



FAIRFAX COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

---

September 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The beginning of another school year presents an opportunity to consider the quality of education for our youth and to review timely opportunities for improving our schools and ensuring our children's success.

Meaningful service connected to classroom instruction, known as service-learning, teaches the value of civic responsibility and improves academic performance among young people. Additional benefits of service-learning include the development of leadership skills, problem solving and thinking skills, developing a caring attitude and concern for others, career exploration, hands-on experience, an improved sense of self worth, and civic engagement. Adults who have been involved in service-learning activities in school vote more frequently, are actively involved in their communities, continue to participate in service, and attain a higher level of education. Service-learning teaches the value of education, the gift of giving, and how school learning can be applied outside the classroom.

Service-learning projects will be completed throughout Fairfax County as part of the School Board's Student Achievement Goal 3-*Responsibility to the Community*. This opportunity will provide students a more sophisticated lens through which to view civic education. Each student will begin by identifying a need in the community and then pursuing real world interaction to address that particular need. This project will be worked on throughout the course of the school year and be used to enhance the FCPS programs of study.

Students will not be receiving credit for the hours spent with an organization. Rather, they are receiving credit for the learning connected to the community experience. Typical community service does not involve an intentional academic component. Service-learning is not merely community service where the focus is on the service provided. Students will be asked to reflect upon their experience and broaden their understanding of topics covered in class through service-learning activities -- where community interaction becomes the textbook. Students will ultimately demonstrate an understanding of the connections between community service and course concepts.

We ask that you review this activity with your child – from the initial selection of the service project through the reflection component. We look forward to making this a positive and powerful learning experience. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

## **GUIDELINES for Service Learning**

For your service learning project, you must perform at least **FIVE** hours of service in your school, neighborhood, or community **PER QUARTER** for a total of **TWENTY HOURS**. The service you perform should be something that is not normally expected of you – that is, not one of your usual responsibilities. You cannot be paid in any way for your service. The service project is about volunteering! For each of the five hours of service, you can do anything that will benefit your school, neighborhood or community.

For service provided to neighbors, there must be a sense of community support for the hours to count. For example, it is not considered community service if you baby-sit so that the parents can go to the movies. If you offer to baby-sit so that the parents can attend church or a meeting, AND could not otherwise afford a sitter, that would be considered an appropriate service. Raking leaves or shoveling the driveway of an elderly or sick neighbor would be appropriate, but offering to do the same for a healthy neighbor would not.

When you are planning your service, it is important to remember that you will do a better job, earn a better grade, and probably have more fun in the process if you choose a project about which you feel strongly. If you are having a problem coming up with something to do, talk to your parents. They will very likely have great ideas.

## **WRITING REQUIREMENT for first quarter:**

The writing requirement is a chance for you to reflect on the service you provided. You **MUST** use a word processor to type your paper. By using the word processor, you can check your spelling and grammar. It needs to be a three paragraph essay with each paragraph including five to seven sentences each. Below are the topics for each paragraph.

(Paragraph 1) Give a **DETAILED** description of the service you provided.

(Paragraph 2) How did the service connect with what you are learning in school?

(Paragraph 3) Explain how your experience personally affected you, affected your school, neighborhood, or community.

The first completed service project is due on or before October 22/23, 2009, but feel free to turn it in early.

## **Helpful Hints!!!!!!**

- Do not miss the due date for turning in the completed project. In the first quarter, you **WILL** drop a letter grade for this each day it is late.
- Projects **WILL NOT** be taken late starting the second quarter through the end of the year.
- If you organize to complete your service doing the same thing but on different dates, be sure to go home after each visit and jot down notes of the visit to HELP you write a better reflective paper entry when you are finished with the service hours.
- When you put your final draft of your essay together, USE A WORD PROCESSOR. This will help you get the spelling and grammar correct. If you do not have a computer at home, you can arrange to stay after with your teacher. There are computers in the library. Spelling, grammar, and writing can influence your grade. See me for printer issues.
- Be sure to fully cover the three topic areas listed in the essay.
- Describe what you **did** on the verification form and make sure the person who supervised you signs it before you turn it in!
- You must complete a TOTAL of five hours per quarter for a total of twenty hours for the year. You may stay after with me anytime you need help working on your project. Remember to check with me for the days I am available.
- Five hours must be completed each quarter.

