

G. SERVICE LEARNING PROJECTS

Overview

Service learning provides students an opportunity to integrate school site learning with work site activities in a community agency or service project. Students develop work skills and workplace behaviors as a member of a work team with specific goals and activities. This is a non-paid activity and usually lasts for up to several weeks. Class project credit may be given. In some school districts, this is a course that lasts from nine weeks to one semester. Use the Serving to Learn K-8, 9-12, and Adult Education guides available through the Department of Education for ideas and format of service learning ideas.

Service learning experiences consist of volunteer work in non-profit or public organizations. The purpose of these experiences is the development of the student's sense of community involvement, in addition to skills and knowledge common to other structured work experiences. Students learn and develop by participating in thoughtfully organized community service work activities that meet actual community needs, are designed in collaboration by the school and community, and are closely linked to the student's classroom learning activities.

Evaluation. It is customary to have the student report on or write about the experience he/she had during the service learning experience. The school personnel (classroom teachers and/or WBL coordinator) responsible for the student's involvement in the service learning experience should provide structured school site activities that connect the student's experience at the project site with learning at school.

Legal Issues. All state and federal child labor laws must be followed for learners under the age of 18. These requirements are defined in this manual, *Part IX - Nebraska Work Based Learning Legal Issues Guide*.

Insurance. The following insurance considerations should be understood by parents, school administrators and employers:

- *Health/Life Insurance* - provided by student's family; however, employers are responsible for offering coverage for students in paid work site learning experiences if similarly classified employees are eligible for these benefits.
- *Automobile Accident Insurance* - provided by the student/parent (for travel to and from work site) unless transportation is provided by the district.
- *Accident/Liability Insurance* - Insurance for personal injury or property damage should be carried by the employer, school district, and family. Additional liability (malpractice) insurance may be advisable in the health care field.
- *Worker's Compensation* - Students participating in paid work site experiences are covered by worker's compensation and may be covered by the school district's policy or the employer. Students participating in non-paid work site experiences are not covered by worker's compensation, but if injured at the work site may be covered by the school district or businesses's liability insurance and/or their family insurance
- *Medical Treatment Waiver.* Parents sign a waiver for student's participation in a work site learning experience.

Sources of Funding. Possible sources of funding for providing service learning experiences include: local schools, the Nebraska Department of Education, Career and Technical Education, Tech Prep, School-to-Careers, Educational Service Units, local business and industry partner, etc.

Time Commitment. It is a short-term experience that varies from one hour, to several days, to as long as one year and can take place from the 7th through 12th grade, although the earlier the service learning projects begin the better.

Training Agreement/Training Plan. Agreements are signed by the student, parents, school coordinator, and employer that outline the responsibilities of all parties and describe the school site and work site competencies to be attained.

Transportation. Students and parents should provide transportation. In some cases, the school or school district may make transportation arrangements for students to and from the work site.

Wages. Student are not paid for participating in job shadowing experiences. Students may be paid stipends to apply toward future studies.

Service Learning Framework

Preparation consists of the learning activities that take place prior to the service itself. Prior to their service experience, students must understand what is expected of them, as well as what they can expect from the service project.

Preparation components include the following:

- ◆ identifying and analyzing the problem
- ◆ selecting and planning the project
- ◆ training and orientation

Action is the service itself and needs to meet certain criteria. It must:

- ◆ be meaningful
- ◆ have academic integrity
- ◆ have adequate supervision
- ◆ provide for student ownership
- ◆ be developmentally appropriate

Reflection enables students to critically think about their service experiences. When students reflect on their experiences, they think about them, write about them, share them with others and learn from them. The reflection time is a structured opportunity for students to learn from their experiences. They can reflect through:

- ◆ discussion
- ◆ reading
- ◆ writing
- ◆ projects

Celebration is the component of service learning which recognizes students for their contributions. It also provides closure to an ongoing activity. Society needs to let young people know that their contributions are valued. There are many ways that this final component of service learning can be implemented:

- ◆ school assemblies
- ◆ certificates
- ◆ special media coverage
- ◆ pizza parties
- ◆ joint celebration with service recipients

