



2015

## Assessing the Impact of an Elementary School's Service Learning Program

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S  
SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM

A DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION  
PROGRAM IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

BY

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

DECEMBER 2015

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## ABSTRACT

Service learning is an educational strategy in which academics are linked with student service projects benefitting the community. The strategy has been implemented in multiple forms across a variety of academic settings. Previous research has demonstrated many positive student outcomes related to service learning, including improved social-emotional functioning, increased academic motivation and achievement, and enhanced civic engagement. The current study focused on the implementation of a service learning pilot program at a suburban elementary school located in the Midwest. This service learning program included two different types of programming: a 22-week cross-age peer tutoring program (PT), and a 12-week service learning project co-taught by a school psychologist and third grade teacher (Ext). The impact of service learning on the participating students' senses of civic efficacy, responsibility, and awareness was ascertained through both quantitative and qualitative measures. Feedback from various stakeholder groups – students, parents, and school staff – was sought through both quantitative and qualitative means. Staff members' perceptions regarding their ability to effectively meet both Common Core State Standards and the Illinois State Board of Education's Social-Emotional Learning Standards through service learning was assessed through surveys/interviews. In addition, students' learning processes and the products created during service learning were aligned with Common Core standards.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Definition and History of Service Learning**

Service learning is broadly defined as an instructional method in which opportunities for community service are utilized as teaching tools. Such community service projects are used to extend and enrich the curriculum through experiential learning and deeper reflection (Billig, 2000; Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, 2009; National Youth Leadership Council, 2008). The term “service learning” was first utilized in 1969 by members of the Southern Regional Education Board, who used the term to describe “the accomplishment of tasks that meet genuine human needs in combination with conscious educational growth” (Karakas & Kavas, 2009, p. 41). However, some would say that the roots of service learning go back much farther than that, to the educational philosophies of Dewey, Piaget, or Tocqueville. These individuals espoused educational philosophies which stated that learning is best achieved through active engagement and a distinct purpose, qualities which are consistent with the idea of service learning (Billig, 2000; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007).

Through the years, educators have varied in their understandings of service learning programming and purpose. Billig (2000) described three overarching schools of thought regarding service learning’s place in education. Some, she reported, have seen service learning as a philosophy of educational reform, a “way to reinvigorate the central role that schools can play in developing responsible, caring citizens who deeply

understand democracy and the meaning of civic responsibility” (p. 658). Others have seen service learning as a curricular tool, one that effectively engages students through authentic learning experiences and the chance to apply standards in real-world contexts. Still others have viewed service learning as an educational program, one that might be available as an elective, club, or after-school program for students who are motivated to make an impact on their community. Multiple organizations dedicated to service learning have attempted to reach consensus in defining the term, outlining the criteria necessary for a program to truly qualify as “service learning.” Many such organizations refer to the criteria set forth by the Corporation for National and Community Service. This group defined service-learning as “... a method under which students or participants learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community; is coordinated with an elementary school/secondary school/institution of higher education/community-service program and with the community; helps foster civic responsibility; is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students; and provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience” (Billig, 2000, p. 659).

This last criterion – structured reflection – has been described as “a pause button that gives students the time to explore the impact of what they are learning and its effects on their thoughts and future actions” (Kaye, 2010, p. 17). The importance of allowing adequate time for reflection was an idea espoused by Dewey long ago. He believed that it was the reflection upon an experience, rather than simply the experience itself, that allowed learning to occur (Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). In service learning, student reflection is ongoing, taking place before, during, and after the service experience. It is

only through this process of reflection that students are made aware of their own assumptions and biases, are able to develop a deeper understanding of the factors impacting the situation requiring service, and can expand their repertoire of problem solving skills.

Service learning programming encompasses nearly innumerable possibilities for implementation. Diverse projects such as school-wide cleanup efforts (Schultz, 2007; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007), advocating for a local monument's preservation (Terry & Panter, 2011), tutoring younger students (Maheady & Gard, 2010; Topping, Miller, Thurston, McGavock, & Conlin, 2011; Wright & Kristi, 2006), and researching the impact of pollution on local waterways (Kaye, 2010; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007) all fit under the broad umbrella of "service learning." There are four types of service students are able to provide: direct, indirect, research, and advocacy (Kaye, 2010). In direct service projects, students have immediate contact with the recipients of their service. Such projects might include visiting with residents at a nursing home, tutoring students after school, working with animals at a shelter, or engaging in on-site environmental work. Indirect service projects typically benefit the community or society in some way, without direct interactions with those being served. These types of projects might include collecting food for a local pantry, raising money for a global charity, or operating a mitten drive for a homeless shelter. For service projects involving research, students gather, analyze, and report on data in the public interest. Such projects might include testing local waterways for pollution, surveying/interviewing the residents of a community regarding an upcoming political referendum, or compiling statistics on teen driving. Lastly, students engaged in advocacy projects work to raise awareness and

promote action on issues of concern to the local community and beyond. These projects might include letter writing campaigns, hosting discussion forums, speaking to political representatives, or theater performances.

Over the past few decades, service learning initiatives have enjoyed increasing popularity. In 2001, seven states allowed districts to award credit toward graduation for volunteering/service learning, a number that rose to nineteen by 2011. Seven states currently allow districts to require service for graduation, and one – Maryland – has community service requirements for all high school students prior to graduation (Sparks, 2013; ECS Service-Learning/Community Service online database). Billig (2000) posited that the uptick in service learning initiatives was due to states wanting both a “reform of students and a reform of education” (p. 658). She said there has been a prevailing belief that students have become increasingly alienated from communities/society, while at the same time U.S. schools were becoming less competitive in comparison with international standards. States looking to increase students’ engagement and improve academic programming were enticed by the research literature outlining service learning’s potential benefits.

### **Outcomes of Service Learning**

Numerous positive effects have been reported from all types of service learning. For students, service learning is linked with better school experiences and academic outcomes. Students engaged in quality service learning programs report increased engagement at school, and demonstrate that engagement by asking more questions and completing more classroom tasks/homework than peers in other classroom settings (Billig, 2000; National Youth Leadership Council, 2008). They demonstrate gains in

academic achievement as measured by state tests of reading/math and increases in overall GPA (Billig, 2000; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). Some studies show improvements in students' problem solving abilities and critical thinking skills (Education Commission of the States, 2013). Students' attendance is also improved when engaged in quality service learning programs (Education Commission of the States, 2013; Ginsburg-Block, Rohrbeck, & Fantuzzo, 2006; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). In longitudinal studies of service learning, service experiences that were embedded in high school courses improved students' graduation rates from both high school and, later, college (National Youth Leadership Council, 2008).

Studies indicate that in addition to academic gains, students also benefit by way of enhanced social/emotional functioning and improved behavior. When involved in service learning, students demonstrate a reduction of risky behaviors such as drug and alcohol use, aggression, delinquency, and sexually risky behaviors (Billig, 2000; Bowman-Perrott, Vannest, Williams, Greenwood, & Parker, 2013; Conway et al., 2009; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). Students engaged in various types of service learning have shown gains in their senses of self-esteem, self-worth, self-efficacy, and self-confidence (Billig, 2000; Ginsburg-Block et al., 2006; Miller, Topping, & Thurston, 2010). Increases have been noted in participating students' overall levels of empathy, and these students rate themselves as being more socially competent than do non-participating peers (Billig, 2000; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007; National Youth Leadership Council, 2008).

Not only do students themselves appear to benefit from service learning, but schools on the whole benefit as well. Research shows that schools with service-learning

programs are regarded as demonstrating a more caring, positive atmosphere than those without. In schools with service learning programs, both teachers and students reported school climates that were more positive and feelings of greater connectedness to the school (Billig, 2000; National Youth Leadership Council, 2008; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). Students involved in service learning show an increased appreciation of diversity and are better able to recognize that multiple perspectives exist (Billig, 2000; Conway et al., 2009). Discipline referrals, school violence, and dropout rates decreased in schools with service learning programs (Billig, 2000; Conway et al., 2009; Ginsberg-Block et al., 2006; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007; Zeldin, 2004). Staff members showed greater levels of job satisfaction, and teacher collegiality increased while teacher turnover decreased (Billig, 2000; National Youth Leadership Council, 2008). Schools also benefit in practical ways from the service provided by students, whether it be cleanup efforts, school gardens, or tutoring programs. Peer tutoring in particular has been found to be an extremely beneficial type of service learning program. In a meta-analysis of elementary peer tutoring by Ginsberg-Block et al. (2006), the authors found that, "Peer tutoring surpassed computer-assisted instruction, class size reduction, and (increased) instructional time as the most economical method of raising reading and mathematics achievement." Slavin and Lake (2008) agreed that peer tutoring was a wise investment, naming it as one of only five proven methods for increasing students' math performance (despite having studied many costly math curriculums, computer programs, and boxed interventions).

The positive effects of service learning extend beyond the school to the surrounding community. When schools implement service learning programs, studies

show that community members view students more favorably. Community members volunteer their time more often and increase their financial giving to schools with service learning programs (Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007; Zeldin, 2004). Service learning has been shown to positively impact parental involvement in the schools, and can serve to improve relations between home and school. Through taking part in service projects with their children, parents often benefit along with the students. Many service projects allow parents to expand their skills in important areas such as communication, advocacy, civic engagement, etc., increasing their feelings of self-worth (Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). Other residents of the community benefit by being recipients of service. Students are able to donate their academic knowledge, fresh insights, and vision to local organizations (Karakas & Kavas, 2009; National Youth Leadership Council, 2008). Rather than viewing students as “problems,” as many people do, community members can begin to see students as resources instead. Because of this, community members are more likely to view students positively when the local school operates an effective service learning program (Baise & Zevin, 2014; Kaye, 2010; National Youth Leadership Council, 2008; Wade & Yarborough, 2007; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007).

Finally, research suggests that students who engage in service learning programs develop the skills and dispositions necessary to become stronger citizens and community members as adults (Baise & Zevin, 2014; Corporation for National and Community Service, 2008; Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004; Wade & Yarborough, 2007; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). Research has shown that students who participate in service learning are more likely to continue on a pathway of lifelong civic engagement. Individuals who participated in service learning during their youth are



more likely than their peers to be politically and socially connected to their communities as adults (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2008; Wade & Yarborough, 2007; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). As adults, individuals who participated in service learning are more likely to demonstrate an understanding of political context and governing institutions (Baise & Zevin, 2014; Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004; Wade & Yarborough, 2007), and are also more likely to see themselves as being politically efficacious (Chi, Jastrzab, & Melchior, 2006; Wade & Yarborough, 2007). Those who engage in service learning as children are much more likely to continue volunteering as adults, which is frequently considered a hallmark of civic engagement (Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004; Wade & Yarborough, 2007; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). These increases in individuals' civic efficacy, knowledge, and engagement are enhanced when such outcomes are specifically targeted by the service learning projects' designs. Participants in projects focusing on government institutions and democratic processes show greater gains in civic efficacy than those participating in projects focusing on other topics (Baise & Zevin, 2014; Wade & Yarborough, 2007). The largest gains in students' civic efficacy and participation overall resulted service learning programs of sufficient intensity/duration that directly connected the service project with academic learning, prioritized student voice/ownership, and included systematic and purposeful reflection by the students (Baise & Zevin, 2014; Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004; Wade & Yarborough, 2007).

Much of the research regarding the civic outcomes of service learning has focused on high school and college-aged youth. A number of authors, however, contend that the elementary years are the true starting point for civic engagement (Baise & Zevin, 2014;

Chi et al., 2006; Corporation for National and Community Service, 2008; Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004; Wade & Yarborough, 2007). Chi et al. (2006) opined that, “the (elementary) grades represent a critical opportunity to lay a foundation upon which civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions can grow” (p. 5). Students are already considered to be fully vested members of their political culture by age 14, having absorbed many of the attitudes and civic habits from the influential adults in their lives by that age (Baise & Zevin, 2014; Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004). Despite this, many educators do not fully appreciate the window of opportunity that exists for civic learning in the elementary grades, nor do they acknowledge elementary students’ ability to engage in meaningful service learning. According to a 2008 survey of school administrators conducted by the Corporation for National and Community Service, over half (51%) of elementary school principals reported that their schools don’t offer service-learning activities because they believe their students are “too young” (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2014, p. 2). Although the elementary years have been somewhat neglected in the service learning literature when compared with students in older grades, it is hoped that this trend will not continue. In their summary of the 2008 Corporation for National and Community Service report, the authors concluded, “If service-learning is to be viewed as a method of putting young people on a lifelong path of engagement, it is necessary to show that age is not a barrier to active citizenship and that elementary school students also benefit from service-learning” (p. 2).

