

Student-led Service Projects

About the project ...

The Student-led Service Project established a structure for students to move their service project ideas into action, while developing their skills in communication, collaboration and planning. Students worked collaboratively with other students and staff during the application process and learned how to write project proposals and then plan and implement their ideas. Over 40 proposals were submitted from elementary and secondary schools, each supported by teachers, an administrator and between one and twenty-four students. All proposals were reviewed by the board's Character Development Steering Committee. Twenty projects were approved for funding on topics as diverse as creating a presentation for high school students to raise awareness for students with disabilities, purchasing a Wii system for a seniors' home and showing the seniors how to play, making care packages for Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan and raising funds for the Humane Society. One project called "Little Dresses for Africa" was proposed by a group of eight secondary students, however, over 100 elementary and 20 secondary students from the fashion class were involved in making the dresses.

Impact on student learning and school culture ...

- Students increased their awareness of the needs of the local community and the world around them and developed specific plans and actions to address the needs and find solutions to problems.
- Students also developed an understanding that change occurs through individual and cooperative ventures and that their actions are part of something bigger in the world.
- Students learned how to work collaboratively with other students, teachers and community members across a range of ages and experiences.
- Students developed project management skills and gained confidence in their ability to solve problems.

Lessons learned for moving forward ...

The project will continue next year due to the significant positive impact it had on students and their communities. The following adjustments will be made to the project application and implementation process to further increase the impact:

- The proposal criteria and submission date will be earlier in the year to allow more time for proposals to be refined and implemented.
- Approved project teams will be asked to submit a progress report mid-year to ensure that they are on track with their projects.
- Teams will be asked to create a presentation to showcase their projects and share their successes with other students and teachers at the board's annual Character Development Symposium.