Setting Up a Service Learning Experience	
Identifying Potential Work Sites	<p>For more detailed information on this subject, see the <i>Part III -Marketing and Work Site Development</i> section of this manual.</p> <p>The first step in setting up a community service learning experience is finding individuals and organizations who are willing to take on the responsibility of working with a student. Many districts mail interest forms to different organizations within the community to establish a pool of possible work sites. Students may also identify possible community service learning sites on their own. The community service learning program depends on the maintenance of a pool of potential work sites that match up with student educational and career objectives. Successful work sites are a valuable resource that can be utilized over and over again.</p>
Placing Students	<p>Student placement in community service learning experiences can be arranged by either the school or the student. Connecting students with work sites that will meet their needs and provide relevant experiences is the most important aspect of planning the community service learning experience. Organization staff will want to interview prospective volunteers to ensure a good match. Programs may allow students who are already involved with an organization that provides community service relevant to their studies to earn community service learning credit for their volunteer experience.</p>

Setting Up a Service Learning Experience	
Arranging Schedules	The work site supervisor and student should arrange a work schedule that is convenient for both of them. It is best if the schedule is consistent from week to week, so the work site can prepare meaningful community service experiences for the student and reinforce positive work habits.
Confirming Plans	The student should contact the work site supervisor to confirm arrangements and answer any questions he/she may have about the program.
Preparing Students	<p>Students need to be thoroughly prepared before embarking on a community service learning experience. In addition to classroom preparation that focuses on career research and exploration and skills that will be applied at the work site, there are practical concerns to be addressed as well. Many districts provide students with a community service learning experience handbook which contains a combination of the following:</p> <p>Structured work experience agreements. These agreements outline the responsibilities of both the work site supervisor and the student, as well as the purpose of and academic expectations for the service learning experience. Forms should be signed by the student, work site supervisor, and program coordinator. Parent/guardian signatures may be required for minor students.</p> <p>Outline of dress and behavior expectations. While classroom preparation for career exploration activities usually covers this information, it's good to reinforce the message that dress and behavior standards in the workplace are different than those at school. Remind students that they are representing the program and the school, as well as themselves. The coordinator should be aware of dress code at each work site and discuss appropriate attire with students. Students should also be informed about sexual harassment issues.</p> <p>Goals/Objectives worksheet. Students, work site supervisors and program coordinators need to work together to develop a list of goals and objectives for the community service learning experience. List should include skills the student needs to acquire and/or practice and concepts the student needs to understand and apply. Goals/objectives should relate directly to classroom work and career development activities that the community service learning experience supports.</p> <p>Checklist. Give students a checklist which includes everything they need to do to prepare for the community service learning experience. Developing objectives, contacting organization staff, arranging schedules and transportation (if necessary) and doing background research are all possible checklist items.</p> <p>Evaluation materials. Students will be evaluated by their work site supervisors throughout the community service learning experience. Provide students with copies of the evaluation forms so that they can be informed about the basis of their evaluations. Ask students to evaluate their community service learning experiences, as well. Students should be encouraged to write or talk about their experiences as a means of better understanding what they have learned. Student evaluations of the program can also be helpful as an element of ongoing program improvement.</p>
Preparing Work Site Supervisors	<p>Work site supervisors must be thoroughly prepared for the community service learning experience, as well. Make sure that they are aware of everything that they are expected to do. Many districts prepare a handbook for work site supervisors which contains a combination of the following:</p> <p>An overview of legal responsibilities. There are many legal issues that work site supervisors need to be aware of, such as safety concerns and child labor, discrimination and sexual harassment laws. Make sure that work site supervisors understand their legal responsibilities and potential liabilities in advance.</p> <p>Instructions for work with young people. Many professionals are unaccustomed to the unique challenges of communication and working with young people. Remind work site supervisors that they may be faced with student attitudes and expectations that may seem unrealistic in the workplace. Encourage hosts to provide as many learning experiences as possible.</p>

