

Demonstration: Documenting Service-Learning

Demonstration is a powerful tool for building support for service-learning within your school and in your community. With the support of administrators, other teachers, and students in your school, you can expand access to service-learning experiences. With the support of individuals and organizations in your community, your students can build new partnerships and make a stronger impact. Read on for tips about how to document service-learning projects as you go and how to turn documentation into demonstration.

WHAT TO SAVE

- Collect copies of papers associated with the project such as lesson plans, correspondence, students' written work, and publicity.
- Save photos, videos and artifacts (concrete materials or products from the project). Don't forget to take photos and/or videos throughout all stages of the service-learning experience, inside the classroom and out.

WHAT TO CREATE

- Start a service learning journal. You can journal at the same time as your students, and model reflection skills while recording your thoughts about the project.
- Keep a learning log. Record the date, time and activity for each aspect of the service-learning experience, including lesson planning, learning time, the service project itself, reflection, demonstration and evaluation. This will make reporting on your project, and planning for your next experience, much easier.

WHAT TO ASK FOR

- Request letters of support from the community organizations that your students worked with. Such letters may help with fundraising or with getting buy-in from administrators at your school.

WHAT TO DO WITH IT ALL – DEMONSTRATION!

- Create portfolios – one for yourself, one for the class, or one for each student.
- Put it online – blog about it or put photos and letters of support on your school's website to show parents and the community what you've been doing.
- Present it – Create a slideshow or video presentation and let the students showcase their work.

Select portions adapted from *The Complete Guide to Service Learning: Proven, Practical Ways to Engage Students in Civic Responsibility, Academic Curriculum, & Social Action* by Cathryn Berger Kaye, M.A., © 2010. Used with permission of Free Spirit Publishing Inc., Minneapolis, MN: 800-735-7323; www.freespirit.com. All rights reserved.