Welcome to WE Schools service-learning

Get ready to get doing.

We’re thrilled that you’re joining our global movement to make a world of difference. As you embark on your service-learning experience, we’re sure that you’ll learn more about the issues you care about, feel more connected to your community and make a real impact you can be proud of. You’ll also be amazed how much you learn about yourself and what you’re truly capable of.

To guide you through your journey, we’ve created this toolkit with information, checklists and worksheets to help you explore critical social issues, keep track of your progress, reflect on your experience and more.

When we come together to learn and create social change, anything is possible!

WE SCHOOLS RESOURCES

Your teacher will be able to access many resources to support your service-learning campaign. Ask them to register and access content for free at the:

» WE VIRTUAL LEARNING CENTER «

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What is service-learning?
Service-learning goes beyond volunteering or doing community service. It allows you to apply what you are learning in your classroom in a real world setting to help solve problems in your community and the world around you.

Service-learning gives you the opportunity to develop a stronger understanding of local and global issues, while taking meaningful action that make a difference.

HERE ARE JUST A FEW ADVANTAGES FOR STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN SERVICE-LEARNING:

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<th>Improved social skills and well-being</th>
<th>Improved university and workplace readiness</th>
<th>Increased academic engagement</th>
<th>Increased leadership skills and civic responsibility</th>
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Service-learning with WE Schools
WE Schools is leading the way in experiential service-learning! We believe that the best learning experiences happen when we contribute to making a meaningful difference in the world.

Working with your teacher and collaborating with like-minded people at school, you’ll learn new skills and strengthen skills you already have, which you can apply to your future education, workplace and career. Service-learning will help you grow in so many ways as a volunteer, leader and global citizen.

SUCCESS STORY
Twelve-year-old Tadeo Figueroa and the student council at Aptakisic Junior High School in Buffalo Grove, Illinois committed to reducing waste in their cafeteria by implementing a recycling and composting initiative. Through research, trash auditing and a determination to create an eco-friendly environment at school, Tadeo and the council continue to encourage their peers to recycle and compost.
**Your service-learning project in 4 easy steps**

WE Schools service-learning has a framework designed to help you meet your academic learning objectives while you learn about local, national and global issues and become an agent of change.

1. **Investigate and learn**
   - Explore topics related to a real-world challenge or opportunity.

2. **Action plan**
   - Develop an achievable plan to implement your service-learning project.

3. **Take action**
   - Implement your action plan using direct service (e.g., volunteering), indirect service (e.g., fundraising) and/or advocacy (e.g., raising awareness).

4. **Report and celebrate**
   - Highlight the project to showcase your learning and outcomes.

**SERVICE-LEARNING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

- **Empathy**: Through service-learning, you’ll be exposed to equity and human rights issues, increasing your social awareness and building respect and understanding for others.

- **Communication**: Working as a volunteer in different and unfamiliar environments will improve communication skills and increase your ability to nurture positive, healthy relationships with others.

- **Collaboration**: In a volunteer setting, you’ll be called upon to work as a group and build skills like conflict resolution.

- **Resilience**: Showing up for others isn’t always easy. Through service-learning you’ll gain practice in goal-setting, self-motivation and resilience.

- **Problem-solving**: Through experience, you’ll build an arsenal of tools that will help you identify problems and come up with creative solutions.

**ABOUT SERVICE-LEARNING CAMPAIGNS**

1. **Investigate and learn**
   - Explore topics related to a real-world challenge or opportunity.

2. **Action plan**
   - Develop an achievable plan to implement your service-learning project.

3. **Take action**
   - Implement your action plan using direct service (e.g., volunteering), indirect service (e.g., fundraising) and/or advocacy (e.g., raising awareness).

4. **Report and celebrate**
   - Highlight the project to showcase your learning and outcomes.

   **Record and reflect**
   - Keep an activity log and complete written reflections throughout the campaign.
Service-learning in action

Follow the four steps of the WE Schools service-learning framework to help ensure you can make an impact in your local community and beyond.

