



The Maryland School for the Blind

3501 TAYLOR AVENUE BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21236 410-444-5000

W. Robert Hair
Superintendent, Student Services
The Maryland School for the Blind
3501 Taylor Ave
Baltimore, MD 21236

Re: Service-Learning Implementation Plan

The Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) is committed to ensuring that our students are vital and active members of the school, local and state community. In accordance with state graduation requirements and in an effort to prepare our students academically as well as civically and socially, all students receiving a diploma at graduation must complete at least 75 hours of service-learning from a mix of curriculum-infused projects and independent projects.

Service-learning is not a unit, but a part of our learning environment. MSB has created curriculum-based projects that support in-class learning and involves students in understanding and solving problems that can impact all in the community and encourages students to complete independent projects in their local community. Issues explored by student include homelessness, damage to the environment and understanding how our government works and how we fit into it. Students are actively engaged in projects that take them away from their desks and into the community.

Sincerely,

W. Robert Hair
Superintendent, Student Services
The Maryland School for the Blind



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The Maryland School for the Blind Service-Learning Implementation Plan

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Service-Learning Implementation Plan

Implementation Plan and Curricular Connections

Minimum Level of Student Engagement

In accordance with State graduation requirements around service-learning (General Instructional Programs – 13A.03.02.06), The Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) requires that all students graduating with a diploma complete at least 75 hours of service-learning. Hours are tracked on individual students by their case managers. Service-learning hours for all middle and high school students are housed in our database and reported quarterly on students' report cards and included on transcripts.

Curriculum Connections

Students earn some of their service-learning hours by completing projects in the following courses:

- Grade 6 Social Studies – 10 hours
- Grade 7 Technology Education – 10 hours
- Grade 8 Science – 10 hours
- Biology – 10 hours
- American Government – 15 hours
- High School Technology Education – 10 hours

All middle and high school courses at The Maryland School for the Blind follow the Maryland State Curriculum standards and are also becoming aligned with Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards. The projects are designed to align to standards being currently followed in the course. Teachers work with the service-learning coordinator to develop and implement projects that allow students to both be active learners as well as giving make to the local and State community. All projects that are infused into the course curriculum include an active-learning component as well as a reflection of what was completed.

In addition to infused projects, students are also encouraged to find projects to complete in their local communities. All projects completed outside of MSB must be approved by an administrator and students are required to complete a record-keeping sheet as well as a reflection. Students may also choose to participate in on-campus and school-sponsored service activities.

Assessment and Evaluation

Service-learning experiences are evaluated by the service-learning coordinator at MSB against the seven best practices of service learning:



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1. Address a recognized need in the community
2. Achieve curricular objectives through service-learning
3. Reflect throughout the service-learning experience
4. Develop student responsibility
5. Establish community partnerships
6. Plan ahead for service-learning
7. Equip students with knowledge and skills needed for civic engagement

Curriculum-infused projects at MSB address the best practices as a part of student learning and experience. The projects involve evaluating needs both in the local MSB community as well those needs in communities from which our students travel. The experiences are aligned to Maryland College and Career Ready Standards, content standards and help students make connections between learning in a classroom and applying to life after school.

Students take a leadership role in designing project goals and work with teachers and other students to reflect on what they are doing throughout the process. Many of the projects completed by students at MSB in curriculum-infused experiences and self-directed experiences involve multiple partnerships with community organizations. Projects are completed over multiple days or weeks with students taking time to plan steps towards completion.

Transfer Policies

Students who transfer to MSB from home schooling, a private school or from out of state during high school will have their service-learning requirement pro-rated as follows:

Time of Transfer	Required Service-learning hours
Grade 9 (either semester)	40
Grade 10 (either semester)	30
Grade 11 (first semester)	20
Grade 11 (second semester)	15
Grade 12 (first semester)	10
Grade 12 (second semester)	5

Connections

As The Maryland School for the Blind updates and revises its curriculum resources to be aligned to Maryland's College and Career Ready Standards, course-infused projects and outside project options are also being updated and revised. Administrators and teachers who are developing curriculum and instructional resources are ensuring that service-learning are a part of our differentiated instructional strategies.



