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Service learning: Students benefitting the community

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SERVICE LEARNING: STUDENTS BENEFITTING THE COMMUNITY

A Project
Presented to the
the Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education: Middle Grades Option

by
Nancy Jean Pesta
Patricia Ubrun
June 1996
SERVICE LEARNING: STUDENTS BENEFITTING THE COMMUNITY

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Presented to the
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by
Nancy Jean Pesta
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June 1996
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Gary Zoto, Principal - Southridge Middle School,
Second Reader
June 10, 1996
The terms community service and service learning are often used interchangeably, but they are distinct concepts. The key difference between community service and service learning is that service learning should be thought of as an instructional strategy. A primary reason for providing the service component in service learning is that it gives the student a context for learning.

Creating "authentic" student work that will promote learning is at the core of effective teaching and learning. Current educational research suggests that students learn better and in more depth when they are allowed to construct their own understanding, learn within a knowledge base and do work that has value and meaning to themselves and others.

The instructional strategy of service learning is one of the best teaching methods available to create this kind of learning experience. Students utilize higher thinking skills, may have the opportunity to work with diversity of other students and are more motivated to learn. Service learning provides students multiple ways to apply and demonstrate learning, to reinforce skills, to develop socially, and to fulfill the scholastic and citizenship mission of public education.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In sincere appreciation, I would like to thank my family, beginning with my husband Alan, and then my children, Travis, Todd and Brittany, for their patience and understanding during the long process of working on my Master of Arts project. I would also like to thank Gary Soto for his invaluable insight and help in regards to service learning and all it entails. Most of all, I would like to thank Dr. Irv Howard for his tireless efforts in this Master of Arts in Middle Grade Education program. Without his assistance and support, I can truly say I would have never come this far.

Nancy

I would like to thank my family, Ron, Nick, and Lindsey, for all their help and support in completing my course work. Where would I be without all of you? And of course, thanks to Gary Soto and Irv Howard, masterminds of cutting edge education. Your time, encouragement and support are always appreciated.

Patty
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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other
John F. Kennedy

Service is a powerful tool for the development of youth. It transforms the young person from a passive recipient to an active provider. When combined with formal education, service becomes a method of learning known as "Service Learning." Service learning enables teachers to employ a variety of effective teaching strategies that emphasize student-centered, interactive, experiential education. Service learning integrates the classroom curriculum and real-life situations to empower students to analyze, synthesize and evaluate concepts through practical problem-solving (Alliance for Service-Learning in Education Reform [ASLER], 1993).

Although the terms are sometimes used interchangeably, service-learning and community service are not synonymous. Service Learning is a dynamic new teaching method that is defined as "an instructional strategy in which students are involved in experiential education in real-life settings and apply academic knowledge and previous experiences to meet real community needs" (Obert, 1995).

Service Learning has these components:

- It is a method whereby students learn and develop through active participation in an organized service
that is conducted in and meets the community needs.

- It is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students.

- It is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program and with the community.

- It helps foster civic responsibility.

- It provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience (National and Community Service Trust Act, 1993).

- It provides young people with opportunities to use newly acquired academic skills and knowledge in real life situations.

- It enhances what is taught in the school by extending student learning beyond the classroom.

- It helps foster the development of a sense of caring for others.

Service learning places a shared or dual emphasis on service and structured learning opportunities. An example is the Adopt-a-Stream movement from the state of Washington in the 1970's. Students helped save a river next to their school from pollution. Their service project offered the
students an opportunity to learn and apply skills from language arts, social studies, math, science, the arts, and other curriculum areas. This mixing of service into the regular curriculum, as a means to motivate and drive the achievement of basic skills, is the most common use of Service Learning (Toole, 1993).

According to M. Batenburg of the Service Learning 2000 Center (1994), there are four quadrants of Service Learning known as: High Service, Connected Learning, Unrelated Learning, and Low Service. Before the service is made part of the curriculum, it must be considered at least Connected Learning or High Service, for it to be worthy to be integrated with the curriculum (see appendix for chart).

The definitions for these four are:

1) **High Service** - The service experience meets an important need, as defined by the community, is well organized and is age-appropriate.

2) **Connected Learning** - The service experience is clearly connected with the knowledge, skill and value goals of the youth development program.

3) **Unrelated Learning** - The service experience has no clear, ongoing connection to the knowledge, skill or value goals of the youth development program.
4) **Low Service** - The service experience does not meet important needs as defined by the community, is not well planned, or is not age-appropriate.

**Rationale for Service Learning**

Youth community service has been addressed at the national level in recent years. This has included the passage of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, authorizing $287 million for social action programs. The most specific goal of this act states: "All students will be involved in activities that promote and demonstrate good citizenship, community service and personal responsibility" (Schine and Seltz, 1992). Many congressional actions have occurred since 1990 and were taken to help increase civic awareness and commitment of young people through community service.

Service Learning enables teachers to employ a variety of effective teaching strategies that emphasize student-centered, interactive, experiential education. Service Learning integrates the classroom curriculum and real-life situations to empower students to analyze, synthesize and evaluate concepts through practical problem-solving (Alliance for Service Learning in Education Reform [Ansler, 1993]). This rich strategy is especially effective at the middle school level.

Middle school is the time in a student's life when s/he
grows more than any other time in their education. This is one of the most critical stages for emotional, mental and physical changes. As educators we are aware that during adolescence, students' cognitive powers are developing. Students in the middle school begin as concrete thinkers and as they progress they begin the journey to abstract thinking. Service Learning is an ideal way to provide middle school students with concrete experiences that encourage them to incorporate high level thinking.

Service Learning provides a unique opportunity to integrate curriculum and community service in an ongoing, and at times, long-term experience. It can take the form of a school activity or club, an interdisciplinary curricular unit, or a schoolwide project. Possibilities for effective Service Learning projects are endless, from tutoring younger children in school to working with adults in the community who have disabilities or are in convalescent homes. Several options are listed below:

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Drinking and driving       Day care
Teen Theater              Animal shelters
Parent education          Cultural institutions

Whatever form it takes, students, teachers and community members become involved and work to improve their school or address a special community need or issue (Clark and Welmers, 1994).

Turning Points (Carnegie Task Force, 1989) suggests that "every middle grade school should include youth service--supervised activity helping others in the community or in the school--in its core instructional program." In a review of quantitative studies, researchers found that students benefit enormously from service learning activities. These benefits include the following:

- Student gains in social and personal responsibility
- More favorable attitudes toward adults
- Lower levels of alienation and isolation among students with a history of behavior problems
- Increased students self-esteem
- Greater social competence, such as communicating effectively, conversing comfortably with others, and persuading adults to take their views seriously
- Gains in moral development (Clark and Welmer, 1994)
Analysis of qualitative research on service learning also provides a convincing argument. Conrad and Hedin conducted a study in 1991 in which they drew from the reflective journals of more than 4,000 students. These student responses reported these two conclusions:

1) A helping relationship with another person is a much more compelling reason to act responsibly than are the demands and sanctions of school authorities.

2) Youth service programs give students a sense of connection with a wider range of people, places and problems.

Through their journals, students indicated that they learned a great deal through their service learning experiences. In fact, 95 percent of the students stated that they learned more from these experiences than they learned in their classes (Clark and Welmer, 1994).

Of all the studies completed, the most convincing is perhaps the one done by the Search Institute in Minneapolis which studied nearly 47,000 young people in grades 6-12. It concluded that just one hour per week of "helping behavior" lowered adolescents' risk of substance abuse, dropping out of school, adolescent pregnancy, and other risky behaviors (Obert, 1995).

Unarguably, service learning offers new and exciting horizons to students. It does more for youth than provide immediately satisfying experience, build skills, or bring
short term benefits to a community. What service learning can do is empower our youth, help them take charge of their lives, respond thoughtfully to the world and ultimately engage them as lifelong learners (Schine and Seltz, 1992).

Implementing Service Learning is not without its difficulties. One of the largest obstacles with be transportation. When one begins to explore the prospect of transporting students to community sites and agencies, cost analysis is staggering. Under the present economical conditions, it is impossible to earmark significant amounts of a school or district's budget on transporting students.

