

Hillcrest High School

Service Learning Guide 2020

THE NATURE OF SERVICE LEARNING

Service learning is a component of the Career-related Programme core. Service learning provides opportunities for students to understand their capacity to make a meaningful contribution to their community and society. Through service learning, students develop and apply academic knowledge, personal skills and social skills in real-life situations involving decision-making, problem-solving, initiative, responsibility and accountability for their actions. The purpose is for students to contribute to society by improving the lives of people or assisting the environment or animals.

Service learning benefits all involved—students as they continue developing skills and knowledge applied to real-life situations, and the community through reciprocal collaboration. Service learning fosters development of abilities, attitudes and values in accordance with the IB mission statement and the IB learner profile. The process of service learning is best when understood and organized as an ongoing experience occurring with regularity throughout the duration of the students' CP.

The five service learning stages offer a helpful ongoing process framework for students. Reflection is central to building a deep and rich experience in service learning.

Reflection allows students to explore ideas, skills, strengths, limitations and areas for further development, and to consider how they may apply their prior learning and background in new contexts.

AIMS

The aims of service learning are for students to:

- develop and apply knowledge and skills towards meeting an authentic community need
- develop as leaders who take initiative, solve problems and work collaboratively with others
- enjoy the experiences of both learning and service
- develop a sense of caring about, and responsibility for, others
- gain a deeper understanding of themselves, their community and society through meaningful reflection
- enhance and strengthen their experience with the existing school curriculum.

TIME REQUIRED

A minimum of 50 hours is expected to be devoted to service learning. The school and students must give service learning as much importance as any other element of the CP and ensure sufficient time is allocated for engagement in service learning.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The five learning outcomes articulate what CP students are able to do at some point during their service learning programme. Through meaningful and purposeful service learning experiences, students develop the necessary skills, attributes and understandings to achieve the five service learning outcomes. The five service learning outcomes are:

LO1	Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth
Descriptor	Students are able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, of which some are more developed than others.
LO2	Demonstrate participation with service learning experiences
Descriptor	Students can articulate the five stages from investigating and conceiving an idea to executing a plan for a service learning experience or series of service learning experiences. Students may show their knowledge and awareness by building on a previous service learning experience, or by launching a new idea or process, or by advancing the work of others. This may be accomplished in collaboration with other participants.
LO3	Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively
Descriptor	Students are able to identify and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through service learning experiences.
LO4	Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance
Descriptor	Students are able to identify and demonstrate their understanding of global issues, make responsible decisions and take appropriate action in response to the issue either locally, nationally or internationally.
LO5	Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions
Descriptor	Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out service learning experiences.

EVIDENCING THE OUTCOMES

Some service learning outcomes may be achieved many times, while others may be demonstrated less frequently. Not all service learning experiences lead to a service learning outcome.

Students provide the school with evidence in their service learning portfolio of having achieved each learning outcome at least once through their service learning programme.



OVERVIEW OF SERVICE LEARNING

The main aspects of service learning are:

- Requirements
- The career-related context
- Links to personal and professional skills
- Links to academic studies
- The international dimension

Service learning is the development and application of knowledge and skills towards meeting an identified and authentic community need. In this research-based approach, students often undertake service initiatives related to topics studied previously in their academic disciplines, utilizing skills, understandings and values developed in these studies. Service learning builds upon students' prior knowledge and background, enabling them to make links between their academic disciplines and their service experiences.

Service learning provides opportunities for students to apply their interests, skills and talents along with academic knowledge towards the common good while being observant of personal development and the impact of their actions. Student engagement in the process of service learning often engenders a natural enthusiasm as students find meaning by bridging classroom content with purposeful action.

Through the authenticity of the experience, there is the potential to transform or redefine a student's behaviour and actions within his or her personal values, changing the student while the student's actions change the community for the better.

During service learning, students develop and apply academic knowledge, personal skills and social skills in real-life situations in accordance with the IB mission statement and the IB learner profile. These skills include:

- decision-making
- problem-solving
- initiative
- responsibility
- accountability for actions

Service learning fosters positive development in four key areas:

- **Knowledge development** refers to a deeper understanding of the nature, purpose and importance of what is learned through varied approaches to content and experiences. It should lead to improved cognitive and intellectual skills, while providing a richer context for academic learning and improved student engagement.
- **Personal development** refers to the ability to tap into students' self-perception in relation to their abilities and potential. During the service learning process, students identify personal interests, skills, talents and areas for growth. Through awareness of their strengths, areas for growth, inner feelings and thoughts, students become more self-aware, self-confident, self-directed, able to take risks and resilient.
- **Social development** refers to the ability to work with other individuals and within groups. Issues of responsibility, commitment, communication, independence and interdependence, diversity of opinion, leadership, recognizing emotions and interpersonal relationships can all be explored.
- **Civic development** refers to becoming involved in community issues and developing prosocial behaviours. This can lead to an increased awareness of community connections, community problems, citizenship and social responsibility, which in turn allows the students to develop an understanding of the relationships between local and global concerns.



