for imaginative ways to solve a scheduling dilemma. The following are possibilities to pursue.

- Plan service projects at the school site or in close proximity to the school site

- Emphasize the connection between CSL and the instructional program of the school (school curriculum, higher order thinking skills, problem solving, and theme-based learning).

- Dedicate reasonable school time to develop a project idea in class with delivery of service occurring on a student's personal time.

- Plan opportunities for students to work at school to develop and construct a product, which meets an identified community need.

- Offer CSL as part of summer school.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING SUPERVISOR:**
**POSITION DECRIPTION ***

JOB GOAL

To supervise the academic work of students earning credit toward graduation under the provisions of Act 648 of 1993 by establishing standards of performance, overseeing community placement, and annually evaluating the program within the local district.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Know and understand the provisions of act 648 of 1993 and Rules and Regulations issued in compliance with that Act. Utilize the implementation manual developed by the State DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support (DCSNS) and the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE).

2. Determine potential placement sites as approved by the State Board of Education and the local school board.

3. Create awareness of the program within constituencies of the school community: school staff, parents, and administrators.

4. Establish standards for successful completion of community service in order to earn academic credit.

5. Guide students in their selection of community service learning sites.

6. Meet with the students on a regular basis to assist them in preparing for community service learning and in planning their action component as well as to evaluate student reflection activities.

7. Maintain a record for each student in the program by:
   Entering service hours earned;
   Preparing required paperwork to transmit credit and grade; and
   Transmitting community service learning records as necessary.

The Community Service Learning Supervisor will have scheduled time each day to assist CSL students. The supervisor's daily schedule should be arranged so that he/she has adequate opportunity to meet or communicate with students earning academic credit under the provisions of Act 648 of 1993.

**This position description serves only as an example and is not intended as mandatory for an Arkansas school district.*

## STUDENT REFLECTION

### Basic Reflection Prompts

These questions are basic and provide early practice for those students who have not engaged in more reflective activities. They are somewhat specific and do not lend themselves to more creative expression of the community service learning experience. If such questions are used, students should be challenged with more thoughtful probes several weeks into the program.

Factual questions ask what? Who? Where?

1. What are four things that you smelled, saw, heard, or touched?
2. What was the course of events?
3. Describe the people you met today.
4. Describe the place of your community learning. Include aspects such as light, color, decoration, and /or ventilation.
5. Describe the equipment that you have used.
6. Describe what you did to prepare for today.
7. Name five things that are most memorable about today.
8. Describe some of your interactions with people in the community program.
9. How do people in the community-based organization appear to you?
10. Did you work by yourself in groups? Describe the setting.
11. In two words describe the place.
12. Were there other volunteers? In what work were they involved?
13. What was the best/ worst thing that happened today? Why?

A second set of basic prompts goes beyond factual response in asking students to express an opinion about the community service learning program. The following examples illustrate such questions, which continue to direct student responses to a great degree.

Questions ask: how do you feel…?, in your opinion…?

1. How did you feel when we first got there; how did you feel when we left?
2. What made you feel that way at first?
3. At what point did your feelings change?
4. What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about your peers?
5. What did you learn about the population served?
6. What did you do today that you were particularly proud of?
7. How are you different/similar to other members of this group?
8. How did differences strengthen the group?
9. In what instances did being different help and hinder the group members?
10. How are you different/similar to members of the population served?
11. Who assumed the leadership roles during the activity?
12. How did the group respond to the leader?
13. What would have happened if this group had been larger or smaller?
14. What would you do differently if you were starting the activity again with the same group?
15. What would you like to say to the group members?
16. How is your life similar to or different from theirs?
17. If you were one of the people you served, what would you think of yourself?
18. What other needs do you think the people you served have?

*Adapted from Maryland Student Service Alliance.*

## Open-Ended Reflection Prompts

These prompts require more thoughtful and effortful responses from students. They may follow many paths in responding unlike the more directed questions set forth above.

1. What was hard or easy about this week/month? (Think about the people you serve, the topics you work with, your service activities; you can write about an ongoing problem or a particular incident.)

2. What is getting harder or easier about your Community Service Learning? Why?

3. What have you accomplished?

4. What have you learned?

5. What conclusions have you drawn?

6. What have you "given" of yourself to others this week?

7. What have others "given" of themselves to you? What have you learned because of it?

8. Describe a particularly difficult situation. How did you deal with it? Were you a "leader"? How would you approach it differently if it were to happen again?

9. How is this experience affecting you? Please explain your response.

*Adapted from Handbook for Continuous Improvement.*

## The Structured Journal

Structured journals provide feedback from participants about their service experiences in a way that offers valuable insights to the supervising teacher. Participants are asked to write in their journals on a regular basis (at least bi-weekly), responding to basic, open-ended questions posed by their supervisor to encourage reflection.

Structured journals help the supervisor and school to understand the impact of the program on participants (changing attitudes towards service, life, different types of people, etc.); to receive feedback on program activities; and to glean insights into project development that might not otherwise be observed. They also help participants get more out of their service experience by encouraging them to reflect on what they've learned about themselves and others. In turn, this will help them become better service providers and citizens by heightening their awareness of and sensitivity to service issues.

## Uses

- To learn about issues your participants are facing so you can better address these issues.
- To receive a first-person account of site activities and glean insights on what works well and what needs to be reworked.
- To gain insight into relationships at sites and flag possible areas of conflict that need to be addressed.
- To obtain "stories" to enhance your reports, storyboards, etc.

## Benefits

- Heightens understanding of participants' needs.
- Enhances the participant's learning experience.
- Improves the ability of participants to express themselves on paper.
- Provides participants with a personal record of their feelings/experiences during their service.
- Builds an extensive resume of descriptive information on your program, its impact, and its specific projects.
- Requires little "setup" time and is inexpensive.
- Encourages reflection. The process of thinking through the questions you pose will teach participants to reflect on what they've learned and what they value.

## Implementation Tips

- Have participants buy their own journal notebooks so they may make a personal monetary investment and feel more of a commitment to writing in the notebooks.

- Discuss the usefulness of structured journals with participants. Get their feedback on how they feel about writing in the journals, and if they feel comfortable sharing their thoughts with you. Also discuss how you will use the journal entries.

- Try using different approaches to see what generates the most open feedback (e.g., have one group respond to questions while another free-writes).

