Service in Schools

Service in Schools, a joint partnership of the NYC Department of Education and NYC Service, strives to expand the number of NYC students engaged in transformative community service and service-learning experiences that enable them to use their voice, skills, and critical thinking to affect positive change in their communities and the world.

Service in Schools offers a range of resources for schools to empower students, as well as recognize and help schools sustain outstanding service and service-learning programs.

In the 2013-14 school year, schools were asked to report on their service and service-related activities through the End-of-Year Service in Schools Survey. This report synthesizes the survey results, highlights student and school outcomes, community partner participation, and service patterns across NYC public schools.

“Our students participated in community and world-wide service projects which enhanced their knowledge of the world around us and the needs of others. This allowed our students to see how they could be powerful agents of change in other people's lives.”

(Micaela Tomasetti, 11X076)
Overall Survey Participation

87% of schools reported on their service and service-learning activities in 2013-14.

Out of the 1,635 New York City public schools* with designated service coordinators, 87%, or **1,421 schools**, participated in the End-of-Year Service in Schools (SIS) Survey. Participation increased 13%, from a 79% response rate on the 2012-2013 SIS Survey.

*Excludes charter schools
Demographics of Responding Schools

Of the 87% of responding schools, Brooklyn schools had the highest response rate at 30%, elementary schools across the city responded the most at 40%.

### Responding Schools by Borough

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staten Island</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhattan</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronx</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
<td>30%</td>
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### Responding Schools by School Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-8</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>2%</td>
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Students in Service

Schools’ responses indicate that approximately $489,116$ students participated in at least one school-led service and/or service-learning activity between September 2013 and June 2014, nearly $80,000$ more students than in the 2012-2013 school year.

Students performed more than $10,239^*$ school-led service and/or service-learning projects between September 2013 and June 2014, approximately $3,500$ more projects than in the 2012-2013 academic year. Approximately $29\%$ of responding schools organized 10 or more school-led service and/or service-learning projects and $71\%$ of responding schools reported organizing up to 9 school-led service and/or service-learning projects.

*Approximate numbers take into account some schools reporting having completed more than 20 service and service-learning projects.
Service Patterns by School Type

Of the 10,239* school-led service and/or service-learning projects organized by responding schools, the majority were conducted by elementary schools at 34%, and the greatest number of projects were performed by schools in Brooklyn at 30%.

Approximate Number of School-Led Service and/or Service-Learning Activities by School Type*

- K-12: 186
- K-8: 821
- Secondary: 607
- High: 3,305
- Middle: 1,719
- Elementary: 3,492
- Early Childhood: 109

Approximate Number of School-Led Service and/or Service-Learning Activities by Borough*

- Staten Island: 642
- Queens: 2,476
- Manhattan: 1,824
- Brooklyn: 3,016
- Bronx: 2,281

*Approximate numbers take into account some schools reporting having completed more than 20 service and service-learning projects.
Perceived Student Outcomes

An overwhelming majority of responding schools reported that school-led service and/or service-learning activities have a positive impact on their students’ development and ability to benefit their community.

The Positive Impact Service has on Students' Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Created positive change in their communities</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed a sense of responsibility towards others</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved their critical thinking skills</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthened their decision-making skills</td>
<td>87%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Partnerships

Approximately 85%, or 1,207 responding schools reported that they partnered with at least one external organization to support their service initiatives this year.

The following local and national organizations have cultivated partnerships with our schools:

- NYCService
- CommonCents
- March of Dimes
- Pennies for Patients
- NYCDOE
- Toys for Tots
- Million Trees NYC
- BuildOn
- Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
- GenerationOn
- New York Cares
- Generation Citizen
- Jane Goodall's Roots and Shoots
- Lead2Feed
- Global Potential
- City Harvest
- Unicef
Nearly half of survey respondents reported that a SIS resource aided in their implementation of community service and service-learning.

Schools Leveraging SIS Resources

Schools reported that the following SIS resources supported the integration of community service and service-learning into their classroom and school community:

- Community partner organizations: 45%
- Communication from central office: 38%
- Professional development and workshops: 33%
- SIS Website: 42%
- SIS Newsletters: 43%
2013-2014 Service-Learning Grants

Through a competitive application process, 150 schools were selected from over 250 applicants to be awarded a $1,000 Service-Learning Grant to support a service-learning project at their school. Below captures examples of how schools used their grant money.