To overcome this problem, schools will have to come up with creative solutions. The first and most obvious solution is for students to stay on site. There are numerous examples of K-12 service projects where students never leave the classroom; an example of this would be woodworking students making toys or home economics students making clothes for children in homeless centers. Other projects may require only occasional trips to community sites. Another way to minimize transportation costs is to choose service sites nearby. Projects may exist at nearby elementary schools, parks, convalescent hospitals and so forth.

It will also be necessary for schools to generate new methods of transportation. One school even bought a fleet of bicycles especially to use for transportation to volunteer sites. Businesses and non-profit agencies may be
recruited to donate vans or drivers. Mass transportation agencies may even be approached to donate bus tokens or fare (National Youth Leadership Council, 1992).

One cannot help but examine the legal issues when considering a service learning program. While the Clinton administration is supportive of service learning as noted by the new Serve America Project, they have not yet tackled the legal issues that schools face in implementing projects (Obert, 1995). Assumption of liability for community service learning programs will be another major hurdle to overcome. Schools, businesses and community agencies will all be faced with liability issues.

Strong organization will be required to deal with liability issues. It will be important for schools to establish clear written procedures and policies that reduce risk and danger. Agencies receiving service from students may be willing to cover students, and programs can be tied to non-profit organizations like scouts or environmental groups that carry large policies (e.g. class becomes and explorer troop). It will be critical for parents, schools, and districts to pressure state and federal government to help as they are encouraging service activities. The bottom line of liability is to remember that districts insure football!
Southridge Middle School Service Learning

Southridge Middle School is a school that sees the value of including service learning in its curriculum. The school's vision is to have service learning in every classroom and all curriculum by the 1998-1999 school year. The plan to implement this vision begins with inservice of staff and continues through pilot programs until eventually there is full staff acceptance and implementation.

Throughout its history, Southridge Middle School has been successful at implementing "cutting edge" strategies, including schoolwide implementation of Performance Based Outcomes (Soto, 1995). In Service Learning, students will be filling complex roles that are self-evaluated. Projects will be aligned with curriculum and have an impact on both the school and the community. Our students will have the opportunity to make an impact on their school and community as well as on learning for today and tomorrow. Service Learning will become yet another powerful tool to add to our workbench (Soto, 1996).

Parents, teachers and the community members of Southridge all feel a real need for involvement by those who can be of service in addressing real community problems. An obvious resource is our middle school students! As these students navigate throughout adolescence, they will have the opportunity to explore real life roles, test their emerging values, and to participate
in meaningful work in their community (Seltz, 1992).

There is a growing consensus on the developmental needs that all youth share. Educators have an interest in addressing all youth needs, but commonly develop programs that intentionally focus on some more than others. Service learning programs are a wonderful way for educators to meet the broad spectrum of student needs, as this the following list indicates:

1. A sense of self-worth and contributing
2. A sense of independence and control over one's life
3. A sense of competence and mastery
4. Physical activity
5. A sense of belonging and group membership
6. Relationship and a sense of closeness
7. A sense of safety and structure
8. High expectations of youth
9. Comfortable room to explore self and environment
10. Sufficient supervision
11. Personal competence
12. Social competence
13. Health competence
14. Cognitive competence
15. Career and employment competence
16. Citizenship competence
17. Creative competence

These competences are taken seriously at Southridge
Middle School and are the driving force behind the decision to provide a Service Learning Program at this site.

Service learning currently exists on various levels at the Southridge site. We have a first year Service learning elective consisting of approximately sixty students. This is the beginning of the "trail." We also have several teachers that work on "community service" projects with their students. These teachers are spreading their wings out into the community, but have not integrated their curriculum into these projects. It must also be noted that some of our teachers have not yet begun to implement any form of service in their classroom. It is a diverse group that will begin to bring the "three year vision" to fruition.

**Our Plan**

It is our goal to make the school's three year vision a reality and to promote service learning at the state level.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1) Provide staff development at site and state levels in service learning practices and principles.
2) Create an elective curriculum to teach and implement service learning on a schoolwide level.
3) Enhance academic study and civic responsibility by assisting interdisciplinary teams in integrating service
learning into their curriculums.

The projected benefits that service learning offers to students demand that we as educators explore and implement this powerful new strategy. As the twenty-first century nears, we must keep up with our students' ever-changing world, and work to prepare them for the workforce. To meet this need, it is imperative that we change the way we do business in our schools. We must insure that our objective is doing what is best for kids and turning out the highest quality self-supporting citizens possible.

According to the Council of Chief State School Officers (1994), service learning offers valuable opportunities to students, schools and communities, and has recorded these Service Learning results:

**Students**

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT AND ACADEMIC LEARNING

- Basic skills, including expressing ideas, reading, and calculating
- Higher level thinking skills, such as problem-solving and critical thinking
• Skills and issues specific to service experience
• Motivation to learn
• Learning skills, including observation, inquiry, and application of knowledge
• Insight, judgment, and understanding

PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

• Self-esteem
• Personal efficacy and sense of responsibility
• Moral development and reinforced values and beliefs
• Exploration of new roles, identities, and interests
• Willingness to take risks and accept new challenges

SOCIAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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

Schools

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

Communities

- Valuable service to meet direct human, educational, health and environmental needs
- Schools as resources - Teacher/student teams serve as researchers and resources in problem-solving and
community development

- Empowerment - School/family/community partnerships assess, plan, and collaborate to meet community needs
- Citizenship - Students become active stakeholders in the community
- Infusion of innovation towards improving the institutional practices of schools and communities
- Understanding and appreciation of diversity - across generations, cultures, perspectives and abilities
The vast majority of the literature we have reviewed agrees with the benefits of a service-learning curriculum in the middle schools. Joan Schine and Judy Seltz in "Experiential Education" (1992) agree that service-learning for middle grade students is one positive method for schools and other community organizations to use to meet the needs of those students. Instead of passively sitting in classrooms listening to teachers lecture, students engaged in service learning are participating in the life of their community, both in and out of the school building. They go on to say that for students to navigate safely from adolescence to adulthood, young adolescents must have opportunities to explore a variety of roles, to test their emerging value systems in real world situations, and to participate in meaningful, valued work in their community.

Well known educator John Goodlad, noted twelve years ago that "[S]tudents were most engaged in classes where they could learn from field trips, interviewing people, . . . building things, or carrying out projects" (1984). His observation is a precursor to the service learning philosophy.

The School Youth Service Network (1991) states that adolescents are very sensitive to the way they are perceived and treated. They are going through an age of heightened self-awareness. While much of their self-
focusing is healthy, sometimes it can become obsessive and overly critical. Service learning provides an opportunity for students to focus on others. The more they help others, the better they feel about themselves. It not only makes them better people, it makes them better citizens.

*Turning Points* (1989), a report issued by the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, estimates that by age 15, millions of young people risk reaching adulthood unable to assume the responsibilities of informed, active citizenship in a pluralistic society. It also states, "Early Adolescence offers a superb opportunity to learn values, skills and a sense of social responsibility important for citizenship in the United States." *Turning Points* also stresses the importance of serving the community in teaching young people to value full participation in society (Carnegie Task Force on Education, 1989).

*Turning Points* provides a set of principles for school restructuring that challenges virtually all of conventional practice in middle schools.

The eight *Turning Points* recommendations are as follows:

- Create small communities for learning, where stable, close, and mutually respectful relationships with adults and peers are considered fundamental for intellectual
development and personal growth.

- Teach a core academic program that results in students who are literate, and who know how to think critically, lead a healthy life, behave ethically, and assume the responsibilities of citizenship pluralistic society.

- Ensure success for all students through elimination of tracking by achievement level and promotion of cooperative learning, flexibility in arranging instructional time, and adequate resources for teachers.

- Empower teachers and administrators to make decisions about the experiences of middle grade students through creative control by teachers over the instructional program.

- Staff middle grade schools with teachers who are expert at teaching young adolescents and who have been specially prepared for assignment to the middle grades.

- Improve academic performance through fostering the health and fitness of young adolescents by providing a health coordinator in every middle school.
• Reengage families in the education of young adolescents by giving families meaningful roles in school governance.

• **Connect schools with communities**, which together share responsibility for each middle grade student's progress through identifying service opportunities in the community, establishing partnerships and collaborations to ensure student's access to social services, and using community resources to enrich the instructional program and opportunities for constructive after-school activities.