- Decide how often you want participants writing in journals. Be careful about asking them to write too frequently as they may burn out and pay less attention to what they are writing. Conversely, encourage them to write as frequently as they like and not to limit themselves solely to the questions you pose.

- Determine what you want to know about participants' experience:

    - Ask some questions repeatedly to monitor changes in attitude. For example, what was the best and worst thing about your service experiences this month? What did you learn about yourself and/or others this month?

    - Introduce new questions to spark reflection on a certain issue (e.g., you might ask participants involved with a homeless shelter such questions as what do you think are the causes of homelessness, how do you think we should address this issue, or how has your service experience affected the way you act toward homeless people).

- Collect journals regularly, and return them promptly. You may want to add comments that encourage participants to expand further on a particular issue or to consider another perspective. Or leave the journals blank so as not to alter their entries. Talk to your participants and ask them what they would like you to do.

- Develop a system for keeping track of entries, e.g., copying sections and keeping them in a binder, entering them into a computer file, etc. Always ask permission before sharing a participants writing with others.

- Ask participants to review their journals at the end of their term of service and to write a final entry (to be given to the program) on what they have seen, done, and felt over the past months. Have them reflect on what changes they have noticed in themselves and the effect they have had on others. Keep a binder of these final entries so that other participants can learn from their experiences.

## Limitations

- Journals that are required, structured, and read by others may appear to be a personal intrusion and stifle participant honesty and enthusiasm. Before assigning journals, make sure your participants are willing to share their thoughts with you. Consider making journals voluntary or giving participants a choice of topics to write on (including whatever is on their minds). One problem with voluntary journals is that you may not hear from participants you most need to understand better -- those who are unhappy in the program. Also, if participants write on topics of their choice, it is difficult to spot changes in attitude, etc.

*From "Tools & Practices: Structured Journal," Corporation for National Service*

## Activities for Reflection

Reflection options other than written responses should be offered to students. Following are examples of student activities, which allow them to reflect on what they have learned.

- **Creative Writing.** Submit articles and poems to the school newspaper, literary arts magazine, or the local media. The articles should be reflective rather than narrative in content.

- **Journal.** Reflect on service through journal writing. This activity is most effective if carefully structured. Ask students detailed questions and encourage them to share their thoughts with each other.

- **Discussion.** Use Pair-Share or another small group discussion strategy for students to talk about service experiences.

- **Stories, Books, Quotes.** Read and discuss stories or case studies related to the students' service experiences. Also, ask students to write a short story based on their experiences. Be sure the story shows a community need through the perspective of one or more characters in the story.

- **Guest Speaker.** Invite a community member to share his or her service experiences. Suggest that the speaker have a theme, such as " How Service Makes Us Better Citizens." Have students prepare questions to ask the guest speaker.

- **Class Work Assignments.** Reflect on service in regular assignments (weekly essays, research papers, oral presentations, etc.).

- **Art.** Express feelings about service through art. Be creative—draw, paint, etc.

- **Scrapbook.** Create a scrapbook about service experience. It could include pictures of service sites, newspaper articles, mementos of the service project and samples of students' writing (letters to the editor, essays, poems, etc.).

- **Music.** Listen to music lyrics to stimulate discussion. Ask students to lead this session – they know today's music!

- **Role Play.** Act out problem situations that may have occurred during the service project. Brainstorm solutions.

- **Mock Talk Show or City Council Meeting.** Create a scenario to discuss the issues students have chosen to address.

- **Video.** Tape students as they serve. Watch the video and discuss it in a group.
- **Dance.** Create a dance or physical expression of the service experience.

*From the National Association of Partners in Education, Inc*

## STUDENTS
## Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Celebration

Student preparation, action, reflection and celebration correspond closely to the suggestions for the school. Where sufficiently explanatory material exists in the previous part, it will be referenced in this section.

**PREPARATION**

Preparation lays the groundwork for "learning" to occur while performing community service. Since service is intended to meet a community need, preparation requires an awareness of community needs and ways in which students can address those needs through "community service with a learning component" (CSL).

Student volunteers need to prepare for community service by:

1. Understanding Act 648 and its connection to the instructional program

Review the information in the "School" section

2. Understanding the nature of community service with a learning component

Review the information in the "School" section

3. Understanding the educational setting in the school in which this will occur

Review the information in the "School" section

4. Participating in site research and selection

In determining placement sites based on those approved by the State Board of Education, students can talk to local experts and prospective recipients; read books, as well as newspaper and magazine articles; and communicate through electronic bulletin boards. Students should receive appropriate instruction in using surveys, making telephone calls, interviewing, or any strategies that involve interacting with the public. Identifying, researching, and analyzing issues associated with various sites may also be a part of this step.

5. Establishing a formal commitment to the community service program at the selected site(s)

Students must plan their projects and learn the necessary skills to be successful. This includes a thoughtful approach, guided by school staff, to the way in which the project proceeds and culminates. Entering the project with necessary skills in place assures students a degree of confidence as they pursue community service.

## ACTION

1. Choose a form of available community service action (direct, indirect, advocacy) at the site. Please see the Community-Based Organization section for examples of each form of action.

2. Determine time frame for service

3. Identify method(s) of reflection. Initiate as appropriate.

Reflection can be both formative and summative. Teacher and student should determine what method is most appropriate over a specified period of time. Again the student must know the criteria prior to initiating the project, including criteria associated with the component of reflection. Use of a Structured Journal is a valuable tool to provide both formative and summative reflection. Details of the process appear at the end of this section.

4. Perform service

As a student performs the community service, he/she should maintain contact with school personnel through conferences or classes. This assures a report of ongoing progress in a manner agreed on by both teacher and student.

## REFLECTION

Reflection is a time to gain through experience, review service action, and evaluate the volunteer site. Accompanying materials supply numerous examples of ways in which reflection can be utilized as a positive tool for both school and student.

## CELEBRATION

Students can contribute ideas about celebrating completion of a community service project or assignment. They may also share in creating appropriate recognition for classmates who have completed assignments. It is important that students know their efforts make a difference.

# PARENTS
## Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Celebration

## PREPARATION

Preparation lays the groundwork for support of the "learning" which occurs when students perform community service. Service is intended to meet a community need, and parents can assist in creating an awareness of those needs as well as suggesting ways students may address them. Parents may even work within a setting appropriate for community service learning activities, thereby providing a unique resource for the school program.

