

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

LINKING

TITLE III

**Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient
and Immigrant Students**

&

SERVICE-LEARNING

Service-learning provides thoughtfully organized experiences that integrate students' academic learning with service that meets actual community needs. Service and learning blend in ways that serve and enrich one another.

Service-learning is a method:

- 1 under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community;
- 2 that is integrated into students' academic curriculum and provides structured time for a student to think, talk, or write about what they did and saw during the actual service activity;
- 3 that provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities;
- 4 that enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community, thereby helping to foster the development of a sense of caring for others; and
- 5 that is supported by regular assessment to provide feedback and guide improvement.

How does Title III support service-learning?

Service-learning can be an effective means of meeting the goals of the Title III program, promoting comprehensive systemic reforms, and enhancing programs for English language learners and immigrant students. The “Improving Language Instruction Educational Programs for Academic Achievement Act” (Title III, Part B) supports service-learning in several ways:

Program Development and Enhancement

Part B, Subpart 1, Section 3212, (a) (2) (B) (viii):

This section states that eligible entities may receive funds for “implementing applied learning activities such as service-learning to enhance and support comprehensive elementary and secondary language instruction.”

Emergency Immigrant Education Program

Part B, Subpart 4, Section 3247, (a) (3):

This section allows funds for states to pay for enhanced instructional opportunities for immigrant children and youth that may include tutorials, mentoring, and career or academic counseling. Sites may use service-learning for tutoring and mentoring and to explore career pathways.

By linking Title III and service-learning, students will be introduced to concepts and experiences that have the potential to increase their sense of community. Students will develop a sense of caring and responsibility, and understand the value of being a good citizen, while learning to speak, read, and write English. To achieve these goals, service-learning programs must be designed with high-quality, ensuring that programs feature the components and strategies necessary for outcomes to be maximized. Providing data as evidence of effectiveness will be necessary to sustain the practice of service-learning using Title III funds.

Examples of service-learning models that could be adopted by Title III programs

Elementary School Projects

At Loma Linda Elementary School in Anthony, New Mexico, upper-grade students developed a program called “Literacy Through Children.” The school library is transformed into a community library three nights a week while once a week 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students tutor and read to those who attend from the public. Teachers reported that the older students developed more English fluency and were able to read with more expression. Younger students developed an enjoyment for reading as a result of being read to by their older peers.

Middle School/High School Project:

The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, created by the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) of San Antonio, Texas, is an internationally recognized cross-age tutoring program. As part of the program, second language learners at the middle and high school levels tutor younger children who are also second language learners. Almost 90 percent of the students participating in the program are Hispanic and 60 percent of the instruction by student tutors is bilingual. All of the students participating in the program are considered at-risk of dropping out of school. Tutors meet with a teacher coordinator once a week to develop tutoring skills, increase their self-awareness and pride, and improve literacy skills. Tutoring relationships are established between students at least four grades apart. The older students spend four hours a week tutoring the younger students. The program’s impacts on both the older and younger students include: a growing sense of responsibility and pride; increased academic achievement, including in English language acquisition; and a greater commitment to succeed and stay in school. The program operates in 240 schools in 25 cities across the United States (Arizona, California, Illinois, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Texas, and Washington, D.C.).

High School Project:

Teachers at the South Carolina Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities in Greenville, SC, creatively incorporate service-learning into their curriculum. Students in the school’s Spanish III-IV class invited young Hispanic children to a reading celebration. The 4- and 5-year olds had limited English language skills. The high school students read children’s books in Spanish and discussed the books with the children. Each child was also given a book to take home in order to practice his or her English language skills. The students from the South Carolina’s Governor’s School were able to hone their Spanish-language skills, and the young children were given the gift of reading and an opportunity to practice their English.

How do exemplary practices in language instruction for English language learners and immigrant students relate to service-learning?

Service-learning as a strategy for language instruction for English language learners and immigrant students shows enormous promise based on the research literature on what works for the educational achievement of these student populations. The research literature indicates that language instruction programs for English language learners and immigrant students are most effective when:

1. There is a clear vision for instruction with organized goals and leadership;
2. There is an innovative link between core academic curriculum and language learning instruction;
3. Classroom activities integrate various elements of students' home culture;
4. The curriculum motivates students by making direct connections to what students want to learn;
5. Active teaching or hands-on learning behaviors using kinesthetic learning compliment and reinforce visual and auditory strategies;
6. Cooperative learning enables students to learn from each other by pairing them in respect to their varying levels of language acquisition;
7. Peers serve as each others' supports and standards for achievement;
8. There is family involvement in the learning process that models the importance of learning. Family members attend school events and training programs, and recognize student achievements;
9. Community partnerships facilitate communication and collaboration in the development of programs for learning; and
10. Professional development opportunities exist for teachers and administrators to learn and share effective strategies for working with English language learners and immigrant students.

Sources

The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition

<http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu>

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

<http://www.tesol.org/index.html>

I'm interested ... Now what?

Confirm your eligibility.

Title III grants are awarded through an application procedure. For more information on the Title III requirements and applications, check with your local district or state office of education. More information can also be found on the U.S. Department of Education's website, available at: www.ed.gov and through the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition's website, available at: www.ncbe.gwu.edu. Both sites provide links to other organizations with resources on limited English proficient and immigrant students.

Plan your service-learning project:

Canvass the community to understand needs and willingness;

Develop agreements for student and community participation;

Explain how supervision will take place;

Provide information about liability and how problems will be handled;

Delineate the obligations of each party;

Develop an appropriate service-learning curriculum;

Design student materials and orientation processes;

Train those responsible for implementing the projects;

Connect service-learning to the curriculum through written and oral reflection opportunities; and

Conduct an evaluation to understand the program's effectiveness.