*Turning Points* (1993), had three main recommendations: reduce ability grouping or "tracking," develop youth service opportunities, and link schools to youth serving institutions and community-based groups.

Sally N. Clark and Marina J. Welmers in "Schools in the Middle" (1994), agree with the principles of *Turning Points* and state that service learning, which involves young adolescents helping others in the school and community, provides a unique opportunity to integrate curriculum and school activities. Furthermore, they state that as an interdisciplinary school project, administrators, teachers, staff members, parents and students become involved and work to address a community need.

Service is especially beneficial to those students
identified as "at risk." Students with already low self-esteem benefit greatly from helping others say Duckenfield and Swanson in "Service Learning: Meeting the Needs of Youth at Risk" (1992).

Dan Conrad and Diane Hedin in "School-Based Community Service: What We Know from Research and Theory" (1991), begin their article of evidence with this invocation: The authors hope that decisions about whether to make service a regular feature of school practice will be informed by evidence about its value to young people." They then proceed to give evidence into the positive aspects of a service learning curriculum and the rationale for the possible outcomes. Their brief historical review suggests that the role of service in an educational program is a way to stimulate learning and social development, and as a means of reforming society and preserving a democracy. However, Conrad and Hedin (1991), state that there is a gap between what quantitative and qualitative methodologies uncover about service, which suggests that a practice so varied and complex demands equally complex and varied types of assessment. Having said that, they say that there is a consistent finding from the research, and that is service and other kinds of experiential programs show the high degree in which participants report that they have learned a great deal from their experiences. In a survey done nationally by Conrad and Hedin in which they surveyed close to 4,000 students involved in service and other
experiential programs, nearly 75% reported learning "more" or "much more" in their participation program than in their regular classes (Conrad & Hedin (1991).

Diane Hedin noted in her article, "Students as Teachers: A tool for Improving School Climate and Productivity" (1987), that an effective way to improve academic learning for students was to be involved in service for the community. Her research showed that the greatest evidence of this relationship was for service in the form of peer tutoring and teaching younger students. Using the technique of meta-analysis, researchers have combined the findings of many tutoring studies and have consistently found increases in reading and math achievement scores for tutors and for those students receiving the tutoring. Although the gains in reading and math are not dramatic, the gains in achievement felt by the students being helped, and especially for the tutors was consistently positive.

It may be that, when we seek to determine whether service influences academic outcomes, we find a positive correlation most frequently when we look at tutoring because it is the form of service that is most "school-like" and because the knowledge and skill in question are most like the ones the tutors have already been using. In the few cases when students in other forms of service have been tested for gains in factual knowledge, the results have been less conclusive. When the measurement tool is a
general test of knowledge, there is usually no diaphanous between students in service programs and those in conventional classrooms—which may demonstrate that at least nothing is lost by time spent out of school. Consistent gains in factual knowledge have been found, however, when researchers have used tests that were designed to measure the specific kinds of information that students were likely to encounter in their field experiences (Hamilton and Zeldin, 1987).

Beyond the question of academic improvements is the question to whether service also improves the social and psychological development of students. According to Stephen Hamilton and L. Mickey Fenzel, in "The Impact of Volunteer Experience on Adolescent Social Development" (1988), well-run service programs do indeed influence social and psychological development positively. Their study of social responsibility of 4-H members engaged in various forms of service such as: child care and community improvement efforts, showed strong gains in social development.

Conrad and Hedin (1991), also found positive gains in social and psychological development when they conducted a study of 27 school-sponsored programs featuring direct participation in the community, including service, community study, outdoor adventures and career internships.

Fred Newmann and Robert Rutter (1983), found less consistent differences between service and classroom
programs, but concluded that service to the community seemed to affect students' sense of personal competence and social responsibility more positively than did standard classroom instruction.

They also reported that students involved in service projects often gained social competence in effective communication with groups and in persuading adults to take them more seriously (Newmann and Rutter, 1983).

With this new found competence, participation in service learning projects finds students that are motivated to become more sensitive to the needs of the people in their community. This awareness fosters a sense of compassion for others. Students also learn a sense of responsibility while applying critical thinking skills and by making decisions. In addition, students show an increase in self-esteem as a result of being involved in service projects. This increased self-worth comes from doing something of value for someone else, and that they in return are valued for their contribution (Obert, 1995).

Raymond Calabrese and Harry Schumer (1986), would agree that self-esteem is improved for students in the service to the community. They reported that a program that included junior high at-risk students in service activities resulted in lower levels of isolation and higher levels of self
worth. However, one of the best reasons for service learning in schools came from the Search Institute, which studied 47,000 youngsters. They reached the conclusion that just one hour per week of "helping behavior" lowered the dropping out of school, adolescent pregnancy, and the risk of substance abuse (Obert, 1995).

Service learning is a valuable tool that offers the opportunity for students to experience the feeling of truly making a difference, and then including this as part of a life long commitment to giving (Obert, 1995).

In "Service Learning," Clark and Welmers (1994) concur with many of Obert's observations. They state that service learning provides opportunities for students to assist others, to enhance their self-esteem, to share in the well being of their community, build responsible behavior, and help them make a connection with the real world.

Furthermore, they say that service learning provides a unique opportunity to integrate curriculum with school activities and service to the community. The many advantages to this are as follows:

• Students see a connection between the real world and their schoolwork and that it has meaning.
• They learn that they need each other to make projects succeed, which builds supportive relationships.

• Students explore issues and apply skills arising from content.

In conclusion, Clark & Welmers (1994), state that by involving students in service learning, you enable them to assist others, to lead, to create visions, to build self awareness, to make informed decisions, and to communicate effectively with the real world in which they live.

Schine, Bianco, & Seltz (1992), agree. They believe that service learning provides students with the opportunity to assume meaningful roles in the community. Through a continuing involvement in the adult world, young adolescents develop a belief in their own competence. When students are valued for a true contribution, their self-worth is greatly enhanced. They learn that they can accomplish goals and develop a sense of usefulness by helping others.

Service learning addresses the students need to explore adult roles and assume responsibility for their decisions. Further, service gives adolescents a chance to apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom in the real
world (Schine, et al, 1994).

Although service learning benefits all adolescents, it particularly addresses the need of the urban adolescent. Because of the magnitude of their problems they often feel helpless. Helping others makes them realize that they can make a difference and affect others lives positively, thereby building their own self-esteem in the process (Schine, et al, 1994).

While it is not a cure-all for students at risk, service learning does give some youth the hope that they can change their lives and their communities. Through community service, students become valuable, contributing members to the often needy communities in which they live (Schine, et al, 1994).

The many articles on service learning seem to agree on the fact that service learning has many beneficial aspects for the students involved. Megan Swezey, from Youth Service California agrees with that assessment, but her article "Collaboration: Considerations and Case Studies for Youth Service Program Development" (1994), stress one aspect of the service learning experience, and that is that collaboration is a critical component for high quality service programs. Strong community support is essential to build and sustain efforts. A greater community vision can
be achieved and sustained when different organizations work effectively together.

Swezey (1994) points out that there is no one model. Successful collaboration takes on different structures and styles to reflect diverse community needs, and organizations. What makes collaboration work is a common vision with shared work and adequate support by staff.

Ms. Swezey states further that to build a successful collaboration process it is necessary to have high trust, cooperation, creativity, and above all, time. Collaboration is the surest way to sustain a program (1994).

Catherine A. Rolzinski in "The Adventure of Adolescence: Middle School Students and Community Service" (1990), agrees with the idea of collaboration as imperative to a successful service program. Collaborative partnerships with involvement and support from the whole community is the cornerstone for a sound youth service program. She states: that "[I]t takes a whole village to educate a child. "Ideally, youth service programs should involve community leaders, community based organizations, civic organizations, churches, businesses, schools, families and young people themselves. Further, she believes that the best of all circumstances in establishing broad-based community support is to generate "bottoms-up" support from the grassroots community for responsible ownership as well as the "top-down" support from policy makers for regulatory
and financial security simultaneously (Rolzinski, 1990).

Youth service program developers must be open to diverse approaches and be respectful of the varied local experiences in recruiting community members in their rural, urban, and suburban neighborhoods, to facilitate a successful collaboration. In addition, service is strengthened by community advisory groups whose members bring expertise and resources to support the objectives of a service program. In this way service learning has the best chance to succeed for all those involved (Rolzinski, 1990).

