



## PROJECT-BASED SERVICE LEARNING

Helping students gain skills through a yearlong, facilitated program, identifying community challenges, investigating solutions and implementing action.

### Helps You Meet Common Core State Standards

Our program is a built-in PBL solution for emphasizing the Common Core goals of *creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, presentation* and *demonstration, problem solving, research* and *inquiry*, and *career readiness*. Students learn how to identify a problem or need in the community and, through collaboration, research, critical thinking and creativity, explore possible solutions. They present their ideas and collectively create a plan of implementation. Throughout the process, students have access to community partners providing mentorship, training and skills for success.

### We Do The Heavy Lifting!

Imagine providing a project-based learning environment to your students that meets Common Core State Standards without doing any extra work! Your educators and staff can be involved as little or as much as you would like. Our staff and volunteers meet with your students throughout the year to facilitate the program. We come ready with curriculum. We work with you to create a schedule that suits your school's needs. We network with community partners to provide mentorship and assistance from business people. You can focus on the countless other demands of education. Let us take this one!

### Why The 'S' In 'PBSL'?

*Project-based learning* is a fantastic solution to meeting many of the goals of Common Core. *Service* is a fantastic tool for transforming a community and developing leaders. We have developed a hybrid of *community service* and *project-based learning* that not only helps you meet academic standards, but also does good for the community and transforms students into *citizens* who *lead* with *character*.

Students need to learn how to problem solve. Why not put that time and effort to work in the real world, meeting a real-life need? This way, they not only gain critical thinking and career readiness skills, they also learn what it means to be part of a community. They not only learn how to think outside the box, but also outside of themselves. Collaboration is all about recognizing our need for others - and collaborating to *serve* your community only extends this lesson.

## Overall Objectives

Students learn to identify problems and solutions through applying creative and critical thinking skills and implement solutions through collaborative efforts. Students come away with a better understanding of the impact they can have on the world around them.

## Outline of Project

### 1) Entry Event (*early Fall*):

- **Description** - The program is kicked off with a school wide assembly focused on character and leadership development. This is a 45-minute multimedia experience utilizing videos, music, motivational speakers and crowd interaction.
- **Objective** - The assembly introduces the impact choices have on the community and inspires with the opportunity to make a difference. It builds excitement in the entire student population and encourages some to rise as leaders and take the next step. Cards are given for students to fill out if they are interested in joining the student leadership summit to carry on the project throughout the year.

### 2) Student Leadership Summit (*yearlong*):

- **Description** - About 10-15 students are selected from those whom filled out cards to participate in the yearlong project-based service learning program. Our staff and volunteers meet with student leaders 10 times throughout the school year in a flipped classroom format, with the student leadership team holding additional meetings on their own at least monthly (*meeting schedule coordinated with school staff*). Students are given access to videos and other tools to help conduct monthly meetings and continue work outside of meetings with our staff and volunteers.
- **Overall Objective** - Student leaders complete two service projects throughout the school year; one serving students and staff on-campus and one serving the community off-campus. Both projects are student-led from identifying the problems and potential solutions to seeing them through to completion.

#### • **SEMESTER ONE**

##### a) 1st Facilitated Meeting | **Group Forming**:

- **Description** - Students introduce themselves to one another and our staff. Students share what interested them in this project and what they hope to get out of it and take part in a discussion-based introduction to group formation.
- **Objective** - Students learn the stages of group development; *forming, storming, norming* and *performing*. Additionally, students are trained how to utilize videos and resources in between meetings with our staff and create a plan for how they will meet monthly on their own.

##### b) 2nd Facilitated Meeting | **Story Forming**:

- **Description** - Students are introduced to the elements of story and the 6 acts most stories follow: *beginning, conflict, expectation, hope, mission, and resolution*. These concepts are applied to their individual lives and to the story of their community. They are then used to identify the conflict and beauty on campus and in their community.

- **Objective** - Students learn how to identify problems and potential solutions, both within their personal lives and within their surrounding community.
- c) **3rd Facilitated Meeting | Campus Development (Identifying the Problem):**
- **Description** - Students use the framework they learned for identifying needs and apply it to their school campus.
  - **Objective** - Students identify needs, present their ideas to one another and work together to choose one problem/need they will address as a team.
- d) **4th Facilitated Meeting | Campus Development (Identifying Solutions):**
- **Description** - Students use the framework they learned for identifying solutions and apply it to their school campus.
  - **Objective** - Students identify multiple potential solutions, present their ideas to one another and research the potential effectiveness of each solution presented. Students identify one solution to move forward with collaboratively.
- e) **5th Facilitated Meeting | Campus Development (Implementing the Solution):**
- **Description** - Student leaders recruit other students, staff and parents to help carry out their proposed solution to the on-campus need and execute their plan.
  - **Objective** - Students learn about influence and recruitment vital to leadership. Students see collaboration in action and get the opportunity to see how their efforts make a difference.
- **SEMESTER TWO**
- a) **6th Facilitated Meeting | Assessing, Reporting & Celebrating:**
- **Description** - The on-campus service is evaluated for its' effectiveness. Successes are celebrated.
  - **Objective** - Students learn how to evaluate a project and look at how well their solution met the identified need on campus. Students learn how to use an assessment rubric and use it to evaluate themselves and one another. Students write a report describing how the project could be improved for next time.
- b) **7th Facilitated Meeting | Leadership & Influence Styles:**
- **Description** - Students participate in a group discussion on the different styles of leadership and influence.
  - **Objective** - Students learn about different leadership styles and which are appropriate in different situations. They learn about influence and flexibility. They also learn about the transformational leadership process, which shows how to train up other leaders.
- c) **8th Facilitated Meeting | Community Development (Identifying the Problem):**
- **Description** - The framework for identifying problems is applied to the community around the school and community partners (*business people, local church volunteers, PTA members, etc.*) are introduced to provide support.
  - **Objective** - Students research their community and work together to agree on one identified need. Students identify stakeholders in the community and employ collaborative skills to gain support from community partners.
- d) **9th Facilitated Meeting | Community Development (Identifying Solutions):**