### **K-12 Service Learning Standards for Quality Practice**

Although numerous studies have pointed to the positive potential of service learning, many researchers have lamented the high levels of variability in program goals,

structures, and outcomes (Billig, 2000; Conway et al., 2007; Education Commission of the States, 2012; National Youth Leadership Council, 2008). Billig (2000) noted that even when great care was taken to select only “quality” Learn and Serve programs for a large scale longitudinal evaluation, those programs still varied greatly in their implementation. Such lack of uniformity has clouded researchers’ ability to evaluate the true effects of service learning programs (Conway et al., 2007). In 2008, the National Youth Leadership Council initiated an analysis of various research findings to determine what factors were most crucial in creating effective service learning programs. The findings of this analysis led to a comprehensive set of guidelines entitled, *K-12 Service Learning Standards for Quality Practice* (National Youth Leadership Council, 2008). These eight practices, listed below, have come to be thought of as the “gold standard” by which programs should be measured (see Figure 1).

<p><b>Meaningful Service</b> Service learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.</p>	<p><b>Links to Curriculum</b> Service learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.</p>	<p><b>Reflection</b> Service learning incorporates multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one's relationship to society</p>	<p><b>Diversity</b> Service learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.</p>
<p><b>Youth Voice</b> Service learning provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating service learning experiences with guidance from adults.</p>	<p><b>Partnerships</b> Service learning partnerships are collaborative, mutually beneficial, and address community needs.</p>	<p><b>Progress Monitoring</b> Service learning engages participants in an ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting specified goals, and uses results for improvement and sustainability.</p>	<p><b>Duration and Intensity</b> Service learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.</p>

*Figure 1.* Summary of K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice. From the National Youth Leadership Council, [www.nylc.org](http://www.nylc.org).

Analyses of service learning outcomes have shown that “without fidelity to the high standards that have been agreed upon by service learning experts, service learning

programs do not appear to have the same potential for positive outcomes” (National Youth Leadership Council, 2008, p. 8). Research has shown large differences between the results achieved by effective and non-effective programming. Poorly designed service learning programs – those where students’ input/opinions aren’t included in decision-making, or those that are of insufficient intensity and don’t allow sufficient time for reflection – can actually result in negative outcomes for students (Education Commission of the States, 2012). Students in low quality service learning programs may actually experience a drop in academic and community engagement levels over time, whereas their counterparts in high quality programs experience gains in those areas. In low quality programs, students actually lose ground in their mastery of “21<sup>st</sup> century skills” (i.e., communication and collaboration skills, critical thinking skills, and ability to use technology effectively), while students in high-quality programs improve in those same skills (Education Commission of the States, 2012). These stark differences highlight the importance of careful planning and study when implementing a service learning program.

### **Linking Service Learning With Other Educational Initiatives**

School personnel are strapped for time, and struggle to meet all the demands placed upon them by new initiatives, standardized testing, and changing curricula. Stand alone programs that are perceived as “just one more thing to do” will understandably be met with resistance. To this end, it is important that service learning programming serve to complement and improve upon other major initiatives/programs.

One such initiative is the implementation of Common Core curricular standards (CCSS). Through the CCSS initiative, there has been an increased focus on developing

students' college readiness and honing their "21<sup>st</sup> century skills" (i.e., an assortment of cognitive and character traits/habits which allow students to function in a fast-paced global economy). Such skills include: problem solving/thinking skills, cooperative and communication strategies, appreciation of diversity, and perspective taking. According to an 2013 *Education Commission of the States* report, service-learning is "one of several... strategies that states, districts, schools, and teachers may use to help students gain a deeper understanding of core academic content" and build 21<sup>st</sup> century skills (p. 3). The report goes on to say, "A growing body of research shows that students engaged in high-quality service learning (programs) learn to collaborate, think critically and problem solve. These same deeper learning skills are necessary for students to master the Common Core (standards) and meet the expectations of Common Core authors and advocates" (p. 6). In order to meet common core standards through the practice of service learning, experts in the field agree that thorough planning is required. For any project, educators must identify the specific curricular standards being addressed, as well as the assessments/rubrics that will be utilized to measure students' level of mastery for each standard (Education Commission of the States, 2013; National Youth Leadership Council 2012 & 2013). In addition, students' understandings will be enhanced through reflection activities that involve "higher-order thinking skills (such) as analysis, evaluation, and problem solving ... to understand the service activity and its relationship to community need" (Billig, 2000, p. 662).

Another major initiative to which service learning is well-suited is Response to Intervention, or RtI. This initiative advocates the use of academic differentiation, progress monitoring, and specific interventions to meet students' educational needs in an

efficient and systematic way. Service learning projects can be utilized to address the needs of both struggling and advanced students. For example, peer tutoring is an excellent way to help students improve both their math and reading skills, and could address the needs of students requiring Tier 2 interventions (Bowman-Perrott et al., 2013; Topping et al., 2011; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). Other authors noted that service learning is as an excellent method for differentiating instruction for high achieving and gifted students. Such projects would be driven by student interests, and would allow such students to tackle more challenging curricular content in a highly engaging way (Neeper, & Dymond, 2012; Terry & Panter, 2011).

One last educational initiative prevalent during the past decade has been the institution of school-wide positive behavior supports, or PBS. Through PBS, all students are to be given universal behavioral supports in the form of a positive, secure school environment, affirming relationships with school staff, and instruction/positive feedback regarding school-wide behavioral expectations. Students who struggle with this level of support are provided with more intensive behavioral interventions and instruction. Wilczenski and Coomey (2007) stated that there has been a shift in how schools address behavioral concerns in the age of PBS. Rather than using counseling interventions which focus on remediation and single target behavior problems, schools are relying more and more upon proactive counseling models that emphasize “skill building rather than deficit reduction” (p. xix). Such programs address “positive youth development constructs, such as social/emotional competency, resilience, and purpose” (p. 22). Service learning is one such program, and has been found to be effective in both promoting resilience/positive behavioral outcomes and reversing negative behavior patterns (Billig, 2000; Conway et

al., 2009; Ginsburg-Block et al., 2006; National Youth Leadership Council, 2008; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007).

### **School Psychologists' Role in Service Learning**

School psychologists straddle the realms of student behavior and academic achievement, filling multiple roles within those realms: PBS/RtI coordinators, learning and behavioral consultants, interventionists, and mentors. Living in both worlds puts school psychologists in a prime position to act as service learning coaches/coordinators. In the words of Wilczenski and Coomey (2007), "school psychologists and counselors are uniquely positioned to infuse a service-learning program with social/emotional learning, career exploration, and academic goal interventions, making them a natural choice to fulfill such a coordinator role" (p. 112). Another asset school psychologists bring to service learning programs is their knowledge of the many different community agencies and supports available to families. This expertise allows them to easily find community partners to either assist in, or reap the benefits of, service projects (Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). Lastly, by working with the entire student population and staff of a particular school, school psychologists have multiple opportunities to engage or assist various groups in their service learning efforts. This not only gives them the flexibility to meet the needs of many different students/groups; it also allows them to provide links between different groups/classrooms working on similar projects or towards similar goals.

### **Study Purpose**

The multiple positive outcomes that have been linked to service learning in the research give plenty of reasons for enthusiasm. Carefully planned, rigorous service

learning projects which adhere to the *K-12 Standards for Quality* have the potential to develop students' skills in numerous areas – both academic and social/emotional – at the same time. It is this potential for multiple positive impacts that would seem to recommend service learning as an especially useful strategy in our age of limited time and increasing educational demands. The purpose of the current study was to measure the impact of a newly implemented elementary service learning program through both quantitative and qualitative measures. These measures were intended to answer three research questions. First, did the current service learning program have a positive impact on students' civic attitudes and self-concept? Second, did the various stakeholder groups – teachers, students, and parents – find service learning to be a valuable educational strategy? Third, does the service learning program appear to be an effective method for meeting academic and social-emotional learning standards?



## CHAPTER II

### METHODS

#### **Setting**

The current study took place at an elementary school located in a large unit school district in the suburban Midwest. Approximately 400 students attend the school, which serves students from kindergarten through fifth grade. According to the school's 2013-14 Illinois Report Card data, the majority of students attending this school (63.4%) are Caucasian. Twenty-two percent (21.6%) of the students attending the school are Hispanic, 5.1% are African American, and 4.8% are Asian. Approximately 10% of the students are classified "English Language Learners," and 42% are classified as "Low Income."

A cross-age Peer Tutoring program was first piloted at this school during the last 12 weeks of the 2013-14 school year. During the pilot program, 20 third and fourth grade students tutored 20 kindergarten and first grade students in the area of reading. Informal responses given by school staff, students, and parents regarding the Peer Tutoring program were overwhelmingly positive. This first positive reaction paved the way for expansion of the program during the 2014-15 school year.

#### **Participants**

During the second half of the 2014-15 school year, the peer tutoring program included 34 tutors: 16 fourth grade students (5 boys and 11 girls) and 18 fifth grade students (9 boys and 9 girls). There were 33 tutees: 13 kindergarten students (8 boys and

5 girls) and 20 first grade students (10 boys and 10 girls). Twenty-one third grade students (11 girls and 10 boys) participated in the co-taught extension group.

During the assessment phase of the study, all of the peer tutors and extension students were invited to complete semi-structured interviews regarding their experiences. From those that volunteered for the interviews (15 extension students and 24 peer tutors), eight peer tutors and eight extension students were selected. Purposive sampling was utilized to ensure that girls and boys were equally represented, and that fourth and fifth grade tutors were equally represented. For the school staff interviews, purposive sampling was again utilized to select seven teachers that represented each of the grade levels involved in the service learning program (one kindergarten teacher, two first grade teachers, two third grade teachers, one fourth grade teacher and one fifth grade teacher), as well as the building principal. Invitations to complete an online survey about the service learning program were sent to 81 parents of peer tutors, tutees, and extension students participating in service learning program during the second. From that pool, 24 parents chose to complete the survey (nine parents of peer tutors, eight parents of tutees, and seven parents of extension students).

## **Instruments**

### **Student Civic Attitudes Survey**

A 25-question student survey assessing students' civic attitudes (e.g., the Civic Attitudes Survey) was administered during the first and final weeks of the third grade extension group. Some of the items on the survey mimic those from two previous studies of students' civic engagement and efficacy. In one of those studies (Wade & Yarborough, 2007), 2,529 students in grades 3-12 were surveyed at the start and the

conclusion of a program called CiviConnections. That survey had been intended to evaluate the program's impact on four hypothetical factors: students' civic knowledge, civic efficacy, civic participation and civic beliefs. Items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 22 of the current proposed survey either replicate or approximate survey items from Wade and Yarborough's study. The other previous research study used to inform the current student survey was a pilot study of a survey designed to measure elementary students' civic outcomes (Chi et al., 2006). That survey had been administered to 445 students in grades 3 through 8, and was intended to provide a global assessment of civic knowledge, skills and attitudes. This global assessment was theoretically divided into seven separate domains: Personal Responsibility, Civic Responsibility, Leadership Efficacy, Civic Participation Skills, Civic Thinking Skills, School as a Community, and Civic Knowledge. Items 3, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, and 18 on the currently proposed survey either replicate or approximate survey items from the Chi et al. study.

The current Civic Attitudes Survey is thought to estimate four separate constructs/factors related to students' civic attitudes and engagement. The first construct, *Civic Awareness*, is a concept similar to the Civic Knowledge posited in both the Chi et al. (2006) and Wade and Yarborough (2007) studies. *Civic Awareness* reflects students' knowledge of, and interest in, local issues, civic processes, and community organizations. No reliability or validity statistics were provided by either Wade and Yarborough or Chi et al. regarding this construct. On the current Civic Attitudes Survey, five items (#1, #6, #9, #10, and #11) are believed to comprise the *Civic Awareness (CA)* factor.

