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Service-Learning Leadership Development (SLLD)

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SERVICE-LEARNING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (SLLD)

SERVICE-LEARNING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: THE YCS MODEL

I. Program Summary

The Service-Learning Leadership Development (SLLD) program is a comprehensive professional development initiative, designed to *increase the Service-learning leadership capacity* in schools or districts that are committed to: **(a)** implementing school-wide or grade-wide service-learning, **(b)** developing new service-learning practice and policy, or **(c)** improving existing youth service programs to reflect high-quality service-learning practices.

The program is funded by the California Department of Education CalServe Initiatives, as part of a statewide effort to develop effective, replicable models of service-learning professional development (for more information see: http://www.cde.ca.gov/calserve). The SLLD model developed by Youth Community Service, a non-profit based in Palo Alto, California, offers valuable resources (a service-learning Resource Binder and the SLLD Training Guide) and on-going professional development and support. It has been successfully piloted for two years in three very diverse school districts, across all three grade spans. Its flexible design can be adapted to work for any school or district.

II. Background: Development of the SLLD Model

(A) Program Goals

The SLLD program was piloted by Youth Community Service (YCS) as a year-long professional development program, with the overarching goal of *developing service-learning leadership and helping service-learning leaders create and implement sustainable service-learning plans.* Specifically, the intent was that service-learning Leadership Development Program participants would:

- ✓ Learn about the definition and elements of high-quality service-learning and, as a result, feel competent to teach others;

- ✓ Know the principles of collaborative learning communities and be able to build support for service-learning at their sites;

- ✓ Demonstrate the ability to design high-quality service-learning projects that use multiple partnerships to integrate meaningful service into the academic curriculum;

- ✓ Develop a plan (for implementation this year or next Fall) for sustainable school-wide service-learning.

(B)Principles of Program Development

Service-learning leaders throughout the country have already developed many useful tools for training teachers on the basic principles of service-learning practice. Indeed, the SLLD Training Guide borrows ideas and activities from many of these resources.

However, the SLLD program also offers a unique emphasis on *achieving school-wide service-learning through increased teacher leadership capacity.* The overarching assumption is that knowledge of service-learning, and even experience implementing service-learning projects, do not ensure the teacher's ability to teach or lead others in the development of a service-learning project. To create sustainable high-quality service-learning, program leaders must also understand the process of school change and program implementation and possess the tools to design service-learning programs that will succeed in their school environment.

Therefore, the SLLD Training Guide attempts to develop *both expertise and leadership capacity.* The ultimate goal is to generate enough knowledge and leadership at a site (whether a school or school district) to make service-learning sustainable. Given this goal, it is also important to acknowledge that no one model of reform fits every educational institution. Thus the Service-Learning Leadership Development Program is flexibly designed, based on a set of operating principles, to help any organization achieve implementation of a sustainable service-learning program.

The Training Guide and Resource Binder which are at the heart of the YCS SLLD model are based on the following best-practices:

- o **Service-learning expertise:** Effective service-learning leaders have a strong grasp of the best practices of service-learning and experience designing and implementing programs.
- o **Leadership capacity:** Effective service-learning leaders understand the process of school change and program implementation and possess the tools to design service-learning programs that will succeed in their school environment.
- o **Structured planning time:** Time must be explicitly set aside for development of a plan, and guidelines provided to support the service-learning planning process.
- o **Allocation of Resources:** Service-learning can be resource-intensive and schools should have funding and materials available for the realization of their plans.
- o **School-community partnerships:** Effective service-learning initiatives are led by collaborative teams of teachers, staff, parents, students, and other community partners..
- o **Peer collaboration and networking:** Service-learning leaders are more successful when connected to a network of other service-learning practitioners and mentors.
- o **On-going professional support:** Successful professional development includes individualized and continued support beyond the training sessions.

SLLD Service-Learning Plan Outline

I. Proposed Service-Learning Project

1) Please provide a program overview. This description will be your "service-learning pitch"

2) How will the service project be selected/planned? (select all that apply, and complete the related questions.)

☐ The Service-Learning Leadership Team will select the project.

(a) Describe the service-learning project(s). Describe the community need that will be met, the service to be performed, and the service providers and recipients.
(b) How will students be involved in decision-making

☐ Teachers will be responsible for selecting/guiding the selection of service projects.

(a) How will teachers be trained/supported to do this? What resources will they be given? What other considerations will be addressed?
(b) How will student be involved in decision-making?

☐ Students will select projects individually, in small groups, or as a class.

(a) How will students be prepared to select their projects? In what forum will this occur (classroom, clubs, assemblies, etc.)? How will students be supported in the processes of selection, design and planning, and implementation? What will teachers' roles be within this process?

(b) How will necessary community partnerships be formed?

II. Integrated Learning

1) How will the service be linked to the curriculum/standards? (If the project will be pre-selected, what subjects will be connected to the service project?)

2) How will student learning be assessed?

3) What are the goals for student development of civic responsibility, and how will they be reached?

4) How will student be engaged in meaningful reflection?

III. Program Participants

1) Describe intended participants (number of students, teachers, parents, etc. - including grade levels or other pertinent information).