REQUIREMENTS

All CP students are required to engage in a service learning programme. Completion of service learning is based on student achievement of the **five service learning outcomes** (refer to page 2 in this handbook).

All students are required to maintain and **complete a service learning portfolio through a Weebly website** as evidence of their engagement with service learning throughout the programme and of application of the five stages of service learning. While not formally assessed, the student's website will give students an opportunity to outline and reflect on their service learning experience. This provides the school with evidence that the student has achieved the five service learning outcomes.

As part of the programme, students engage in **three interviews** with their service learning coordinator. These formal interviews are documented by the coordinator and the student as further evidence of student achievement of the five outcomes.

- The first interview is at the beginning of the service learning programme.
- The second interview is at the end of the first year of the service learning programme.
- The third interview is at the end of the service learning programme.

The provision of service learning is expected to run concurrently with the other components of the CP core.

THE CAREER-RELATED CONTEXT

With many students, it may be appropriate for the service learning plans and identified need to be correlated to their career-related studies. If, for example, students are undertaking a course on health care as part of their career-related studies, service learning experiences related to hospitals, health clinics, rehabilitation centres and nursing homes could be ideal.

For some students, exploring a distinct or different area of interest may develop or provoke new avenues for exploration and open further career opportunities. In most service learning experiences, students will come into contact with people in diverse roles in society and learn about careers that may be new to them, or that they may experience and understand in new ways.

LINKS WITH THE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS COURSE (PPS)

The relationship between personal and professional skills and service learning is relevant and useful to the students. Service learning coordinators/advisers are encouraged to make links between personal and professional skills and service learning.

Each of the five themes of personal and professional skills has relevance to service learning.

- **Personal development:** forms the basis for self-reflection and explores the skills required to organize and manage time, make decisions and manage change.
- **Intercultural understanding:** the exploration of cultures and cultural perspectives, including one's own, enables students to be effective in diverse settings.
- **Effective communication:** focuses on interpersonal communication, writing, presentation and IT skills.
- **Thinking processes:** explores the topics of ethical thinking, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem-solving and lateral thinking.
- **Applied ethics:** the IB's commitment to principled action requires students to take responsibility for their actions and consequences and act with integrity and honesty.

Incorporating aspects of the personal and professional skills course in service learning would provide further relevance to the students of the interrelated nature of the components of the CP core.



LINKS TO ACADEMIC STUDIES

Service learning should be associated wherever possible with students' academic studies. Service learning provides an ideal vehicle to make tangible the nature, content and knowledge of the students' academic studies. For example, a student studying business management may utilize the knowledge gained to undertake social entrepreneurship benefiting an area of the local community. A student studying biology may investigate the local waterways and develop a plan to assist with cleaning it up.

Subject-specific teachers can assist students in developing service learning experiences by deepening their understanding related to a relevant issue identified by the students. Students can utilize their classroom time to investigate and research issues associated with their subject area, leading to planning and action of service learning experiences.

Teachers can deliberately integrate the process of service learning within academic courses to advance understanding through depth of inquiry and application of knowledge and skills to meet an authenticated need. When integrated within an academic class, students can participate in the five stages of service learning:

- investigation
- preparation
- action
- reflection
- demonstration.

By doing so, students become more capable of transferring this process to an idea of their own design. Service learning is known to enliven academics as students see how their studies can be readily applied in the community. For example:

- Students learn about an event in recent history and, as a result, collect local stories from senior members of the community to contribute to the library and historical archive. Students develop both inquiry and documentation skills.
- In a literature class, students create and perform a contemporary version of a play for elementary children. This increases the students' understanding of the original text while developing their collaboration, writing and communication skills.
- In a mathematics class, students assist in designing a community parking lot to maximize the number of cars while ensuring adequate spaces for accessible parking for disabled people.
- In a science class, students identify a location for a rainwater garden then install and maintain it as a model for the local community.

