Cecil County Public Schools
2025-2026 Service-Learning Implementation Plan

I. Implementation Plan and Curricular Connections

A. Minimum Level of Student Engagement

1. All students who attend Cecil County Public Schools (CCPS) are required to successfully complete four service-learning projects that are integrated into the curriculum. Upon completing the projects, a student met the Superintendent's requirement for service-learning. The hourly equivalent of the project is as follows:

Grade	Hours Equivalent
6	15
7	20
8	20
9	20
TOTAL	**75**

B. Curricular Connections

1. Service-learning takes place in a variety of settings in CCPS. Grade six instruction occurs during science instruction as well as throughout the four-day visit that all grade six students are invited to attend the NorthBay Adventure Camp in North East, MD. Service-learning implementation in grades seven through nine varies by school. At the middle school level, schools are organized to follow a "team" approach. The team of teachers and students work in conjunction with the Service-Learning Building Coordinator to determine what the annual project will be for the students. Service-learning instruction occurs by all content teachers and may be infused dependent upon the project. For instance, based on the focus of the project in grade eight being Saving the Past for the Future, students may engage in more extensive instruction based on the state approved curriculum for grade eight social studies. The grade nine project is included in the Health I course in CCPS. This course is considered one of the 25 required credits that students must complete to earn their diploma in Cecil County.

   The following project descriptions are used as a guide for each grade level:

   Grade Six: The Environment and You

   Students participate in a teacher-directed project that focuses on improving the environment.

Grade Seven: Food for Thought

Students focus on promoting positive nutrition and focus on hunger and homelessness in the community.

Grade Eight: Saving the Past for the Future

Students explore history and create projects to preserve historical information and artifacts.

Grade Nine: Issues in Our Society

Students choose and develop a project with personal meaning to help their community during their Health I class.

2. Curriculum is developed during the regular curricular review process. In addition, building coordinators develop lessons/projects and share via electronic files and use Google Docs. This occurs at various times throughout the school year.

3. Service-learning is used as an instructional strategy to address existing course goals and objectives. Since schools do have some latitude in developing meaningful projects, the course goals and objectives may vary by school, grade level, and teacher. For instance, the grade six theme, *The Environment and You*, touches multiple goals and objectives. The mathematics Maryland College and Career Readiness indicator of making sense of problems and learning to solve them is applied during their action phase of the project. Students may determine the number of zebra mussels found in a sample from the bay and through calculations, realize the long-term effect on various bay plant and animal life. During the grade nine service-learning experience, students apply the language arts common core goal of conducting and reporting on research. Classes/groups of students will analyze sources in writing, evaluate their relevance, and report on information and ideas they have investigated. Projects in grade nine focus on *Issues in Society*. Projects have included anti-bullying programs, collection of resources for those in need, and participating in volunteer opportunities at facilities for special needs children.

4. Students in CCPS are exposed to projects in grades six through eight that naturally involve a significant amount of "action" in the community. For instance, a grade eight project has been developed in conjunction with a local historic site to preserve a Revolutionary War era ironworks. As a part of the "action" phase, each year students at two of our middle schools visit the site and continue to uncover and preserve the grounds and buildings. Students from previous years often volunteer to participate as they have taken such pride and interest in working to achieve the goal of public operation as a historical site.

CCPS has maintained a county level webpage to reflect a more detailed explanation of the Maryland Service-Learning requirements and opportunities for parent and community involvement.
www.ccps.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=148
Additional links from the main CCPS website are also available to provide parents and community members' direct access to individual school service-learning websites.

5. Building coordinators are asked to ensure that as much direct service is provided as possible. Additionally, coordinators make sure that teams of teachers in their buildings take varied approaches to projects so that students may be exposed to all types of service before they get to grade nine, where more independence in project choice typically occurs.

6. Service-learning experiences are created through a planning process involving the vital teachers at the school, the building coordinator, and various individuals from the central office. Student input is also considered in this process. Many of our projects have become standard and a "tradition" at the school. There have been various lasting partnerships with community-based organizations that often guide schools to particular needs in both the local and greater community.