Honnet and Poulsen of The Johnson Foundation, list several ways for a service learning program to be effective:

Engage people in responsible and challenging actions;
articulate clear service and learning goals for everyone involved; allow for those with needs to define those needs;
clarify the responsibilities of each person and organization involved; match service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstances; expect active and sustained organizational commitment; is committed to program participation by and with diverse populations; insures that the time commitment for service and learning is flexible, appropriate, and in the best interests of all involved; includes training, supervision, support, monitoring, recognition, and evaluation to meet service and learning goals; and provides
structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.

Furthermore, they believe that a combination of service and learning is powerful, creating potential benefits beyond what either service or learning can offer separately. Through this interplay of service and learning, participants:

1) Are more curious and motivated to learn
2) Are able to perform better service
3) Strengthen their ethic of social and civic response
4) Feel more committed to addressing social issues
5) Understand problems in a more complex way
6) Demonstrate more sensitivity to how decisions are made
7) Learn about and respect other cultures
8) Learn how to work more collaboratively with others
9) Develop a habit of critical reflection
10) Realize that their lives can and do make a difference (Honnet and Poulsen, 1993).

The consensus of these articles agree with Rolzinski (1990), that youth service programs must be diverse, dynamic, creative, individual and flexible enough to offer opportunities to attract young people regardless of their circumstances.
CHAPTER THREE: Implementation

Tell me and I forget.
Show me and I remember.
Involve me and I understand.
Ancient Chinese proverb

The Need for Service Learning

As educators, parents and citizens face a decline in National Schoolwide achievement test scores, and face student inability and apathy, there can be no doubt that there is a need for innovative strategies that will reach today's students. It is possible that Service Learning in school curriculums is "just what the doctor ordered."

Learning through service provides students with meaningful, relevant opportunities to fulfill the curriculum and citizenship mission of public education. Creating "authentic" work that will promote learning is at the core of effective teaching and learning. Current educational research suggests that students learn better when they are allowed to construct their own understanding, learn within a knowledge base, and do work that has value or meaning to themselves and others. The instructional strategy of service-learning is one of the best teaching methods available to create this kind of experience.

As American companies move away from low skill, low wage business to those which employ highly skilled workers at higher wages the need for creating authentic learning opportunities for students will only become greater. In a
democratic society, one of the purposes of public school is to prepare students for active informed citizenship. Part of being a responsible citizen is establishing and maintaining meaningful employment. A equally important part of citizenship is possessing the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to build a better world. The real world is full of real problems to solve, real letters to write, real laws waiting to be made, real surveys to analyze. The learning experiences that students are engaged in should be equally real. Service learning offers this reality.

At the local, state and national levels, service learning is now being recognized as an effective strategy for increasing student learning and promoting schoolwide restructuring. This method has been endorsed nationally by the United States Secretary of Education, Richard Riley, and endorsed by California State Superintendent, Delaine Easton. "No single formula school improvement will fit every local community's needs, but innovative service learning is invariably a key feature of local school success" (Riley and Segal, 1995).

Service learning can also be connected to several other educational initiatives. These initiatives are for elementary, middle schools and high school.
Connection to Other Educational Initiatives

Schools and districts are finding that providing service learning opportunities for students is a way of teaching and learning results called for in the grade span initiatives (Here they Come: Ready or Not!, It's Elementary!, Caught in the Middle, and Second to None).

In addition, many educators are experimenting with ways to make interdisciplinary connections and are incorporating scenario and project based teaching methodologies such as Problem Based Learning and Action Based Projects as ways to make curricular connections. Because service learning is best designed when these project elements are included, service-learning can be a powerful way to make these interdisciplinary connections. It can be used on a continuum from making learning real in one discipline to making connections between disciplines.

Another connection exists between service learning and the School-to-Work Opportunities (STWO) Act which create an infrastructure to support student transitions from school to high-skill, high-wage careers and/or further education. Paralleling those of service learning are the three major components of STWO: school-based learning including interdisciplinary instruction; work-based learning related to a student's career interest; and connecting activities to ensure coordination of work-based and school-based components. Other similarities are found in the
partnerships and collaborations with business, community, parents and district/site leadership and citizenship training.

Service Learning at Southridge Middle School

Assessment of Community Needs

The community of Fontana, located in the heart of the Inland Empire is a community in transition. Less than 15 years ago this little steel town had a population of 25,000. In the 1980s new housing developments brought thousands of newcomers to the city. Over 100,000 people of diverse ethnic and linguistic background now populate this area. Southridge, a suburb of the city of Fontana, has been part of this staggering growth. Since its development in 1985, the Southridge community has been a "hotbed" of increasing crime related to youth activity. Since 1992, the gang population in the greater Fontana and Southridge community has steadily risen. According to the Fontana Police Department's latest data (Feb. 1995), there are 1,022 identified gang members in the community. The Southridge community alone houses one active gang with 118 identified members, 6 Los Angeles gangs recruiting within the community, and at least 2 graffiti tagging crews. In fact, in January of 1995 gang activity crossed gender lines with the first known female gang operating in the
Southridge community. Southridge is truly a community at risk!

Academic achievement in our school is also in need of great improvement. Test scores along with district data from report cards and student portfolios indicate the need to increase student achievement in order to better prepare students for the future. A recent survey indicated 53% of the students said they needed help with their school work. Many cited specific areas such as math and science. Evidence suggested that 65% of the parents are not high school graduates. Language skills and literacy are limited. Parents themselves suffer from lack of credible role models. Parenting continually request programs to help them and their children to learn to read, write and acquire skills to function day to day.

Community surveys reiterate these problems. Five thousand community members were actively involved in identifying challenges students and community would be facing in the 21st century. When surveyed as to greatest community need, these stakeholders responded in a similar manner: PUBLIC SAFETY and ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT!

Community members were adamant about building a stronger community and improving public safety. Eighty percent of responses indicated concern about gang influence in neighborhoods and apartment complexes.

Since school budget cuts eliminated after school sports, and many special interest activities, there is no current
program that deals with at-risk youth at the middle and elementary level. The best time to reach at risk students before gang ties and recruitment activities are firmly established is during the primary years. The increased crime levels related to youth gang activity in the years since these program cuts, certainly support the need for such a program.

Southridge Middle School Project Plan

Our project will target and work toward solving this problem in a variety of ways. First, student will develop and implement long term service projects to improve academic achievement, and increase awareness of Public Safety. Secondly, by working hand in hand with law enforcement partners and community members, students will implement a positive program for identified at-risk youth in the middle and elementary grades. This program will be multifaceted and include a variety of components such as parent training, academic tutoring, after school activities, and self-esteem building. Thirdly, the service learning program will create a strong bond between school and community, thereby building a stronger and better community. This project is designed to increase personal growth, development and civic responsibility.

Our project is designed to include all these elements of high quality service learning:
• **Integrated Learning**

When integrated learning occurs, the service activity enhances the important knowledge, value or skill goals of the class or school.

• **High Service**

Work that is considered high service meets a real need in the community (as defined by the community), is age appropriate, well-organized and gets something done.

• **Student Voice**

Students should be engaged in as many aspects of project planning as possible.

• **Reflection**

Reflection should take place before (to prepare), during (to troubleshoot), and after (to process), service activities.

• **Collaboration**

All stockholders (administrators, agencies, businesses, community members, parents, students, and teachers) are involved in planning, execution and evaluation.

The Southridge Service Learning Program is designed to increase personal growth, development and civic responsibility of students at all levels of the program.

The program offers a broad range of developmentally appropriate activities for students to choose from.

The program development includes three basic components:
1. Project Potential
2. Classroom Interdisciplinary Team Project
3. Service Learning Elective Program

Project Potential

A gang prevention program for at-risk youth (grades 3-8). Middle and high school students develop and implement the program while serving as managers, trainers and facilitators. The program is designed with age appropriate students in mind. Our middle school students will serve as program facilitators for elementary students.

Program highlights are as follows:

A) Culturally diverse Big Brother/Sister program (our middle schoolers serve as role models to Project Potential students in grades 3-5).

B) The Program will foster a career and college connection. This piece of the puzzle will assist at risk youth in making connections between educational success and future career options.