2) Describe any partnerships that will be formed within the school or surrounding community.

3) Describe the proposed role of the Service-Learning Leadership Team (e.g. lead training, guide implementation, facilitate the design process, be the implementers, etc.).

IV. Growth and Sustainability

1) How will the team achieve school-wide support and/or awareness of the service-learning initiative (e.g. events - celebration, recognition, instruction - training, meetings, etc.)?

2) Please describe your plan for making service-learning sustainable at your site, including:
   - Future leadership
   - Curriculum and other resource development
   - Student participation
   - Teacher involvement
   - Community partnerships
   - Other?

3) How will you evaluate the impact of the program and ensure continuous improvement?

V. Program Logistics

1) What is the program timeline (beginning with planning, ending with celebration/recognition)?

2) Please provide a detailed program budget, not exceeding $2000, and include any in-kind or other contributions by the school site (Refer to the attached budget form, if needed).

3) How will the program be sustained after YCS funding has run out?

4) What other logistics need to be considered (transportation, accreditation, supervision, etc.), and how will they be addressed?

BUILDING YOUR SLLD PROGRAM MODEL

The YCS model was suited to the needs of YCS and of participating schools. However, the SLLD tools can be used in a variety of ways to achieve different professional development goals. Use the worksheet below to brainstorm goals for your site.

Define your program goals
Use the following questions to guide your thinking (or a group discussion) about the role of a service-learning leadership development program in your school or district:

1) Who are potential participants?

2) What current service-learning activity or interest exists among potential participants?

3) What do potential participants know about service-learning and what do they need/want to learn?

4) What would the ideal service-learning program(s) look like?

5) What are the non-service-learning priorities for your site/organization and how can they be connected to service-learning outcomes?

Use a separate sheet of paper to define your goals and benchmarks.

Goal: What will participants know or be able to do as a result of the program?
   Sample Goal: "Participants will learn about the definition and elements of high-quality service-learning and, as a result, feel competent to teach others."

Benchmarks: what outcomes would you expect to see along the way that indicate movement towards the goal?
   Sample benchmark: "Participants' school-wide service-learning plans will demonstrate an understanding of how to implement the 7 Elements of High-Quality Service-Learning."

INTRODUCTION TO THE SLLD TRAINING GUIDE

I. Overview of the SLLD Training Guide

The training guide is not a "program" that needs to be followed sequentially. Rather, it is a menu of activities that are useful in the development of service-learning expertise and leadership. The order of the units as they are presented allow service-learning leaders to first become familiar with the best practices of service-learning, and then begin to think about their individual and institutional capacity for developing an effective service-learning program. However, if you are working with a group of experienced service-learning practitioners, you might want to by-pass the initial units, and focus on the activities that build leadership or help practitioners improve their programs.

The Guide is comprised of the following units:

Program Orientation
Unit 1: Introduction to Service-Learning
Unit 2: Project Planning – Connecting Service to the Curriculum
Unit 3: Designing Meaningful Reflection
Unit 4: Youth Development Through Service-Learning
Unit 5: Civic Responsibility Through Service-Learning
Unit 6: Assessing Student Learning
Unit 7: Building Support for Service-Learning
Unit 8: Program Evaluation and Peer Review
Special Event I: Panel of Representatives from Exemplary Service-Learning Schools
Special Event II: School-Agency Partnerships

The Training Guide is based on the seven principles of best practice identified in the SLLD Program Overview, and each of the units supports one or more of those principles, as follows:

Principle of Best Practice	Relevant Unit(s)
Service-learning expertise	All Units and Special Event I & II
Leadership capacity	Program Orientation, Unit 7 & Special Event I
Structured planning time	All units
Allocation of Resources	Unit 2
School-community partnerships	Unit 4 & Special Event II
Peer collaboration and networking	All units, Special Event I in particular
On-going professional support	Special Event I

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE-LEARNING

🕐 *Total Running Time: 2 hours 30 minutes*

This introduction to service-learning not only teaches participants about elements of high-quality service-learning, but also asks them to think critically about the importance of each element. They analyze the quality of a set of projects and begin to explore some of the challenges involved with designing high-quality service-learning. Finally, they reflect on the vision of service-learning for their own schools. This unit *does not* delve deeply into any one aspect of the definition. It only serves as an overall introduction to the vocabulary and concepts of high-quality service-learning.

The activities in this unit allow participants to:

- Become familiar with the basic definition of service-learning;

- Know and be able to explain the 7 elements of service-learning;

- Explore their own perspective/ opinion about high quality service-learning;

- Apply what they have learned to developing a program for their schools.

For more information on this topic, consult the following resources:

Belbas, B., Gorak, K. & Shumer, R., "Commonly Used Definitions of Service-Learning: A Discussion Piece." Available from the National Service Learning Clearinghouse, 800-808-7378 or http://www.servicelearning.org/.

Toole, P., "Essential Elements of Service-Learning." `1999. Available through the National Youth Leadership Council http://www.nylc.org

Cairn, R.W. and Kielsmeier, J. C., "Growing Hope: A Sourcebook on Integrating youth service into the school curriculum." Roseville, MN: National Youth Leadership Council. (612) 631-3672.