Step 1: Investigate and learn

It’s critical that we take action on important social issues within our communities, across the country and around the world. The first step is to understand the issues you’re trying to address and how society impacts them—in both positive and negative ways.

Exploring issues activity

Using the issue cards and WE Schools resources, your team can become experts on a local and global issue through group discussion, note-taking and teaching others.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

To explore local and global issues, ask your teacher to download WE Schools issue cards and classroom resources from the WE Virtual Learning Center.

SUCCESS STORY

Houston, Texas high school buddies Bryce Lui, Jeffrey Chuong and Omar Busaidy created Food for Heroes to help local restaurants and support frontline workers during the pandemic. Since launching a GoFundMe campaign and spreading the word on social media, Food for Heroes has delivered approximately $8,500 worth of food to frontline workers in hospitals, police departments, fire departments and local sheriffs’ offices.
Finding your “why”

There are many worthwhile and necessary causes, but when you put your time and energy toward an issue you are passionate about or a problem you want to solve, you can make real change.

1. MAKE A LIST OF ISSUES THAT HAVE AFFECTED YOU OR PEOPLE YOU KNOW.
A personal connection to a cause can supercharge your commitment and fuel your desire to make things better. Start by thinking about issues affecting those around you—family, friends, neighbors—and what you can do to help.

2. NOTICE THE CHALLENGES IN YOUR COMMUNITY.
Look for issues close to home. You may notice something that’s missing, like wheelchair accessibility or a safe place for kids to play. Consider how issues like climate change or racism affect your community. Are there people who are experiencing homelessness or are in need? Reach out to local community organizations to find out how you can help.

3. LOOK AT THE BIGGER PICTURE.
We’re all connected through our shared humanity. Each day, the headlines shine a light on some of the world’s most challenging issues: inequities in human rights, sustainability, natural disasters, poverty, access to education and food insecurity.

Problem: causes & effects

Dig deeper into the issues you’re trying to address. When we understand and evaluate which actions are most appropriate to support those causes, we can make a more meaningful impact.

Use the problem worksheet and apply your critical thinking skills to consider the causes and effects of the problem you have identified.

DURING THIS ACTIVITY, RATHER THAN STARTING AT THE TOP OF THE WORKSHEET, FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

A. Start in the middle, to focus on the problem and goal.
B. Then go to the bottom, to investigate the causes and solutions.
C. Finally, explore the effects and outcomes.

A. EFFECTS → OUTCOMES

B. PROBLEM → GOAL

C. CAUSES → SOLUTIONS
Problem worksheet

EFFECTS
These are the results created by the problem. At first, this part of the issue appears easy to address and solve. But consider all the effects (“effects of effects”) that can happen when a problem goes unaddressed. Always ask: “Then what happens?” (E.g., I am missing opportunities, feeling frustrated, etc.)

PROBLEM
This is the key issue that’s being studied. Because it may not be as apparent as the effects, the core problem may sometimes take longer to identify. (E.g., I’m often running late for school.)

CAUSES
These are the situations or factors that have led to the problem. Keep digging to find all the supporting causes. When exploring the root causes of a problem, ask yourself: “Why does this problem exist?” and consider the “causes of causes”—the layers of factors that contribute to the problem. (E.g., I didn’t hear my alarm or I didn’t get enough sleep.)

Solution: goals & outcomes
Setting goals and planning for outcomes is critical to mapping out the sustainable actions needed to achieve the solution on behalf of your issue. It’s important to look beyond the short term and address not only the symptoms of the problem but the root causes as well.

Use the solution worksheet to explore current solutions that are being used to combat the topic you addressed in your problem worksheet. While you complete this activity, refer back to your problem worksheet as it may help you create solutions that address the actual problems.

GOAL
This is the problem from your problem worksheet, but re-framed as a goal (e.g., I aim to regularly be on time).

SOLUTIONS
These are the actions needed to solve the problem and achieve the goal stated at the center of the solution worksheet. When exploring solutions, ask yourself, “How will this solve the problem?” Be sure to look beyond the short term and address not only the symptoms of the problem but the root causes as well.

