



**2009 Annual Convening
of Service-Learning Leaders
Maryland State Department of Education
Service-Learning Unit
Great Kids' Farm~
Healthy Living, Eating and Environment**

Primary Subject: Science

Grade Level(s): 6 - 12

Additional Subject Area Connections: Social Studies, Health

Unit Title: Great Kids' Farm

Type(s) of Service: Indirect and Advocacy

Unit Description: As students learn about environmental preservation in science, healthy living in health classes, and advocating for things to improve the community and/or the quality of life in Social Studies classes, students began to express concerns about the lack of ready available fruits and vegetable served at lunch. As a result, students across the district put into action what they learned about all three of these areas by supporting the transformation of the Bragg Nature Center into what we now call the Great Kids Farm.

As a result of their efforts, there is now an urban farm which grows, harvest and puts directly into the hands of City Schools' students fresh fruit and produce during lunch on a daily basis.

Potential Service-Learning Action Experiences:

Student s performed tasks such as:

- Eradicating invasive plant species
- Small stream clean-up activities
- Organizing the greenhouses
- Planting fruit and vegetable plants and trees
- Preparing for a community plant sale fundraiser
- Harvesting fruit and vegetables to be consumed by their peers
- Creating outreach opportunities for students and community members
- Preparing a home for the farm goats
- Educating other students about the importance of green living

**Local School System: Baltimore City Public Schools
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**Maryland State Curriculum
Indicators Met**

Content Title:

Environmental Science:

- 6.3.4 The student will evaluate the interrelationship between humans and biological
- 6.4 The student will develop and apply knowledge and skills gained from an environmental issue investigation to an action project which protects and sustains the environment.

Health(adapted from the 7th Grade):

- 6.0 Nutrition and Fitness
 - Students will demonstrate the ability to use nutrition and fitness knowledge, skills and strategies to promote a healthy lifestyle.
- D. Nutrients
 - c. Describe how nutrient intake can contribute to being overweight or obese.
 - e. Investigate food sources/groups for nutrients that have a positive and negative effect on the four common chronic diseases and being overweight and obese.

Social Studies:

- 1.0 Political science
- 2.0 Analyze the importance of civic participation as a citizen of the world.

Language Arts/English:

- 1.0 General Reading Processes
 - 1.0 Develop and apply vocabulary through exposure to a variety of texts.
- 4.0 Writing
 - 2.0 Compose oral, written, and visual presentations that express personal ideas, inform, and persuade.

Alignment with Maryland's Best Practices of Service-Learning:

Unit Title

1. **Meet a recognized community need**

After discovering in health and science classes that students were not eating properly and needed to increase their consumption of more fruits and vegetables to be healthy, students across the Baltimore City advocated for more healthy options for their peers. As a result, students assisted with the transformation of the Bragg Nature Center into a working urban farm, The Great Kids Farm. Students then assisted with environmental preservation activities as well as vegetable and fruit planting activities which were later harvested and provided for consumption to students across the city.

2. **Achieve curricular objectives through service-learning**

This service-learning unit met a number of indicators and objectives from the Voluntary State Curriculum.

3. **Reflect throughout the service-learning experience**

At the conclusion of this activity, students created a variety of reflection activities inclusive of writing stories about their experience to scrapbooking to show their work and sharing their efforts with others.

4. **Develop student responsibility (Students have opportunities to make decisions about the service-learning project.)**

Student participants worked with the Great Kids Farm staff to develop a variety of projects that all students would engage in. They also worked with the farm staff to develop strategies for fundraising, marketing and brainstorming additional ways to get more students involved.



5. **Establish community partnerships**

Partnerships developed as a result of the efforts of various schools, the Great Kids Farm, as well as a few local non-profit agencies.

6. **Plan ahead for service-learning**

Students researched childhood obesity statistics, environmental preservation efforts as well as urban farming and sustainability efforts across the United States. Students were

responsible for designing how they would complete each activity and the follow up that was needed by additional groups of students who would follow their work at the farm.

7. Equip students with knowledge and skills needed for service

Participating students participated in several activities prior to actually going out to the farm to perform invasive species eradication and vegetation planting and transporting activities. Students also participated in an on-site tour and orientation to understand the skills necessary to carry out their task.