As service learning is integrated within academic classes, teachers and students find a shared purpose in applying knowledge and abilities in ways that call upon the continual development of transferable skills. Experiencing the process within a classroom heightens student confidence in taking independent action.

THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

Service learning builds on other international dimensions experienced by CP students. They are encouraged to view aspects of their service learning in a broad, global context. They are challenged to become internationally minded and culturally aware.

Students can investigate and reflect on cultural values and behaviours, leading to a greater understanding and respect for other peoples and the way in which they lead their lives. **Students should be reminded, however, that often it is just as important to look closer to home.** Working with people from different social and cultural backgrounds in the **local context** can do as much to foster international-mindedness and mutual understanding as international service learning experiences or projects.



THE SERVICE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

A service learning experience can be a single event or may be an extended series of events.

A meaningful service learning programme must be more than unplanned or single experiences. A series of planned service learning experiences following the five stages of service learning is expected for a more engaging and comprehensive service learning programme.

By participating in service learning within the local community, students develop awareness and understanding of societal issues and solutions. However, single incidents of engagement with individuals in a service learning context can lack depth and meaning. When possible, interactions involving people best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships for the mutual benefit of all.

THE FIVE STAGES OF SERVICE LEARNING

Each student will create a Weebly website that will entail one service learning experience. Students will:

- **investigate** an interest that often raises questions and curiosity and typically reveals an authentic need
- **prepare** by learning more to deepen understanding
- take **action** based on the verified need
- **reflect** on what they have done along the way
- **demonstrate** their understandings and accomplishments to an audience

For all service learning experiences, students begin with investigation. During ongoing service learning experiences, the action stage may lead students back to investigation or preparation as they further develop, expand and implement new or related ideas to address the same or different aspects of the identified need.

The five service learning stages are:

1. **Investigation:** Students participate in social analysis of a selected issue, with identification and confirmation of a community need, often with a designated community partner. Having an inventory of interests, skills, talents and areas for personal growth, students are able to make choices based on their priorities and abilities and the designated need.
2. **Preparation:** Students acquire and develop the knowledge and skills needed for deeper understanding of the issues that prepares them for purposeful action. Students design a service plan appropriate to the identified need, with clarification of roles and responsibilities, resource requirements and timelines to successfully implement the plan. Any community partners are likely to be consulted.
3. **Action:** Students implement the plan through direct service, indirect service, advocacy or research. Their service may be a combination of one or more of these types of service. Students may work individually, with partners or in groups.
4. **Reflection:** Students examine their thoughts, feelings and actions applied to the context of self, community and the world. With service learning, reflection often occurs with greater frequency as students identify significant moments generated by new situations and insights.
5. **Demonstration:** Students make explicit what and how they learned and what they have accomplished, for example by sharing their service experience through their service learning portfolio, or with others in an informal or formal manner. Through demonstration and communication, students solidify their understanding and evoke responses from others.

These five stages of service learning provide a framework that enables students to:

- increase self-awareness • learn about learning
- enjoy the learning process through purposeful experiences
- explore new and unfamiliar challenges
- employ different learning styles
- develop their ability to communicate and collaborate with others
- experience and recognize personal development
- transfer acquired skills and knowledge to new settings and situations in and out of the classroom
- develop attributes of the IB learner profile.



DOCUMENTATION THROUGH YOUR PERSONAL WEBSITE

A student's website will reflect their experience, project, and reflections via Weebly.

To start, add these six components on the student's main page of their website: You will be updating your website as you do your service learning. Keep in mind that you must provide evidence within your website for all five learning outcomes.

- Include four tabs: Investigation, Preparation, Action, Reflection
- Title
- Picture of yourself
- Your service learning aims and goals
- Statement about your service learning experience
- Profile - In this section, students include their personal interests, skills and talents, areas for growth, plans and goals for their service learning programme.
- Don't forget to add your accomplishments too!

During the stages of investigation and preparation of the five stages of service learning, students identify a need and learn more about the issue, situations and circumstances. They also determine an appropriate form of **action** that addresses this societal or community need. This often requires students to verify the need and to innovate or join others already engaged in purposeful action.

By engaging in different types of service learning within the CP, students accumulate different ways of knowing about their community and their potential for contributing to societal change. The type of action and what is done as action is enhanced when students draw from their interests, skills and talents; this accounts for high levels of engagement as they also integrate academic content and knowledge.