Parents may assist in preparing students for community service by:

1. Understanding Act 648 of 1993 and its connection to the instructional program.

Such understanding may be developed through conversations with school personnel and with students. This will build support of community service learning (CSL) program among parents. The links to a student's academic program should be explicit.

2. Comprehending the meaning of CSL

Parents can profit from knowing about both service learning and CSL so it is clear how the program supports student achievement and promotes student growth in other ways.

3. Identifying the purposes and benefits of CSL

Benefits recognized by parents may include:

- Seeing increased maturity in students
- Experiencing increased respect from students as a result of their improved understanding of the adult work environment
- Recognizing a safe and supervised environment in which students may learn and develop in new ways
- Realizing strengthened family bonds as a result of "real world" encounters
- Encountering new perspectives on student capabilities and reasons for pride

4. Determining their role in the CSL process

Parents should attend any preparatory meetings to familiarize themselves with the CSL program and opportunities for students. This allows them to develop an appreciation of the program philosophy and its operating procedures, and they have the opportunity to ask questions pertinent to their student's participation. Especially important is establishing the link between academics and community service learning, as well as gaining a formal consent or

permission for their student's participation. Parents should also know in which educational setting the CSL program takes place within the school (regular classes, scheduled or occasional conferences, or other arrangements), schedule for completion, any liability implications, and similar details.

5. Learning about approved sites

Parents can receive a list of community sites approved by the State Board of Education and the local school board where CSL programs may operate. They may wish to confer with students about various placement opportunities before a final commitment is made, taking an active interest in helping students choose their project or projects. They may also know of additional sites for placement to recommend to the Arkansas DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support for approval by the State Board of Education and the local school board.

## ACTION

Parents assist in CSL implementation through:

1. Making a formal commitment to support the CSL learner

If a formal contract was not signed at the time of preliminary conferences, this should occur now. Elements of agreements are outlined in previous sections, and they provide ideas for its format. The CSL Supervisor and parents should mutually understand that any questions about the placement are addressed to school personnel, not to personnel of the community-based organization. Parents must also recognize the timeline for completion of the CSL program in order to receive one unit of academic credit toward graduation.

2. Assisting with transportation

Provision of transportation is a major factor in a successful CSL program. Parents may be sources of the transportation itself or of ideas for other approaches to arranging transportation between school and placement sites.

3. Assisting with research and resources relevant to placement

As students begin their learning at the site, occasions may arise when they require additional resources and assistance to learn about their placement. Parents can assist as required to facilitate work at the library, community interviews, or other undertakings that add substance to the placement experience.

4. Participating in conferences

School, student, and parent may decide whether and how often parents participate in school-based conferences about the CSL program. Students will meet with the Supervisor in a predictable manner, and parent interest and involvement may be valuable to this effort.

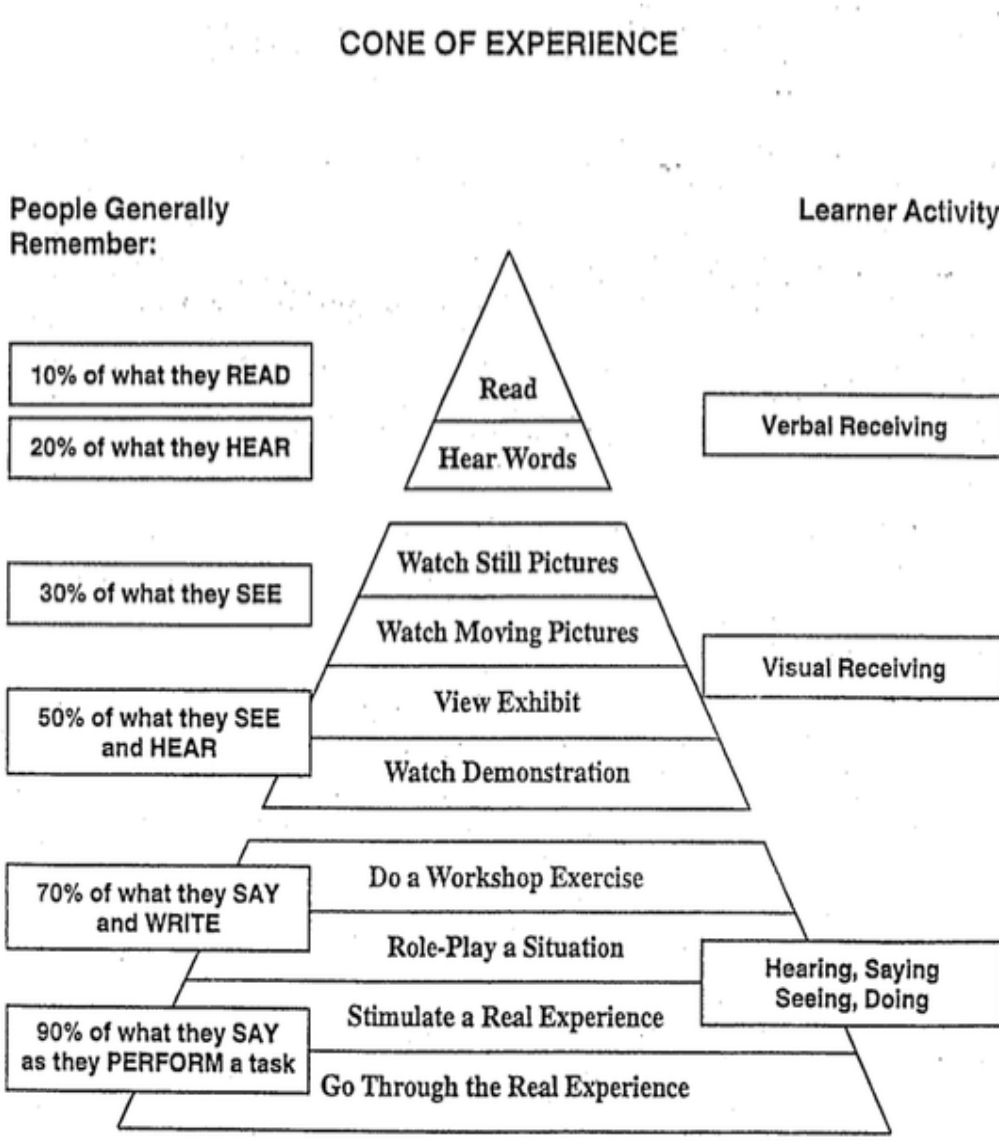
## Reflection

Parents may benefit from sharing the formal reflections of students as they progress through the CSL program. If parents are to see such materials, students should be involved in the initial decision and aware of this potential use. Final reflection pieces or activities may be the focus of parent involvement, rather than intermediate pieces and activities. Parents may also suggest ways in which authentic reflection can occur.