The next potential factor, *Civic Responsibility*, is a concept borrowed from the 2006 Chi et al. study. This construct represents a belief in one's responsibility towards

other people and the community as a whole, and involves feelings of compassion/empathy. In their study, Chi et al. did not calculate the reliability coefficient for Civic Responsibility as a single construct. Instead, the calculated reliability coefficients for the four components the authors believed comprised the scale (Concern for Others, Value of Group Work, Appreciating Diversity, and Environmental Stewardship). The reliability coefficients for these four components, then, ranged from .49 to .74. For the current Civic Attitudes survey, seven items (#2, #3, #4, #15, #20, #23, and #25) are thought to comprise the *Civic Responsibility (CR)* factor.

The construct of Civic Efficacy was borrowed from both the Wade & Yarborough and Chi et al. studies. These authors conceptualized the term as representing a belief in one's ability to make positive changes in one's community, which included mastery of both group participation and individual leadership skills. According to Chi et al. (2006), the reliability coefficient for this construct was .68. For the purposed of the current study, however, the Civic Efficacy construct is believed to represent not one, but two, factors. One factor, *Civic Efficacy: Group Skills (EG)*, represents students' beliefs regarding their ability to work effectively in groups, especially when addressing community problems. This factor is believed to contain five items (#7, #8, #12, #16, and #19). The other factor, *Civic Efficacy: Individual Skills (EI)*, is tied to students' feelings of personal competency, and a belief in their ability to make a positive impact on the world around them. This last factor is thought to contain eight items (#5, #13, #14, #17, #18, #21, #22, #24). A copy of the Civic Attitudes Survey used in the current study can be found in Appendix G.

### **Semi-Structured Interviews**

During the last two weeks of the 2014-15 school year, semi-structured student interviews were conducted with a sample of participants from both of the service learning project types (peer tutors and participants from the third grade service learning extension group, i.e., “extension group students”). The interviews were designed to elicit feedback about the service learning program, including its perceived impact upon the students themselves. The general prompts that were provided to the students during these interviews are provided in Appendix K.

During that same time frame, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the building principal, and with teachers whose students participated in peer tutoring or the extension group. These interviews were intended to elicit both general and specific feedback regarding the service learning program. The general prompts that were provided to the teachers/principal during these interviews are provided in Appendix N.

### **Parent Survey**

The parents of students who participated in service learning during the second semester of the 2014-15 school year were invited to complete an online survey. This survey solicited feedback from them regarding their children’s experiences in service learning. The parent survey’s 21 items included general questions about the child’s service learning experiences, as well as questions asking whether specific academic or emotional outcomes resulted from the child’s participation. Sixteen of the survey items were presented in a 5-point Likert-style format, with potential responses ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Higher scores would indicate a stronger parent perception of positive outcomes related to the service learning experience. The survey

also included four yes/no questions about specific behaviors related to the child's enjoyment of service learning, as well as to the child's attempts to engage parents in the projects. A final open-ended question asking parents for additional feedback/comments regarding the service learning program was included at the end of the survey. The parent survey and its cover letter are included in Appendix O and Appendix P.

## **Procedures**

### **Peer Tutoring**

The Service Learning program consisted of two different modules/types. The first type, a cross-age peer tutoring program, was an expansion of a pilot program that had been introduced during the last two months of the 2013-14 school year. For this program, peer tutors were chosen during the week of October 6, 2014, based on the recommendations of all six fourth and fifth grade teachers. Teachers were directed to choose students they believed would do well working with younger students, and who would most enjoy tutoring. Teachers were also told that tutors had to be able to follow school-wide behavioral expectations independently, and should model appropriate reading/cooperative behaviors for their tutees. Of the 34 students recommended for the tutoring program by their teachers, 11 had previously tutored during last year's pilot program. The current tutors' initial reading skills varied at the start of the tutoring program, with some scoring up to one year below grade level fluency expectations during fall benchmarking, and others scoring at or above expectations.

When inviting the students to be in the program, tutors were told that they had been recommended by their teachers for the Peer Tutoring program. They were also told what the criteria for selection had been. They were provided with a summary of the

program procedures and expectations, and were given the choice of whether or not to participate in the program. All of the recommended tutors chose to participate in the program. Parent permission forms were sent home with each tutor, and had to be signed and brought back before tutors were able to begin training. The tutor training was completed in four sessions over a two-week period using program materials created by Jim Wright (which can be found at [www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org)). Lessons that were taught during training included a review of appropriate hallway/tutoring behaviors, how to address tutee misbehaviors, how to give compliments/encouragement, and specific paired reading strategies. During the last training session, the students' understanding of the tutoring process was assessed, and they "graduated" to being full-fledged peer tutors.

While the tutors were being trained, all five kindergarten and first grade teachers were asked to recommend tutees for the peer tutoring program. They were asked to recommend tutees who: (1) would follow behavioral expectations in the library and act in a respectful manner towards a peer tutor, (2) would enjoy reading with a fourth or fifth grade buddy, (3) could read well enough on his/her own to engage in fluency practice, and (4) would benefit from the tutoring in some way. The last criterion was left up to the teachers' discretion. Three teachers felt their strongest readers would benefit most from peer tutoring, because it would afford them extra practice/attention that was often reserved for needier students in the classroom. Two teachers instead recommended students who were struggling with reading, hoping to give them one more venue to practice needed skills. The school psychologist contacted each of the tutees' parents to let them know their child had been recommended for the Peer Tutoring program, and discussed with them the criteria for that recommendation. Parents were told that

participation in the Peer Tutoring program was absolutely voluntary, and if they chose not to allow their child to participate, the opportunity would simply be offered to a different student. Permission slips were sent home with the potential tutees, and all of the parents gave their children permission to participate. Tutoring began on November 3, 2014. The 25-minute sessions took place twice a week in the school library. Tutoring sessions were supervised by this researcher, or by the media specialist.

During the last week of January, 2015, teachers were given the choice as to whether they wished to have the same tutees continue in the program, or whether they would rather give other students a chance to participate. Both kindergarten teachers and one first grade teacher decided to change tutees, while the other two first grade teachers chose to have the same tutees continue for the rest of the school year.

In January, 2015, this researcher shared the peer tutors' version of the student assent script (see Appendix A) with all of the peer tutors. Students were notified regarding the general purpose of the research, and were assured that their participation in the Peer Tutoring program would not be impacted by their willingness to be involved in the study. A second written permission slip/consent form was sought from parents of all the tutors (see Appendix B and Appendix C). Through the informed consent procedures, parents were notified regarding the general purpose of research study, and told about the student interviews and parent surveys that would be conducted. They were assured that their permission allowing their children to participate in the study was voluntary, and would not impact their children's involvement in tutoring. A request asking for permission to audio-record the interviews was included with the consent form, as well as a copy of the interview questions (see Appendix K).



During the student assent process, the peer tutors were notified about voluntary weekly tutor lunch groups that would begin meeting in February, 2015. These meetings were intended to serve the dual purpose of planning special activities for the tutees and allowing the tutors to reflect on their practice. Tutors were sorted by grade level into groups of five to six, and met with this researcher once a week over lunch. During the meetings, tutors planned a number of activities (such as a scavenger hunt, writing activities, and crafts) for tutoring celebrations in March and May. They later reflected on how these activities were received by their tutees, and shared success stories, challenges, and ideas with one another. The tutor meeting component was added to the peer tutoring program in an attempt to better meet the *K-12 Standards for Quality Service Learning Practice* through the introduction of reflection, youth voice, and progress monitoring.

### **Co-taught Service Learning Extension Group**

The second service learning module included in the current study was a service learning extension group co-taught by one of the third grade teachers and this researcher. The students who participated in this group had been identified by the third grade team as needing additional challenge/extension in Language Arts. The identification process took place at the third grade Data Analysis meeting in December, 2014. This Data Analysis meeting included grade level teachers, support staff members, and the building principal, who analyzed benchmarking results and other academic data in order to plan interventions and differentiate instruction. The students identified as needing Language Arts extension were those who exceed standards on both benchmarking and classroom reading assessments, and who consistently demonstrated a high level of skill in the classroom. The extension activities were presented during a 30-minute “Intervention &

Extension” (I&E) block, in which all grade level students were divided among grade level teachers and support staff to receive either specific reading interventions or English Language Arts (ELA) extension opportunities. Parents were notified in writing regarding the extension (or intervention) group their student would attend, as well as the teacher assigned to that group.

The 12-week service learning extension group began on January 27, 2015. (Thought the group had originally been intended for six to eight weeks, additional time was needed due to interruptions resulting from cold days, PARCC testing, and spring break.) A student assent script outlining the intent of the group and overarching research project was presented to the students on the first day of the program (see Appendix D). Student brought home letters of informed consent to their parents to let them know about the service learning group (see Appendix E and Appendix F). In the informed consent letter sent to parents, they were notified that involvement in the service learning program was voluntary, and were told that they could choose not to include their child in the extension group. Twenty-two students had originally been recommended for the extension group; however, one parent chose to place her child in an alternate I&E group rather than allow the child to participate in the study.

Parents were also notified that they had a choice whether or not to allow their children to participate in the individual interviews. A copy of the interview questions (see Appendix K) was included with the interview parent consent form, along with an additional request asking for permission to audio-record the interviews. After parent consent forms were obtained for the 21 up students participating in the extension group,

the students were administered as a group paper-and-pencil version of the 25-question Civic Attitudes Survey on February 3, 2015 (see Appendix G).

The service learning extension group followed the general project format set forth by Cathryn Berger Kaye in her book, *The Complete Guide to Service Learning*. For the first step of this project format (*Investigation*), a community problem or service opportunity is researched and defined. During the second step (*Preparing/Planning*), a plan is set forth to address the community problem and/or provide service. These plans are put into place during the third step (*Action*). For the fourth step (*Reflection*), students evaluate the project and their place in it, and compare their new understandings of the problem with their initial reactions. The fifth step (*Demonstration*) has students display their new understandings through an academic demonstration. Although the steps listed above are often presented in a linear/sequential fashion, they are more accurately seen as part of a fluid and iterative process. During a given service learning project, participants periodically reflect on their progress, conduct further investigations, revamp plans to match new understandings, and demonstrate their knowledge in different ways for different audiences.

The lessons presented during the co-taught extension group built upon on a prior third grade social studies unit focused on citizenship. Students were first introduced to the concept of service learning, with the classroom teacher engaging them in group discussions about service learning's ties to the idea of citizenship. After this introduction, students began investigating service opportunities. They were asked to complete an interest survey, were given an opportunity to explore several websites dedicated to matching students with service projects/opportunities

([www.childrendonate2.org](http://www.childrendonate2.org); [www.ecology.com/ecology-kids/](http://www.ecology.com/ecology-kids/); [www.generationon.org/kids/make-your-mark/projects/](http://www.generationon.org/kids/make-your-mark/projects/); and [www.dosomething.org](http://www.dosomething.org)), and interviewed their parents/family members about past volunteer experiences. These activities allowed the students to generate a list of potential charities/service organizations they might research for the project. Students selected a service area they were most interested in (such as animal welfare, disaster relief, childhood cancer, etc.), and were helped to find a service organization that addressed that area. Based on the students' interests, six different organizations were eventually selected. Students chose which organization they most wanted to study, sorting themselves into instructional groups of one to six students. The students worked together in these groups to research their organizations, craft emails requesting additional information, compose phone scripts, and contact individuals within the organization by phone. From the information they were able to collect, students then created posters and gave presentations to share what they'd learned with the other third grade students. They also completed an opinion writing unit, with the final product being an essay about why the work of their chosen organization is important. The students then worked together as a whole group to plan a fundraising event, the *Bake Sale and More*, to be held during the school's annual education fair. Together, they decided what baked goods would be sold and made artwork to sell. They also created posters and announcements promoting the event, went to different classrooms asking for donations, and convinced the building principal to host a raffle drawing to raise additional funds. On May 5, the students hosted and ran the event, selling items at one table and passing out brochures/information about their organizations at another. During the final days of the extension group, they wrote a reflective paper about the things they learned and what

they'd gained during their experiences. The same Civic Attitudes Survey that had been given to the students at the beginning of the service learning unit was administered to the group once more on May 7, 2015.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The items on the students' Civic Attitudes Survey had four potential Likert-style responses. Scoring of each item was based on student response, with most items being given 1 point for the response "Not At All," 2 points for the response "Not Really," 3 points for the response "Sort Of," and 4 points for the response "Definitely," Items #4, #5, #13, #14 and #25 were reverse coded (i.e., responses of "No Way" were given 4 points, "Not Really" 3 points, etc.). Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for each of the four hypothesized factors - *Civic Awareness (CA)*, *Civic Responsibility (CR)*, *Civic Efficacy: Group Skills (EG)*, and *Civic Efficacy: Individual Skills (EI)* – using all of the students' scores obtained within each factor. This was done to provide a general measure of construct validity and reliability for each factor. To determine if there were significant changes in students' responses from pretest to posttest, t-tests were performed for the scores students received on each of the individual survey items. In addition, the mean scores for each of the individual test items were also calculated for the pretest and for the posttest to examine patterns of change. An additional matched pair t-test was conducted using the mean item scores within each factor at pretest and posttest. The .05 alpha level was used for all statistical tests.

The teacher and student interviews were audio-recorded, then transcribed to ensure that all pertinent data was accurately captured. To begin the coding process, a large number of potential a priori codes were generated from the themes/ideas most

prominent in the three research questions. Additional codes were generated through open coding, then honed through the constant comparative process described in Johnson and Christensen's book, *Educational Research*. The final codes fell within five categories: CCSS (which referred to interviewees' positive agreement regarding service learning's potential for meeting academic standards), SEL (which referred to interviewees' statements that indicated the positive impact service learning had on the social-emotional skills identified in ISBE's Social Emotional Learning Standards), Value (which referred to interviewees' statements regarding the benefits of service learning that didn't fit within CCSS/SEL), Challenge (which referred to interviewees' statements regarding the difficult or challenging aspects of service learning), and Implementation (which referred to specific suggestions made by interviewees to improve upon, expand, or change implementation of service learning). The last part of the coding process involved having this researcher, and an outside researcher with well-established qualitative coding experience, review/code the interview transcripts independently. The two then summarized each interviewee's responses within each of the five coding categories. The two coders' summaries were compared/contrasted, and content consensus was reached (Vera et al., 2014). The summary data was then analyzed to determine interviewees' overall perceptions of the service learning experience. In addition, common themes related to this study's research questions were identified, concerns/challenges were enumerated, and recommendations regarding critical implementation components/program changes were determined. A draft of the results presented in this document was also given to the outside researcher for final validation. It should be noted that references

in this document to “teacher interviews,” or to “teachers’” responses, refer to the responses obtained from both the seven teachers and the building principal.

The data collected from the online parent surveys was summarized and evaluated through individual item analysis. The total percentage of favorable responses (i.e., the number of times parents marked “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” for the item, rather than “Not Sure,” “Disagree,” or “Strongly Disagree”) was calculated for each item in order to determine which positive impacts parents noted most often, and which were less prevalent. The response patterns of all of the parent respondents were examined as a whole group. In addition, the specific item responses given by the three different groups of parents (i.e., tutors’ parents, tutees’ parents, and extension students’ parents) were analyzed.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

#### **Student Survey Results**

In order to evaluate whether the service learning extension group had an impact on students' civic attitudes and self-concept, the participants were given the same 25-question Civic Attitudes Survey at the beginning of the group and again at the end. The Civic Attitudes Survey was intended to assess four potential factors/subscales – *Civic Awareness* (i.e., recognition of local issues and service agencies), *Civic Responsibility* (feelings of concern for, and obligation towards, the community), *Civic Efficacy: Group Skills* (belief in one's ability to work well in conjunction with others), and *Civic Efficacy: Individual Skills* (belief in one's personal effectiveness). In an attempt to determine whether each subscale/factor held together as a separate construct, correlational analyses were run for the item scores within each of the subscales. The alpha scores for all four of the hypothesized factors were found to be above .60, suggesting that each subscale held together as a separate construct. Because of this, the student survey data was analyzed at the subscale level to obtain a meaningful understanding of the students' survey scores. The data from the correlational analyses of each subscale can be found in Table 1.



Table 1

*Subscale Correlational Analysis Data*

	N of Items	Mean Total Score	Variance	Std. Dev.	Cronbach's Alpha
<b><i>Civic Awareness</i></b>	5	14.00	7.18	2.689	0.62
<b><i>Civic Responsibility</i></b>	7	24.62	7.40	2.72	0.62
<b><i>Civic Efficacy - Group Skills</i></b>	5	14.60	8.40	2.90	0.67
<b><i>Civic Efficacy – Individual Skills</i></b>	8	25.61	19.44	4.41	0.79

In Table 2, the individual items that were thought to comprise each of the four subscales are shown. Items that are denoted “RV” are those that were reverse coded.

To analyze students’ data within each of the four subscales on the Civic Attitudes Survey, two different types of t-tests were run. The first matched pair t-test examined whether the students’ scores on each of the individual survey items within each subscale varied from pre to post intervention. The second matched pair t-test was conducted by comparing the mean item scores for each survey item within the subscale at pretest and posttest. For the *Civic Awareness (CA)* subscale (items #1, #6, #9, #10, and #11), the total subscale mean scores from pre to post did not change significantly as a result of the service learning program. In addition, the scores obtained by students on each of the five individual *CA* subscale items did not differ significantly from pre to post. The data from the Civic Attitudes Survey does not suggest that the current intervention had a significant impact on students’ awareness of community problems/issues. Data from these assessments are found in Table 3.

Table 2

*Civic Attitudes Survey – Potential Subscales*

<b>Civic Awareness</b>	<b>Civic Responsibility</b>	<b>Civic Efficacy: Group Skills</b>	<b>Civic Efficacy: Individual Skills</b>
1 - I'm aware of problems/needs in my community	2 - I care about people in my community	7 - I work with others to solve community problems	5 - (RV) The things I do don't impact the community much
6 - I talk about community problems with friends/parents	3 - I want to help when someone has a problem	8 - I believe I can persuade others to do things to improve our local community	13 - (RV) I don't have the ability to make things better for people in my community
9 - I can name agencies/organizations that address local needs/problems	4 - (RV) It isn't my responsibility to solve problems in my community	12 - I'm able to solve more problems working with other people than I can by working alone	14 - (RV) When it comes to fixing community problems, I have no idea where to start
10 - I know how to contact knowledgeable people to get information about local problems	15 - We are all responsible for keeping our community clean	16 - When I see something that needs to be done, I try to get my friends to work on it with me	17 - I can stand up for what I think is right, even if my friends disagree
11 - I can use information from variety of sources to solve problems in my community	20 - I want to help solve the world's problems	19 - I'm good at getting others to work together	18 - Once I know what needs to be done, I'm good at planning how to do it
	23 - It's everybody's job to take care of our community		21 - I believe I can make a positive difference on the world around me
	25 - (RV) I'm only interested in problems that affect me/my family		22 - I'm confident in expressing my opinions in front of adults
			24 - I can use my interests, skills, and talents to make the world better

Table 3

*Pretest and Posttest Data for Civic Awareness (CA) Subscale*

	Pre- Intervention Mean	Post- Intervention Mean	Difference	Changes signif. at .05 level?
#1 - I am aware of problems/needs in my community	2.95	3.05	0.10	No*
#6 – I talk about community problems with my friends/parents	2.60	2.60	0.00	No*
#9 – I can name agencies/orgs that address local needs/problems	2.55	2.85	0.30	No*
#10 – I know how to contact knowledgeable people for info about community problems	3.00	2.70	-0.30	No*
#11 – I use info from variety of sources to solve community problems	2.75	2.95	0.20	No*
<b>Total Civic Awareness Mean Score</b>	2.81	2.83	.02	No** (t-stat .16 < 2.13)
*t-tests for individual survey items were conducted using all students' scores on each item at pretest and at posttest. **Total CA subscale t-test conducted using item mean scores at pretest and posttest.				

For the *Civic Responsibility (CR)* subscale (items #2, #3, #4, #15, #20, #23 and #25), the difference in item mean scores from pretest to posttest was found to be statistically significant. In addition, students' scores on three of the seven individual items within the *CR* subscale also differed significantly from pre to post. The data appears to suggest that the service learning program had a significant positive impact on students' sense of civic responsibility. In particular, items that speak to the students' personal sense of responsibility (i.e., "I want to help solve the world's problems"; "It

isn't my responsibility to solve problems in my community - RV"; and "I only care about problems that affect me and my family - RV") showed the most significant changes overall. Table 4 shows the data from these calculations.

Table 4

*Pretest and Posttest Data for Civic Responsibility (CR) Subscale*

	Pre-Intervention Mean	Post-Intervention Mean	Diff.	Significant at .05 level?
#2 - I care about the people in my community	3.85	3.85	0.00	No*
#3 - I want to help when I see someone having a problem	3.40	3.60	0.20	No*
<b>#4 – It isn't my responsibility to solve problems in my community (RV)</b>	2.35	3.42	1.07	<b>Yes* (t-stat 3.79 &gt; 1.73)</b>
#15 - We are all responsible for keeping our community clean	3.60	3.80	0.20	No*
<b>#20 – I want to help solve the world's problems</b>	3.45	3.85	0.40	<b>Yes* (t-stat 2.05 &gt; 1.73)</b>
#23 – It's everyone's job to take care of our community	3.85	3.75	-0.10	No*
<b>#25 – I'm only interested in problems that affect me/family (RV)</b>	2.9	3.70	0.80	<b>Yes* (t-stat 3.15 &gt; 1.73)</b>
<b>Total Civic Responsibility (CR) Mean Score</b>	3.34	3.71	.37	<b>Yes** (t-stat 2.14 &gt; 1.94)</b>
*t-tests for individual survey items were conducted using all students' scores on each item at pretest and at posttest. **Total CA subscale t-test conducted using item mean scores at pretest and posttest.				

For the *Civic Efficacy: Group Skills (EG)* subscale (items #7, #8, #12, #16, and #19), the increase in the subscale mean scores from pre to post was found to be statistically significant at the .005 level. Within the *EG* subscale, three of the five items

also differed significantly from pre to post. This data suggests that the service learning group appeared to have a significant positive impact on students' beliefs regarding their ability to work effectively in groups, especially in regards to solving community problems. Table 5 shows the data from these calculations.

Table 5

*Pretest and Posttest Data for Civic Efficacy – Group Skills (EG) Subscale*

	Pre- Intervention Mean	Post- Intervention Mean	Difference	Significant at .05 level?
#7 – I work with others to solve community problems	2.60	3.00	0.40	No*
#8 – I believe I can persuade others to do things to improve community	2.90	3.20	0.30	No*
<b>#12 – I am able to solve more problems working with other people than I can by working alone</b>	2.60	3.18	0.58	<b>Yes* (t-stat 1.98 &gt; 1.73)</b>
<b>#16 - When I see something that needs to be done, I try to get my friends to work on it with me</b>	2.60	3.13	0.53	<b>Yes* (t-stat 2.27 &gt; 1.73)</b>
<b>#19 – I am good at getting others to work together</b>	2.75	3.25	0.50	<b>Yes* (t-stat 3.75 &gt; 1.73)</b>
<b>Total Civic Efficacy – Groups Skills (EG) Mean Scores</b>	2.71	3.15	0.44	<b>Yes** (t-stat 9.39 &gt; 4.60 at the .005 sign. level)</b>
*t-tests for individual survey items were conducted using all students' scores on each item at pretest and at posttest. **Total CA subscale t-test conducted using item mean scores at pretest and posttest.				

For the *Civic Efficacy: Individual Skills (EI)* subscale (items #5, #13, #14, #17, #18, #21, #22 and #24), the increase in the subscale mean scores from pre to post (.31)

was found to be statistically significant at the .05 level. In addition, students' scores on three of the eight individual items within the *EI* subscale also differed significantly from pre to post. These results suggest that students' beliefs regarding their personal abilities to make changes in the world around them were positively impacted by their involvement in the service learning group. Table 6 shows the data from these calculations.

Table 6

*Pretest and Posttest Data for Civic Efficacy – Individual Skills (EI) Subscale*

	Pre-Intervention Mean	Post-Intervention Mean	Diff.	Significant at .05 level?
<b>#5 – The things I do don't impact my community much (RV)</b>	2.30	3.15	0.85	<b>Yes* (t-stat 3.02 &gt; 1.73)</b>
#13 – I don't have the ability to make things better for people in my community (RV)	3.40	3.28	-0.13	No*
#14 – When it comes to fixing community problems, I have no idea where to start	3.00	3.00	0.00	No*
<b>#17 – I feel like I can stand up for what I think is right, even if my friends disagree</b>	3.40	3.75	0.35	<b>Yes* (t-stat 2.11 &gt; 1.73)</b>
<b>#18 - Once I know what needs to be done, I am good at planning how to do it</b>	2.90	3.35	0.45	<b>Yes* (t-stat 2.14 &gt; 1.73)</b>
#21 – I believe I can make a positive difference on the world around me	3	3.45	0.45	No*
#22 – I am confident in expressing my opinions in front of adults	3.25	3.35	0.10	No*
#24 – I can use my interests, skills, and talents to make the world better	3.2	3.45	0.25	No*
<b>Total Civic Efficacy – Individual Skills (EI) Mean Total Score</b>	<b>3.04</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>.31</b>	<b>Yes** (t-stat 1.77 &gt; 1.73)</b>
*t-tests for individual survey items were conducted using all students' scores on each item at pretest and at posttest. **Total CA subscale t-test conducted using item mean scores at pretest and posttest.				

## Stakeholder Feedback Regarding Value of Service Learning

### Student Feedback

To determine whether the current service learning program was perceived as being worthwhile and/or effective by the stakeholders involved, feedback was sought from the student participants, as well as from the students' teachers and parents.

Significant themes regarding the value of service learning are summarized below.

During the student interviews, eight peer tutors and eight extension students were asked a series of questions about their experiences in the service learning program. From their responses to the interview questions, it is clear that each of the 16 students found service learning to be an enjoyable experience. For example, one peer tutor talked about enjoying the tutoring process: "It was very fun. And - we did a lot of creative activities. And - it was just great listening to your buddy read and learn other words that they had struggled on before." In another example, an extension student recalled his experiences at the bake sale: "We got so much accomplished, and like we were just - me and C. and all them were just running down the hallways and advertising. Yeah, like, we could barely catch our breaths! It was really fun." Some of the students spoke to the fact that the service learning experience was a novel one, introducing them to activities or concepts they'd not previously encountered: "...it was still really fun learning about them (different service organizations) and asking questions. Because in average life you don't really go to an organization and call and say, 'Hey - can I learn about you?'"

Student interviewees spoke about new understandings they gained through the service learning process. For the extension students, new understandings were often tied to feelings of civic engagement and responsibility. One extension student said that his

involvement in the service learning group, "...teach (sic.) me that you can make a big difference if you help just a little." Another student said that they'd learned, "we could help other people and animals to ... survive, and make this world better. You know, less problems and a better place for us to live in." A third student said her service learning experience "made me feel like... the community needs your help, you shouldn't just sit there and do nothing. You could help." This student also mentioned that she'd learned that she wasn't too young to make a difference, because "...you think, 'Oh, I can't do this now, I'll do it later on' – you can accomplish that NOW by helping organizations." A different student reiterated this idea, saying he learned "to do something bigger that you thought you couldn't (sic.) have done, because most average kids think that they can't make a change in the world, but you can."

For the peer tutors, the understandings they gained were often about their own capabilities and learning a new role. For example, one tutor said that tutoring, made me feel that I can help other people out. I'm the smallest person... I'm the youngest person in my family so like, nobody needed my help usually, they usually needed my brothers' help or my mom's help or my dad's help.

Another tutor said that, "... you feel more grown up, and you're just like, 'Ooh, I've got a kid I can take care of. I read with him or her.' This just feels really nice, to start helping them." One tutor spoke about how she and her friends were passing on the help that was once given to them: "Other people helped ME read, and other people helped T and M read (other tutors from her class) or something. And, so, we're like doing it to another person." Tutors also mentioned specific teaching strategies/skills they learned through their experiences tutoring program. For example, one student said, "I've learned that it's



not just going there and reading to your student. It's about going there and teaching them how to read." Another said, "I learned how to be a better, like, instructor, and how to... let them finish the sentence before I tell them the word, so that I'm not interrupting them."

Many of those interviewed focused on the impact their service activities had on those that were helped. Tutors talked about how peer tutoring could help their tutees do better in the long run: "it really helps younger kids. 'cause, um, you need to read, 'cause it's really important in life"; or "I liked helping the students get through their grade so they don't have to struggle in first grade." Extension students talked about how their service made a difference in the lives of others. One boy said his service project made a positive impact, "because there's a lot of kids with cancer, and there might be some in the community and I'm helping them. Helping the community makes a big difference." Another student said by doing service learning, "you make a difference to the world. We just helped a community that helps sea turtles! Maybe they'll live five months longer because we donated."

A few interviewees talked about hoping to continue doing service as adults. One student reported, "I kind of like want to be a teacher when I grow up. And this ... I want to do this. Like, a bake sale to help organizations." Another said, "Even when I'm grown up, I want to do it... I want to be like a tutor person... so, like, a person has a hard time with their school, I could, like, probably help them." Other interviewees talked about how they wished to train others to do service learning. One peer tutor stated, "I know that I can teach them (people in the community) to do this (tutoring), 'cause I think that it's a pretty good idea." A student from the extension group stated, "I feel like if we

help others, and I tell people how to do this, and they tell their friends and then... we can all start helping the community.”

There were some challenges or difficulties noted by the student interviewees in regards to service learning. One extension student said,

I didn't really think that some of those things were necessary... like making all those big posters. I know that we were presenting to the class about it, but if you were doing like just one group, you don't really need the posters. The essay... I know we were supposed to learn? But I don't think that the essay was really, really needed because all we did was telling (sic.) our opinion... unless that was for grades. Unless it's for grades – then it's required. But if it wasn't, it was just extra.

That same student said he would do service learning again,

if it was a little less work – sure. Because I don't think I would want to take another month again and do this. But if it was a little less than a month - sure! I would like to do this again.

A challenge noted by two fifth grade tutors was that missing class to do peer tutoring was sometimes difficult. For example, when asked if peer tutoring made him a better student at all, one fifth grader responded, “Well... I would think so? But it was sort of harder, because I had to catch up on stuff ‘cause we went out of class time.” The other fifth grader stated, “Yeah– I didn't like that we had to miss out on class time? ‘Cause I'd have extra homework.” Neither student felt this was an issue that would've kept them from tutoring, however, or that it had a significant negative impact on them. As the one tutor later said, “I always catch up, I'm not behind. And this whole year I haven't got one late

assignment.” In addition, two of the fifth grade peer tutors expressed concerns about whether they would have the time available to do tutoring in middle school. One girl stated, “I would want to do it again – it’s just that I’m one of the slow... I’m not that organized, and I do math and that stuff slow? So I like don’t like missing out in time – like, class time.”

When asked if they would want to participate in service learning again, or whether service learning should be offered in the schools, the majority of student interviewees responded affirmatively. For example, when one extension student was asked the question, ‘Is this group something that should be done in the schools?’, he replied, “Yeah, it should be done again. Because I bet other kids like us – people would love doing it, like the second graders next year. If they do it, they would love it.” When a peer tutor was asked if he would like to continue tutoring, he said, “Yes! That’s what I say – yes. Of course!” Another affirmation provided by some of the students were comments that the program was ‘just right’ and that it shouldn’t change: “I think it was perfect just the way it was when we were doing it. Yeah – it was good!” Some tutors affirmed the value of the program by suggesting ways to extend the current programming, usually by adding extra days or tutoring different subjects. A few of the extension group students mentioned that although they really enjoyed their experience, they would want to make some changes before participating once more. For example, one student said, “I would change it to maybe an outside program? Like a dog wash, or selling some kind of drink, because I like making smoothies (laughs). I like spending time outside.”

In general, the student interviewees had a great deal to say about the service learning program that was positive. Much of what they reported indicated that they found the experience enjoyable, valuable, and meaningful overall.

### **Teacher/Principal Feedback**

Eight school staff members were interviewed to gather feedback about their perceptions regarding the use of service learning as an educational strategy. Teachers of peer tutors (one fifth grade teacher and one fourth grade teacher), tutees (two first grade teachers and one kindergarten teacher), extension students (two third grade teachers), and the building principal all volunteered to complete the qualitative interviews. Some of their feedback pertained directly to the current service learning program, while some referred to their views on the practice of service learning in general.

One common theme through all of the interviews was that teachers found service learning to be an engaging activity for students. For example, a first grade teacher said, my kids were SO excited, every time. They would remind me, ‘don’t forget that it’s peer tutoring today’. ... Every single student in my class asked, ‘Can we do it? Can we be part of it?’ They thought it was very, very cool.

The kindergarten teacher reported,

the kids were always excited to go. They would talk about their buddies, and ask me on days that it wasn’t meeting, you know, ‘Are we meeting our buddies today?’ So, I think the excitement and what they gained out of it was great.

A fourth grade teacher reported that because the peer tutors looked forward to doing the program, it helped her in the classroom:

the kids would remind me (when it was time for peer tutoring). So it went very smoothly because the kids enjoyed it, and they wanted to do it. I didn't have to keep track of it – the kids kept track of it.

A number of teacher interviewees spoke about how the experiences presented during service learning are both meaningful and memorable for students. One of the third grade teachers stated,

I think that it (service learning) makes them (the students) more appreciative of what they have and what the world has to offer, and I think that it opens a lot of doors for them. And I think that it's so important that they see all these opportunities... that they're exposed to all these opportunities and know that there's not just one path to follow.

The other third grade teacher summed up this idea in her statement:

The kids respond so much more to THIS sort of environment – the service learning project in general and the cooperative learning. They respond so much more, they connect emotionally, they remember it... And it's more to them than just sitting and listening to someone give them information. It's more powerful for them. And they are growing in ALL areas.

She also felt that the connections established between students and the community had a meaningful impact on the kids:

...connecting them to the community – that was a huge piece that they had never - a lot of them had never done before. They didn't see themselves necessarily at this age as a citizen of the community, you know? They saw themselves as a person in a school in a classroom. And it's taking that person in a school in a

classroom out and helping them to realize that they do have an impact on the things that happen in this world. And were able to connect that to our social studies and to our science and it makes that a lot more meaningful – those are the things that they're gonna remember.

Some of the teachers discussed how the service learning program met the needs of diverse learners. For example, the building principal said about both the service learning extension group and peer tutoring:

I feel like both of these opportunities allowed kids to try something different. To like, 'you know what? Maybe you're not the best reader in the world, or you're not the best mathematician in the world. But, this is an area you can make an impact in'. And, as schools, we're always trying to find ways to reach all of the kids in some way. And I feel like this has really helped some of those kids find something that they might not have picked up on before, you know?

A first grade teacher said about peer tutoring:

I felt like this was good for those kids who were... maybe not designated for (intervention) groups, but who wouldn't otherwise get, you know, that special attention even though they needed it? Like those borderline kiddos?

The fifth grade teacher thought about the impact service learning has on students from low SES backgrounds:

...with our demographics changing, some kids may never have the opportunity to give back. Or, they may think 'I don't have anything. I don't have very much money.' And they're going to think, 'what can I do?' because they always tie

everything back to money. It doesn't have to be about money. It can just be about helping.

The kindergarten teacher, on the other hand, felt that service learning had helped her meet the needs of students who needed additional challenge:

Even though they (the tutees) were already meeting standards – they were my higher group – I felt like that was still good for them. Because I think a lot of that group did shoot up really fast and they got to be really awesome readers by the end of the year.

Several teachers spoke to how service learning opportunities offer students important experiences or supports that often are lacking. A first grade teacher stated, “I definitely think that them having that role model and someone to look up to... I think it's good, because I think we have less and less role models for kiddos these days.” This same teacher also talked about how it was good her students received, “that extra reading time that they got with someone else. You know? Because some of them don't get that at home – they don't have that parent or sibling or whatever reading with them again at home.” The two third grade teachers saw different opportunities offered through service learning. One expressed how service learning offers a rare opportunity for social-emotional development:

I think that (service learning) teaches kids empathy towards not just animals and stuff but towards other people. It really gives them an opportunity to help others and see how that feels? Because I don't think there's a lot of opportunities for that in general.

The other teacher saw service learning as providing more of an opportunity to apply academic skills in context:

And this was a perfect opportunity for them to connect all these things that they've been learning all year to a real life situation... otherwise, they would never have been introduced to these things, or at least not at the elementary level.

All of the interviewees saw service learning as having a positive effect on a wide range of students' social-emotional skills. Though all interviewees reported at least some academic benefit as well, there were a few who stated that the impact of service learning clearly skews towards the social emotional. For example, the fourth grade teacher mentioned, "I see (service learning) more as a community – a healthy community-type thing, or a Second Step-type thing than an academic thing." Many other interviewees, however, felt that service learning delivers solid benefits in *both* the social/emotional and academic areas, and saw it as a viable tool for meeting both academic and social/emotional learning standards. (The link between service learning and standards is explored in depth in a later section of this document.)

Though the teacher interviewees named many positive aspects of service learning, they also noted challenges as well. Some interviewees felt that the activities completed during the program, or the overarching program goals, were unclear. The kindergarten teacher stated, "I don't know exactly goes on in there (during tutoring), I guess. Do they rotate reading? I guess I don't know exactly what they do." The building principal thought that many teachers mistook peer tutoring for the former classroom buddies system the school previously ran: "I'm not sure that the teachers were sure of what you were trying to accomplish with peer tutoring... I think that's probably true. I think that



they still thought of it as a buddy system.” To combat these misunderstandings, she felt it would be critical to let,

the teachers know exactly what your objectives are – have a clear objective for EACH of the different programs, and be able to say – even if they’re posted outside your door ‘Our goal for peer tutoring is’ and put it up there. Teachers have it in their classrooms every day, you know?

The fifth grade teacher also talked about the need to establish clear, measurable academic objectives, especially for the peer tutoring program:

What are the objectives for the peer tutors? What are you - how are you wanting them to look different from the beginning to the end? What will they personally gain? ... Are you tracking their fluency scores to see (if they’re improving)? Because it’s (sic.) good data points for you, for the project, to see if (peer tutoring is) ultimately impacting their fluency.

Some respondents indicated that service learning needs to show a clear academic benefit in order to be widely adopted. The building principal stated why academic benefits are so critical:

I think you have a lot of pressures right now from state and federal government, saying ‘you gotta get, you gotta get, you gotta get such and such scores’. And especially with the PERA laws moving to 30% of every teacher’s evaluation being based on test scores...it’s driving more and more about what teachers are doing. More and more teachers are feeling the stress, in my opinion, that they don’t have the time to do the fun things that we know teach kids different skills rather than just reading, writing and arithmetic. So... I think you would have

some teachers who would embrace (service learning) wholeheartedly, and others who would fight you.

The fourth grade teacher bemoaned this reality:

I think that sometimes we're missing out on (teaching students) those pieces that make us whole people. I think that's really difficult – it's like we have to do one more grammar lesson, or we have to do one more test. We test the kids so much – we have to do one more test, one more test, one more test.... I think it comes down to time - what are you gonna lose? It's sad, but the thing you seem to take out of your day is the non-academic extra. It's the first thing to go.

In order to address this reality, some talked about the need to collect academic growth data to show the progress made during service learning. In the words of the building principal, "If teachers saw the correlation between student growth, and what the projects were, that they would take that worry off their plate a little bit. (Service learning) would have to be academic in order to get the buy in." The one group of students that some teachers were unsure benefitted academically from service learning were the peer tutors. The fifth grade teacher stated, "I think the peer tutoring piece will be harder to tie to the curriculum – it just will." The fourth grade teacher also had difficulty seeing academic benefits for the tutors from her classroom. When asked if there was a way to use peer tutoring to meet curricular standards for the tutors, she said, "Um, that's a tough one. I don't know. I would have to really look at the common core standards for each academic area to see if it would fit."

A few teachers noted that time pressures made it difficult for them to utilize service learning as effectively as possible. Though one of the first grade teachers felt that

she was able to consistently use the peer tutors effectively with her students (“I made sure that the books that my students were taking were always books at their reading level”), the other two tutees’ teachers reported having some difficulty with this. The kindergarten teacher reported,

I felt like I... by the end of it, was kind of behind with switching out their books. Because as report card time came - or the times when I’m meeting with them more ‘one-on-one assessing’ and not in reading groups – it was harder for me to switch out their books. So they were kind of reading the same book for a while? That was just my own challenge.

The first grade teacher thought that she did not always use the tutors to their fullest potential:

I think maybe even more, just on my end, I could have utilized (the tutors) a little bit more, like academically? To help? I felt like I just sent (my students) with books every time and, you know, I think maybe it would be good to think about how to be more... efficient with having that support with those kids? ... I think it would take more time, to be prepared for, but I think it would be one way to use (the tutors) maybe a little more effectively.

For the teachers of the peer tutors, the challenge came in the form of instructional time lost when tutors leave the room. The fourth grade teacher noted that this lost time sometimes made it hard for her to complete her reading assessments:

When a student goes to tutoring, it’s the same kids out every time... I was able to do some things academically with my smaller group that was left, but at the same

time, that group never changed so I couldn't pull in different people to do the testing or to do whatever I needed.

The fifth grade teacher expressed concerns about lost class time for some of her tutors:

I feel like a couple of my kids, it wasn't in their best interest to be out of the classroom. ...I think it would be beneficial to start (peer tutoring) second quarter... just so we can get a feel for the kids who it would benefit really well, and who would be ready for the responsibility of it.

Despite the difficulties some teachers encountered in terms of time pressures and unclear program goals, all of the school staff members reported their willingness to continue using service learning as a strategy. When the kindergarten teacher was asked whether she thought peer tutoring was just 'one more thing' that teachers had to do, she replied, "I didn't feel that way at all. I think it's nice and the kids enjoy it... I feel like they were really excited and it was a really positive influence for them and a positive experience." When a first grade teacher was asked about using service learning in the future, she said,

I think that approach to learning is awesome. I think it ties it in with the whole idea of community, which is an important concept... I mean, when anyone – when they're helping someone else, they get a benefit from that and they see how that feels. Absolutely – I would love that.

The fifth grade teacher gave a similar response:

I would definitely like to do something like that. I think it would help to help kids see what's going on around them... And I think, some of our kids, if we don't do

these things, they'll never experience it.... I would totally love to be involved with service learning. I think it's great.

The third grade teacher who'd co-taught the service learning extension group stated, "I'm definitely doing this again. Oh yeah, I definitely am. Because it... like I said, to see the excitement of the kids – that brings to light, to me, 'I gotta do this more'." The other third grade teacher said,

I love the service learning and I know that I've said that before but I think that it's so important for kids. And I think that if it does become a good portion of the curriculum, or if it becomes a... priority, it is going to create this generation of kids that is really empathetic towards each other and really creates a community, like kids that have a sense of community.

### **Parent Feedback**

Twenty-four parents of students in the service learning program responded to an online survey asking for their feedback about the program. Analysis of the responses they gave showed that overall parents thought the overall impact service learning had on their children was positive. All of the parent respondents agreed that the service learning program was something their children looked forward to doing, and every parent reported that their children said they enjoyed the program. All 24 parent respondents also agreed that the service learning program was a good use of their children's time. All but one of the parent respondents indicated that the service learning program improved their children's self-esteem, and all but one felt the program got their children interested in helping others. Table 7 summarizes all parents' responses to survey items 1-16.

The parent respondents were split between three groups: parents of tutees (8 parents), parents of peer tutors (9 parents), and parents of extension group students (7 parents). Some differences in response patterns were noted between the various parent groups. Parents of tutees (N = 8) saw clear benefits in terms of their children's motivation/engagement, connection to school, and self-esteem. All tutees' parents reported that the peer tutoring program was a good use of time, and that it was something their children enjoyed. They also all reported an increase in their children's academic confidence and feelings of self-esteem. Seven tutees' parents felt that peer tutoring made their children feel more connected to school, caused them to want to come to school, and got them interested in helping other people. These seven also thought that the program improved their children's group participation skills, helped them become better readers, and taught them strategies they could use in the future. The tutees' parents seemed less sure about the peer tutoring program's impact on their children's math and writing skills (with six parents saying they were unsure tutoring had any impact on these skills). They were also unsure that tutoring helped their children with problem solving skills (four parents unsure), or helped them find unique talents/skills (five parents unsure). For the last, open-ended item, one parent responded, saying, "My daughter was very excited to be tutored. I was grateful that this was recognized and put into motion for my daughter. She hopes to do it again!"

Parents of peer tutors (N=9) reported positive perceptions of the peer tutoring program overall. They all reported that tutoring was a good use of their children's time, and that it was something they enjoyed/looked forward to. They all thought that participation in the program increased their children's self-esteem, and got them

interested in helping others. All nine parents felt that being a peer tutor helped their own children to become better readers. Eight tutors' parents reported that being a peer tutor had helped their children develop unique talents/skills, including leadership skills, group participation skills, and speaking/listening skills. Eight parents also reported that being a peer tutor increase their children's academic confidence taught them problem solving skills, and taught them strategies they could use in the future. Two of the tutors' parents were unsure that tutoring had an impact on their children's writing/math skills. In addition, two of the tutors' parents were unsure that tutoring made their children feel more connected to school or made them want to come to school. On the open-ended item, two parents chose to respond: "H. loved being a peer Tudor (sic)!! Thank you!!!"; "C. enjoyed the peer tutoring experience immensely. She is hoping to participate in the program next year. Thank you for providing C. with this wonderful experience."

Parents of the extension group (Ext) participants (N = 7) also appeared to have positive perceptions regarding the impact service learning had on their children. All of the Ext parents strongly agreed that the service learning program was something their children looked forward to doing, and all strongly agreed that the program taught their children strategies they could use in the future. All of the Ext parents thought the group was a good use of their children's time, and that it got them interested in helping others. All of them also thought that the program motivated their children to come to school, and that it helped their children develop group participation skills. Six of the Ext parents felt that the service learning experience helped their children discover their unique talents/skills, increased their academic self-confidence, helped them feel more connected to school, and helped them develop self-esteem. Six Ext parents also reported that the

service learning experience helped their children develop leadership skills, and helped improve their speaking and listening skills. There were a few benefits that the Ext parents were unsure about. Four parents were unsure that the group had a positive impact on their children's math skills; and two parents were unsure whether the group had a positive impact on their children's reading/writing skills. For the open-ended items, four Ext parents chose to respond. The comments were as follows:

My son really enjoyed doing the bake sale and explaining to the parents what they were doing with the money they raised and how they picked the organization to support!

The service project was very beneficial and I hope it is implemented as a program to the school. Or even a takeaway for teachers that doing group projects is important to build student team building and working together.

This project was probably his favorite activity in the school year and he would like to do something similar next year.

Such a great experience, this is how learning should be (rather than just constant testing) these kids learned life skills that will help them for their future. I would be very happy to have my child involved in these types of programs in the future. Such great guidance, advice, and also freedom from a wonderful educator. Thank you for the opportunity.

The cumulative percentages for items 1-16 can be found in Table 7. Figure 2 shows the response pattern for all parents ( $N = 24$ ). Figures 3, 4, and 5 show the response patterns from the three separate parent groups (extension students, tutees' parents, and tutors' parents).