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In order to align to standards and employ research and practice-based instruction, much of the course content used at MSB in the middle and high school classes comes from Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS). The Maryland School for the Blind services many students from BCPS and has enjoyed a mutually-beneficial partnership through a number of coop programs since the 1960's.

Infrastructure

In order to maintain service-learning as a goal across the curriculum and grade levels, several staff members are responsible for maintaining records and ensuring that students are receiving all required service-learning hours. All students in the middle and high school grades are informed of current service-learning progress quarterly on their report card. The Service-learning Coordinator is responsible for monitoring student service-learning hours and communicating with parents and students what hours they have, what they still require and if they are in danger of not meeting the requirement as they approach graduation. Those students that are not meeting the requirement will be given additional guidance and opportunities to meet the standard.

Title	Role	Responsibility
General Academic Program Principal	Service-learning Coordinator	Maintaining service-learning implementation, approving curriculum-infused and independent projects, communicates service-learning requirements and needs to parents and students
Case Mangers	Records	Recording and maintaining records of service-learning hours in school database
Classroom teachers	Curriculum-infused service-learning projects	With the Service-learning coordinator, designing and implementing projects
Student Services Coordinator	Maintaining and updating all data	Maintains the database system and ensures that all service-learning hours are accurately reported on report cards and transcripts

Student Leadership

The goal for all students at MSB is to become as independent as possible. For many, independence requires that a student become a leader of their own



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programming and educational priorities. Students have an opportunity to highlight and use their leadership skills when helping to implement course-based service learning projects, when selecting an outside project or as a student-leader when working with a community partner or as part of a school-sponsored experience.

Community Partnerships & Public Support and Involvement

In addition to the curriculum-infused projects, students are required to earn an additional 10 hours of service-learning. These hours can be earned through independent projects that have been approved the Service-learning coordinator or through a campus-based or school-supported experience.

The Maryland School for the Blind has worked with a number of community organizations to offer students a variety of opportunities in service-learning. These organizations include local animal shelters, retirement and nursing homes and our on-campus Leo's Club.

The Leo's club gives students ranging between the ages of 14-18 the opportunity to serve the local community in the Parkville/Carney area. This club is a student led organization that strives to meet the needs of the community members and is an extension of the adult Parkville/Carney Lions Club. Students participate in service projects including but not limited to; feeding the homeless, conducting canned food drives, volunteering at community events, serving at nursing homes, and other various activities.

Professional Development and Training

Teachers who are responsible for curriculum infused service-learning projects receive support from the service-learning coordinator in the form of project implementation as well as training in curriculum updates. Training is done on an as-needed basis and when curriculum and project updates happen.

The Service-learning Coordinator also attends regular on-site and virtual meetings with MSDE to ensure that MSB is up-to-date on the latest methods and available resources. Those resources are shared with all middle and high school teachers who work with students earning service-learning hours through formal professional development trainings as well as through email and our school's intranet. All parent, staff, student and administrator questions related to service-learning are directed to the Service-learning Coordinator.



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Accountability

Record Keeping

Teachers/case managers are responsible for updating and adding service-learning hours to a student's record in our database system quarterly. Accounting of service-learning hours are checked by both the program Principal and the Coordinator of Student Services, who maintains and administers the database system. Case managers are required to enter hours for both infused projects as well as ones that students complete independently or through one of MSB's community partners.

Funding and In-Kind Resources

The Maryland School for the Blind will continue its support of service-learning through curricular, material, and financial support. While no separate budget is maintained for service-learning, MSB does support classroom and after-school projects with both funding and staffing. MSB will apply for additional funding when available.

Annual Goals and Timeline

Students at The Maryland School for the Blind in grades 6-12 will have an opportunity to complete service-learning tasks both through curriculum-infused projects and independent, pre-approved service in the local community or near the student's home.