Setting Up a Service Learning Experience	
Preparing Work Site Supervisors (continued)	<p>Activity suggestions. Remind work site supervisors that the purpose of the community service learning is to provide students with an environment where learning can take place in the context of community service. Encourage supervisors to allow students to participate in as many learning activities as possible, especially activities that offer an opportunity to develop workplace skills.</p> <p>Checklist. Work site supervisors will probably find a checklist very useful. Checklist items might include: arranging meeting times, planning with program coordinator to insure that academic requirements are met, signing structured work experience agreements, arranging student workspace as appropriate, and informing students about organization policies and procedures.</p> <p>Evaluation materials. Employer response to the community service learning program is essential for maintaining a successful operation. Provide employers with forms on which they can evaluate student participation, as well as the program itself.</p>
Connecting the Classroom to the Work Site	<p>It is important to make the community service learning experience meaningful by connecting it to classroom learning. Connecting activities can take many forms, and should take place at all stages of the experience.</p> <p>Pre-experience Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students research the general career fields and specific organizations in which their service experiences take place ● Students write about their preconceptions and expectations related to the organization in which their experiences will take place ● Students prepare questions to ask their colleagues based on their research and writing ● Teachers emphasize practical applications of the concepts and skills they teach in class <p>On-site Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students learn actual job skills by participating in work-related activities ● Students observe practical applications of academic concepts ● Students work toward achieving individual goals and objectives <p>Seminars</p> <p>Seminars provide students with opportunities to better understand their community service learning experiences and enhance their learning. Seminar schedules can vary from three meetings per term to as often as once a week. Curriculum can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Job search skills and techniques, such as resume writing and interviewing skills ● How to develop goals and objectives ● Reflective assignments, such as weekly logs and journals ● Education on workplace issues such as: sexual harassment, workplace basics, managing conflict, responding to criticism, labor laws, discrimination, professionalism ● Workplace skills and techniques related to student placements ● Guest speakers ● Round-table discussions ● Collaborative learning activities ● Values clarification <p>Post-experience Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students write about the differences between their expectations and the realities of the workplace ● Students and teachers discuss the connections they see between classroom learning and the workplace ● Students continue their career research in light of what they have learned during the community service learning experience

Nebraska Success Stories

LINCOLN SERVES AMERICA PROJECT

Students in the Lincoln Serves America project involving youth from the YWCA project, participated in a “Week Without Violence” activity, which focused on understanding interpersonal violence. The curriculum designed by the Nebraska Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Coalition served to increase understanding as well as sensitivity to this very important issue. Some projects completed were the painting of a mural at an activity center, involving art students from the high school. The mural of the pledge was painted at the center and was well enough done that it has remained at the center. The students also painted a fence that was covered with graffiti. About 50 students were involved in the “Week Without Violence” activity which included assembling community awareness mailers.

The youth were also involved in a “Toys for Tots” program that distributed toys through the Salvation Christmas Store and served over 2,500 families in the program. They also sacked poinsettias for the elderly shut-ins and helped deliver 80 plants.

Program Areas. All Areas

Grade Level. 6 - 12th Grades

Contact. Tami Damian, YMCA of Lincoln, 1432 “N” Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, (402) 434-3494.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN THE WORLD PROJECT

The Ainsworth Family, Careers and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), and the FFA wish to provide opportunities for their members to work in the community to make it a better place in which to live.

The teachers from all of Brown County’s elementary schools read the book, *“The Most Beautiful Place in the World,”* to their students. The moral of this story is that the character’s hometown is the most beautiful place in their world. The first and second graders drew pictures in art class of what they felt is the most beautiful place in their environment. The third graders drew a picture of what they thought was the most beautiful place in their home town. These pictures were made into quilts (with help from local quilters) and raffled off. The proceeds from the raffle went to buy trees and were planted in the community.

The fourth and fifth graders did six short environmental education units. They took turns taking disposable cameras home, taking pictures of something they liked about the community and something that could use improvement. From the pictures, feasible fix-up projects were selected and completed, such as playground improvement and trash pick up. The sixth graders wrote to the author of the book informing her of their projects. They also did historical interviews with the senior citizens in the rest home. These interviews were compiled into books which were distributed in the community.