C. *Assessment & Evaluation*

1. Service-learning experiences are ultimately evaluated by the building level coordinator using the 7 best practices as the guideline.



Seven Best Practices of Service-Learning



1. Meeting 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 for service-learning
7. Equip students with knowledge and skills needed for service

Service-learning project facilitators and students are both required to use the *CCPS Service-Learning Assessment Tool* (**Appendix**).

Additional assistance and clarification is available from the Coordinator of Service Learning who oversees the Service-Learning local projects and programs. The overall program is evaluated by the Coordinator of Service Learning on an annual basis.

2. All independent projects must be approved by the building coordinator. Students must complete a standardized form and submit to the building coordinator for approval and application of hours. Should any questions regarding independent projects arise, the Coordinator of Guidance Services serves as the oversight for all county submissions.

D. *Transfer Policies*

1. All hours accumulated in previous schooling shall apply to the service- learning requirement. Students transferring in grades six through nine will be required to complete the project of their current year and all future requirements. Students entering in grades ten through twelve shall be required to complete the grade nine project or an approved alternative. **No exceptions for service-learning shall be granted, even for second semester seniors.**

   Students who exit the local school system will have all their hours and completion of projects indicated on their report card and side two of their state SR-2 card. Contact information for the building coordinator is made available to the new school to discuss any questions or concerns with the transfer information. Students who are entering CCPS will receive a small summary from their school counselor that explains the service-learning requirements and how a student may complete them. Student records will be reviewed, and evidence of past service is placed in the student file. Students are issued a service-learning folder to hold all artifacts and indicate the signature of the supervisor when projects are completed. All service-learning documentation is kept in the school files until graduation from high school.

E. *Connections*

1. Service-learning is supportive of the PBIS and CHAMPS programs that are evident in all of our schools. With 100% of our schools being trained in PBIS, we believe that the combination of PBIS and service-learning creates an environment where students are positive and eager to participate in school sponsored activities and programs to better the school and community at large. Service-learning is also incorporated in the STEM program as our students are regularly participating in environmental studies and programs to improve the environment.

2. CCPS is fortunate to have a continued partnership with the NorthBay Adventure Camp program. The overall goal of the NorthBay program is to

improve environmental education. Through a four-day program, grade six students learn about the local environment and engage in service- learning projects to improve the environment near the Chesapeake Bay. Upon completion at NorthBay, students bring the concepts back to the school and hope to apply them in their local communities.

3. Service-learning is a part of the Bridge to Excellence Master Plan with an explanation of how students meet the MSDE requirement.

II. Infrastructure

LSS Contact for service-learning:

- Mr. Tony Petinga
- Coordinator for Title I/Assessment
- George Washington Carver Educational Leadership Center
- Management and oversight of county service-learning program
- 5% percent of responsibilities

School based service-learning coordinators (**Appendix**)

- 11 school-based personnel
- Service-learning building coordinator
- All secondary schools
- Oversight of individual school service-learning implementation, activities and documentation
- 5% percent of responsibilities

III. Student Leadership

1. In our projects student leadership is demonstrated in a variety of ways. Students are encouraged to take leadership of their projects. This becomes more evident as the students participate in the latter portion of their requirements. All students are involved in the planning and determination of needs or needs assessment that occurs prior to the start of a school-based project.

2. All students are involved in the needs assessment to determine the needs of the community. It may be simply reading the local paper over a specific period of time and gauging the needs based on news stories, or it could possibly be a situation where a school is impacted by an event and the students elect to base their project and ideas to support those in need.

3. Students may complete a service-learning validation form that tracks meritorious service. Meritorious hours are recorded in the electronic student database and printed on all progress reports.

4. Students are recognized in Cecil County on an annual basis. All recognition standards will be in the electronic reference folder made available to all service-learning building coordinators.

IV. Community Partnerships & Public Support and Involvement

1. Sites and projects are approved at the local school level with central office oversight. MSDE guidelines for participation with organizations are closely followed.