- **Description** - The framework for identifying solutions is applied to the community around the school and community partners are included in the conversation.
  - **Objective** - Students apply framework to present potential solutions to one another and to community partners. Students use evaluation of last service project to brainstorm how this project will improve and agree on a final solution to be implemented.
- e) **10th Facilitated Meeting | Community Development (Implementing the Solution):**
- **Description** - Students carry out their proposed solution to the off-campus need and execute their plan. A plan is created for the continuation of a student leadership team for the following year.
  - **Objective** - Students see collaboration in action and get the opportunity to see how their efforts make a difference. Students evaluate and assess their work on the final off-campus project. They assess the overall effectiveness of their leadership team throughout the year and create a plan for a student leadership team to continue the following year.
- 3) **Exit Event (end of year):**
- **Description** - The program is celebrated with a school wide assembly focused on character and leadership development. This is a 45-minute multimedia experience utilizing videos, music, motivational speakers and crowd interaction, that also highlights the successes of the student leader service projects.
  - **Objective** - The assembly emphasizes the impact choices have on the community & inspires with the opportunity to make a difference. It builds excitement in the entire student population & encourages some to rise as leaders. It celebrates & recognizes the work of the student leaders throughout the year.

### Assessment & Evaluation

Students are evaluated throughout the project by our staff and volunteers, as well as their peers and themselves. They are given a final assessment upon completion. Our staff and volunteers monitor the progress and participation of students through observation, using the following rubric:

Area	Percentage
Attendance of Meetings	30
Participation in Service	40
Self & Peer Evaluations	10
Written Reports/Assignments	20

## Essential Elements of PBL

### Significant Content:

**College & Career Readiness** - This project addresses community needs through creative, critical problem solving. The details of this vary slightly from school to school as different community needs are assessed by the students, but every project will include teaching students a framework for problem solving. Ultimately, being a good problem solver is essential for college and career readiness.

**Writing & Language** - Students must research multiple sources on the issue they have identified for their community. They must communicate their issue and possible solutions clearly to community partners through writing and speaking. They are also expected to use technology and social media to communicate their project.

**Mathematics** - Their research must include statistics on the issue they are addressing and calculating the probability of success of their possible solutions.

### 21st Century Competencies:

The entire project is built around identifying and solving a community need. Students collaborate with each other and community partners to problem solve. They are given skills and a workflow for critical thinking, must collaborate on creative and innovative solutions, and communicate with one another throughout the process. These skills will be taught, evaluated and assessed by our staff. Community partners are typically local business people who provide mentorship and training in career readiness skills, as well.

### In-Depth Inquiry:

Students are introduced to a framework for identifying problems and solutions and are led in applying those skills to their community. Throughout the course of one school year, they ask a series of questions to identify a community need, research the issue, meet with community partners for assistance and explore multiple possible solutions.

### Driving Question:

The driving question for this project is essentially, "What problem does our community face and how can we as students address this need?" Youth today have a growing desire to be involved in change. They also want to be handed responsibility to take action. In our experience with schools throughout the nation, this question has proven to captivate students.

### Need to Know:

This project is initiated with a kick-off event (*entry event*) that piques the interest of students. A multimedia, school wide, energetic and interactive assembly introduces the driving question and inspires students that they can find the answer. From there, the team of student leaders selected to continue the project are encouraged to gain knowledge and apply skills to address the question.

**Voice & Choice:**

Our staff and volunteers provide the framework, structure, training and coaching, but ultimately the students are responsible for identifying a community need and implementing a plan of action to address it. The solution is a student-led one.

**Critique & Revision:**

Before implementing service to the community, students present their possible solutions to one another and to the facilitators. Students are given an environment to collaborate on these ideas and provide constructive criticism. Ultimately, the team agrees on one solution they think is both most feasible to accomplish and provides the best results.

**Public Audience:**

Students present their possible solutions for community transformation to each other and the class facilitator, but it does not stop there. They present their ideas to community partners who have agreed to help with the project and, ultimately, the group presents their solution to the community in the very act of implementing service.