Four types of action are:

- Direct service: Students engage directly with the people, environment or animals.
 - Examples: Students could undertake one-on-one tutoring, develop a garden in partnership with refugees, or work in an animal shelter.
- Indirect service: Though students do not see the recipients of indirect service, they have verified their actions will benefit the community or environment.
 - Examples: Students could redesign a non-profit organization's website, write picture books to teach a language, or nurture tree seedlings for planting.
- Advocacy: Students speak on behalf of an issue of public interest in order to promote awareness and understanding through dispersal of accurate information that may lead to others taking action.
 - Examples: Students could lead an awareness campaign on hunger, perform a play about replacing bullying with respect, or create a video about sustainable water solutions.
- Research: Students collect information from various sources, analyse data and report on a topic of importance to influence policy or practice.
 - Examples: Students may conduct environmental surveys to influence their school, contribute to a study of animal migration, compile effective means to reduce litter in public spaces, or conduct social research by interviewing people on topics such as homelessness, unemployment or isolation.

When making choices about action, an important consideration is the community being served. A key purpose and intent of service learning in the CP is for students to experience and understand the local community **outside** the school. However, if authentic needs are found within the school, it is possible for the school to be the beneficiary of student action, which may then prepare students for further action within the large r community.



APPROACHES TO SERVICE LEARNING

When planning for service learning, always consider the advantage of students conducting service locally. Local interactions allow for:

- developing relationships
- observing and participating in sustained change
- meeting challenges through collaboration.

From the local context, students can extend their thinking and knowledge to understanding global issues.

Wherever possible, service learning should be associated with or draw from students' academic studies. As students see the correlation between academics and service learning, their content studies have greater relevance and purpose through application. Service learning also involves the utilization of students' skills, expertise and knowledge; the following approaches to service learning should always take into account these three important factors.

Ongoing service learning: When investigating a need that leads to a plan of action implemented over time, students develop perseverance and commitment. They observe how their ideas and actions build on the contributions of others to effect change. Their reflections may show deeper awareness and knowledge of societal issues.

School-based service learning: While students are encouraged to participate in meaningful service that benefits the community outside school, they may well find appropriate service learning opportunities within the school. In all cases an authentic need must be verified that can be met through student action. Identified needs met within school may prepare students for further action in the larger community. For example, by tutoring within the school, students may then be better prepared to tutor at a community centre.

Community-based service learning: Participating in service learning within the local community advances student awareness and understanding of social issues and solutions. Single incidents of engagement with individuals in a service learning context can lack depth and meaning. Interactions involving people best occur with a regularity that builds and sustains relationships for the mutual benefit of all. For example, rather than making one visit to a retirement facility as a single service learning experience, students could arrange regular visits over a longer period of time, and in doing so find that their efforts are valued and have reciprocal impact

Immediate need: In response to a disaster, students often want to take immediate action. Typically they quickly attempt to assess the need and devise a planned response. Later, to provide greater context, the students can be reminded and encouraged to further investigate the issue to better understand underlying causes. With increased knowledge, students may commit to ongoing assistance, for example by getting involved in community initiatives regarding an environmental issue.

Fundraising: For fundraising to have meaning and purpose, students must initially develop their understanding of the cause and issues being addressed and then choose the organization to support. Students can draw from their interests, skills and talents to plan the method and manner of fundraising. Ideally, students will communicate directly with the organization and establish accountability for funds raised. Sharing the rationale for the fundraising is essential in order to educate others and advocate for the chosen cause. Students can also support their financial contribution through **direct service, advocacy or research** forms of service learning action.

Social entrepreneurship: A social entrepreneur is someone who adopts a business approach towards addressing authentic community needs. Participation in problem-solving of authentic societal issues creates the potential to develop civic knowledge, community awareness and skills, all necessary for social entrepreneurship. Currently, the term also indicates taking action that maintains environmental sustainability rather than depleting natural resources. For example, a social entrepreneur may transform an idea such as distributing food to people in need through creating gardens for communities to have an ongoing food source while teaching job skills for people to earn a more stable income. By engaging in purposeful actions, social entrepreneurs can use service learning to strengthen business skills that represent their personal values and beliefs as they help their community. Examples of young social entrepreneurs provide inspiration and role models.