The seventh and eighth graders wrote a story or poem of what they thought was the most beautiful thing about Brown County. These were compiled into books which were sold. The proceeds again were used to buy trees which were planted in the community. A video tape was made of all aspects of this project. A computer presentation was made as well as a homepage on the Internet.

The second part of the goal was to give computer training to some of the Senior Citizens in town by going to the Senior Center and the Retired Teachers Organization. This way the senior citizens gained computer skills while learning about the students in Brown County.

Program Areas. Agriculture Education, Business Education, Family and Consumer Sciences

Grade Level. 1 - 12th Grades

Contact. Glenna Prewitt, Ainsworth Community Schools, 520 East 2nd Street, Ainsworth, NE 69210, (402) 387-2082.

Sample Forms for Service Learning Projects

The forms on the following pages provide the structure required to make these opportunities a valuable experience for both the student and the employer.

TITLE	DESCRIPTION	PAGE #
WBL Training Agreement	Agreement signed by the student, parents, school coordinator, and employer that spells out the responsibilities of all parties.	136
Insurance and Emergency Information	Insurance, medical, and family information for student.	137
Service Learning Project Training Plan	Describes the student competencies resulting from the service learning experience.	138
Business/Community Organization Evaluation	Business/community organization representative's evaluation of the student's participation in the service learning project.	139
Student Observation/Evaluation Report	Student observations and evaluation of their service learning experience.	140

SAMPLE

**WORK BASED LEARNING (WBL)
TRAINING AGREEMENT**

Student Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Street: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Social Security #: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Parent's Name: _____ Address _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Employer Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Employer Address: _____

Days per Week: _____ Hours per Day: _____ Hours _____ A.M. and _____ P.M.

School Name: _____ School Location: _____

Career Cluster: _____ Training/Occupation Title: _____

Work based Learning Activity: (Check all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Apprenticeship | <input type="checkbox"/> Field Trip | <input type="checkbox"/> Service Learning Projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preapprenticeship | <input type="checkbox"/> Internship/Practicum | <input type="checkbox"/> WECEP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Registered Apprenticeship | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Shadowing | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Work Experience | <input type="checkbox"/> Mentorship | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Part Time Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

EMPLOYER'S RESPONSIBILITIES. The employer agrees to place the student learner in the activity specified above for the purpose of providing occupational experience of instructional value. The activity will be under the supervision of a qualified supervisor and will be performed under safe and hazard free conditions. The trainee will receive the same consideration given employees with regard to safety, health, social security, general work conditions and other policies and procedures of the firm. Safety instruction will be coordinated by the school and correlated by the employer. The employer will adhere to all State and Federal Regulations regarding employment, child labor laws and minimum wages, and will not discriminate in employment policies, educational programs or activities for reasons of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, marital status, age or handicap. The student learner will not displace a regular worker.

WBL COORDINATOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES. The WBL coordinator agrees to work with the employer in developing a written training plan that includes progressive work process to be performed on the job. The coordinator will visit each student learner at the training station and continue a close working relationship with the person to whom the student learner is responsible while on the job. The coordinator shall attempt to resolve any complaints through the cooperative efforts of all parties concerned. The coordinator will meet with each student learner's parent and/or guardian prior to placement and during the school year. The local education office and employer will keep each student learner's Training Agreement on file for three (3) years.

PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES. Parent and/or guardian agree for the student to participate in a WBL opportunity provided by the public schools.

STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES.The student learner is enrolled in a WBL course of study and agrees to follow rules and guidelines established by the school, employer and WBL coordinator with regard to hours of work, school attendance and reporting procedures.

HAZARDOUS OCCUPATIONS EXCEPTION. Will the student be involved in a hazardous occupation as defined under the Federal Child Labor guidelines? _____YES _____NO (If yes, the **Student Learner Exemption Agreement** must be completed.)