Conrad, D & Hedin, D, "Youth Service: A Guidebook for Developing and Operating Effective Programs." Independent Sector, 1828 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. (202) 223-8100.

INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE-LEARNING
AGENDA

As a result of today's session, participants will:

- Become familiar with the basic definition of service-learning;

- Know and be able explain the 7 elements of service-learning;

- Explore their own perspective/ opinion about high quality service-learning;

- Apply what they have learned to developing a program for their schools.

These goals will be met through the following activities:

1. Definition of Service-Learning;

2. **Key Service-Learning Concepts**

3. **The Elements of Service-Learning;**

4. Service-Learning Case Study;

5. Visioning; and

Activity 2: Key Service-Learning Concepts
Running time: 30 minutes

Goals: To introduce participants to the key concepts in service-learning.

Materials:

    📄 "What is Service-Learning?" – 1 per participant & a display version. Chart paper and markers

Preparation

⇨ Distribute the handout, "What is Service-Learning?"

⇨ Ask participants to read the definition and underline any key ideas or concepts in the definition which they think should be emphasized.

Action

⇨ Assign participants to grade-level groups of 3 or 4, and instruct them to work as a group to write a "child-friendly" definition of service-learning that they could use to explain the concept to their students.

⇨ Once they have determined their definition have them write it on posted chart paper so that all definitions are on display.

⇨ Have each group share their definition and ask other participants to identify key phrases or words in each group's definition.

Reflection

⇨ Facilitate a whole group discussion that addresses one or both the following questions:

1) What goals or purposes for service-learning are reflected in each of these definitions (e.g. academic learning, character development, civic responsibility, etc.)?

2) What are the key phrases or language that are most useful when presenting the idea of service-learning to students?

WHAT IS SERVICE-LEARNING?[1]

It is a method whereby **students learn and develop** through active participation in thoughtfully organized **service** that is conducted in and meets the **needs** of a community **identified by youth**;

It is **coordinated** with an elementary school, secondary school, institutions of higher education, or community service programs, and with the community;

It helps foster **civic responsibility**;

It is integrated into and enhances the **curriculum** of the students;
It provides structured time for the students to **reflect** on the service *and evaluate the activity.*

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[1] Federal Definition of Service-Learning. See http://www.cde.ca.gov/calserve for more information.

Activity 3: The Elements of Service-Learning
Running Time: 45 minutes

Goals: To develop a deeper understanding of the 7 Elements of Service-Learning and allow participants to adapt the concepts to meet their own understanding.

Materials:

📄 "Elements of High-Quality Service-Learning" - one per participant Two copies of "7 Elements of Service-Learning Presentation" cut into strips.

Preparation
- ➪ Explain that there is a widely accepted model of service-learning developed by Service-Learning 2000 at YSCal. This model proposes 7 elements of high-quality service-learning .

- ➪ Introduce the handout, "Elements of High-Quality Service-Learning." Ask participants to carefully read all 7 elements and their definitions.

Action
- ➪ Divide participants into 7 groups and assign one of the 7 elements to each group.

- ➪ Give each group a copy of the "7 elements of Service-Learning Presentation" instructions, review the instructions, and allow groups 25 minutes to prepare a presentation on their assigned Element.

- ➪ Have each group take 2-3 minutes to present their work. Ask other participants for comments, questions or additions.

Reflection
- ➪ Ask participants to which of the 7 Elements overlap.

- ➪ Give participants one minute to think about which of these elements they would prioritize if they could only implement two of them. Have them turn to a partner and share their thoughts.

Seven Elements of High Quality Service Learning

Integrated Learning
- The service learning project has clearly articulated knowledge, skill or value goals that arise from broader classroom or school goals.
- The service informs the academic learning content, and the academic learning content informs the service.
- Life skills learned outside the classroom are integrated back into classroom learning.

High Quality Service
- The service response to an actual community need that is recognized by the community.
- The service is age-appropriate and well-organized.
- The service is designed to achieve significant benefits for students and community.

Collaboration
- The service learning project is a collaboration among as many of these partners as is feasible: students, parents, community-based organization staff, school administrators, teachers, and recipients of service.
- All partners benefit from the project and contribute to its planning.

Student Voice
Students participate actively in:
- choosing and planning the service project;
- planning and implementing the reflection sessions, evaluation, and celebration;
- taking on roles and tasks that are appropriate to their age.

Civic Responsibility
- The service learning project promotes students' responsibility to care for others and to contribute to the community.
- By participating in the service learning project, students understand how they can impact their community.

Reflection
- Reflection establishes connections between students' service experiences and the academic curriculum.
- Reflection occurs before, during, and after the service learning project.

Evaluation
- All the partners, especially students, are involved in evaluating the service learning project.
- The evaluation seeks to measure progress towards the learning and service goals of the project.

Unit 1, Activity 3, continued ⇨

7 Elements of Service-Learning Presentation

Create a presentation on chart paper which includes:

1) A definition of your assigned element (in your own words!)

2) A list of the beneficial impacts on that element of service-learning.

3) 2-3 Strategies for implementing that element into a service-learning project.