2. Our list is forever changing in Cecil County. We have no formal "approval" process but rather encourage any site that can partner and meet the seven quality practices to participate. We have begun to build a connection with the Department of Community Services for Cecil County over the past year.

3. Information is distributed to building level coordinators through our county meetings. Each school organizes information differently, with all staff being aware of how to access acceptable sites and projects through their building coordinator.

4. Information is made available to all students and parents through our service-learning brochure. All secondary schools also have a link on their individual school's website regarding the service-learning program and opportunities available to students.

5. Parents are informed about participation by communication from the home school. CCPS utilizes electronic methods such as mass e-mail, and postings on school websites, and social media outlets. Newsletters, postings on the marquee, School Messenger calls, and letters sent home also allow for communication with the family. We have had multiple schools' projects highlighted in the local news coverage as well.

6. CCPS utilizes electronic methods such as mass email distribution, postings on school websites, or the CCPS Facebook page. The School Messenger calling system is also implemented to make mass announcements to students and their families.

V. Professional Development and Training

1. The service-learning contact is the preferred participant in state-sponsored trainings and conferences. If not available, building coordinators will be tapped to attend the session and then share with both the LSS contact and other building coordinators. Information is shared with individual schools as necessary. Access to new community-based organizations and opportunities for student service projects will be continuously brought to the attention of all coordinators through email correspondence. The central office liaison will continue to make school visits to monitor service-learning projects and progress. All CCPS employees, including building coordinators, will continue to be notified of continuing on-line education courses such as the *Quick Course in Quality Service-Learning* course.

   New teachers at the secondary level are introduced to the state service-learning requirements at our new teacher orientation training each August.

2. School staff receive training from both the building coordinator and the LSS Contact. Building coordinators are expected to share information on upcoming service opportunities with those staff members who may be approached by the public coming into the school buildings. The LSS contact does meet with both guidance and lead secretaries on an as needed basis to review proper data input procedures and basic service-learning requirements.

VI. Accountability

1. Service-learning is tracked/documented in two ways in Cecil County. All students in grades six through twelve are issued a service-learning portfolio. The folders are designed to indicate completion of all projects which will include an overview of service-learning, sample community contact letters, a directory for service-learning information, and the minimum requirements to complete a satisfactory service-learning project. Student artifacts and forms are maintained in the portfolio. In addition to the folder, completion of projects and meritorious hours are recorded in our central student database, PowerSchool. This allows for the data to be included in the students' permanent records.

2. Service-learning progress is noted on each progress report issued to students. Students in grades 6-12 have information that shows their progress as pass/fail, as well as all meritorious hours accumulated to date.

3. The completion of service-learning projects is finalized by classroom teachers with an additional check by the building coordinator. All projects must be signed off by the teacher of record in order for the student to receive credit. Data is entered in the electronic system by the designee at each school.

4. The quality of projects is assessed by the building coordinator. While each school may use a slightly different model to review school-based proposals, all project proposals are evaluated with a comparison to *Maryland's Seven Best Practices of Service-Learning* as distributed by MSDE.

5. School projects are developed by teams of teachers who work to ensure the projects meet the expectations of the *Seven Best Practices of Service-Learning*. It is also expected that each team makes their school community aware of the projects that students are working to complete.

VII. Funding and In-Kind Resources

Source	**Amount**	**Purpose**
CCPS	$1000	Printing Service-Learning portfolios for all secondary students

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VIII. Annual Goals and Timeline