## Celebration

Parents may take part in the celebration of student achievements in two ways. First they can support the actual event through volunteering time of other resources. Secondly they can attend and join in recognizing student successes.

## Cone Of Experience




Adapted from materials produced by Dr. Katherine Tift for the National Drug Abuse Training Center. For further information on the "Cone of Experience", see Raymond T. Wimon, *Educational Media*, Charles Merrill Co., 1969, Columbus, OH.

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING

Community service learning can be linked to any curriculum area and can support student learning expectations set forth in the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks. Following is a breakdown of a few of the subject areas and goals that are possible to meet through community service learning.

**Science**

- Relevance of science
- Rational and creative thinking
- Environmental studies
- Health education
- Nature, biology
- Sanitation
- Aging process
- Pollution
- Genetics/ disabilities
- Public health/ health regulations

**Social Studies**

- Political, historic, and economic aspects
- Social awareness
- Political awareness
- Diversity issues
- Local government
- Cultural sensitivity
- Citizenship
- Critical thinking and problem solving

**Math**

- Appreciation
- Express and interpret mathematical ideas
- Measuring
- Estimating
- Problem solving
- Budgeting
- Calculating
- Graphing
- Surveying
- Analyzing

**Language Arts**

- Research
- Writing
- Formal speaking
- Informal speaking
- Reading
- Communication skills
- Critical thinking
- Effective listening
- Language appreciation
- Literature appreciation

**Vocational Education**

- Communication skills
- Socialization
- Job tolerance
- Work ethics
- Appropriate behavior
- Work habits
- Personal appearance

**Health**

- Self concept
- Interpersonal relationships
- Substance abuse
- Health practices
- Food and nutrition
- Disease
- Safe living

**Music & Fine Arts**

- Appreciation
- Historical, cultural, and social context
- Aesthetic judgments and decision making
- Active expression

**Family Studies**

- Food and nutrition
- Interpersonal relationships
- Child development
- Concept of family

*Adapted from the Maryland Student Service Alliance*

## COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
## Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Celebration

### PREPARATION

Preparation lays the groundwork for "learning" to occur while performing community service. Since service is intended to meet a community need, preparation requires adequate time to identify needs and figure out how to effectively address those needs through "community service learning."

Community-based organizations need to prepare for student volunteers by:

- Understanding Act 648 and its role in the organization.
- Revisiting community-based organization's mission statement, goals, and objectives.
- Training staff to be able to identify their volunteer needs.
- Learning how to effectively communicate with youth.
- Preparing to help expand leadership and interpersonal and communication skills in the youth.
- Discussing liability issues, including child labor laws and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Benefiting community-based organization, for example, increased productivity, intergenerational experiences, and helping groom our future work force.
- Including youth in your planning process.
- Developing the plan for evaluation.

Part of the student's responsibility is preparing for community service learning is to choose their volunteer site. Community-based organizations should be prepared to address students' questions as students survey organizations with which they are interested in volunteering. CBOs should not only be available for school community service fairs, but also be proactive in coordinating them within the community.

To help students choose their volunteer site, CBOs will want to have these things in place.

Prepared materials to send to potential student volunteers, which include:

- Application form
- Volunteer eligibility requirements
- History, mission statement, and purpose of agency
- Job descriptions

Position Description/ Project Description should include:

- Job duties
- Jobs in which youth are interested and that are meaningful

- Benefits to youth
- Levels of advancement, if possible
- Compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act and child labor laws
- An ensured learning component
- Projects that are available for all students, regardless of their developmental age
- Reinforcement of preparation, action, and reflection
- An identified supervisor and procedures

Other needed forms: (School may have some they want you to use)

- Sign-in sheet
- Evaluation tool
- Student letter of intent

Interview process should:

- Promote proper placement based on the abilities and interests
- Properly reflect knowledge of questions that are legal/ illegal

Orientation and training of students should include:

- Agency history, mission, purpose, and volunteer opportunities
- Organization expectations from youth, i.e., timeliness, dress code, behavior
- Agency procedures, rules, etc.
- Liability issues, including child labor laws and ADA
- Volunteer eligibility requirements

On-the-job training for youth should:

- Reinforce expectations, guidelines, and boundaries
- Provide any procedures necessary to ensure successful task completion
- Demonstrate use of special equipment

Adequate supervision should:

- Provide age-appropriate tasks
- Provide developmentally appropriate supervision
- Allow for reassignment or advancement as necessary

## ACTION

Once students have worked through the preparation process, they are ready to engage in action, which can take three major forms. Examples of the three types of action and possible student-learning outcomes are:

**Direct Service**
*Tutoring, mentoring, visiting the elderly, distributing food, etc.*

Students learn to:

- Be responsible for their own actions
- Be dependable
- Make a difference in another person's life
- Solve problems
- Care for another person
- Focus on the needs of others, and place personal issues in context
- Get along with people different from themselves.

**Indirect Service**
*Drives, collections, fund-raisers, cleanups, environmental projects, etc.*

Students learn to:

- Work as a team and cooperate
- Play different roles in a group
- Take pride in an accomplishment
- Organize people to get a job done
- Involve others (recruit them to help)
- Perform project specific or job specific skills
- Value working with others to solve problems

**Advocacy**
*Lobbying, speaking, performing, etc.*

Students learn to:

- Persevere
- Articulate a concern and suggest solutions
- Work with adults
- Persuade people to act in a new way
- Understand relationships among issues
- Appreciate the duties and privileges of citizenship
- Appreciate the political process
- Recognize that on person can make a difference.

## REFLECTION

Just as the students benefit from reflection, so do the community-based organizations. This process will help CBOs evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their youth volunteer program.