Table 7

*Parent Service Learning Survey: Cumulative Percentages for Items 1-16*

<i>Question: Do you feel that the service learning program your child participated in ....</i>						
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Percentage Agreement</b>
<i>.... was a good use of your child's time?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	83.33%	<b>100.00%</b>
<i>....was something your child looked forward to doing?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	87.50%	<b>100.00%</b>
<i>....improved your child's self-esteem?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	4.17%	20.83%	75.00%	<b>95.83%</b>
<i>....helped your child to discover his/her unique skills or talents?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	12.50%	62.50%	<b>75.00%</b>
<i>....got your child interested in helping other people?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	4.17%	25.00%	70.83%	<b>95.83%</b>
<i>....made your child feel more connected to his/her school?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	20.83%	62.50%	<b>83.33%</b>
<i>....motivated your child to come to school?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	33.33%	54.17%	<b>87.50%</b>
<i>....helped your child develop group participation skills?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	8.33%	25.00%	66.67%	<b>91.67%</b>
<i>....helped your child develop leadership skills?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	20.83%	62.50%	<b>83.33%</b>
<i>....increased your child's academic confidence?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	8.33%	33.33%	58.33%	<b>91.66%</b>
<i>...helped your child become a better reader?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	29.17%	58.33%	<b>87.50%</b>
<i>...helped your child do better in math?</i>	0.00%	4.17%	45.83%	25.00%	25.00%	<b>50.00%</b>
<i>...helped your child improve his/her writing skills?</i>	0.00%	4.17%	37.50%	20.83%	37.50%	<b>58.33%</b>
<i>...helped your child improve his/her speaking or listening skills?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	20.83%	29.17%	50.00%	<b>79.17%</b>
<i>...taught your child problem solving skills?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	37.50%	37.50%	<b>75.00%</b>
<i>...taught your child strategies that he/she can use again in the future?</i>	0.00%	0.00%	8.33%	12.50%	79.17%	<b>91.67%</b>

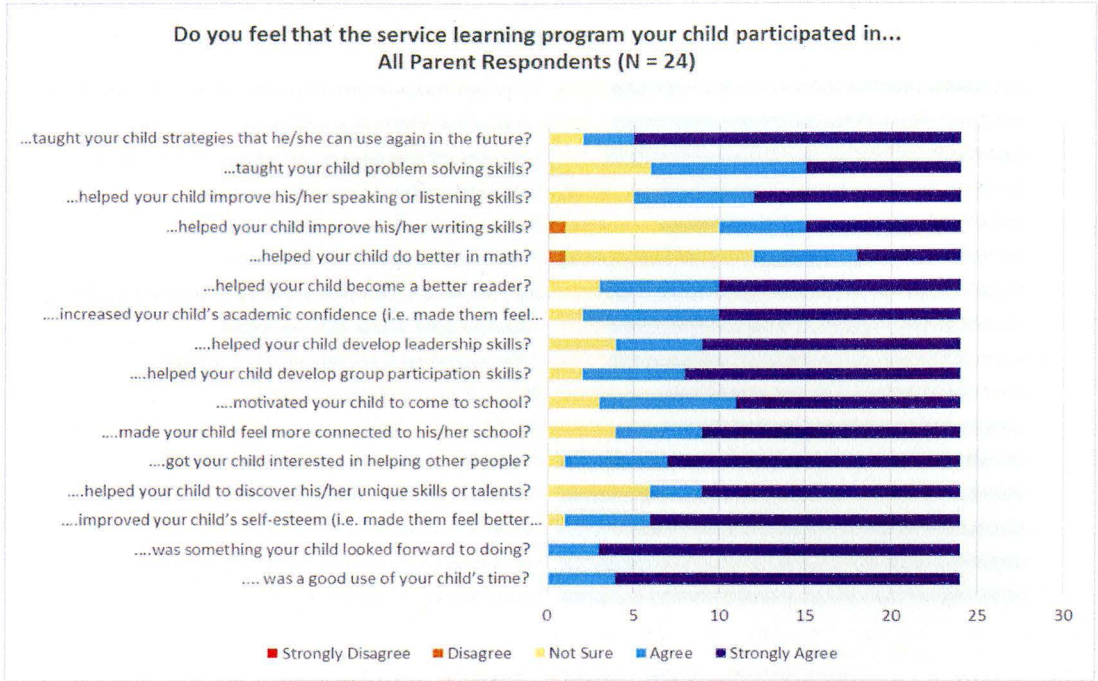


Figure 2. Parent Survey, All Respondents

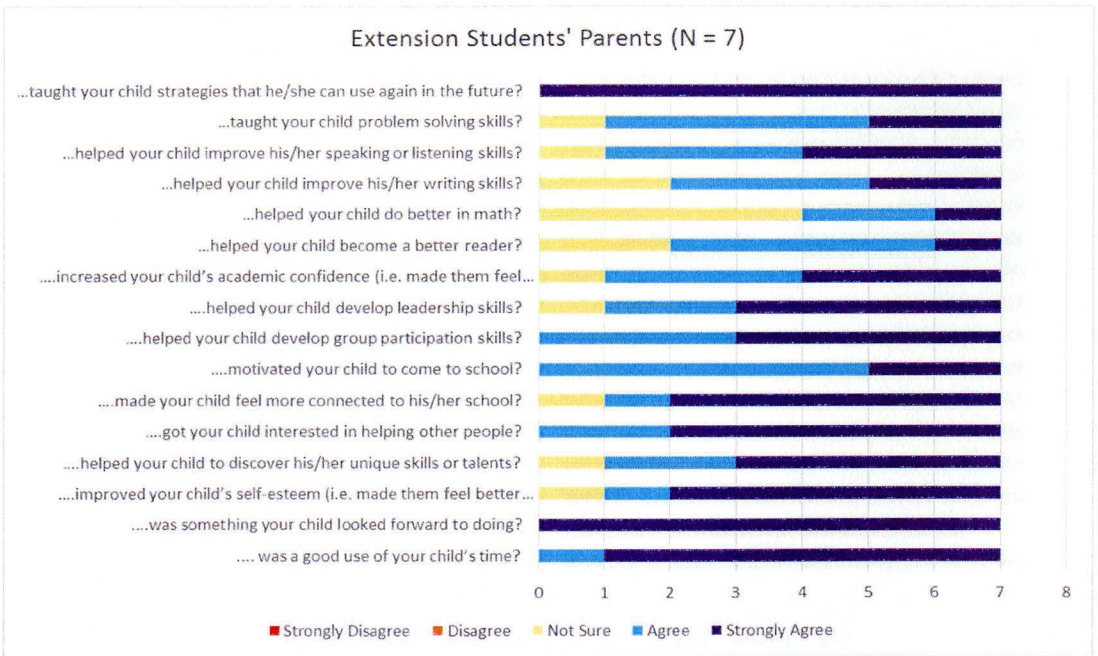


Figure 3. Parent Survey, Extension Group Respondents

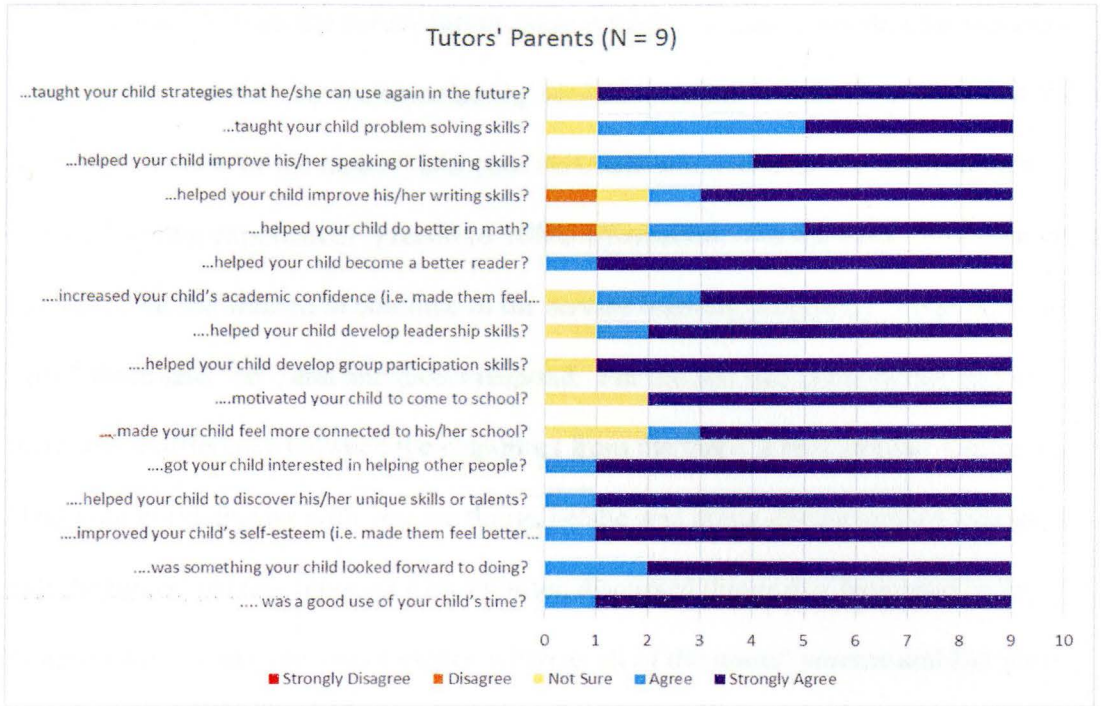


Figure 4. Parent Survey, Tutor Group Respondents

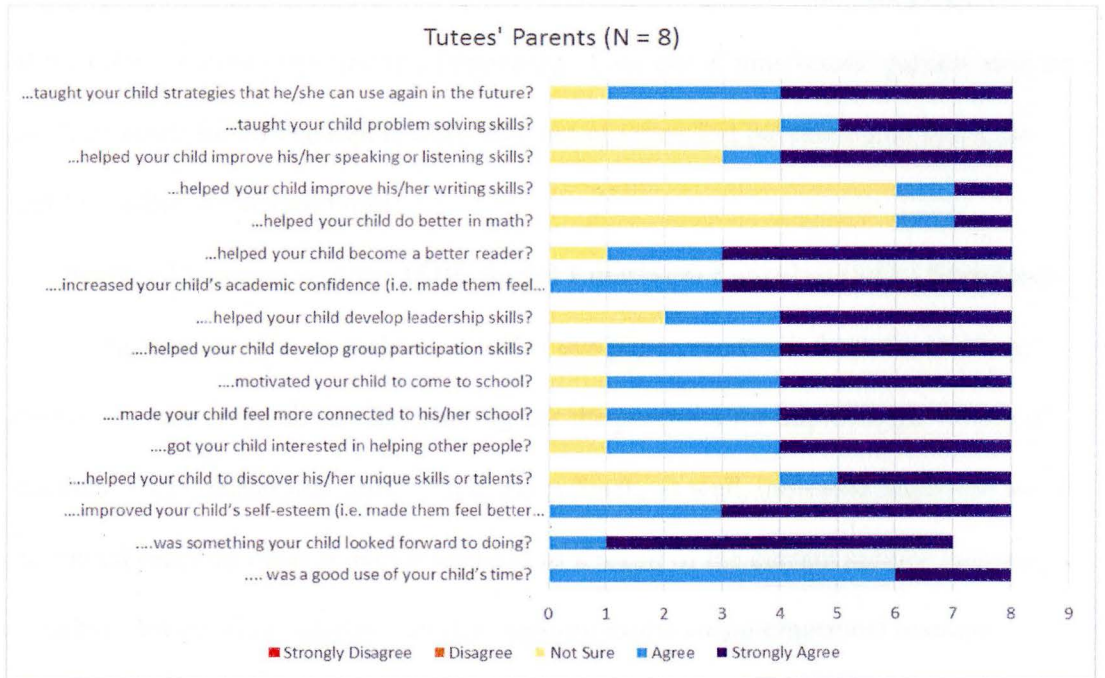


Figure 5. Parent Survey, Tutee Group Respondents

Items 17-20 on the parent survey were intended to assess whether the students solicited their parents' advice/input during service learning, or kept them informed about the program. One of the items ("Did your child tell you ...that he/she enjoyed their service learning experience?") received 100% affirmation. For the item, "Did your child tell you... he/she wanted to continue in the service learning program?," 20 parents said "yes", three said "no", and one didn't respond. For the last two items in this section, there was a difference between the responses from the three parent groups. On the item, "Did your child discuss with you the things he/she was doing during service learning?," half the tutees' parents reported their children discussed things that happened in the program with them (four out of eight), whereas all of the tutors' parents and Ext parents reported that their children did discuss the things they did in the program. For the last item, "Did your child ask for your input/advice regarding his/her service project?," none of the tutees' parents reported this happening. Four out of nine tutors' parents said their children asked for advice/input, while five out of seven Ext parents noted that their children asked for advice/input.

### **Service Learning and the ISBE Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Standards**

As was noted in an earlier section of this paper, feedback from the teachers' interviews indicated that service learning has the potential for improving a variety of students' social-emotional skills. Student feedback, as well, indicated improved social-emotional outcomes and skills for students as a result of the current service learning program. When asked whether service learning meets social/emotional learning standards, the building principal replied,

Oh, for sure. Absolutely – it hits all three of the standards. You talk about how it supports working together, and being a part of a community, that’s all about building their self-esteem and knowing how to interact with other people. Not just their peers, but all different grades and ages. I don’t see how you could say it doesn’t address the standards.

When asked the same question, a third grade teacher remarked,

I think that it (peer tutoring) really gives those kids that need to develop socially and emotionally - I think it gives them a purpose. So instead of just teaching, it gives them an opportunity to use what we teach them through Second Step... It gives them a reason to use it, to show someone else or gives them an opportunity to set a good example for others and to teach someone else about it. And I always believe that if you can teach it, you’ve really learned it. Or teaching it really solidifies it.

The following is a discussion of the specific social/emotional learning standards that appear to be impacted in some way by service learning experiences.