C) Project Potential culminates with participation in Project Adventure. This is a challenge by choice, ropes course, that is presented through the physical education department here at Southridge Middle School. Here students
demonstrate their new found abilities by collaborating with others to conquer the course. This exciting ropes course includes a: zip line, Burma bridge, catwalk, trapeze, and numerous ground level initiatives. Teachers and students will serve as belayers, and ground initiative facilitators.

**Classroom Interdisciplinary Team Projects**

Interest, strengths and enthusiasm perpetuate as students work alongside adults to demonstrate academic knowledge and skills through assessment, development, and implementation of a long term public safety plan. Students will utilize investigation/inquiry skills to create and complete community needs assessment; to include surveys, community searches, guest speakers, gathering data, and so forth.

Following the development and implementation of the plan, students will be responsible for reflecting and evaluating its success and the community impact. Students will then create a service-learning portfolio entry.

Service learning projects will be integrated into existing interdisciplinary academic curricula in all areas and grade levels—based on state framework subject matter.

Integration will include:
1) Basic skills--reading, writing, speaking, listening and math skills
2) Higher order thinking skills—problem solving and critical thinking skills
3) Learning skills—observation, inquiry and application of knowledge
4) Understanding, appreciation, and ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds, generations and cultures

Student reflection is necessary to gain new understanding, academic skills and knowledge from service learning experiences. All staff in-services are designed to include reflection as a process, and strategies are included for teachers to build reflection into all phases of service learning. Students at all grade levels will use a variety of reflection techniques, such as: journals, poetry, role-playing, video/slide presentations, graphics and so on. Service learning reflections will also become part of student portfolios that currently exist schoolwide at Southridge. Reflection is the framework in which students process and synthesize the information and ideas they have gained through their service experience and in the classroom. Through the process of reflection, students analyze concepts, evaluate experiences, and form opinions—all in the context of the school curricula.

Teachers and other people responsible for leading reflection sessions often rely on one or two tried and true methods of reflection. Group discussions, journal writing
and essay writing are the most common. However, from a Tri-Distric Workshop in Palo Alto, CA. we learned that we need to expand our notion of what reflection is and how it can be done. One of the most effective tools introduced was Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

Gardner articulated what we all know intuitively: people solve problems and construct meaning in different ways. He found that those different ways can be grouped into seven types, which have become known as the Seven Intelligences (Armstrong, 1994).

The seven are as follows:

1. Linguistic Learner
2. Logical/Mathematical Learner
3. Spatial Learner
4. Musical Learner
5. Bodily/Kinesthetic Learner
6. Interpersonal Learner
7. Intrapersonal Learner

Linguistic Learners like to read, write and tell stories. They learn best by saying, hearing and seeing words.

Logical/Mathematical Learners like to do experiments, figure out things, work with numbers, ask questions, explore patterns and relationships. They learn best by categorizing, classifying, working with abstract patterns and relationships.
Spatial Learners like to draw, build, design and create things, daydream, look at pictures and slides, watch movies, and play with machines. They learn best by visualizing, dreaming, working with color/pictures.

Musical Learners like to sing, hum tunes, listen to music, play an instrument, and respond to music. They learn best with rhythm, melody and music involvement.

Bodily/Kinesthetic Learners like to move around, touch and talk and use body language. They learn best by touching, moving, and interacting through sports, crafts and bodily sensations.

Interpersonal Learners like to have many friends, talk with people and join groups. They learn best by sharing, relating, cooperating, and comparing.

Intrapersonal Learners like to work alone and pursue their own interests. They learn best by doing projects, interior reflection, having their own space, and individualized self-paced instruction.

With this in mind we have gathered Reflection ideas and activities from the Service Learning 2000 Center, that address each of the Seven Intelligences (Batenburg, 1994). Three suggestions were offered for getting started:

1. Give students options—everyone loves a choice.
2. Over the course of a year, try reflective activities based on all the intelligences so that you are playing to everyone's strengths.
3. Ask students to create reflective activities that use different combinations of intelligences.

**Rejection Ideas Based on the Seven Intelligences**

**LINGUISTIC**
- Keep an ongoing journal, either reflecting on your own about your service experiences, or responding to assigned questions and topics.
- Compose an essay based on the first day of your service job.
- Write a reflection paper that combines your service experience with what you are learning in class.
- Prepare a research paper on an issue that arises from your service experience.
- Write a job description for the service job you held.
- Compose a letter to your site supervisor offering suggestions for working with future youth volunteers.
- Write an article for the school or community newspaper highlighting your accomplishments.
- Write a poem that reflects your volunteer experience.
- Report to your class the goals of the place where you work.
LOGICAL/MATHEMATICAL

• Compile statistics or other quantitative data on your service learning project.
• Identify a problem you see at your work site and devise a solution.
• Connect your service learning experience to a larger issue at the state or national level.
• Write about any measurements, classifications or numbers.
• Construct a detailed time line of the service experience.
• Create a hypothesis based on your experience.

BODILY/KINESTHETIC

• Within three minutes, express the heart of your volunteer experience to the class without using words.
• Create and perform a skit about what happened at your site.
• Act out a possible television commercial that would encourage people to take advantage of the services your agency offers.
• Put on a skit for an all-school assembly that shows the the younger students what it is like to do service work.
Create and perform a dance that reflects your experience with service work.

SPATIAL

- Draw the place where you volunteer and tell the class about your drawing.
- Draw your school and the place where you volunteer and what is in between; tell the class about your drawing.
- Create a display about the issue that your agency works on; display it at the agency and/or at school.
- Make a collage that shows something about your placement, or how you feel about your work there.
- Record a TV commercial that you find offensive as a result of your work. Show it and share it with the class.
- Document the whole service learning project using pictures, videos, essays, and displays.

MUSICAL

- Compose a song that captures your service experience.
Either perform or record the song for your class.

- Bring in a song that reflects your service experience.
- Notice sound and songs while you're working. Create a presentation based on the sounds.
- Bring in different objects that make sounds. Have groups create rhythms that express their service experience. Put the rhythms together to make a composition.
- Bring in music without words; work in groups or as a class to create words from the service experience that match the music.

INTERPERSONAL

- Have a small group discussion about your experience doing service work.
- Share with one other person what you felt like before, during and after the volunteer work.
- Read the quote, "A ship in harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are built for" (William Shedd). Discuss how this quote relates to your volunteer work.
- Role play something that happened at your volunteer job that you did not know how to handle. Classmates role play appropriate and inappropriate responses to this
situation.

INTRAPERSONAL

All reflective activities have an intrapersonal dimension: the moment when we stop to reflect about our experience. Once we move toward expressing that reflection in writing, talking, drawing, movement, it takes on the characteristics of one of the other intelligences (Armstrong, 1994).

Elective Program

Service learning elective courses will be offered at our middle school. Although all students will eventually be service learning participants, these courses are designed to ensure student voice by giving students opportunities for leadership roles and career exploration. Roles include: Member of Student Advisory Committee, assessing needs, budgeting, facilitating and teaching, public relations program managers, mentors, role models and so forth. Admission to these courses include student application and an interview process along with teacher recruitment.

Diversity of students will be insured by existing programs at Southridge Middle School. Youth with diverse backgrounds and abilities currently work together in heterogeneous classes and interdisciplinary teams.
throughout the school. Southridge currently serves as a collaborative special education model at the district and state level. Special education students are mainstreamed and a productive part of the educational process at all grade levels. Bilingual and limited English speaking students are also integrated into 6th grade classes and inter-disciplinary teams. The socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural breakdown of participants in service-learning projects will reflect district breakdowns. District ethnic breakdown is 57.2% Hispanic, 28% Caucasian, 11.7% African American and 3.1% other.

The Southridge Service Learning Program promotes educational reform by aligning with Goals 2000 through the promotion of effective citizenship, connecting our students to the community through the Public Safety Program. This program will address a safer school and community, while encouraging parent involvement. The program also aligns with Goals 2000 by promoting safe, disciplined and drug free schools.

**Teacher Inservice**

Training is a critical part of our program. It is our goal to provide inservice training to all Southridge Middle School staff members as well as serve as a district catalyst for change, by demonstrating the benefits of service learning. Inservice trainers will include CAL
Serve representatives, grant coordinators, teachers with service learning experience, as well as students who have been involved in service learning projects.