Before the first student enters the door of the CBO, it is extremely important that the preparation piece include a plan for evaluation. It is at this time that the staff needs to identify what the students will do to help the CBO meet the goals and objectives of their mission statement while providing meaningful community service experiences to the students.

At the outset of planning, therefore, you must decide on your measuring stick so that success can be recognized and rewarded. Do you judge the success of a volunteer service department by the number of hours served or the quality of service rendered, or both?

A meaningful job description is an essential tool for evaluation. Other tools to help in this process would be sign-in sheets and input from staff, clients, or customers, and the students themselves.

There are five components of a total evaluation: the CBO staff, students, clients or customers, school, and parents. A total evaluation will need feedback from all five groups. Collaboration will be necessary for a true picture of the program. It would be advisable to work with the other four components to ensure this.

***Remember that you cannot fail if you learn from your mistakes.***

## CELEBRATION

Recognition and celebration have long been used as motivators of volunteers who are performing community service. While recognition should be continual and ongoing, celebration normally marks the end of a service activity, or a specific number of hours or years of service.

Celebrations and recognition are important to the closure of service projects. It gives the volunteers an opportunity to shout to the world, "We are finished!" Celebration is also an opportunity to tell those who worked on the project just how valuable their service was to the community.

Here are two ideas you can use to "capture the moment." One, create a Hall of Fame with photos of service projects. Two, take a photo of the student being congratulated by his or her service supervisor. Frame the photo and piece photographs of top performers in a central school area.

There are some simple rules to consider when choosing methods of recognition.

1. Match the recognition or celebration to the person. Some people are shy and prefer little fuss, some thrive on humor, and others need the support of a number of people. Be sure that the form of recognition is appropriate both to the person's demeanor and his or her place within your organization.

2. Match the recognition to the achievement. An organization should have a system of awards for various levels. For common everyday achievements, impromptu, informal awards are appropriate. Formal awards are appropriate for major accomplishments or the end of the project. Remember, the student is receiving school credit for his or her community service. This, in itself, is an earned reward.

3. Be timely and specific. When done at an appropriate time, the power of motivational recognition is most realized. Clarity of recognition helps to establish group direction and goals.

4. Most opportunities for recognition occur on a daily basis in informal situations, not formal luncheons or the giving of plaques.

When making formal awards, consider what the students most enjoy; better still ask them to help in planning. In many cases the celebration involves service and brings together those being served and service providers. Some popular examples of awards and celebrations for students are:

Awards:

- Scholarships to college
- Wearables (T-shirt, tie, watch, sweatshirt)
- Letters of recommendation to college/employer
- Certificates of appreciation or achievement
- Volunteer of the week/month recognition
- Nomination for community and national awards programs
- Local government recognition

Celebrations

- Picnics
- Special privileges, role, or event (ball game or concert)
- Social event, i.e., pizza parties
- Music event
- Special field trips to fun activities
- Verbal "thank yous" daily
- Gift certificates from donor businesses (movie rental, movie passes)
- Recognition in staff newsletter
- Special pins/pens, T-shirts, mugs, etc.
- Written notes for a "job well done"

What better way to celebrate service than by doing service? National Youth Service Day was first observed in Arkansas in 1992 by bringing together 40 youth from across the state. In April 1997, the Arkansas DHS Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support partnered with the Department of Education and brought together 1,300 youth to celebrate and do a beautification project at the Little Rock Zoo.

**THE GREATEST CELEBRATION IS THE SELF GROWTH OF THE STUDENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY**

## How Ready is Your Organization for Youth Volunteers?

There is no simple checklist of what you need to get involved in community service learning. Here are some of the things that are important to have in place – or create- when developing a program. For each one, mark the level of readiness you perceive.

1. How often have you worked with volunteers (youth or adults) on other projects?

   **A lot** **Some** **None**

2. Is someone eager to be a champion for community service learning within your organization? Is she or he available to work with students?

   **Eager** **Willing** **Reluctant**

3. Do you see youth as a valuable resource for your organization? Do you believe youth will bring fresh ideas and approaches that will help you better address community needs?

   **Viewed as resources** **Neutral** **Viewed as problems**

4. Can you provide adequate supervision for students?

   **Plenty** **Some** **Little**

5. How often does your organization use well-defined job descriptions for volunteers?

   **Always** **Sometimes** **Never**

6. How open is your organization to involving youth in decision making roles in the organization once they have shown their commitment to your organization's mission?

   **Very** **Somewhat** **Not at all**

7. How readily could students apply what they would do in your organization to what they are are learning in school and real-life situations?

   **Very** **Somewhat** **Not at all**

8. How appropriate and accessible are your facilities to the age and skill levels of youth who will be providing services?

   **Very** **Somewhat** **Not at all**

9. How flexible is your organization to designing services to fit students' schedules?

   **Very** **Somewhat** **Not at all**

## Ideas for Generating Student Reflection

Reflection is an essential part of community service learning. It is this step of the process that makes the students focus on what they have learned. It helps them to realize the new knowledge, skills, and understanding they have gained through their volunteer experience. Although it is up to the student and their school coordinator, it is helpful for Community-Based Organizations to be aware of the types of reflection activities their student volunteers may be participating in. **Ask your student volunteer what their reflection component is so that you can keep them on track.**

### Speaking

- One on one conferences with leader/ teacher
- Whole class/ group discussion
- Read and discuss case studies
- Oral reports to the group
- Discussion with community members or experts on an issue
- Public speaking on the project (for parents, community leaders)
- Tutoring younger students
- Testimony before policy makers
- Mock talk show or city council meeting
- Simulation or role playing

### Writing

- Essay, research paper
- Journal or log kept daily, weekly, or after a service project
- Poems
- Special project report
- Narrative for video, film, or slide show
- Guide for future volunteers
- Self-evaluation or evaluation of the program
- Newspaper, magazine, or other publish material
- Thank you notes to CBOs
- Student evaluation of CBO

### Activities

- Gather information needed to serve or understand a project
- Conference or workshop presentations
- Portfolio
- Plan a training session for other students or program leaders
- Plan recognitions/celebrations
- Plan future projects
- Recruit peers to serve
- Allocate program budget
- Painting, drawings, collages, or other artwork
- Dance, music or theater presentations
- Scrapbook

## SORTING OUT THE COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING OPTIONS

Community service learning programs can take many forms; there is not a set model that works for everyone. Many people think of a series of continuums that show options. Here are some of the many options you have when you start community service learning. All may be appropriate at different times and for different reasons. Have the participants mark the options on each line that fall within the comfort level of their organization or institution. Compare the opportunities marked.