“P.S. 28 directed the grant funding towards a reading mentorship program called “Book Buddies” where upper-grade students were paired with lower-grade students to develop their interest in reading, improve critical reading skills, and foster positive relationships in the school community.” (Carly Petersen, 06M028)

“…scholars raised funds for the "Service Walk-A-Thon" for their individual charities…Scholars improved their research, writing, communication, and technology skills by participating in this school-wide project. In addition, this experience supported their holistic development by encouraging compassion and consideration of a wide range of causes.” (Shaun Porter, 24Q290)
2013-2014 Service-Learning Grants (con’t)

“Staten Island Technical High School (SITHS)’s National Honor Society students host the Hungerford School (physical and developmentally disabled students) for the day. "Hungerford Day" is a senior volunteer project conducted each year with the goal of furthering leadership, service, character development and scholarship among students. SITHS students learn they have the ability to make a difference in the lives of others, to appreciate the gifts of health and high scholastic achievement, to appreciate the gifts that those with disabilities possess, and to live the goals set forth. They also learn to not judge a book by its cover, and that there are more examples of things which make us similar than different. The Service-Learning Grant helped SITHS purchase supplies and refreshments for Hungerford Day. Our students often proclaim this activity is one of the most rewarding experiences in their high school career. It comes at a time of intense anxiety during the college application season and serves as a stark reminder of the value of life and perspective.” (Joseph Manzo, 31R605)
Recommendations and Proposed Next Steps

Information gleamed from the survey identifies how we can make SIS more present in school communities. Through increasing SIS awareness, service engagement and attention will also grow.

Based on the data and feedback collected from both the Mid and End-of-Year Surveys, SIS identified successes and challenges to inform the work going forward. Below is a list of recommendations to continue to support and expand community service and service-learning opportunities in schools citywide.

Recommendations:

1. Engage in a deeper analysis of what is working in schools.
2. Increase communication and awareness about SIS resources, opportunities, and partner organizations.
3. Allocate the Service-Learning Grant earlier in the academic year.
4. Organize school visits from the SIS team.
Recommendation 1: Engage in a deeper analysis of what is working in schools.

Many schools are actively engaged and successful in implementing community service and service-learning into their communities. SIS will gather more information from these schools to inform strengthening support for service-learning programming. For example:

- What community service and service-learning projects is the school doing?
- How are they organizing the work?
- How do they engage students? Teachers? Staff? Parents/Families?
- What further support do they need?
- How could they make their service program stronger?
- If SIS as a program could support the school more, what could we do?
  - Are they looking for certain types of opportunities?
  - How do they want information from SIS to be relayed?
Recommendation 2: Increase communication and awareness about SIS resources and opportunities.

Service coordinators find SIS resources such as the SIS website, SIS newsletters, and attending professional developments valuable. However, less than half of survey respondents are accessing these resources and opportunities. Additionally, service coordinators report finding value in working with partner organizations, yet many schools shared that they do not know who partners are, how to contact them for support, and what services and opportunities they provide. Thus, SIS will:

- Develop a communication strategy tailored to school constituents’ specific needs and use models.
- Identify additional mechanisms for communication in collaboration with different NYCDOE offices, NYC Service, and partner organizations.
Recommendation 3: Allocate the Service-Learning Grant earlier in the academic year.

Service-Learning Grant recipients requested receiving grant monies earlier in the year to allow them more time to implement their service-learning projects. SIS will:

- Initiate the grant application, selection, and allocation process earlier in the academic year.
- Provide recipients with guidance detailing how grant monies can be used and by what date the money needs to be allocated within their school budget.
Recommendation 4: Organize School visits from the SIS team.

Service coordinators expressed a desire for the SIS team to visit their schools to both support their implementation of building a culture of service-learning and to observe their service activities. For the upcoming year, SIS will:

- Develop a site visit plan and protocol that guides visits and interactions with schools.
- Use civic corps members to cultivate relationships with schools and support ongoing communication throughout the school year.
For More Information:

Elizabeth Benjamin

ebenjamin2@schools.nyc.gov

schools.nyc.gov/service