

Dear After School Provider, Educational Leader, Policy Maker, Youth Program Funder, Interested Youth Ally.

School and program administrators around the state are actively working to improve their after school programs. They are looking for ways to bring more students into their programs and to engage youth in meaningful activities that improve student academic and personal success. We also know that extending traditional classroom instruction time is not appealing to our students and is not producing the kind of results we all would like to see.

I would like to offer a proven solution to this dilemma: after-school service-learning. Because it is rooted in the curriculum, it is an effective way to emphasize the learning that happens during the school day. Because it is project-based hands-on learning it engages students in ways classroom instruction does not. This instructional method is also a recommended strategy by the California Department of Education's, After School Program. Furthermore, after school service learning can be a means to engage students in civic activism; where students research their community, identify issues of concern, and find solutions that require some kind of policy or systems change. This kind of service learning exposes students to how government and large systems work. It helps students learn research and presentation skills and teaches them how to be self advocates as well as civic activists.

The Region 3 Service-Learning Co-Leads, have many resources to help you investigate, plan and implement service-learning in your after school program. Below are a few of the resources about service-learning in general and after-school service-learning in particular:

Service Learning and Region 3 Service learning Resources

<http://www.ydnetwork.org/Service%20Learning%20Resources%20and%20Events>.

<http://www.servicelearning.org/what-service-learning>

How to integrate Service learning into after school programs:

<http://yscal.org/Library/Programs%20Files/Five%20Steps%20to%20Service.pdf>

Service Learning and Civic Engagement Brief <http://www.ydnetwork.org/Policy%20>

[Excel Youth Zone: Afterschool Service-Learning](#)

http://www.excelyouthzone.org/misc/AboutClubeXcel_XYZ.pdf

To connect to our region's service learning technical support leads please contact

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