Activities	Staff Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date	Notes
Collecting blankets and toys for BARCS Animal Shelter	Grade 6 classroom teacher	March 2017	May 2017	Students coordinate school and community collection effort to collect blankets and toys for animals living in a shelter
Robotics and programing to solve problems through engineering, advocacy for increased accessibility	Educational and Assistive Technology teacher, Middle School Science and	September 2016	January 2017	Through preparing for the First Lego League (FLL) robotics and programming competition,



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Activities	Staff Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date	Notes
	English Teachers			students study how humans and animals live and work together. Additionally, students advocate to FLL to make the programming options more accessible to students with disabilities.
Collecting food and gently used clothing for those living in a homeless shelter	Grade 8 Science Teacher	October 2016	December 2016	The project will connect the local and nationwide problem of homelessness and the impact of climate change on those who are homeless. The culminating project will be collecting food and clothing donations and delivering them to the shelter.
Ecology/Environmental Research	High School Biology Teacher	May 2017	June 2017	Students will choose a topic related to ecology and the environment, complete



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Activities	Staff Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date	Notes
				research and collect evidence from a variety of sources and complete a project of their choice (poster, website, musical performance, presentation, etc...) to present to a group of same-age peers and middle school-age students.
Curriculum-infused American Government Projects	High School American Government Teacher	November 2016	May 2017	Students will complete three projects related to types of state/country government systems, recognizing types of propaganda and media bias and wisely using natural and community resources
Advocacy and Accessibility	Educational and Assistive Technology teacher	November 2016	May 2017	Students will complete multiple projects around



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Activities	Staff Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date	Notes
				ensuring that educational technology and STEM resources are accessible to students with disabilities. The project culminates with students writing letters and papers that develop arguments for accessible materials helping all students learn.
Staff Training	Service-learning Coordinator	October	November	Teachers of middle and high school students are trained on infusing Service-learning into curriculum. Projects are submitted to the coordinator to ensure they meet the seven criteria.
Assess Project Success	Service-learning Coordinator	May	May	Service-learning coordinator works with individual teachers to assess the



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Activities	Staff Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date	Notes
				success of curriculum-infused projects and make changes for the upcoming school year



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Attachment A

Sample Project

Project #1 (5 hours)

As part of a unit on types of government and economic systems, students will:

1. Identify and describe the features of a state
2. Identify the roles of government
3. Apply the features and roles of a state, by creating a profile of a new, fictional sovereign state and deciding on its priorities

At the completion of the unit, students will work individually to create a fictional state by working through a series of questions, i.e.: geographical size and location, make-up and distribution of population, level of education, cultural traditions, legislative assembly, making laws, lead of state, keeping order and helping citizens. They will design and label a map of their state. Maps and written reports will be presented to a group of middle school social studies students in order to establish and continue partnership with students in other programs. Students in the Government class will take on a leadership role when presenting to and teaching other students.

Project #2 (5 hours)

As part of a unit on media propaganda, students will:

1. differentiate between forms of persuasive media
2. identify bias, propaganda, and symbolism in media
3. identify forms of propaganda in use
4. demonstrate understanding of use of media propaganda

At the completion of the unit, students will individually script and produce a television or internet advertisement, which will be presented, along with a short oral report, to another group of high school students. Students in the Government class will take on a leadership role when presenting to and teaching other students.

Project #3 (5 hours)

After studying a unit on Smart Growth programs, focusing on five commonly shared goals of such programs, which are:

1. to promote compact development
2. to protect natural resources and environmental quality
3. to provide and promote a variety of transportation options
4. to supply affordable housing



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5. to create positive fiscal impacts

Each student will create one-minute public service announcement and share it with a classroom of elementary school students in order to establish and continue partnership with students in other programs. Students in the Government class will take on a leadership role when presenting to and teaching other students.



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Attachment B

Independent Service-Learning Activity Hours Verification and Reflection

Student: _____

Name of Service Site/Organization: _____

Date(s) of Service: _____

Total Hours Earned: _____

Project Description: _____

Service Site Supervisor: Your signature below verifies that the hours listed are correct, the student was not compensated in any manner, and that a thorough orientation was provide to ensure the student fully understands the purpose/mission of the organization and how their service addressed a community need

Site Supervisor Signature

Student Reflection Questions

What did you learn about the community issue you addressed through your service?

How did your efforts support the mission of the service site and provide a benefit to the community?

What did this service-learning experience teach you about your role as a citizen in the community?