## **Calendar of Dates:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter – Service Learning

Final Projects due (Verification Form and Essay):

Thursday, October 22<sup>rd</sup> or Friday, October 23<sup>th</sup>

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter – Service Learning

Final Projects due (Verification Form and Interview):

Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup> or Friday, January 15<sup>h</sup>

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter – Service Learning

Final Projects due (Verification Form and five paragraph essay):

Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup> or Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup>

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter – Service Learning

Final Projects due (Verification Form and Oral Presentation)

Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup> or Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup>

# SERVICE PROJECT IDEAS

## Service in the School

- Contract with a teacher or other member of the faculty or staff to help after school one day per week
- Take part in a tutoring program supervised by a teacher
- Plan and carry out a fundraising activity that will benefit the school
- Provide a buddy system for new students
- Create a directory for students – listing libraries, sports programs, and community service opportunities near the school
- Beautify the school though art or landscaping
- Other ideas: \_\_\_\_\_

## Service in Your Neighborhood or Community

### Contract with a **hospital**:

- Draw pictures to brighten rooms
- Record original stories for patients
- Read to young patients

### Contract with a **library**:

- Repair worn books
- Make and distribute bookmarks
- Host story hours for younger children

### Contract with a **homeless shelter**:

- Hold a blanket drive
- Make and decorate knapsacks or baby quilts
- Bake cookies, or make and donate other food
- Help with food distribution
- Hold a can food drive for a shelter

### Contract with a **day care** or **senior center**:

- Be a companion to a child or an elderly person
- Collaborate on story or joke books for hospitalized children

### Improve your **neighborhood**:

- Start a graffiti watch and clean up
- Plant and care for trees, flowers, etc.
- Pick up trash along a roadside
- Help an elderly neighbor with his/her yard work, shovel snow, or rake leaves.
- Handing out brochures for local governments/political candidates

For other volunteer opportunities, refer to the Directory of Youth Service Learning Opportunities by the Volunteer Center of Fairfax County, Inc., 10530 Page Avenue, Fairfax, Virginia 22030. The telephone number is 703-246-3460; their web site is <http://www.volunteerfairfax.org>. The organizations listed in the Directory ask that students plan to volunteer at least fifteen hours during the school year.



# SERVICE LEARNING

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time Spent \_\_\_\_ hours \_\_\_\_ minutes

# TWAIN

Type of Service (circle one) COMMUNITY SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD

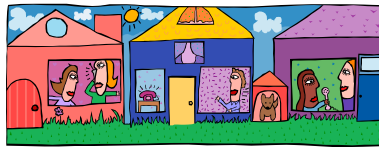
What did you do?

---

---

---

Verification Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# SERVICE LEARNING

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time Spent \_\_\_\_ hours \_\_\_\_ minutes

# TWAIN

Type of Service (circle one) COMMUNITY SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD

What did you do?

---

---

---

Verification Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## **GRADE SHEET - SERVICE 1ST QUARTER**

### **A**

- \_\_\_\_\_ - Completed all five hours
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Makes connection between service and learning
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Turned in on time
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Detailed paper of superior quality
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Shared with class

### **B+**

- \_\_\_\_\_ - Completed all five hours
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Makes connection between service and learning
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Detailed paper
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Turned in on time
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Shared with class

### **B**

- \_\_\_\_\_ - Completed all five hours
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Makes connection between service and learning
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Paper
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Turned in on time
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Shared with class

### **C+**

- \_\_\_\_\_ - Completed all five hours
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Makes connection between service and learning
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Paper
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Turned in on time
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Shared with class

### **C**

- \_\_\_\_\_ - Completed all five hours
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Makes connection between service and learning
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Minimal paper
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Turned in on time
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Shared with class

### **D+**

- \_\_\_\_\_ - Completed all five hours
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Summary of your experience
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Turned in on time
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Shared with class

### **D**

- \_\_\_\_\_ - Completed all five hours
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Shared with class

### **F**

Has not demonstrated the basic knowledge of the skills

FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SERVICE-LEARNING ACKNOWLEDGMENT SHEET

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT AGREEMENT:** I give permission for my child to participate in the FCPS service-learning program and understand that this program may require activities to be completed outside the normal school day. I understand that my son/daughter will be responsible for his/her transportation, if required. If unable to complete service-learning requirements, my child will complete a comparable alternative assignment as outlined by his/her teacher.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**STUDENT AGREEMENT:** I agree to participate in the FCPS service-learning program and to fulfill the service and learning objectives for my school. I agree to complete forms, evaluations, and other paperwork required by my teacher. If I am unable to complete service-learning requirements, I will complete a comparable alternative assignment as outlined by my teacher.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**TEACHER AGREEMENT:** As the class teacher, I agree to provide instruction and guidance that will support this student's ability to fulfill the FCPS service-learning requirement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**This form must be completed and returned to your teacher by the assigned date.**