Inservice will include the following components:

1. Theory and principles of high quality service learning practices.
3. Nuts and bolts of implementations: legalities, time, transportation, union infringement and so on.
5. Providing structured time for community, student, and teacher reflection.

Of course, inservice training efforts will build upon experiences with past service learning projects. These include: home-economic students preparing and serving meals at homeless shelters, Project Christmas Cheer (which was once a class activity and is now a school wide program involving students, community members, and businesses teaming up to aid needy families), Students working with police to recycle and restore bicycles for needy children, literature project that involved the adoption of senior citizens to explore the theme of loneliness in the novel Men of Iron, students working with local hospitals to sew and provide flannel blankets to infants with AIDS, and
Project Adventure Day that served community families to bond and build their relationships.

The above mentioned programs have shown a tremendous increase in staff involvement. According to a recent survey, a 100% of the Southridge staff is committed and eager for the opportunity to coordinate and expand into a school wide service learning program. Using the expertise of state department staff and trained educators, the Southridge staff will gain more insight through a comprehensive staff development program.

Along with training of Southridge teachers, educators across the state will be trained in service learning. Southridge is also in the unique situation of hosting approximately 1,000 visitors per year. During schoolwide tours, and through guest training sessions, visitors across the state will be exposed to service learning at the middle school level.

Southridge has so many visitors each year because it is a nationally known middle school, that is hailed for its trailblazing strategies in teaching. William Spady praises Southridge Middle School, and our principal, Gary Soto in Chapter 5 of his book on educational reform, for Southridge's future-focused, purposeful approach to innovation in education. His book entitled: Outcome-Based Education: Critical Issues and Answers (1994), is informative literature that addresses the future prospects for the public schools of the 21st century. Included is
his belief that service learning should be part of every school that places students' interest first when planning curriculum.

Besides hosting guests, the Southridge staff will continue to coordinate, facilitate, and host local, state and national conferences that will highlight this dynamic teaching strategy.

Southridge Service Learning Timeline

By June 1996
1) The Southridge staff will coordinate, facilitate and host local, state and national conferences that will highlight the power of service learning. (Schools of the 21st Century Conference, July 17-19; California Middle Grade Partnership Symposium, Oct. 8-10, and Performance-Based Education Conference, Dec. 4-5 (approximately 1,500 educators).

2) Continue to facilitate a yearly average of 1,000 visitors to Southridge Middle School. The Service Learning program will be shared through staff and student presentations, videos, observation and literature, as measured by school records.

3) Continue to be a leader and integral part of the International Alliance which is an international recognition of 15 public school systems that are restructuring toward a 21st century vision. In addition,
Service Learning will be promoted at the yearly Alliance Symposium.

By June 1997
1) Target staff will deliver a minimum of 15 presentations, focusing on service learning, at local, state and national conferences.
2) Train university Education Department staff and help create university course syllabus for teacher preparation which include a service learning component.
3) Development and publishing of service learning implementation handbook as well as a bi-yearly community newsletter.

By June of 1998
1) Continue to host visitors on all school sites, and increase presentations by 10 per cent at local, state and national conferences.
2) Create a service learning video in partnership with the California State Department of Education Middle Grade Division, to serve as a staff development tool to be shown to over 100,000 educators (Southridge is currently highlighted in four state videos).
Service Learning Presentation

The writers of this project conducted a presentation on Service Learning in March 1995, at the California League of Middle Schools Conference (CLMS) in San Diego, California. We put together a packet of information that we had gathered through our research on service learning, and distributed it to all those attending our presentation (see appendix for packet contents).

An especially useful handout was prepared by James and Pamela Toole of the Compass Institute in St. Paul, MN. (1990). It detailed clearly what the components of a service learning project require.

Components of the Service-Learning Cycle:

1. Identify a Service Project

Selection Qualities for Successful Projects

High student interest, input, and choice
Meets a real need
Spontaneously generates student questioning
Capable of fostering student learning
Strong community voice

Methods to Identify Possible Service Projects

Exposure to current issues
Student interests and expertise
Vision for making a better world

53
Community search (observation)
Community research (interviews, surveys)

2. Planning and Preparation

Research/Background to Service Project
What do we know? Prior knowledge and attitudes
What do we need to know?
How can we gain this information?
How can we involve the service recipients for help?

Orientation/Preparation for Service
Goals of project (what do we want to accomplish?)
People involved (e.g. senior citizens)
Issue (e.g. homelessness, environment)
Skills needed for task (e.g. planting a tree)
Planning (e.g. strategies, responsibilities)
Problem solving (what if?)

3. Implementing a Meaningful Service Project

Appropriate supervision
Continual dialogue, discussion

4. Processing the Learning Experience: What?
So what? Now what?
So what? What worked? Why? What did we learn?
Was the project a success? How do we know?
Now what? How can we use what we learned in the
future?

Celebration/Recognition: How do we give importance to what we have done?
CHAPTER FOUR: Evaluation

Evaluation and Quality Control

The Southridge community of learners will utilize a variety of assessment methods. We will establish an assessment committee made up of key partnerships members and staff to work with the students advisory board in assisting and identifying effective service learning practices. This group will be responsible for developing a system of tracking and evaluation. Established criterion will serve as a rubric for our plan's objectives and enable us to assess the overall effectiveness of our efforts.

Components of our assessment rubric include:

1) Meeting the needs of all students involved.

2) The schools will be required to submit specific data which will be reviewed by the assessment committee on a regular basis. Data will include the number of violent acts; suspension rates; expulsion numbers; academic achievement results; and student, educators, and community participation.

3) On going evaluation tools will include "customer" surveys, and randomly selected interviews, and school and community on site visits.

4) Timely program checks will include quarterly reports and presentations of progress and formative assessments will be made to the partners. Program assessment and data
information will be gathered at Southridge Middle School for discussions to generate ideas for refinement and improvement. This feedback will assist us in continuously aligning the needs of Fontana students and the Southridge community.

**Timeline for the Evaluation Process**

**By June 1996**

An evaluation committee will be formed that will direct school wide assessment of the service learning program. It will be measured these three ways: surveys, portfolios, and specific data.

**By June 1997**

Committee directed evaluation of school wide program to be completed by staff, students and community partners--as measured by program improvement plan derived from assessment.

**By June 1998**

Cumulative assessment of school wide program and develop a plan for the future of the program at Southridge Middle School.

**Formative Evaluation**

Evaluation of each service learning project for what has
worked, or not worked, will be helpful in improving the quality of the students' experience and planning for future years. This kind of formative evaluation will be built into the program design from the beginning based upon predetermined criteria. Students may evaluate projects as part of their reflection activities. The process known as "Cycles of Inquiry" is a very useful way to conduct ongoing assessment for continued improvement as well as establishing a valued role for stockholders (Shawn, 1995). This process is very open ended and focuses on the collection of data to determine program effectiveness. This data may be collected through the examination of student work and through interviews with students, teachers and others.

Another method known as "Self-Directed Study" also focuses on engaging the stockholders in the evaluation process. Schools are encouraged to have parents and community members be active participants in the evaluation design and in data collection to ensure their input and participation.

It is helpful to contract for services from a neutral third party evaluator to assist in the evaluation design and to provide feedback. Typically, 10 per cent of the service learning program costs should be allocated for evaluation. These services can be obtained through in-kind support from district staff, higher education students or professors, or other qualified evaluation staff. If all
participants are to have ownership of the evaluation effort is necessary to provide staff development in the areas of evaluation design and in collecting data based on student work (Shawn, 1995).

Summative Evaluation

Determining the outcome of service learning activities is as important as on-going evaluation. Summative evaluation will provide the necessary documentation to base continued support for these efforts.

Evaluation Standard

According to the Alliance for Service-Learning in Education Reform: Standards for School-Based Service-Learning (1993), the following standards should be considered during the evaluation process:

• Effective service learning efforts strengthen service and academic learning.

• Model service learning provides concrete opportunities for youth to learn new skills, to think critically, and to test new roles in an environment which encourages risk-taking and rewards competence.

• Preparation and reflection are essential elements in service learning.
• Students' efforts are recognized by their peers and the community they serve.

• Youth are involved in the planning.