OUTCOMES
These are the results created by the solution. Results may appear as straightforward as having achieved goals, but when you consider the ripple effects and outcomes of sustainable results, the impact is far-reaching and long-lasting. Always ask, “Then what happens?”
Solution worksheet

Start by rewriting the problem from your problem worksheet and reframing it as a goal at the center. Then consider the different solutions and possible outcomes of the solutions.

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### RECORD AND REFLECT

During step 1, keep a log of activities related to the project and reflect on what you’ve learned about the local or global issue you’ve chosen and consider how this program will help you grow.

### WHAT ISSUE(S) IS YOUR GROUP ADDRESSING?

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### WHY DO THESE ISSUES EXIST?

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### HOW WILL YOU HELP MAKE AN IMPACT ON THE ISSUE(S) YOU HAVE CHOSEN?

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WHAT SKILLS DO YOU WANT TO DEVELOP DURING YOUR SERVICE-LEARNING EXPERIENCE?

WHAT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOUR FUTURE/CURRENT EDUCATION, WORKPLACE AND CAREER GOALS?

HOW WILL YOU BECOME AN ACTIVE CITIZEN AND CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY AT LARGE?

WE Schools service-learning campaigns

Once you decide on the issue you want to take on, then you’re ready to choose your service-learning campaign and turn your passion into action. WE Schools has a number of ready-made service-learning campaigns that align with the themes of Education and Innovation, Community and Social Needs, Environment and Sustainability, Equity and Human Rights, Health and Well-being and Social Entrepreneurship. Your teacher can access all of the resources and campaigns below once they sign up at the WE Virtual Learning Center.

WE Are Innovators
Take action against today’s pressing social issues by creating innovative solutions through the use of STEM skills and raise awareness on the issues that you’re passionate about.

WE Scare Hunger
Come together to collect food to help scare away hunger. Hold a food drive to contribute to your local community food bank and raise awareness of the root causes of hunger.

WE Volunteer Now
Rally your peers to take action on an issue in your community. Inspire others to volunteer and create a ripple effect of volunteerism.

WE Are One
Technology is a powerful tool for social change. Use it to imagine and develop ways to make your school and community more inclusive for everyone.

WE Are Silent
Use your voice. Speak up, go silent and fundraise to amplify the voices of those who go unheard around the world.

WE Go Green
Commit to a sustainability pledge in your school or community and watch how everyday actions can turn into sustainable impact.
WE Promote Respect
Help build understanding of the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships and provides tools to form bonds with others that will enrich your life.

WE Walk For Water
Clean water is a basic human right that not everyone has. Walk for all women and children around the world who spend hours each day walking to collect water for their families.

WE Embrace Anti-racism
Create a more inclusive world and break the cycle of racism. This resource uses tangible examples and tools for students to understand and recognize diversity and inclusion, while promoting awareness, advocacy and behavioral change.

Take action with your own campaign
With the D.I.Y. Campaign, you can create positive social change for a cause you care about, your way! Download the guide here.

Campaign in Action
Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Neel Jain delivers groceries to his grandmother. He’s extended his efforts to others in Portland, Oregon, especially the elderly and immuno-compromised. PDX Concierge helps community members who can’t leave their homes or need extra food so they don’t go hungry. The Westview High School student’s volunteer initiative has exceeded his expectations. He’s recruited over 50 volunteers to help his cause, made over 450 deliveries across his community and made many friends and connections along the way.

“In this challenging time, delivering groceries and building friendships has given me a sense of compassion and purpose within my community.”

NEEL JAIN
Step 2: Action plan

Before you get started on your actions, you need a good plan. Without a plan to guide you, you won’t have a reliable way to reach your goal. And without a defined goal, you won’t know if you’ve achieved it.

