

## **The IPARD Process in Service-Learning Investigation, Planning, Action, Reflection & Demonstration**

### **Investigation**

Young people begin their research on the community problems of interest. The teacher may introduce problems or needs for the class to consider. They may conduct a needs assessment or other form of determination of community need. Once they choose a need they would like to address, students conduct some form of research to document the extent and nature of the problem and establish a baseline for monitoring progress. At this stage, youth often identify the community partner with whom they will work. If the young people identify the area of interest based on the opportunities being provided by the community partner, the investigation typically involves documentation of the need. This step is critical in engaging students' emotional connection to the project and leading to intrinsic motivation.

#### **Guiding questions for teachers:**

- What is the overall purpose of the service-learning project? What impacts do you hope the project will have on students and the community they serve?
- How will you facilitate student choice of the “community” they want to serve?
- What activities and resources will you provide to assist students in assessing community needs?
- How will you use the criteria of relevance to academic learning, urgency and importance, student interest/engagement and efficacy to help students select the problem for the project?
- What content standards and curricular connections will working on this problem allow students to meet?
- What civic and other learning goals do you hope to meet within the project?

## **Planning**

In this component, sometime called planning and sometimes called preparation, young people, often working with community partners, plan the ways in which they will meet the community need. Planning may include developing a common vision for success, deciding what to do, determining who will do what, creating timelines for completion, listing material needed and costs, and including how fund will be procured. Students also need to anticipate stumbling blocks, communicate with administrators, etc. This is a time to challenge stereotypical thinking about people or issues that the service will address.

### **Guiding questions for teachers:**

- Once you and the students identify a potential problem area, what questions about the problem and possible solutions should they try to answer through their library and Internet research?
- What is the specific service to be provided? How does the service relate to the overall purpose of the service- learning activity? How does it address the areas of impact that you hope it will have on the students and the community? Will it successfully address the area that you measured to establish the baseline of the problem?
- How will you facilitate student decision-making about the specific type of service to be provided and the division of labor that is needed to implement the project?
- What content standards and benchmarks will be met as students plan and provide the service activities?
- What civic goals will the project address? What civic knowledge, skills (informed decision-making, listening, expressing their opinions) and dispositions (e.g., tolerance, sense of responsibility for others, believing they can make a difference in the world) will be developed?
- What other learning do you hope students will gain from the project (e.g., social skills, career exploration, learning to manage conflict and/or learning about themselves)?
- How can you ensure that the community partners are part of the vision, planning and preparation phases?
- How will you assess the students' readiness for the project? What do your students need to understand about the social problem, the community and organizations with whom they will work, the recipients of service and themselves? What skills do they need to have, such as communicating with others, conducting experiments and/ or planning activities? What attitudes and values should they have? What strategies will you use to ensure that students have the prerequisite knowledge, skills, attitudes and values?
- How will you weave reflection activities into this component?
- What types of assessment will you use to determine progress toward meeting specific service-learning project goals and learning objectives while they are working on this phase of the project?

## Action

All participants implement their plan by engaging in the activities that will meet the community needs. This is the actual service portion of service-learning.

**Types of Service:** There are four ways of providing service. Service-learning always has at least one type of service but often has more than one.

**Direct:** Face-to-face service that directly benefits people or animals. For example, serving food at Berkshire Food Project or tutoring young children in the afterschool program.

**Indirect:** Service that benefits people or animals but you don't directly interact with them. This can also include service that benefits the environment. For example, collecting food for a food pantry, cleaning up the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail or raising money for homeless pets.

**Advocacy:** Raising awareness on behalf of an issue or cause with the goal of improving the problem. For example, running a "Think Pink" campaign to raise awareness about breast cancer or hanging posters that encourage energy conservation.

**Research:** Conducting a research project and presenting the results to an influential group with the goal of bringing about changes that benefit the community. For example, conducting a survey to analyze the prevalence of dating violence among students and presenting the results to the school administration and local officials along with recommendations for addressing the problem.

Guiding questions for teachers:

- In direct service activities, students interact with recipients of service or the physical environment they have targeted for improvement. Given the service problem, what types of direct service activities could the youth perform?
- In advocacy service activities, students try to address the underlying causes of a social problem by attempting to influence policymakers or elected officials. Could an advocacy component be added to the project to enhance the learning and help students feel an even greater sense of efficacy?
- How can you adopt, adapt or create a rubric for students to use that ensures the service activity they select demonstrates the standards and indicators of high-quality service-learning?
- How can you ensure that all students benefit from the service activities and find them to be meaningful?
- How can you ensure that students understand and find mutual benefit with service recipients?
- How can you make sure that your community partners are playing a significant, positive role in the lives of the students? How can you maximize the potential for the partners to serve as role models?
- How will you address diversity issues within the service project, both before, during and after service?
- How can you keep students engaged in the service over time?
- How can you implement service-learning so that teachers and other adults also find the service to be fulfilling?

## **Reflection**

At each stage, participants engage in some form of activity that allows them to think about the community need, their actions, their impact, what worked and did not work, the ways in which their work contributes to the common good, and/or similar types of analytic thinking. Final reflections often include measures or other ways to gauge impact. Students can create reflection activities.

### **Guiding questions for teachers:**

- What reflection activities could you use to support the academic, civic and social-emotional learning goals of the service-learning project before, during and after completion?
- If you plan to use discussion and journaling, what forms of reflection you could use to encourage multiple modes of student response? For example, could your students write poetry or fiction about their projects, or create paintings, sculpture or dramatic pieces?
- What reflection prompts (questions) before, during and at the end of the project would encourage your students to go beyond simply describing or reporting their experiences? For example, what questions might push them to analyze the causes of social problems, to apply their academic learning to their service experience or to evaluate the effectiveness of social services?
- How could you broaden the social context for authoring beyond the individual student to make reflection more collaborative? How could you expand the audience beyond you as teacher to make it more authentic?

## **Demonstration/Celebration**

Demonstration and Celebration go hand in hand as students show others, preferably in a public setting with those that have influence, what they have accomplished, what they have learned, and the impact of their work. Often this happens in a culminating event. Celebration of the learning and impact follow the demonstration.

### **Guiding questions for teachers:**

- Who should plan the demonstration and celebration and what roles and responsibilities will each participant have?
- What combination of demonstration and celebration activities would be the most meaningful for your students and community partners, and why?
- What plans for demonstration will best allow your students to meet the academic goals of the project?
- In what ways could the demonstrations be used as summative assessments? If they are used this way, who will evaluate student performance and what criteria will they use?
- Which options for planning would contribute most to your students' civic and social-emotional learning? Which options would contribute most to the community?
- How will you evaluate the success of the demonstration and celebration events and engage in continuous improvement?

IPARD process were excerpted from: Service-Learning in Action at:  
<http://www.servicelearning.org/pubs/materials/L109>

Guiding questions were excerpted from Strategies for Student Engagement: A Toolkit to Implement Quality Service-Learning in Colorado  
[www.cde.state.co.us/servicelearning/.../ColoradoToolkitFINAL-web.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/servicelearning/.../ColoradoToolkitFINAL-web.pdf)