International service: Students are encouraged to participate locally in service learning before considering service learning opportunities outside their country. Students benefit most from serving in an international context when able to make clear links to parallel issues in their local environs and they understand the consequences of their actions. When participating in international service learning, students must understand the background and the circumstances of an identified and authenticated need to support their involvement. When direct communication with an overseas community is not possible, students could cooperate with an outside agency. Schools must ensure that commercial providers, if used, act in accordance with the aims of the IB mission statement and service learning requirements. Schools must also undertake risk assessment to ensure the safety of students.

Volunteerism: Students often volunteer in service learning experiences organized by other students, the school or an external group. In such cases, it helps if students are already familiar with the need and its context, as this will increase the likelihood that their contribution will have personal meaning and value. Using the five service learning stages prior to volunteering is highly recommended.

Service learning arising from the curriculum: Teachers plan units with service learning opportunities in mind, leading to student action. For example, while studying freshwater ecology in environmental systems and society, students could decide to monitor and improve a local water system.



SERVICE LEARNING PORTFOLIO, WEBSITE, & PROJECT

Students are expected to maintain and complete a service learning portfolio as evidence of their engagement with service learning and their understanding and application of the five stages of service learning and achievement of the five service learning outcomes. The service learning portfolio can also reveal how students have developed the attributes of the IB learner profile. Indeed, the service learning portfolio is the demonstration, the fifth service learning stage, though students may also elect to participate in other forms of demonstration.

The service learning portfolio is used by students to plan their service learning programme, reflect on their experiences and provide evidence of their learning. The portfolio is regularly discussed during the three interviews between students and coordinator, and likely at other times that both the student and the coordinator may meet more informally. Appropriate encouragement and advice is given, and can be documented and noted in the portfolio.

The service learning coordinator must ensure that students keep their service learning portfolio up to date and relevant, and will check the portfolio regularly. If any concerns arise, especially on whether students will successfully complete their service learning programme, these should be noted in the service learning portfolio and appropriate action taken at the earliest opportunity.

The service learning portfolio is used to showcase the students' service learning experience and participation and should be viewed as a source of pride for the students. To highlight its significance, students could have the choice of how the service learning portfolio is assembled, what they include and how it is shared. Individual student learning styles will dictate the type of portfolio that they use: digital, online, diary, journal, scrapbook or a combination of these. Students are encouraged to explore the different options available to them.

The service learning portfolio is a summation of the students' service learning. It could also be a valuable addition to a student's résumé or CV for a prospective employer or educational institution.



EXAMPLES OF SERVICE LEARNING

For all of the following examples, the five stages of service learning could be easily followed. For example:

- In collaboration with the local community, a group of students produce a mural celebrating the community's cultural heritage for a public building. They link this work to their studies in art class. To prepare, students research the role of public art and look at examples of murals produced in other communities.
- After learning how to test water in a science lab, students collaborate with a local non-profit organization to regularly take water samples in a nearby polluted waterway. To prepare, students learn about the local history of industry. Their documented findings are used for a news report and presented to the local city council.
- Students join a community organization to design an eco-friendly garden for a neighbourhood. They advance their knowledge about local ecosystems and gain grant-writing skills.
- Through knowledge gained from their academic studies in science, students embark on a public awareness campaign regarding diabetes types 1 and 2. They interview and consult local health authorities then work in groups to determine appropriate outreach for different sectors of their community, with consideration of culture and language.
- In response to learning about a local endangered lizard in biology, students develop a plan with two community targets: radio public service announcements for drivers to be more aware of lizards on the road, and a colouring book for younger children to become animal stewards.
- Students studying history identify a need to promote teen involvement in museum events. Drawing upon their related academic studies, they partner with the museum's communication specialist to develop and submit a plan for using social media to promote awareness. Upon approval, students design web resources, provide a timeline of activities and participate in promoting and hosting an inaugural event.
- While studying psychology, students partner with a community-funded youth development organization that supports younger adolescents to stay in school. They learn about adolescent behavioural development and strategies to mitigate problems, along with skills such as conflict resolution, leadership and team building. They lead workshops to advance student competencies.
- After studying issues in global politics, students select several international organizations and examine how they provide information or services in response to these issues. Based on their findings, they select an organization to support and host a community learning event to share information about the issue and the selected organization.



Name: _____

I have received a copy of Hillcrest's Career Diploma Service Learning Handbook. I understand that if I have questions about the Service Learning component of the CP Diploma, I will ask the Service Learning coordinator. I understand that this service learning portfolio and project will be due by February of my senior year.

Signature: _____

Date:

