

Spotlight on Service-Learning

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Spring Forward and Be the Change!



As we spring forward into Daylight Savings Time, the weather transitions to spring, and spring and summer breaks loom in the near future, educators begin seeking strategies to engage their students in their content. Service-learning educates, engages, and empowers students to Be the Change!

When engaging students in service-learning it is important that it is meaningful and meets high quality standards:

- Experience should be organized, connected to content with service that meet authentic community needs;
- The process should include structured time that allows students to collaborate, plan, and reflect about the service experience;
- Service-learning should include activities that enable students to collaborate with community members and afford opportunities to make decisions and solve problems.

Students can learn that they can **Be the Change** that is essential in their community, and that they have a part to play as a civic participant. When students perceive the value of the knowledge and skill gained from those who are being served, they develop greater respect and caring. Outcomes are also enhanced when students have voice and choice in the service-learning projects so that they will rely on themselves and their peers to solve problems, and they will be addressing needs they see as essential and meaningful.



With spring and summer breaks coming soon, the students at **South Newton High School**, Kentland, completed a great service-learning project to help students **Be the Change** and meet a critical need for students in the community who experience additional needs during school recesses. Utilizing the **K-12 LTG** lesson [Bedtime Bags](#), students discussed the need for helping the economically disadvantaged and worked in small groups to develop a sense of empathy for the underprivileged while learning about current services provided to those individuals and families. Supported by an **INSPIRE³** mini-grant, students created Break Bags for impoverished elementary students to take home over Christmas break. Bags included art supplies, reading material, toiletries, and small

toys. Students were in charge of deciding what materials went in the bags based on perceived need and age of recipient. The students filled and distributed the bags.

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