Activities	Staff Responsible	Start Date	Finish Date	Notes
Continue collaboration with Cecil County Department of Community Services – Cecil CARES annual event	Coordinator of Guidance Services (SVL LEA Supervisor)	Spring 2026	On-going	Continue to advertise opportunities for student groups/teams to participate in Cecil CARES projects. Utilized the volunteercecil@ccps.org info/site to participate.
Use of CCPS Assessment Tool	SVL Building Coordinators and all teachers/staff are involved in project implementation.	On-going	On-going	Continuing use of form to enhance Seven Best Practices fidelity
Websites for each school updated annually	SVL Building Coordinator/Webmaster or TUST Representative	On-going	Annual	Continue to remind schools to update information on their websites
Updating/PD for new and returning staff responsible for SVL delivery	SVL Building Coordinator and SVL LEA Supervisor	8/2025	On-going	
Annual Visit	LEA SVL Supervisor	9/2025	6/2026	
EOY SVL Report	SVL Building Coordinator and SVL LEA Supervisor	6/2026	9/2026	
Project Completion	SVL School Building Coordinators and implementation teachers	9/2025	5/2026	

Appendix

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CCPS Service-Learning Assessment Tool

Answer these questions about your service-learning practice. Check the box which most accurately describes your experience. Evaluate only one service-learning experience at a time.

Use this tool to explore strategies for strengthening your service-learning practice. High quality service-learning projects should meet all seven best practices.

1. Are students meeting a recognized need in the community?

- € No
- € Yes, students provide short-term assistance addressing a community need
- € Yes, students provide ongoing assistance addressing a community need
- € Yes, students work toward a lasting solution to a community problem

Follow-up:

Who determined the need?

How could you and your students tell that the need was met?

How essential was it to the community that the problem was addressed?

2. Are you meeting curricular objectives through service-learning?

- € No
- € Yes, we incorporate service-learning into a unit
- € Yes, we use service-learning to unify the teaching of content and skills throughout the year
- € Yes, we teach content and/or skills in different disciplines using service-learning throughout the year

Follow-up:

What skills are students learning through service-learning?

What curricular content are students learning through service-learning?

3. Are students reflecting throughout the service-learning experience?

- € No
- € Yes, at the end of the experience, students contemplate their service-learning experience and receive a response
- € Yes, throughout the process, students contemplate their service-learning experience and receive a response

Follow-up:

Who gives students a response as they reflect? Their peers? The teacher? The community agency?

When do students reflect?

How is the reflection structured to get the most meaningful response and discussion possible and maximize student learning?

4. Are you developing student responsibility?

- € No
- € Yes, we establish choices for students in how they implement the teacher-planned service-learning
- € Yes, we share responsibility with students for service-learning development and implementation
- € Yes, we facilitate student definition, coordination, and implementation of service-learning

Follow-up:

How often do students work together in service-learning?

What percent of service-learning is teacher driven verses student driven?

Who plans and organizes the service-learning?

5. Are you establishing community partnerships?

- € No
- € Yes, we consult with community partner for information and resources relevant to the issue the service-learning project addresses
- € Yes, we create opportunities for students to interact with community partners
- € Yes, we collaborate with students and community partners as an action team to plan and implement service-learning

6. Are you planning ahead for service-learning?

- € No
- € Yes, we plan service-learning ahead of time without input from others
- € Yes, we collaborate with colleagues, students, and others to plan service-learning

Follow-up:

Who is involved in the planning process?

How far in advance do you plan?

7. Are you preparing students for the service experience by equipping them with knowledge and skills needed for the project?

- € No
- € Yes, we equip students with knowledge and skills at the beginning of the experience
- € Yes, we equip students with knowledge and skills as needs arise or as the project changes

Follow-up:

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What do students need to know to serve successfully?

Do their needs change as their service-learning progresses? How?

Do you explore the significance of their service-learning experience in relationship to citizenship and civic duty concepts?

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Service-Learning Building Coordinators

Paul Robinson
Bohemia Manor Middle School

Joanne Carradin - grade 6 A-L and all of grade 8
Brooke Smith - grade 6 M-Z and all of grade 7
Cherry Hill Middle School

Carol Dougherty
Elkton Middle School

Sharon Brockell
North East Middle School

Kathleen Watkins
Perryville Middle School

Sara DeCoursey
Rising Sun Middle School

Wendy Wilcox
Bohemia Manor High School

David Cadd
Elkton High School

Rebecca Clark
North East High School

Jim Canty
Perryville High School

Jill Cowan
Rising Sun High School