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Connecting School-to-Work and Service-Learning

Chief State School Officers Council

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Connecting School-to-Work and Service-Learning

Adapted from the work of the Council of Chief State School Officers

How does service-learning complement the School-to-Work initiatives?

Extend Engage Experience

Both service-learning and School-to-Work are forms of experiential education that extend student learning into the community, and the work sites become centers of learning. Service learning and school-to-work programs engage students in learning experiences that help develop organizational, team, and problem-solving skills as well as the competencies and foundation skills identified as important for employability and responsible citizenship.

Service learning:

- Provides a new mechanism for teaching and assessing the application of the core curriculum, while teaching and reinforcing job readiness skills.
- Prepares students to be contributing members of their families, communities, and country.
- Provides opportunities for students to apply what they are learning to real community needs.
- Expands locations for authentic learning to include "nonprofit" and civic organizations. (Well organized and planned service-learning experiences can help offer the broad spectrum of exposures to the community and world of work for all students required by the School-to-Work Opportunities Act.)
- Builds greater public interest and support by youth and schools by placing students in the community as helpers who meet community needs.

The similarities

School-To -Work & Service-Learning

- *Philosophy*

Both reforms are based on the experiential education philosophy that we tend to remember 10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see, 50% of what we see and hear, 70% of what we say, and 90% of what we both say and do.

- *Paradigm*

Both reforms see students as providers of resources, active learners, producers of knowledge, providers of help, and people who make things happen.

- *Pedagogy*

Both reforms utilize the same pedagogical strategies such as contextual learning, application of knowledge to real

situations, expansion of teaching beyond the classroom, multidisciplinary teaching and cooperative learning. Both reforms require teachers to re-examine the way they teach.

• **Partnerships**

Both reforms require schools to establish formal partnerships with outside entities.

• **Programmatic issues**

Both reforms must grapple with similar programmatic issues such as transportation of students to and from work/service sites, liability concern when students are off campus, and how students' external experiences are coordinated and integrated with what goes on at school.

		School-To-Work	Service-Learning
The differences	<i>Intended purposes (in descending order)</i>	Career development Academic development Personal development Social development Civic responsibility Ethical development	Academic development Civic responsibility Personal development Social development Career development Ethical development
	<i>Primary intended beneficiaries</i>	Student	Equal benefit between student & community
	<i>Pay</i>	Encouraged	Discouraged
	<i>Focus</i>	Skills	Knowledge
	<i>Education fund sources</i>	Perkins Funds JTPA School-To-Work Opportunities Act	National and Community Service Trust Act

School-to-work partnerships are fostered by engaging students in work activities that provide students with opportunities to explore the world of work. And although businesses do receive some benefit from the students' work activities, the intended emphasis and focus of school-to-work programs tends to be on students' academic learning and career development (Furco, 1994).

Ultimately, which hands-on activities constitute work and which constitute service are defined by both the intended purposes of the field activities and the types of partnerships that are formed between the school and the external agencies. In many cases, this distinction is not very clear.

Given the ongoing budgetary concerns for education, combining service-learning and School-to-Work efforts can not only enhance leverage for school program

funding, but it can also help streamline school reform efforts by bringing together students who otherwise might never interact. Unlike many other school programs which tend to target specific student populations, (Gifted and Talented Education, Bilingual Education, Migrant Education), service-learning and School-to-Work efforts encourage the involvement of all students regardless of age, ability, or ambition. As a result, students from all sectors of a school's population can unite to work together toward common social, personal, academic, and vocational goals. The tenets of School-to-Work and service learning — integrating curricula, connecting secondary and post-secondary institutions, partnering schools with the community, and developing students' life skills — will become increasingly more important as K-12 education witnesses a merging of school reforms as it moves towards establishing a more holistic approach to teaching and learning.

Program examples

Bethel School District

In Bethel School District, staff members are working to redesign teaching and learning so students apply the core learnings to work and community settings. Bethel is committed to an integrated, project-based model of learning in which the use of community resources and technology are central. This process hinges on using five career paths—arts and communication, business and marketing, engineering and scientific, health and human services, and industrial and technology — which provide a context and more targeted application for core essential learnings.

District-level coordination for important programs such as secondary vocational education, Tech Prep, service-learning and School-to-Work transition is coordinated by the Executive Director of Applied Learning who in turn works hand in hand with district administrators for curriculum, staff development, and evaluation and assessment. The glue that ties School-to-Work transition with the core essential learnings together is a set of five core lifelong learning tools or supporting outcomes that relate directly to the SCANS report. Bethel graduates will be equipped to do the following:

- Apply career development skills
- Apply technology
- Apply communication skills
- Apply responsibility and ethics
- Apply problem solving skills

Teachers in all subject areas in the district have been engaged in developing integrated curriculum materials which apply the core essential learnings.

Contact: Marilyn Ashe, Executive Director of School to Work, Bethel School District : 206-536-7237 ; Ande Chapman 536-7272; FAX 536-7301

Tonasket High School *

Students in the high school classes are teamed up with students from the elementary school to interview community members for a book which describes the various careers which are available in their community. Both students gain greater awareness

of their career options and high school students develop communication and leadership skills. Contact Rhonda Colbert, (509) 486-2161.

Lake Chelan School District*

Service-learning has been integrated into their Voyages (4-5), Venture (6-8) and Visions (9-12) grades are led by community and staff in a variety of activities for 30 minutes a week. Activities encourage team building and social skills to career self-awareness. Elementary, middle and high school each have their own curriculum. For example, elementary students provided 365 valentines for nursing homes. Americorps members help to provide leadership and assistance in developing the community service-learning sites. Contact Marilyn Jones or Kathy Teeley, (509) 682-8291; fax 682-5842.

Crater High School*

Service learning has been incorporated into their Human Service Career Strand.

Vancouver School District

Service learning opportunities are included in the district's work site directory, and career specialists encourage students to participate in a rich variety of service learning programs to enrich their career awareness and to help build their portfolio. Contact Jill C. Smith, (360) 696-7217; fax 737-4233.

Central Valley High School

Students from Central Valley have implemented a variety of service activities within their School to Work efforts. For examples, they have designed and built a central receiving station for Goodwill Industries. Contact Dan Ruddell (509) 533-4709.

Selkirk High School

The science classes in this rural high school now provide year-round water testing for local residents, the Utilities company, and the City. Contact John Lerner, (509) 446-3505.

REAL (Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning)

This project enables high school students in rural communities to develop enterprises which they can "take with them" as they graduate. A graduate has started a business in high school that currently employs and contributes to the economic well being of the rural community. Contact Judy Patterson, (509) 466-8468; fax (509) 533-3226.

Riverside School-Based Enterprises

The following small business incubators are presently being successfully operated at Riverside High School:

- Printshop
- Thrift and Gift Shop
- Computer echnology
- Youth Employment Agency
- Riverside Screen Printing

Contact Galen Hansen, Riverside High School, E. 4120 Deer ark-Milan Rd. Chattaroy, WA 99003. (509) 292-0214

Puyallup High School

A service leadership class, under the direction of the career specialist, facilitates and promotes career exploration and citizenship development through community service. The students run a service bureau that serves as a clearinghouse to link students and classes with local service opportunities. Contact: Michael Sein-Ryan (206) 841-8711 ext. 6009; fax (206) 841-8624.

Resource people and places

Peer Consultants

Dan Ruddell, Central Valley High School, (509) 533-4709. Works for the Panarama Regional School-to-Work Consortium helping schools in the area incorporate service-learning into their School-to-Work efforts.

Beau Bassett, (360) 734-7970 (Bellingham). Provides assistance to businesses and schools interested in partnering for service. (202) 336-7026.

Resources

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; School-to-Work Office; Bill Crossman, (360) 753-2060; (360) 753-1066. This office provides technical assistance through resource materials, trainings and phone consultation. In addition you can receive information through the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning, (360) 664-3312; Web site: <http://ospi.cisl.wednet> or through the National Homepage for School-to-Work: <http://www.stw.ed.gov> or (800) 251-7236.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) School to Work; (800) 547-6339, ext. 598. NWREL provides technical assistance through conferences, newsletters, evaluations, publications and phone consultation. See resources: www.nwrel.org/comm/program/html.

The Council of Chief State School Officers is completing a national study of programs which integrate service learning and School-to-Work. Contact Barbara Gomez (202) 336-7026.