Parents agree to arrange transportation for their child to and from the work site. By signing this form they are giving permission for their child to receive emergency medical treatment in case of injury or illness. They also understand that school personnel will not be present when the student is at the site and will not be responsible for their child. All signatories agree to comply with the responsibilities specified in the training agreement.

Student Date _____ WBL Coordinator Date _____

Parent or Guardian Date _____ Employer Date _____

Employer's Insurance Carrier Carrier's Contact Person

SAMPLE

**WORK BASED LEARNING (WBL)
INSURANCE AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

PERSONAL DATA

Student's Name _____ Birth Date _____
Student's Home Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Student's Social Security Number _____ Home Phone _____
School Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____

INSURANCE COVERAGE

<u>Insurance Coverage</u>	<u>Yes/No</u>	<u>Family</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Employer</u>
Liability and/or Bonding	_____	_____	_____	_____
Workers' Compensation	_____	_____	_____	_____
Health/Accident	_____	_____	_____	_____

Name of H/A Ins. Co. _____ Insured _____ Policy # _____

NOTE: Please identify who is providing coverage by placing an (X) in the appropriate box.

STUDENT MEDICAL INFORMATION

List medical information about the student that would be helpful in case of an emergency.

Allergic to medications? _____ YES _____ NO

If yes, what medications? _____

List any allergies or other medical problems of the student. _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Work Phone _____

Work Name/Address _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Work Phone _____

Work Name/Address _____

Parent/Guardian Home Address _____ Home Phone _____

Emergency Contact _____ Phone _____

SIGNATURES

I consent for my child to receive emergency medical treatment in case of injury or illness. The information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Note: This form should be kept on file at school. If the student is participating in a WBL activity, a copy should also be on file at the work site

SAMPLE

**Service Learning Project
TRAINING PLAN**

Student Name _____ Social Security # _____ Age _____

Home Address _____ Home Phone _____ Birth Date _____

Student's Career Objective _____

Work Based Learning Coordinator _____ Phone _____

School/Address _____

COMPETENCIES TO BE DEVELOPED
(List competencies the student will need to complete.)

COMPETENCY	Date of Evaluation
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

SIGNATURES

Instructor's Signature _____ Date _____

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

NOTE: It is the policy of the school district that no person on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, sex, marital status, handicap, or disadvantage should be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity.

SAMPLE

**Service Learning Project
BUSINESS/COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION EVALUATION**

Thank you for participating with the student from our school in his/her service learning project. In an effort to improve the service learning experience for employers and students we would appreciate your completing this evaluation.

Business/Community Organization Name: _____

Representative's Name/Title: _____

Student Name: _____

1. Please indicate the level of interest demonstrated by the student.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not interested | <input type="checkbox"/> Moderately uninterested |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat interested | <input type="checkbox"/> Very interested |

2. Did the student ask questions directly related to the application of skills required for completing the project?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

3. Did the student ask questions about training/education required to complete the project?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

4. Did the student have the opportunity to interact with more than one individual during the experience?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

5. Did the student dress appropriately for the environment in which the project took place?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

6. Please comment on the amount of time that was required for the project experience:

Days: _____ Hours _____

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too long | <input type="checkbox"/> About right | <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough time |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|

7. What could have been done to help make the experience more meaningful for the student and/or other volunteers?

8. Would you participate in the Service Learning Program again?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

Comments _____

Return to: Work Based Learning Coordinator _____
School Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

SAMPLE

**Service Learning Project
STUDENT OBSERVATIONS/EVALUATION**

Work Site _____ Student _____

Business Host _____

Department _____ Date _____

Time Reported in at Site _____

Time Reported out at Site _____

1. Who was your service learning supervisor? _____

2. Was he/she prepared for the project? _____

3. How would you rate your service learning experience?

- Excellent Good Not Very Good

4. Describe your service learning experience _____

5. Write down one interesting thing you learned _____

6. What workplace skills did you learn? _____

7. What kind of training/education is necessary to complete the project? _____

8. Did the experience change your mind about your career plans?

- Yes No

9.. Comments: _____

NOTE: Return to your Work Based Learning Coordinator

