



Westborough Service Learning Initiative

Educator Guide

Our “Why”

We believe that service to others can be an incredible tool for learning and for character development. Service teaches thoughtfulness, a variety of communication styles, and complex problem-solving skills. Our program is centered on the belief that service empowers young people to become engaged in their communities, grow confidence in themselves, and leverage their creativity.

Service-learning can be incorporated in virtually any curriculum, and we have created resources specifically for Westborough to increase access to Service-Learning concepts and projects. The incredible guidance and support you provide to your students can be tremendously valuable in the process of leading a service project & we would love to support your classes' goals in any way! Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or feedback! (westboroughservicelearning@gmail.com)

How to use our resources:

We've created the Westborough Service-Learning Website to house some of our resources for students to access independently:

- The Service Cycle is the foundation of our curriculum, and a self-guided version is available for students and groups to use independently of our workshops. If your class is interested in leading a service project or making an impact towards a problem in our community, this page can help guide the process of designing and leading a project, as always please feel free to adapt the cycle to best fit your project and classroom!
- The guides are intended to help students communicate to others about their project and might be helpful for the advertising portions of a service project
- Our Service Organizations Database can help guide the process of researching an organization or a cause to serve. The database is made up of organizations we're in contact with & have worked with in some capacity
- We've provided a list of 15 different service ideas for the classroom (on this guide) that could be a starting point for a service-learning program - please reach out with any questions or ideas!



A Collection of 15 Service Ideas for the Classroom:

These ideas vary from the length of a class period to the course of a few weeks, we'd love to support service in our schools in ways that best fit our students. You know your class best, whether it's a quick mention of service in your curriculum or a long term project, we'd love you support your efforts with different types of projects to fit your classroom:

Half Hour to hour long project:

- (1) Spend a class period cleaning up trash from a path or field area nearby the school (with gloves if necessary!)
- (2) Create posters with inspirational sayings to hang around the cafeteria or school
- (3) Write Thank You notes to janitors and other staff in the building

Couple of days:

- (4) Engage with helping a younger class to practice reading or math skills
- (5) Plant flowers or weed an area in front of the school or by the playground
- (6) Host a creative writing session about personal values or character
- (7) Interview someone who leads a service organization and create a presentation or article about that person & their organization
- (8) Have students put together coffee, tea, or hot chocolate mix for local workers who make a difference in your community, such as nurses, firefighters, or police officers.
- (9) Make cards to give to a home for the elderly. This could fit well into an art project or poetry writing assignment.
- (10) Volunteer at an animal shelter- play with the dogs and cats, help to brush them, and clean up after them. Or create/donate toys or supplies to a local shelter

Week or longer:

- (11) Connect with a school or class in another part of the world and help provide classroom necessities to them (ie. pens/pencils, notebooks, books)
- (12) Design an acts of kindness campaign in the school
- (13) Research historical figures who led others and highlight positive & negative aspects of their leadership style
- (14) Study the art and culture of an impoverished nation or one that is in crisis. Invite students to make their own artwork inspired by that country, then auction off the pieces and donate the proceeds to a charity in the struggling nation.
- (15) Sponsor an animal at the zoo by holding a class yard sale or raffle. This one fits great into learning about animals or a field trip to the zoo



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Don't know where to start?

If you're interested in starting a project with your classes or students, consider building the project around the skills you are trying to teach them. Skill-based service projects allow students to not only to engage in service but also build the skills you would typically teach in a traditional classroom setting. It's also not uncommon for students to share their own ideas on where they see the project heading, this can be a great opportunity for collaborative problem solving with your students.

Supporting a student's project:

You might have students who fall in love with service and may even want to design their own project, while their infinite creativity can lead to amazing new ideas, it's very likely they'll need some support along the way. The resources here can give them guidance and a place to start, however, we also know that teachers and supportive adults serve as the mentors who really make projects come to life. If your students have an idea for a project, they might want to do it independently of the class and will very often need some guidance through challenging steps.

We'd love hear from you!

We'd love to support you and your students in the most meaningful ways possible! Please reach out to us if you have any questions or feedback - we'd love to grow our program in a way that is truly valuable to our incredible school district and Westborough Community!!