• The service students perform makes a meaningful contribution to the community.

• Effective service learning integrates systematic formative and summative evaluation.

• Service learning connects school and its community in new and positive ways.

• Service learning is understood and supported as an integral element in the life of a school and its community.

• Skilled adult guidance and supervision is essential to the success of service learning.

• Pre-service and staff development which includes the philosophy and methodology of service learning best ensure that program quality and continuity are maintained.

**Documentation**

Many types of documentation will be utilized. These include: attendance, records, photographs, videos, reports,
papers and the like. Two items that fall under the heading of document collection deserve special attention: portfolios, and journals.

**Portfolios**

Portfolios have a long history in the visual arts. Traditionally artists have collected their best works in a portfolio designed to represent the quality and nature of their art work. In recent years, educational researchers and practioners have adapted the model of the artist's portfolio for use in the documentation and evaluation of student learning in a variety of disciplines. In classroom across the country, teachers and students are using portfolio evaluation in subjects ranging from creative writing to mathematics.

Some educators and researchers have seized upon the portfolio as a way to capture the process of student learning over time, rather than always documenting just the final result (testing for example). They advocate portfolios that include not only best work, but also materials such as rough drafts, journal entries, and video-taped group discussions. Some educators even call these portfolios "processfolios" reflecting their efforts to capture the process of learning and reflection over time.

As practitioners know, service learning provides an opportunity for students to grow in a variety of areas. Teachers may implement service learning precisely because
it involves students in rich, real-world issues. However, the complex nature of service learning makes evaluation a challenge. Paper and pencil tests and other conventional evaluation strategies may fall short of capturing the development that can take place in service learning classrooms.

Portfolios are now implemented schoolwide at Southridge Middle School. Portfolios can contribute to service learning programs in a number of ways. Students can work with teachers to build their own portfolios, thereby taking on active roles in self-assessment. The collection of work contained in a student's portfolio can become the basis for productive discussion among students, parents and educators. These portfolios provide a way for teachers to use these materials in evaluating the overall performance of individual students.

In some classrooms, students and their teachers construct a "project-folio" to evaluate the effectiveness of an entire service learning program. Portfolios have the potential to capture the multiple intelligences and "ways of knowing" that come into play when students participate in service learning.

Journals

Once the goals are known (the activities and results for a program), students can be given specific questions to reflect on in their journals. For instance: What kinds of
challenges have you encountered? How have you handled them? What have you learned from the project thus far? What are you most proud of? and so forth. The questions should be ones that will help find out if the students are learning, feeling, experiencing and doing what was expected.

Reading the journals can then become an experience that helps write an evaluation of the program. A tally should be kept of how often certain words or phrases the students have used in their journals, such as "It was cool!" or "It was great!" or "I learned..." or "I am more ______ now than before." This is called coding.

Evaluation Tools

The two most common tools for program evaluation: questionnaires and interviews. Both are excellent for finding out if desired changes in attitude, behavior and knowledge have occurred. For example, the simplest way to measure a change in students' attitude toward their community is to ask them direct questions about it at the beginning of your program, and then ask the same questions at the end. This is known as a pre/post survey, and can be done either as a questionnaire or an interview.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires are custom-built instruments used to
collect information about and measure results of service learning programs. These are the three most common types of questionnaires:

1) Pre/Post Survey

This design is used to compare the knowledge, attitudes, perceptions or beliefs of students before and after the program. Results from the pre-test establish baseline information on the students, to which the post-test results will be compared. For example, you might ask the students to respond to a series of statements on their attitude toward community, to see if, after completing the service program, they are more supportive of, or knowledgeable about the community and its problems.

2) Post-Project Survey

Although the pre/post design is preferable, you sometimes won't be able to administer a survey at the beginning of the program and will have to rely on results from a post-survey only. Without information on how the students felt at the beginning of the program, this type of questionnaire asks the students to reflect on their experiences and to report on how the program affected them.

3) Comparison Groups

This type of questionnaire design allows you to compare some aspect of the group you are studying to another group
with similar characteristics that has not been involved with your service learning program. The comparison groups could be composed of students from a traditional class or students in a similar program, such as a club or another form of experiential education.

Regardless of the type of questionnaire you are designing, there are different types of questions that are good for getting at different sorts of information. In closed-ended questions, students must select from a list of predetermined choices for response. For example, "How would you describe the pace of the classroom lessons: too slow, just right, or too fast?" or "Please respond to the following statement: I think it is the responsibility of the community to take care of people who can't take care of themselves. Choose from the following responses: I strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree."

Closed-ended questions help quantify responses and are especially useful when it comes time to compile and analyze the results, particularly when faced with a large number of surveys.

Below are some options for structuring closed-ended questions:

Fill in the blank: How many hours a week do you spend writing in your journal? _______ hours per week.
Yes/No: Before taking this class, had you ever volunteered in the community?
1. Yes 2. No

Scale: How would you characterize the tutoring experience? (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6
NOT INTERESTING INTERESTING

Checklist: Does your teacher provide an adequate amount of time for you to talk about the service project when you get back to class?
Check the one best answer)

___ We have way too much time
___ We have too much time
___ We have just enough time
___ We could use a little more time
___ We need a lot more time

Rank Ordering:
The following is a list of some of the problems that students face when volunteering in the community. Please rank their importance according to your
experience. Place a 1 by the most important problem, a 2 by the next most important problem, and so on.

___ There is no one there to tell me what to do.

___ The supervisor is very disorganized

___ There is nothing for us to do.

___ There is too much for me to do.

___ The people at the community agency are not nice to me.

Open-ended questions have no fixed responses and ask students to provide their own answer to the question. For example, "How would you describe your service experience?" or "In your opinion, who should be responsible for taking care of people who can't take care of themselves?"

While open-ended questions are more difficult to interpret and quantify, they provide an opportunity to explore other issues that may have been overlooked in a closed-ended question. They also give students a chance to express their feelings and perceptions in their own words.

Analyzing Survey Results:

Entire books are written on how to analyze survey results. We have discovered a few general tips to apply when analyzing results. With closed-ended questions in a pre/post survey, it is important to compare the combined,
average response from the pre test with the post test. Ideally there will be a change in the mean response. A statistical analysis (T-test) will determine if the changes are "statistically significant" or the result of chance.

With open-ended questions, it is helpful to figure out a method of coding responses. For example, when students are asked to describe their service experiences, certain adjectives indicate and categorize responses, such as, "cool", "the best ever" or "it sucked", and "whatever." With this coding one can then quantify results according to the response as being either positive or negative.

**Interviews**

Interviews can be the verbal equivalent to written questionnaires or surveys. They are particularly useful for obtaining more detailed explanations from people, for gathering information which is personal or complex, and for clarifying ambiguous answers. Their interactive nature allows for many types of questions including those that measure intensity of feelings, pose hypothetical situations, and require lengthy responses in the forms of anecdotes or personal stories. Interviews are especially effective with people who are not able or willing to write answers to surveys (like young children and the elderly), and when the subject matter is very personal and intimate.

Anyone can be trained to conduct interviews, including program directors, teachers, students and volunteer staff.
Similarly, interviews may be conducted with any stakeholders who are capable of verbal expression.

1) Types of Interviews

Interviews can take place in person or on the telephone. Personal interviews enable face to face conversation and the ability to recognize expressions and other body language which might affect interpretation of responses. Telephone interviews tend to be more convenient and afford greater access to participants who live out of town.

Interviews may be structured or unstructured/informal. Structured interviews may closely resemble questionnaires, as the interviewer is careful to follow a set of predetermined questions and attempts to use the same language and tone with each participant. This creates a kind of objectivity which enables the comparison of responses to specific questions.

Unstructured or informal interviews are a sort of guided conversation. They do not rely on a particular set of questions or a predetermined order. Rather the interviewer may prepare a few questions to ask ahead of time and will use these and other questions which emerge from the conversation at the most appropriate moment. Informal interviews offer the most natural format for data collection and typically rely on clues from the participants to help determine the most productive topics and prompts.
2) Interview Responses

One of the most important and challenging aspects of conducting interviews is learning how best to respond to a participant’s answer. It is necessary to be both flexible and firm—allowing the participants to go off on tangents when appropriate, but convincing them to answer specific questions and not to stray too far in the course of the interview.

