

Baltimore County Student Service Learning

Program Information

What is Service-Learning?

- Service-Learning is a state graduation requirement which engages students in organized service projects that meet real needs in the community. Service-learning experiences build character and enable students to grow both socially and academically.

Service-Learning Experiences
Must Include **PREPARATION,**
ACTION, and **REFLECTION.**

- **Preparation** is the first step of Service-learning in which students cooperate with teachers and community members to:
 - Identify issues affecting the community; e.g., homelessness, environment, eldercare
 - Select project site and type of action
 - Plan service-learning reflection
 - Explore the concept of citizenship

- **Action** is the next step of service-learning in which students carry out their service. This action can take place in school or in the community. Service-Learning experiences give meaning to academic lessons, such as reading student composed stories to younger children.

- **Reflection** is the final step of service-learning in which students look back upon the project and review what they have learned. Reflection may be done individually (journals, scrapbooks) or as a group (class evaluation of the project based on the goals and outcomes).

What is the Service-Learning Requirement?

- All students need to complete 75 hours of service-learning as part of the state graduation requirement.

How will I meet the
requirement in Baltimore
County schools?

- Service-Learning begins in grade six. Students may earn hours through projects completed in the classroom (curriculum infusion) and through independent service projects in the community. See the Service-Learning Coordinator for assistance.

How are Hours Earned in Class?

- Each of the following classes incorporate 8 hour projects that are directly connected to classroom instruction and meet real community needs.

Grade 6

- English
- Social Studies
- Health
- Technology Education (where offered)

Grade 7

- Art
- Technology Education (where offered)

Grade 8

- Science
- Health
- Family Studies (where offered)

What other opportunities are available for me to earn hours?

- All students may participate in independent projects which meet community needs. Projects can be:
 - Direct service - working directly with people in need
 - Indirect service – working indirectly to help people in need (such as fundraisers to help kids with cancer)
 - Advocacy - vocally supporting a cause in person or in writing

Can Awards be Earned for Independent Service Projects?

Yes.

- Baltimore County offers the opportunity for students in grades 8 & 12 to earn Meritorious Service Awards for outstanding independent service projects. Students may apply for the award by completing the application process.

- All applications will be reviewed by a panel of judges who will determine the winners. Award winners are invited to attend the Meritorious Service Awards Ceremony, where they will receive an award as a symbol of the outstanding contributions to their communities.

Students Interested in Independent Projects Need to Follow these Steps:

- Go to the Service-Learning Coordinator in the school to find an approved organization in which to serve or to get an organization pre-approved.
- Call the organization to determine the need for assistance.

➤ Obtain the Pre-Approval Form from the Service Learning Coordinator. This form will be signed by the organization and the coordinator.

- After turning in the Pre-Approval Form, the student will be given the Verification of Hours Form and Reflection Form. These should be taken to the organization and will be completed during and after the service project.

➤ At the completion of the project, the student will turn in the completed Verification of Hours Form and the Reflection Form.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact your Service-Learning Coordinator.