Setting S.M.A.R.T. goals

S.M.A.R.T. goal-setting (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound) is a technique to help you succeed in reaching your goals. It gives a focused direction for actions by breaking them down into manageable steps, tracks your progress and keeps you on target.

Ask yourself the following questions as you set your S.M.A.R.T. goals, ensuring that each goal aligns with your personal “why” and the cause that your team is supporting.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR SERVICE-LEARNING CAMPAIGN?

WHAT DO YOU PERSONALLY WANT TO ACHIEVE BY THE END?

HOW WILL YOUR TEAM HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?
**S** SPECIFIC
Plan a precise course of action and specify how and where. (E.g., a goal should be “to raise $1,000 to feed five families for a month,” instead of “raise money to buy food for families in need.”)

**M** MEASURABLE
Set a goal you can measure so you know when you’ve reached it. (E.g., a goal should be “to partner with five teachers to make speeches in five different classes at my school,” instead of “to make as many speeches as I can.”)

**A** ATTAINABLE
Make sure that your goal is something realistic and reasonable. (E.g., a goal should be “to get 100 signatures on a petition to increase government funding for local after-school programming,” instead of “to arrange a meeting with the mayor to discuss after-school programs.”)

**R** RELEVANT
Make sure your goal will really help address your chosen issue. (E.g., a goal should be “to organize a coat and blanket drive this winter,” instead of “to collect clothes in summer.”)

**T** TIME-BOUND
Set an exact timeline for when you want to achieve your goal. (E.g., a goal should be “to plan an assembly for June and reach out to the media by May 1 to publicize,” instead of “to host a concert when I can find people to play.”)
Step 3: Take action

It’s time to get out there and make it happen! Even small actions can make a difference. Taking action comes in many forms—you can raise awareness, donate money or needed goods, or volunteer your time and skills. Here are six different ways to make an impact.

**Advocacy**
Educate others about topics that affect the public. These include projects that aim to create awareness and inspire action on issues that impact your community, your country or the world.

Example: Collect signatures for a petition and send it to your local or national government official.

**Awareness-raising**
Focus the attention of others on a cause in the community or in the world. Regardless of the action you take, the objective is to increase others’ understanding of broader issues.

Example: Host a movie night by screening a documentary that touches on a topic you are passionate about and have a discussion afterward to find out how much everyone learned.

**Behavioral change**
Directly impact individuals by helping to turn their bad habits or routines into positive ones like educating others about an important issue.

Example: Take a sustainability pledge to pack no-waste lunches, plant a garden, or walk to school.
**Service-Learning**

**STEP 3: TAKE ACTION**

**Fundraising**

Working on broader issues, collect donations of money from individuals, businesses, charitable foundations or government agencies for a project that will benefit others.

Example: Organize a coin drive and ask friends and family to donate their loose change for a cause you care about.

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**Material Support**

Collect donations or items like canned goods, second-hand clothing and books for a charitable cause.

Example: Hold a food drive and get a team together to collect non-perishable items for your neighborhood food bank.

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**Volunteering**

Make a meaningful, direct impact in the lives of others by giving your time to a cause you care about. This could mean staying within your neighborhood and helping out locally or helping a community in another country.

Example: Spend time at a local soup kitchen or seniors’ residence or lend a hand to an international development project. The possibilities are endless!

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**Taking action checklist**

You’ve investigated an issue, decided on a cause and set your S.M.A.R.T. goals. Use this to-do list to help you achieve success.

- Decide on the type of action—is it a single event or longer-term campaign?
- Make sure your group is organized with specific roles (e.g., administration, research, project management, finance, communications, public relations, etc.).
- Create an engaging social media presence and website to communicate why you’re taking action and how people can contribute.
- Reach out to your community and wider network to join you in your campaign.
- Create a fundraising or campaign page to track your progress toward your goal.
- Share regular updates with your team and supporters.
- Tally donated goods or funds and deliver them to your chosen cause.
- Celebrate your success and thank everyone who made it possible!