**Management**

Formal collaboration with the district schools and/or others ⟷ Informal coordination with a teacher or school

School-led ⟷ Agency-led

**Types of Service**

Youth –initiated projects ⟷ Existing projects

One-day projects | Short-term projects | Ongoing projects

Work at the school | Work at the agency | Working in the community

Directly work with people | Institutional supported projects | Issue-oriented advocacy

**Learning Components**

Not integrated with the school curriculum | Integrated into one subject area | Integrated into a multi-disciplinary curriculum

Reflection on site only | Reflection on site and in classroom | Reflection only in the classroom

**Types of Youth**

Individual youth | Small Teams | Large Teams | Whole Classes | Whole School

Elementary students (grades K-5) | Intermediate students (grades 6-8) | High School Students (grades 9-12)

Single age of youth | Many ages of youth | Youth and adults

*Adapted from The Points of Light Foundation curriculum*

# SECTION IV

# SAMPLE FORMS

## Non-Profit/ Community Organization
## Community Service-Learning Site Application

Community Service-Learning
(Act 648 of 1993)

1. Name of the school district and school initiating this application.

(School District) _____

(School) _____

2. Name of the Community Service Learning faculty supervisor with whom this non-profit/ community organization will be working _____

3. **Non-profit/ Community Organization Information:**

County: _____ School: _____

Name of non-profit/ community organization: _____

Address: _____
(Street) (State) (Zip Code)

Phone Number:_____ Fax Number:_____

Email Address: _____

Name of Director/ Contact Person: _____

Hours of operation: _____ Staffing/ number of employees: _____

Number of volunteers: _____

4. What is the mission of your organization?_____

_____

_____

5. What service(s) does your non-profit/ community organization provide? _____

_____

_____

6. Does your non-profit/ community organization currently offer volunteer opportunities for youth? Yes_____ No_____

(If the response is yes, please provide details of the types of volunteer positions for youth.)

_____

_____

_____

7. Identify the non-profit/ community organization personnel who will be supervising student volunteers: _____

8. Does your agency maintain liability insurance for volunteers? Yes_____ No_____

Please Return this site application by fax or email:

Arkansas Division of Community Service and Nonprofit Support

Dhs.dcsns.asc@arkansas.gov

Subject Line: Act 648 Site Application

Donaghey Plaza South

P.O. Box 1437, Slot S 230

Little Rock, AR 72203-1437

Phone: 501-682-7540

Fax: 501-682-6752

## Community Service Site Evaluation Form

School: _____ Date_____

Agency/Organization:_____

**Rating of Experience at Site**

Please evaluate the following components of the above named site using the indicated scale. Additional comments about the site are useful.

**Rating Scale**

4-Excellent 3-Very Good 2-Average 1-Fair 0-Unsatisfactory NA-Not Applicable

| COMPONENTS | RATING | COMMENT |
|---|---|---|
| Responsibilities Outlined | _____ | _____ |
| Training Provided | _____ | _____ |
| Supervisor(s) Willing To Give Guidance | _____ | _____ |
| Safety Issues Addressed | _____ | _____ |
| Student Treated With Courtesy by Staff | _____ | _____ |
| Tasks Assigned Were Personally Rewarding | _____ | _____ |

If you have the opportunity to assist this agency/company/ organization in the future by providing volunteer service, would you? Why or why not?

_____

_____

What change(s) in the treatment of student volunteers would you recommend to this agency/company/organization?

_____

_____

Event participated in or position held at this service site: _____

**Please return this form to your school's Community Service-Learning Supervisor**

**STUDENT EDUCATIONAL VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

Name:_____ Social Security Number_____
Address: _____
_____
Phone: _____ Date of Birth: _____
Time of availability for community service: _____
(Date and time)

***Person to notify in case of emergency:**
(Parent)
Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address:_____

(Other)
Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address:_____

Family Doctor_____ Phone:_____

I would like to work with: _____Children _____Teenagers _____ Adults _____Elderly

Special Interests:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| _____Computers | _____Sign Language | _____Graphics/Design |
| _____Animals | _____Elderly | _____Public Relations |
| _____Art/Music | _____Disabled | _____ Recreation/Sports |
| _____Human Services | _____Education/Literacy | _____ Skilled Labor |
| _____Boards/Committees | _____Environment | _____ Fundraising/ Events |
| _____Bilingual Skills | _____Other (specify) _____ | |

Previous Work Experience/Special Training (i.e., nurse aid, CPR, water safety):
_____
_____

Any physical restrictions that limit your ability to volunteer:
_____

Things I do best:_____
_____

Things I would like to learn: _____
_____

Why I want to volunteer: _____
_____
If additional space is needed to answer the above question, please use the back of the form.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Routing information: 1 copy in school file
1 copy to agency/ agencies where student volunteers

# COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING AGREEMENT

**Project Agreement**

I agree to do a community service learning project with _____
(Agency/project)

I understand where the location of this agency is and will provide my own transportation unless otherwise specified.

Based on my interests, the needs of the community, and time considerations, I propose to perform the following service: _____

I will spend a total of _____ hours on the project and will keep a Volunteer Activity Time Sheet.
Starting Date _____ through _____

**Pre-Project Site Information**

____ Contact person with the agency Name _____ Phone_____
____ Written job description
____ No orientation or training will be held
____ Orientation or training will be held _____
(Date/Time/Location)

**Agency Agreement**

The community service site agrees that the above named student accepted by it for volunteer service will in no manner be considered to be an employee, agent, or volunteer of the _____ School District and the volunteer relationship, which is established will be solely between the community site and student. Any screening for suitability for volunteer service is the responsibility of the community site and not the school district's or the local schools. The _____ School District nor the local school makes any warranty of suitability for service of students volunteering with the community site.

The community site will hold the _____School District and the local school harmless from all claims or action, which may arise by reason of volunteer service being provided to the community site by the student.

