

**North Adams Public Schools  
Community Service Learning  
2017-2018**

Students continued to have the opportunity to learn and develop through applied service-learning projects throughout the North Adams Public Schools district. Our service-learning projects are designed to create specific ties between community needs and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. High quality service-learning positively impacts student engagement, academic success and helps promote goal setting. In addition to the improvements made within a community by a service-learning project, the community benefits from seeing students give back to the place in which they reside and as such, others become a part of a student's educational process.

This past year was a transitional moment for our service-learning program. We added both a new coordinator and a new slate of members to our Service Learning Advisory Board (SLAB) and deepened the emphasis on connecting service-learning projects to specific curriculum and outcomes for students. We're also in the process of revamping our service-learning forms and process for approval, in hopes of making it more accessible for teachers. Through this very important work, we capitalize on creativity and engagement and broaden our outreach and ability to collaborate with community partners, expanding the impact we have on our community and its' members.

In addition to updating current process, forms, and outreach regarding the service-learning process, the SLAB continues to differentiate our approach in supporting teachers who would like to implement service-learning into their practice. Our oversight committee includes members from our schools and Central Office (who also served as voting members), as well as representation from MCLA and Williams College.

We were pleased to collaborate with the Growing Healthy Gardening Program to further the work of our NAPS garden projects. The program continues to engage many educators and students in a collaborative effort that reaches across numerous disciplines and subject areas. The project empowers students to help their community problem solve around resource scarcity, nutrition, and the environmental and health impacts locally sourced food has on an economy and people. Students continued to repair and maintain beds at each school and also prepped and planted for the growing and harvest season. We look forward to working with our summer campers to harvest and donate the food to the Berkshire Food Project to include in their free community meals, Greylock neighborhood residents, and residents of the Windsor Mill.

The annual Brayton Memorial Day Celebration was held on Friday, May 25th. In preparing for the celebration, students in Ms. McCarron's 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom learned about the significance of Memorial Day and the different ceremonies held around the country to honor the men and women that sacrificed their lives for our liberties. In order to accomplish these lessons, classroom discussions, readings, and activities were led by Ms. McCarron. Students helped coordinate the ceremony by selecting readings, music, and identifying the list of invited guests. Students were selected to host and emcee the event in its entirety. During the ceremony they delivered readings, handed out flowers to the invited dignitaries, participated in the choral singing of patriotic songs, and properly greeted guests in a respectful and welcoming manner. Students met and greeted veterans of past wars and had the opportunity to write short biographies on each of the guest speakers. The ceremony was televised and presented to the community for viewing. This project continues to be important to the students and the school as a way of honoring those that have given the ultimate sacrifice. By holding this Memorial Day Celebration, we are able to allow community members to share what the day means to them. Not only do the students benefit from learning the historical meaning, but they also have the privilege of interacting with war heroes and sharing this very important day with them.

High School and Academy students engaged in service learning projects in a number of ways. Ms. Pepper included service-learning in her art classes by painting holiday scenes on the windows of the North Adams Housing Authority Ashland Park Apartments and at Drury High School, helping to bring holiday cheer to some of our older-adult population and Drury High School students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Additionally, they continued to work with the Cascade School Supply Building by replacing the first row of damaged paintings with new ones. Each student painted replicas of masterpieces onto door-sized boards. Horticulture students at the NAPS Greenhouse integrated math and science skills while planting, growing, and maintaining flowers that were donated and beautified a variety of places in North Adams, including Main Street, City Hall, and city parks.

Students at the high-schools off-campus E3 program learn through interdisciplinary units in a competency-based program. Service-learning is integrated throughout the academic content areas during the year. In the course of all of these projects, students acquired competencies in Humanities, STEM and social-emotional learning/Career Readiness. They addressed food insecurity as part of their Cooking for (Real) Life project, where they visited our local food pantry, developed recipes based on typical food that you would find in the pantry, and created recipe cards for their clientele. They also expanded on last year's Give Food – Take Food Community Food Box project by building two additional boxes and placing them at the Mohawk Forest development and the North Adams

Housing Authority. Through their Building a Bike Collective project, students collaborated with Northern Berkshire Community Coalition to create a draft business plan for their Tunnel City Bike Collective as a way to investigate and suggest how their bike collective should organize itself. As part of the Many Faces of North Adams project, E3 researched issues related to social justice, including a history unit on the civil rights movement of the 1960s and its relevance to current events as well as work in social emotional learning on unconscious bias and racism. The students chose to reach out to the wider community to celebrate and bring awareness to diversity in our community by creating an art exhibition. The art exhibition, titled I AM..., was mounted in a gallery on Main Street in North Adams. Lastly, through their Recycling...Why Do It? project, they put together a program to teach younger students about the importance of recycling.