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**Practice Safe Service-Learning**

When conducting service-learning in person it’s important to recognize everyone’s safety and well-being. While health and safety policies and practices vary, here are a few suggestions:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- If soap and water aren’t available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm.
- Avoid touching surfaces people touch often.
- Keep a distance of six feet from others, if possible.
- Use any necessary personal protective equipment, as directed.
Getting the word out

• Choose a catchy campaign slogan, tagline and/or hashtag (think #icebucketchallenge and #Movember).
• Create pages, group chats and gifs on social media to generate excitement, provide updates and promote upcoming events.
• Use your school, group or committee social media handles to share.
• Extend your campaign reach by encouraging your social media network to share your campaign through their personal pages.
• Promote your campaign through local news outlets and community websites.
• If possible, bring in a guest speaker, a community leader or someone from your chosen cause to share their knowledge and experience with your school.
• Make it easy for people to take part by setting up an online fundraising page or using a crowdfunding platform.
• For a food drive or material collection, designate a clear time and place for people to drop off items.
• Help people feel like they’re part of something meaningful by sharing stories about the people or communities that you’re helping.

RECORD AND REFLECT

After step 3, reflect on your experiences of taking action as a team and describe how you may continue the work that you and your team started with this project.

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU LEARNED ABOUT YOUR ISSUE?

SUCCESS STORY

At Lakewood High School in Lakewood, California, Irma Magana and her students organized a food drive and collected 10 boxes for the Long Beach Rescue Mission and Midnight Mission in downtown Los Angeles. For the WE Walk for Water campaign, her students put together a video to educate others on what women and children experience collecting safe water for their communities around the world.

DID YOU RUN INTO ANY OBSTACLES WHEN BRINGING YOUR ACTION PLAN TO LIFE? HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD DO DIFFERENTLY?

HOW WILL YOU CONTINUE TO RAISE AWARENESS OF YOUR ISSUE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE?
### ORGANIZING YOUR TEAM

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### TRACKING YOUR PROGRESS

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Step 4: Report and celebrate

You and your team did it! Congratulations on completing a successful service-learning campaign. You’ve also learned some new skills and gained some valuable experience. Now it’s time to share the results of your actions in your community and the world around you and celebrate the group’s hard work.

Report

HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE INVOLVED IN YOUR SERVICE-LEARNING CAMPAIGN?

HOW MANY PEOPLE DID YOU IMPACT THROUGH THE CAMPAIGN?

DEPENDING ON HOW YOU CHOSE TO MEASURE YOUR ACTIONS, WHAT WERE YOUR RESULTS?

Share the good news

Host an event to acknowledge your group’s hard work and celebrate the difference you’ve made. Let everyone know the results in a concrete way (dollars raised, volunteer hours donated, canned goods collected, people helped, etc.—however you’re measuring your impact). Here are a few ideas to get you thinking:

• School-wide assembly
• Display for the whole school to visit
• Movie-style documentary screening
• Poster exhibition
• School social media page, website, newsletter or email
• Share on social media and tag @WEteachers so that we can share with our audience!
Celebrate

Make sure you celebrate and reward yourselves for all your hard work.

- Celebrate your impact through a group party or virtual gathering.
- Record the highlights of your event and create a video.
- Share photos with your school, community and on social media.

Give thanks

Thank everyone who participated and let donors and other supporters know how their contribution made a difference. Don't forget to share and celebrate over social media using your school, group or committee's handles.

RECORD AND REFLECT

It's important to look back at your goals to evaluate and celebrate the impact you've made individually and as a group.

DID YOU REACH YOUR GOALS? WHY OR WHY NOT?

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF THE CAMPAIGN?

WHAT IS SOMETHING NEW THAT YOU LEARNED?

WHAT WAS YOUR KEY TAKEAWAY FROM THE EXPERIENCE?
Thank you

It’s because of change-makers like you that we’re able to create sustainable impact and make a better world possible. We couldn’t do it without you!

SHARE YOUR STORIES!

We’d love to hear how you are activating service-learning. Tag @WEteachers or use #WEschools so that we can share what you’re doing!