Community Site Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date_____

**In Case of Problems**

I (the student) will contact the Community Service Learning Supervisor in advance of any schedule conflict which might arise, cause me to be late or absent, and with last minute conflicts, agree to phone the agency contact person directly. I have the person's name and phone number.

I (the student) agree to work only on assigned tasks and in my assigned area. If problems or conflicts with program clients, other volunteers, or agency staff arise, I (the student) will discuss these with the Community Service Learning Supervisor.

I (the student) will hold in confidence any information learned at the volunteer site.

I (the student) will offer feedback to my instructor about this placement experience after my service in the community.

If for any reason, I (the student) cannot keep this agreement I will contact the Community Service Learning Supervisor before terminating this contract with the program.

By signing this agreement, I (the student) agree to be punctual as well as responsible for my actions at the agency/project volunteer site, which was selected.

**Parental Agreement**

I (the parent) give permission for my child, _____, to participate in the community service learning volunteer service activity with _____ (agency).

I (the parent) understand that the community site agrees to accept the above named student for volunteer service with the understanding that the volunteer relationship is established solely between the community site and the student. The student is not providing volunteer service as an employee, agent, or volunteer of the _____ School District or local school. I (the parent) acknowledge that the community site assumes all responsibility for all claims or actions, which may arise by reason of volunteer service being provided to the community site by the student. In the event or a medical emergency I authorize the community site to transport my child to the nearest hospital.

Parent's Signature: _____ Date_____

**Community Service Learning Supervisor's Agreement**

I (the Community Service Learning Supervisor) agree to provide time during the school year to instruct the student on basic skills important to volunteer service. I (the Community Service Learning Supervisor) further agree to meet with the student to assist with the student's reflection on the volunteer service. If the student completes seventy-five hours of volunteer service and meets other requirements of the Community Service Learning Program, one elective credit will be awarded to the student.

CSL Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date_____

Students Signature _____ Date_____

School _____

1 copy- School File
1 copy- Volunteer Agency

*This form could be reorganized to fit the needs of the individual project, school, or district. You may desire to have the completed form returned to the Community Service Learning Supervisor for review, final signature, and to be faxed, emailed, or mailed to the volunteer agency.*

## COMMUNITY SERVICE LETTER OF AGREEMENT

I. PARTICIPANTS
   a. Students
   b. Parents
   c. Local School
   d. Volunteer Site

II. GOAL:
   Through participation in meaningful community service, _____ will develop leadership skills, and community awareness that will prepare him or her for active citizen participation while earning academic credits

III. LENGTH OF COMMUNITY SERVICE
   _____ will provide seventy-five (75) hours of community service during his or her 9th-12th year of academic study. These hours may be served at more than one volunteer site.

IV. COMMITMENT/ RESPONSIBILITY-STUDENT:
   - Attends orientation.
   - Reports to volunteer agency on time.
   - Works only in assigned areas.
   - Engages only in volunteer assignments that supervisor approves.
   - Completes the Community Service Plan that includes preparation, action, and reflection.
   - Complies with school and volunteer site conduct standards and requirements.
   - Safety of the student is a joint responsibility of the student and the volunteer site.
   - Keeps confidential <u>any</u> privileged information learned on the job.

V. COMMITMENT/ RESPONSIBILITY-PARENT:
   - Gives permission for his/her youth to participate in the community service program sponsored by this school.
   - Understand that transportation needs are the responsibility of the parents or the student.
   - In the event of a medical emergency, I approve the following:
     _____ Take my child to the nearest hospital

     _____ Take my child to _____ Hospital

     _____ Doctor

VI. COMMITMENT/ RESPONSIBILITY-SCHOOL:

- Provides diverse community service-learning opportunities from which the student may choose.
- Is responsible for screening the agencies/ or organizations and their volunteer opportunities to determine appropriate placement for each student.
- Reviews and verifies completion of community service plan.
- Provides one (1) academic credit that may be applied toward graduation upon completion by student of seventy-five (75) hours of documented community service in grades 9 through 12, as outlined on Arkansas Legislative Act 648 of 1993.
- Designates person(s) to monitor the student community service program for Act 648 as applies to each student participant.
- Assesses the effectiveness of program annually.

VII. COMMITMENT/ RESPONSIBILITY- VOLUNTEER SITE

- Provides student with orientation, training, and written job descriptions.
- Provides adequate supervision for student as needed according to student's age and abilities.
- Safety of the student is a joint responsibility of the student and the volunteer site.

Signatures:

| | |
|---|---|
| _____ | _____ |
| Student | Date |
| _____ | _____ |
| Parent | Date |
| _____ | _____ |
| School Supervisor | Date |
| _____ | _____ |
| Volunteer Site Coordinator | Date |

## Volunteer Position Description

**Job Title**: _____

**Site Supervisor**: _____

**Purpose of job**: _____

_____

**Duties and Responsibilities**:_____

_____

_____

_____

**Experience/ Qualifications Desired**: _____

_____

_____

**Age Requirement?** _____Yes _____No If yes, what age?_____

**Hours of Commitment:** Per Week_____ or Per Month_____

**Scheduling:** Week days only _____ Evenings_____ Weekends_____

At discretion of volunteer _____ or Hours/Days Needed_____

**Training Service Site Will Provide:**_____

_____

**Benefits**: _____

_____

**Student Covered Under Service Site's Liability Insurance?** Yes_____ No_____

**Student Final Evaluation Form**

Student's Name: _____ School: _____

Agency/Organization: _____

Supervisor's Signature_____ Date_____

**RATING OF STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE**

PLEASE EVALUATE THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS FOR THE ABOVE NAMED STUDENT. IF THE STUDENT MADE NOTICABLE IMPROVEMENT, PLEASE INICATE UNDER COMMENTS.

**RATING SCALE:**

4-EXCELLENT 3-VERY GOOD 2-AVERAGE 1-FAIR 0-UNSATISFACTORY NA-NOT APPLICABLE

| CHARACTERISTICS | RATING | COMMENT |
|---|---|---|
| Ability to Perform Duties Without Supervision | _____ | _____ |
| Relationship with Other Employees | _____ | _____ |
| Dependability and Reliability | _____ | _____ |
| Personal Appearance | _____ | _____ |
| Enthusiasm | _____ | _____ |
| Spoken Communication Skills | _____ | _____ |
| Written Communication Skills | _____ | _____ |
| Courtesy | _____ | _____ |
| Emotional Maturity | _____ | _____ |
| Thoroughness in Completing Tasks | _____ | _____ |
| Interest in Learning | _____ | _____ |
| Judgment | _____ | _____ |
| Willingness to Receive Guidance | _____ | _____ |
| Preparation for the Position | _____ | _____ |
| Overall Performance | _____ | _____ |

If you had a position open in the area of responsibility held by the student, would you hire this individual?