Exemplary National Models

Community Service 2000

Community Service 2000 is a service learning program that combines the principles of service learning with school-to-work. It is an effective program to attract that "college bound" student into School-to-Work experiences. It's free to implement, and any community can do it.

The program started with the recognition that nearly all communities of any size have a bundle of community service organizations – including churches – that need volunteer help. The trick was to identify those organizations, visit them, explain School-to-Work to them, and create meaningful internships, one semester in length, with them.

A team of six high school students was formed to conduct an independent study project. Their task was to identify the organizations, visit each of them, create internships, and develop a program that would enable high school students to work as interns in these organizations for one semester FOR CREDIT in the high school.

Six weeks later, the project was complete. The students had visited over 30 local community service organizations, explained the concept to them, and developed some 50 internships. They prepared a written report of their findings and conclusions, articulated the internships, and (with some help) linked each project/task students were to do in the interships to the SCANS foundation skills and competencies. They presented their report to school district administration, received an enthusiastic response, and the program was off and running.

Three years later, the program is thriving and expanding. It attracts the "college bound" students in such internships as pathology lab assistant, elementary school teacher aide, activity coordinator at a retirement homeresearch assistant to the city council and city manager, high school publications assistant, and many others.

It's a program that serves as a model for any model for any enthusiastic school to copy – and all it takes is some energy, creativity and willingness to give students an opportunity to serve their community by linking such service to School-to-Work.

Why not turn your students loose and let them develop such a program? Or maybe you don't think they are capable of doing it. . .

Contact Charlie Jett, ccjett@delphi.com

Abraham Lincoln High School Environmental Academy

Located in a large urban district with a racially diverse student population, the **Environmental Academy at Abraham Lincoln High School** is dedicated to both beautifying the community and educating students uninspired by traditional methods.

Through the Environmental Academy, a school within a school, students have provided the city and state with hundreds of water, soil, air and radon samples; conducted a horticulture therapy program for the elderly patients and residents of hospitals and nursing homes; designed and installed a historically accurate federal garden at a city museum; visited and studied the rain forest in Cost Rica; and visited and worked with students in Russia to establish the first American/Russian Environmental Education Center. The Center in the United Soviet Republics now has a satellite center in Philadelphia.

The students, grades 9-12, are vocational and college bound. Upon graduation, the students receive a competency certificate issued collectively by environmental

agencies. In recognition of the student's work, the business community has contributed over \$2 million in laboratory equipment. In addition to grants, PennServe grants, and private donations, The Academy receives funding from Philadelphia Academy, Inc.

Project OASES

Project OASES in Pittsburgh Middle Schools is designed to motivate at-risk eighth grade students who show a lack of self-esteem, poor attitude and disinterest in school and school work. The selected students spend three out of seven class periods in eight weeks of occupational training at the OASES instructional shop. Following an orientation period, students volunteer in the community.

Students employ their skills in construction and restoration, such as building a playhouse for mentally retarded children at a community center, painting for the Salvation Army, constructing an entrance ramp for a double amputee, and repairing dwellings for nonprofit organizations, the city and public schools. Many participating students have made it on the honor roll and have fewer behavioral and discipline problems.

Action Learning Internship Program

Through the **Action Learning Internship Program**, students serve as interns for 20 weeks in exchange for academic credit from the participating school. Students can explore future careers in the education, environment, arts, government, legal and criminal justice systems, health care and community service organizations while they apply academic and problem-solving skills. All students in grades 9-12 are eligible to participate.

These unpaid internships entrust students with a wide variety of responsibilities in order to give them an overall perspective of a career. Weekly seminars enable students to reflect on events, assess progress, analyze problems, share ideas and plan and implement group activities and field experience which they share with the seminar group. The projects are direct applications of the knowledge and skills students have learned on the job.

Student evaluations by sponsoring employers contribute 20% to their overall grade. Through their internships, students develop valuable work-related skills and employer contacts as well as a sense of responsibility, independence and motivation.

Cosmopolitan community school

The University of Pennsylvania and the West Philadelphia community are transforming a conventional inner-city school into a "**cosmopolitan community school.**" The entire academic curriculum at the Turner Middle School will be linked to overcoming the problems of its environment or catchment area, resulting in the development of a holistic, action-oriented curriculum; a school-based primary health care facility; and a school-based job training center for catchment area residents.

For students, job training is viewed as a "strategic, psychological and pedagogical means" to help them overcome alienation, develop higher order thinking and problem-solving skills, and build social and interpersonal skills.

A teacher works as a community-school coordinator to liaison with university faculty, community representatives, and school staff and facilitate "sustained, long-term, face-to-face communal participatory action research" to bring about this transformation. This project began as a summer institute for at-risk students and will progress through various developmental phases—a school-within-a-school, a school-

wide, district and community-wide model. Students learn math, English, science and social studies through the exploration of health issues, including nutrition, AIDS, hypertension, substance abuse, cancer prevention, injuries, cholesterol and ophthalmology.

For example, under the leadership of a Penn Anthropology professor, the Community Health Watch program involves students in conducting a neighborhood health survey to explore local health habits. Results will be compiled for a community health data base and community brochure and newsletter. In addition, students are trained and supervised by Penn Medical School students and staff to host health screenings for community residents on hypertension, ophthalmology and cardiovascular risk.

Another initiative, the Neighborhood Disease Prevention Program, involves students in providing full and detailed prevention assessments for 150 adults per year. In addition, students become familiar with healthcare professions through volunteer work, visits, and discussions with hospital, health care and day care center staff and the West Philadelphia community.

To support this focus on community wellness, the Turner School also hosts free adult and community education classes for catchment area residents, taught by teachers, residents, specialists and university students. A new Head Start and job training center will also focus on health and involve both children and families.

Northwest Side Community Develop- ment

The Northwest Side Community Development Corporation teamed up with several schools in the Milwaukee School District to both improve security and attract business into the community and prepare students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to contribute to the work force.

Custer High School, a construction magnet school in an inner city, predominantly black area, involves regular and special education students in a technical education program to rebuild boarded-up houses in the community. Through the assistance of the corporation, the school obtained a \$30,000 interest free line of credit to cover supplies, materials and other expenses until restored homes could be sold. The loan is repaid with the profits from the sale of the homes to low-income families.

Students learn construction skills in the classroom as sophomores and juniors through work on small segments of the homes. During their senior year, they spend two hours every day at the site under the direction of teachers. During the summer, the corporation pays wages for continuing student work, which often leads to full-time opportunities upon graduation.

Although the corporation's members act as consultants on different aspects of the work, students handle every phase of renovation from cost estimates, analysis and preparation of design, roofing, landscaping, painting, electrical installation, plumbing and the laying of floors and drywalls. This work must pass the city's inspection before it is sold to a disadvantaged family for "the lowest price consistent with good business practice."

A diploma and Career Certificate are awarded to students upon graduation, guaranteeing student's abilities. If employers are not satisfied with a particular employee, the former student returns to Custer to be retrained. According to teachers, the project has boosted pride and motivation as students learn why geometry and

English are important to real-world work and contribute to the welfare of their community. Corporation members also host shadowing opportunities, tutor in academic subjects and sponsor mock interviews to sharpen students presentation skills.

The technical education program is supported by the Northwest Side Community Development Corporation, a nonprofit economic development agency funded through federal block grants and foundations. Additional funding is from Bank One and the Wisconsin Housing Authority.

Graphic Communi- cations Center

The Graphic Communications Center at Lakeland High School involves graphic arts, special education, journalism and at-risk students in producing high-quality offset printing to over 300 local nonprofit agencies including schools, city government, Indian tribes and community-based organizations.

In addition, the center is involved in an articulation project in the area of telecommunications. This previously specialized training program has evolved into an exploratory curriculum that covers all academic areas and emphasizes both theory and application.

All students grades 9-12 are eligible to enroll in this elective program. Area high schools provide up-to-date instruction in business education in cooperation with Nicolet Area Technical College. These institutions are tied via modem. Students utilize electronic mail, databases, modern dictation and other technological advances. Not only does this program provide needed services to nonprofit organizations, but it also provides relevant and advanced training for students.

Mon Valley Secondary School

A special building construction curriculum at **Mon Valley Secondary School** in Clairton, Pennsylvania prepares special education students with the marketable skills to successfully transition from school to work. Created through the modification of existing programs, this industry production and maintenance program is specially designed for students with special needs, ages 14-21, who enter with the will to excel.