3) Interview Analysis

Making sense of the information you gathered in an interview can seem daunting. Reviewing notes and tapes to look for patterns of responses among participants or to scan for consistency within the individual interviews can be helpful. It is useful to identify key quotations to transcribe and report—quotations that seem unusual or different from the more traditional answers received. These should be included in the final evaluation report in the exact words of the participant; they can serve as convincing qualitative data and add nuances which cannot be expressed by quantitative data alone.

Our final word on effective assessment is to remember these objectives:

What is your goal? What do you want your program to achieve? What will you do to achieve your goal? How will you know that you have achieved your goal? What tool will you use to show your achievement? And finally, how do you
make sense out of your findings?

Service Learning Programs' Liability

In conclusion, it is important to remember this advice from the National Youth Leadership Council (1991), when deciding on a Service Learning Program for your school:

1) Have clear written procedures and policies that reduce risk and danger.
   • Ask yourself: Have I taken all reasonable precautions. The key is to not be found negligent.
   • Master charts showing where volunteers are working.
   • Parent permission, release forms.
   • Clear and adequate supervision and training given
   • Be sure all drivers are covered by insurance.
   • Clear rationales for pairing students and those being helped.

2) Make strong links to academic curriculum (school's mission).

3) Tie service activities to the same policy as work study at the secondary level.

4) Tie service to policies of non-profit organizations like
scouts or environmental groups that carry large policies.
5) Check on the coverage of the agency where you are placing students. They may be willing to cover students.
6) Discuss issues thoroughly with the school's adviser.
7) Check with large national insurance companies that specialize in volunteers.
8) Pressure states/federal government to help as they are encouraging service activities.
Vocabulary of Youth Service Programs

Youth Service: There are currently a vast number of program models, titles and organizations which share one core attribute: the utilization of youth to provide service to their schools and/or communities. The term "youth service" serves as an umbrella to identify this entire field.

Volunteerism: The most well known and established part of the youth service field is volunteerism. It means performing some formal service for others or one's community without receiving any external rewards.

Community Service: Community Service is youth volunteerism that occurs out in the community.

Service Learning: The term service learning is frequently confused with volunteerism or community service. While the main focus of volunteerism is on the service being performed, service learning places a shared or dual emphasis on service and structured learning opportunities.

Peer Helping: Peer helping programs began in the early 1970s. Such programs were created in response to the great increase in guidance needs among youth. Popular uses of peer helpers within school are cross-age and peer tutoring, cross-age education and so forth. These programs always involve people helping people, and utilize strong training and reflection components to produce significant gains in both knowledge and skills among the participants.

Youth as Resources: This has become one of the rallying cries of the entire youth service field. Its importance is that youth are typically seen as consumers within society, and service gives them an opportunity to become valued partners and contributors in their communities.

Reflection: Research by Diane Hedin and Dan Conrad has established that the critical component of successful service learning programs is reflection.
APPENDIX B
Service Learning Quadrant Handouts

Service Learning 2000

High Service
The project meets a clear important need

Unrelated Learning
No clear connection

Integrated Learning
Project is clearly integrated

Low Service
Not geared toward important needs

Don Hill and Jill Addison, 1993
**Quadrant Exercise**

**Service Learning 2000**

**Service Learning Quadrant Exercise**

**Challenge:** Place the letters of the following seven descriptions of service learning efforts on Quadrant Diagram.

A. The Oxnard school district votes to require that all students contribute ten hours of voluntary service to their high school every year to deal directly with increasing problems of campus vandalism which have almost brought classroom instruction to a halt. A clerk in the counseling office is assigned to record participation hours so that handling the service requirement does not become an extra burden for classroom teachers.

B. Mrs. Templeton organizes her middle school music program to help a neighboring school district restore music in its curriculum. Students in her classes go to the other school and tutor individual students in how to play instruments. The tutoring program culminates with a joint concert.

C. Mr. Linder organizes his second grade classroom to support efforts to buy everyone a class sweatshirt that students design. Whenever students violate a class rule, they are asked to contribute a penny to the sweatshirt fund. The students also have a sweatshirt Run-A-Thon every spring to raise money.

D. The freshman English teachers in Mandalay High School organize their curriculum around the theme of community. In addition to reading literature that focuses on community issues, all students are asked to volunteer during the school year to contribute to either their school or local community. Students keep a service journal.

E. Mr. Snickers uses homelessness as a central theme for a nine week unit in his English class. In addition to reading a novel about homeless youth and several poems, his students write and act out skits about homelessness.

F. Mrs. Cardoza spends two weeks in her fifth grade class studying how many different cultures have celebrations similar to Thanksgiving in America. Students bring in cans at the end of the unit which she delivers to a local group.

G. Ms. Ramirez organizes her science class to increase earthquake preparedness in the neighborhood. She begins by using geology field trips to stimulate interest and to develop student ability to work in teams. The project culminates when students create preparedness kits in English and Spanish to distribute to those effected.
APPENDIX C

Service Interdisciplinary Planning Form

Science

Practical Arts

Social Studies

Fine Arts

Language Arts

Mathematics
APPENDIX D
Reflection Ideas Handouts

**Speaking**
- Class Discussion
- Group Discussion
- Oral Reports
- Public Speaking
- Speak to Younger Kids
- Testimony to Policymakers

**Writing**
- Essay, Research Paper
- Journal or Log
- Case Study
- Project Report
- Narrative for Video
- Self Evaluation
- Newspaper Article

**Generating Reflection**

**Activities**
- Gather Information
- Field Research
- Role Playing
- Workshop Presentation
- Lead a Training Session
- Celebrate Programs
- Recruit Peers to Serve
- Program Budget

**Multimedia**
- Photo, Slide, Video Essay
- Painting, Drawing, Collages
- Dance Presentations
- Music Presentations
- Theater Presentations
Reflection Suggestions

Journals
See the enclosed handout for suggested journal prompts.

Other Writing Activities
Write a job description for the volunteer job you held.
Write a letter to your site supervisor offering suggestions.
Write an article for the school or community newspaper.
Write a paper about an issue that impacts your volunteer site.
Find a newspaper article about the issue your agency addresses.
Write a poem that reflects your volunteer experience.

Oral Activities and Group Discussions
Report to your peers the goals of the agency where you work.
Read the quote: "A ship in harbour is safe, but that is not what ships are built for" (W. Shedd). Discuss in regards to volunteer work.
Share how you felt when you were volunteering.
Share with one other person what you did and any problems you had.

Role Playing
Describe something that happened at your volunteer job that you did not know how to handle. Have the class join in.
(Pre-reflection) Role play what you will say when you arrive at your placement.

Video
Create a television commercial advertising the service of the agency in which you work.
Bring a clip from a movie that expresses something that you have experienced at your service work.
Create a video that reflects what you have accomplished.

Skits/Dramatic
Act out a possible television commercial that would convince people to volunteer at your site.
Create a skit that describes what you did at your site.
Within three minutes, express the heart of your volunteer experience without using words.
Write a song/rap about your experience.

Graphic
Create a newsletter which reflects what each person in the group did as their volunteer work.
Create a display about the issue you are working on or the agency for whom you were working. Display it at the agency.
APPENDIX E

Suggestions for a Daily Journal

The journal is for you. It is a place to try out ideas, to make sense of what you are doing and how you are feeling. It's a place to practice writing and do some thinking. Set aside a special notebook for this journal. Don't use it for anything else. At least once a week, or whenever you have been at the placement site, write a paragraph describing your experiences. You might also want to write about the feelings and ideas that have been triggered by them. The questions below suggest some things that you might write about, but are certainly not the only things. On any one day you might write on one or two, but by the end of the project you should have written at least once on nearly every one of them.

* What was the best thing that happened to you this week? Was it something someone said or did?

* What new skill did you learn?

* What did you do in your work that was fun or satisfying?

* Did you get an idea that would improve your work? This program? The world?

* What did you do that helped you get along and work with others?

* What criticisms did you receive and how did you respond to them?

* What compliments did you receive and how did you respond to them?

* What happened that made you feel uncomfortable or unhappy?

* What did you do today that made you feel proud? Why?

* What were some of the things that you wanted to say today and did not?

* What did you learn from a disappointment or failure?

* What did you discover about other people?
REFERENCES