_____

How could the student improve his or her performance?

_____

## Community Service Learning Reflection Form

Name of Volunteer: _____

Date and Time of Service: _____ Hours Served: _____

School: _____ Event: _____

1. What was the best thing that happened at your site? How did it make you feel?

2. What things(s) did you like least about your site today? What made you dislike it?

3. What compliments did you receive today, and how did the compliments make you feel?

4. What have you learned about the people you are helping?

5. Have you had a problem at your service site? How did you handle it? Upon reflection, if the situation were to occur again, how would you handle it differently?

**VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACTIVITY TIME SHEET**

Student: _____ School: _____ Month:_____

| DATE | VOLUNTEER SIGN-IN | VOLUNTEER SITE | TIME IN | TIME OUT | TOTAL HOURS | SUPERVISOR'S INITIALS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
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Supervisor's Signature: _____ Work Phone: _____

**VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACTIVITY SIGN-IN SHEET**

Student: _____ School: _____ Month: _____

| Date | Volunteer Site | Activity Performed | Time In | Time Out | Supervisor Signature |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
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| | | | | | |

**TOTAL HOURS**: _____

# SECTION V

# THE FINAL CHAPTER

## COMMUNITY SERVICE EDUCATIONAL GUIDELINES

Each community service opportunity must include:

- A preparation plan
- A demonstration of volunteer actions
- A method of reflection

**Whatever reflection method is chosen, the above listed components must be included.**

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT REFLECTION:

Homeless Shelter

- "Upon meeting a homeless man, the look in his eyes was unexplainable, a look of fear, a look of insecurity. His face lit up when I gave him the coat. From that day on I knew I had nothing to be afraid of, but much to look forward to. "

Head Start Center

- "When I sit and look at the kids, I often wonder what they will grow up to be. This leads me to see how I can shape my life and the choices I make for myself. I often wonder what they think of me. "

Tutoring

- " These three fourth graders I work with have stopped guessing at the math answers and started really learning their multiplication tables. I have a new respect for my teacher."

EXAMPLES OF REFLECTION METHODS

- Keep a journal/diary
- Write a poem
- Draw a picture
- Respond to open-ended questions
- Write a paper, essay, or short story
- Compile and present a multimedia workshop, e.g., pictures, diagrams, maps
- Present a dramatic representation

EXAMPLES OF OUTCOMES ON REFLECTION

- Validates feelings
- Confronts fears
- Gains a sense of ownership
- Changes life
- Determines career directions
- Increases educational opportunities
- Identifies strengths
- Encourages understanding

## LEARNING LEADERSHIP THROUGH SERVICE

One of the key values of involving young people in service is that it teaches them basic leadership skills. By matching service projects with the leadership level of youth, you can build skills and abilities that will translate into other areas of life. This chart shows how different types of projects can teach youth leadership skills at different levels. The first stages of leadership tend to be more appropriate for upper elementary and junior high-age youth.

| Leadership Level | Characteristics of Appropriate Tasks | Sample Service Projects | Leadership Skills Youth Might Learn |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Beginning | • Close supervision<br>• Clearly defined tasks<br>• Limited options for exercising judgment | • Tutor with supervision<br>• Lead children's classes with established curriculum<br>• Lead recreation in a nursing home | • Meeting schedules and keep commitments<br>• Seeing the importance of service<br>• Understanding the needs in a community |
| 2. Intermediate | • Less direct supervision<br>• Some opportunity of independent judgment | • Gather and assess information on community needs<br>• Do publicity and recruiting for projects | • Applying knowledge to a situation<br>• Building confidence in personal skills<br>• Building problem solving skills<br>• Understanding the needs from the resident's viewpoint |
| 3. Experienced | • Independent Judgment<br>• Some supervisory responsibility | • Do peer counseling<br>• Organize specific projects | • Building problem solving skills<br>• Learning the importance of self-initiative<br>• Enabling people to help themselves<br>• Developing interpersonal and analytical skills |
| 4. Project | • Advisory and Supervisory responsibilities<br>• Independent about applying policy | • Develop project based on community need | • Translating goals into reality<br>• Understanding relationship between individual and institution |
| 5. Program | • High leadership and management responsibility<br>• Goal and budget setting with others | • Develop and administer a service-learning program | • Gaining confidence in functioning autonomously<br>• Inspiring value of service-learning to others |

*Adapted from the Lutheran Brotherhood's RespecTeen and the Maryland Student Service Alliance Handbook.*

Using the chart above, list service projects that could fit under each category. Discuss which project(s) you think would work best in your school and community.

# PARENT/GUARDIAN CONFERENCE

Parental/guardian views can be a key indicator of program performances and regular discussions with parents/guardians are an effective way to become a more effective service provider.

**Determine Contact Time**

Usually the earlier the parent is contacted the more likely the parent is to become involved. This first contact is an opportunity to explain the program's importance, to identify personal issues or problems faced by the students, and to identify ways the parent/guardian can help the child succeed. The type of service project undertaken can impact the number of parent/guardian conferences needed.

> **Activity**
> Decide how often parents/guardians will be expected to participate in conferences and with whom they will speak.

**Delineate Information to Share**

Combine conferences with informational presentations on special events, types of service projects, and program guidelines. A parent/guardian conference is likely to be more effective and provide the most useful feedback when parents/guardians are familiar with program activities.

> **Activity**
> Based on the service project(s) under consideration, brainstorm the type(s) of information that would provide the most insight for parents/guardians.

**Involve Parents in Program Activities**

Some programs believe parental/guardian involvement is so critical to success that they require parents/guardians to spend as much as a half-day each 6-9 weeks at the program.

> **Activity**
> Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of involving parents/guardians directly in program activities.

**Tell parents/guardians their attendance is an expected part of their child's participation in your program.**

*Adapted from the Corporation for National Service Handbook for Continuous Improvement*