Students develop the capabilities, perception and attitudes essential to acquiring decision-making and problem-solving skills by performing a sequenced series of tasks at work stations. Progress is assessed through a pre and post test analysis and incorporated within each student's Individualized Education Plan.

Students apply their various skills in carpentry, iron work, cement work and finishing by working for ten school districts and the community by doing such jobs as building sidewalks, widening handicapped-access areas, and constructing sheds for senior citizens.

When the school board solicited bids to build a railing and retaining wall behind the school, the class not only submitted a proposal and won the contract, but completed the work for less than the original cost estimate. For students, the work has become a source of pride and satisfaction, and community and business members have developed more favorable perceptions about the employability of the handicapped.

High School for Health Profession

In order to meet the city's great health care needs and improve student's attitudes toward high school, the **Baylor College of Medicine and the Houston Independent School District designed the first High School for Health Profession.**

Through an emphasis on patient care, laboratory technology and advanced science courses, the four-year college preparatory program provides an integrated academic and vocational curriculum that prepares students for almost all of the 200 allied health professions. The program combines the required curriculum of math, English, science and social studies with a flexible schedule of relating topics to allow students time to provide health services to the community.

The program employs a career ladder approach whereby students learn and assume advanced work and responsibilities and provide needed service to their community. Freshmen begin with a specialized course in training and study skills. As sophomores, students investigate careers and prepare to work as nursing assistants.

In the junior year, students choose classes each quarter in one of the five areas: patient care, medical laboratory, public health and environment, medical office education and dental assistance. The first half of the quarter they work on academic and skill development, and in the second half they work at a health care facility. In the patient care practicum for example, students become members of a hospital unit, assume their own patient load and master 16 different skills, including checking vital signs, giving catheter care, relating information on patient conditions to nursing staff and assisting in pre-operative preparation.

As seniors, students choose advanced science classes or a career-related cooperative education program. In addition, students also contribute their health care skills in short term efforts, such as free public screenings for hypertension, immunization programs, fundraising campaigns, crisis hotlines and international development. They also act as health care resources in their own neighborhood.

Almost 90% of the students go on to college. The school has been called the best racially and economically integrated school in Houston, where the student population is 45% black, 23% Hispanic and 32% white, and girls outnumber the boys 2 to 1. In addition, staff proudly report no drug problems, teenage pregnancy or racial incidents at the school. The high school has also served as a model for similar programs initiated in Florida, Washington, D.C., and several Texas locations.

Contextual Learning

Service-learning, prefaced on the idea that students “learn by doing” and attached firmly to the real world of work, is in a prime position to demonstrate the most recent learning theory put forth by education specialists—contextual learning.

Service-learning a model

The following aspects of contextual learning can serve as guidelines in the process of preparing students for effective service-learning programs.

1. Learning occurs as the mind connects any immediate, present experience with related, past experiences.

New information is normally not retained or used unless a connection is made with previous learning.

2 Intelligence, as the cognitive capacity for learning, is much broader than traditional theories of IQ measurements.

Researchers have expanded assessments of intelligence beyond verbal/analytical measurements and now talk about “multiple intelligences,” which include practical, contextual, spatial, and physical aspects. This suggests that learning environments must meet the needs of diverse intelligences. The rational, abstract lecture method of teaching is not suited to all.

3. Individual learners possess an innate inclination toward a variety of methods of perceiving and processing information foundational to learning.

“Learning styles” research has produced an abundance of materials for reaching individual learners. Contextual learning builds on this work by stretching the teaching/learning experience from the lecture hall for the abstract/passive learner to the servicesite for the concrete/active learner.

4. Maximum retention of learned knowledge/skills occurs when the content and skill acquired are considered by the learner as sensible, usable, and valuable.

Information unrelated to the learner’s real world will not be consistently retained.

Service-learning, with its emphasis on applied academics, has the opportunity to serve as the best model of “contextual learning.” Appealing to the neglected concrete learner and directly connected to the workplace, it provides instruction that is meaningful, realistic, and usable.

Adapted from an article by Dr. Steve Sadler, Center for Occupational Research and Development, P.O. Box 21689, Waco, Texas 76702-1689, (800) 972-2766.