**Illinois Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Standard 1B: Recognize personal qualities and external supports**

This standard speaks directly to students’ self-awareness and self-concept. When interviewed, teachers indicated that service learning had a positive impact on students’ self-concept and/or self-esteem. One teacher said, “I think that (service learning) really gives them a sense of self, and I think that it really helps some of the kids who are maybe a little bit more shy, or who need a little bit of a boost of confidence or something.”

Another remarked,

for some kids... they're enlightened by a person or a job or a thing (during service learning). And they don't know what they can do until they are shown that. And that's where you get some of those kids who otherwise struggle and then they find something. And that is... emotionally making them feel, 'I'm worth something, I can do this'.

The positive impact service learning has on students' sense of self-worth was even more evident in the responses students themselves gave when interviewed. The following statements were made by the extension students when asked if service learning had made them feel different about themselves in any way:

I feel really proud of myself. And I bet everyone else in the group feels really proud of themselves. And I feel like it's made lots of people better people.

It's very exciting and I mean, you just feel happier once you help people. And you feel better about yourself and other people.

It made me feel like you are - great. You made someone feel happy, and you made them feel like they're cared for. And now they're happy, because someone helped them.

It made me feel good about myself, 'cause now I look back and I'm like 'Oh my gosh, I helped a lot of people do that stuff so now they can... help what they do'.

Additional evidence supporting the claim that service learning has a positive impact on SEL Goal #1 come from the results of the parent survey. On the parent survey, 23 out of 24 total parent respondents indicated that service learning had a positive impact on the children's self-esteem. Twenty-two parents felt that service learning had a

positive impact on students' academic confidence. Four-fifths of the parents surveyed (N = 20) felt that service learning helped the children develop leadership skills, while three fourths of the respondents (N = 18) thought service learning helped the students develop unique skills/talents. These results indicate that parents saw clear growth in SEL Goal #1.

From the Civic Attitudes Survey, the students' scores on one of the subscales – *Civic Efficacy: Individual* – showed significant increases from pretest to posttest. This would appear to indicate that overall, students had higher levels of personal self-efficacy after engaging in service learning. One of the survey items that showed significant improved from pretest to posttest was “I feel I can stand up for what I believe in, even if my friends disagree.” The item was intended to examine students' feelings of self-confidence and leadership skills, areas that would appear to be tied to SEL #1. Another item on the Civic Attitudes survey where students demonstrated significant growth was “Once I know what needs to be done, I'm good at planning how to do it.” This item directly relates to SEL Standard 1C: Demonstrate skills related to achieving personal and academic goals. Specifically, this is the skill set addressed by the late elementary benchmark 1C.2a.: Describe the steps in setting and working toward goal achievement.

The above data regarding students'/teachers' positive statements regarding the effect the service learning extension group had on students, as well as the data from the parent and student surveys, supports the idea that service learning can be used to meet ISBE's SEL Goal #1.

## **Illinois Social Emotional Learning Standard 2A: Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others**

This standard refers to a student's ability to empathize, a skill which teachers noted is built through service learning experiences. One of the third grade teachers remarked, "I think that (service learning) really works on that empathy piece, and that's so hard for them (the students) at this age." She also noted, "it gives (students) an opportunity to reach out to others who need help, and I hope that that carries with them as they grow." The fourth grade teacher stated that service learning improved the overall atmosphere of a building because, "I think it adds to the kids having mutual respect for other children. For kids being able to understand when someone's struggling - how to have some empathy and how to help them."

## **Standard 2C: Use communication and social skills to interact effectively with others**

Benchmarks within this standard refer to both the social skills needed to build positive relationships/friendships, as well as those needed to work effectively within academic groups. Teachers and students noted that both skill areas are enhanced through service learning.

In the area of positive relationships, teachers of both peer tutors and their tutees noted the positive regard and friendships that grows between tutors/tutees. The kindergarten teacher noted that her tutees, "were excited and ... they became familiar with those friends (their tutors) in the hallway and they would see them and recognize their faces and it was nice, too, for kindergarten. They all loved it." The first grade teacher reported her students, "would see their tutors in the hallway and say 'hi!' and 'there's my tutor!', you know, when they came to get somebody the next time? So, they



loved it – they really did.” The tutors’ teachers also noticed these positive interactions. One of the third grade teachers said, “I think that the connections went really well. I know that some of (the tutors) felt really connected to the student they were placed with and I think that it really helped the younger students.” The building principal, too, noticed the positive relationships established between tutors and tutees: “those older kids love their younger kids like nobody’s business. And that’s really neat to see them kind of watch out for these little guys, you know?” The fourth grade teacher reported that she felt the relationship skills developed during peer tutoring were one of the biggest benefits of the program:

I think that’s where the heart of it is – how to work WITH other people... I think you learn so many social skills – how am I going to talk to this younger person, and use positive words when they’re maybe not following my directions? How to reword what I’m trying to say so that they understand what I want. How to nurture them, so that they - even when they make mistakes, they see that they can be better and can learn and it can be fun.

For their part, the tutors, too, spoke positively about the relationships established between them and their tutees:

Being a peer tutor... it’s, like, really fun, because the kids - they appreciate, you can tell. They appreciate you? They’re always nice to you, and then it’s fun... I think my tutee must’ve used to, like, talk about - us? Because all the kindergartners like know my name? They’re like ‘Hi, C.!’

Some of the other tutors noted that the social skills they developed during peer tutoring transferred to other settings. For example, when asked how he’d been impacted by peer

tutoring, one student said, “in our class, we do little work with our partners? And I became like more talkative than I was ... at the beginning of the year”. Another said, “When I came to this school, like, last year? I was way too shy. Now, like, I did peer tutoring – it makes me less shy now, and I’m more friendly.”

Both the teachers and students had much to say regarding the impact service learning had on the students’ ability to work effectively in groups. One of the third grade teachers noted that students learned to work effectively with one another during the service learning program, even if they had not had a chance to work together previously: “the experience overall was very positive. There was a lot of interaction between kids that might otherwise have not participated together.” A comment made by one of the extension group members was along those same lines:

I think I should (continue to) go for the people that I don’t usually talk to and try and go with them. Because probably with partner work... at the beginning (of the service learning project), I didn’t like working with them? At the end, I LIKED working with them. So, that changes the way I feel about other people.

The third grade co-teacher reported that through working together, the extension students were able to improve previously weak skills: “you have some kids who struggle to effectively communicate, and there were some that we had in our group. But paired up with certain people who kind of helped them overcome those boundaries, they’re only growing together.”

When interviewed, many of the extension students mentioned that working with a group/team was one of the things they liked best about the experience. One student said, “I enjoyed, like, getting into a group and, you know, like working together and finding

out what ... like what do you do next, and how do you do this, so like that". Another stated, "I've never done anything with a group this big? So I learned that working with a group this big is really fun and it's sort of easy." Some students mentioned that they were able to get more accomplished through teamwork than they could have accomplished alone. One said, "I enjoyed working with other people, because, like if you work without a team, it's probably going to ... I mean, if you don't have help, then... things might get messed up. So, I preferred working with friends." Another said,

I did like it (service learning), only because it got us working with a group... (to) do a bake sale, which would take tons of time to practice. But since we were a big group, we got to do the whole entire thing in a couple weeks, maybe one month.

These statements indicate that students not only developed group work skills, they also developed an appreciation of what that group work allowed them to accomplish together.

Additional evidence supporting the claim that service learning has a positive impact on SEL Standard #2 come from the results of the parent survey. On the parent survey, 23 of the 24 parent respondents felt that service learning had gotten the children interested in helping other people. Twenty-two parents reported that the children's group participation skills had improved as a result of service learning. Four-fifths (N=20) of parents believed that students' speaking and listening skills had improved as a direct result of the service learning program.

On the Civic Attitudes Survey, students demonstrated a significant increase in the area of *Civic Efficacy: Group Skills* from pretest to posttest. Three of the items on that survey which showed significant growth were: "I am good at getting others to work

together”; “When I see something that needs to be done, I try to get my friends to work on it with me”; and “I am able to solve more problems by working with other people than I can by working alone.” The results of both surveys, along with the comments made by teachers and students, show that service learning can help students improve their skills within SEL Standard 2C.

**Standard 2D: Demonstrate an ability to prevent, manage, and resolve interpersonal conflicts in constructive ways**

Conflict management is a crucial skill when working with groups. Though the extension students had many positive comments to make about group work, a number of them also alluded to the fact that working in groups could be challenging. One student reported that, “Sometimes the group could be a little... like sometimes it could be a little hard to work with.” Later, this same student elaborated, “sometimes it’s... it’s hard for me to work with people who don’t let you share your ideas.” Another student reiterated this theme, stating, “sometimes I got frustrated with my friends. Like, they said, ‘No – how ‘bout this?’ and they took away my ideas. Sometimes I got frustrated with a six people group. But otherwise, it was fun.” A third student commented how during the service learning project, she and other extension group students were able to handle differences of opinion because they were all working towards a common goal. She said, “I enjoyed it, because we all were working together. Although we had different organizations, we all worked together and all did - and all worked together. Although if someone didn’t want to do that, we still made it work.” She later stated,

Before we did our I/E, I was never good at working in a group... working together in a group with what we did helped me to be a better student at working

in a group. I feel like we all were just, like, say ‘OK, I wanna do this, and I wanna do this. OK, we’ll work together to make that one’. We didn’t all want the same stuff, but we all wanted to accomplish this - doing this together.

This understanding - that conflicts can be mitigated through focusing on a common goal - is one that clearly aligns with Social Emotional Standard 2D.

**Standard 3C: Contribute to the well-being of one’s school and community**

*Late elementary benchmark 3C.2a.: Identify and perform roles that contribute to the school community.* Standard 3C has perhaps the most readily apparent ties to service learning of any social emotional learning standard. This standard speaks to student decision making, requiring the internalization of school/social/societal norms. This standard also speaks to one’s role as a member of a community, whether that community is a family, a classroom, a school, a town, or beyond. The peer tutoring program is closely tied to the benchmark 3C.2a.: Identifying and performing roles that contribute to the school community. Teachers reported that through the peer tutoring program, the fourth and fifth grade tutors learn to take on a leadership role with their younger tutees. In some cases, these new responsibilities help formerly struggling students to truly shine. The fourth grade teacher remarked,

I like the idea of peer tutoring. I think it gives a great ego boost to those kids who are maybe struggling students in your classroom, and they don’t get to lead as often. I think that with younger children, they’re able to be the leader. They’re able to all of a sudden take on the responsibility of ‘I have to be the good example’.

The building principal reiterated this concept when she said,

I think that we saw through this process that kids that we might have anticipated not being a GREAT role model for others, but could find some benefits from it (peer tutoring), ended up being some of our strongest leaders. So, sometimes I think that the kids just surprise us.

The tutees' teachers reported that the older students served as role models for the younger ones, exemplifying behavioral and/or academic expectations for the little ones. The kindergarten teacher noted that "my kids (the kindergartners), meeting with the older kids, seeing how they should behave and what... where they're going from here. Just having an older influence is great, with buddies." A first grade teacher echoed this sentiment:

I know they (the tutors) were picked based off of... their characteristics of what type of students they were and what type of individuals? So... I do think that they were responsible, that they were great role models for our students to be around.

She said as much to her students prior to tutoring, telling them what the program was all about:

It's a chance for you to go and be around older students that can either help you with reading, or help you with something. Or, just someone that you need to look at and say, 'that's the kind of person that I want to be when I'm their age.'

This same teacher also felt that in many ways, peer tutors are able to more clearly exemplify behavioral norms than adults can. She noted,

I think that especially young children or older children – are more apt to follow the example of another child than they (would) an adult. I think sometimes they're going to listen to what a friend says, or a peer, more than a teacher. I

think if those are skills that we're encouraging the peers to have, really encourage them... I think it's good to give them some direction.

When interviewed, the tutors, for their part, appeared to embrace the role of instructor/caretaker over their young charges. Some tutors stated directly that being a tutor taught them to be more helpful with others. When asked, 'What did you learn from being a peer tutor?', one tutor responded, "to help others more? Like, I knew how to help - just, not as much as I learned from tutoring this year." Another tutor said tutoring taught her, "That being helpful is a good thing, because the truth is, I haven't been very helpful in my life? But now, like I realize and I'm gonna keep helping more." All of the tutors reported feeling that their assistance was beneficial to their tutees. Some of the statements made by the tutors included, "I think it's really good to teach younger people how to read.", and:

I liked helping the students get through their grade so they don't have to struggle in first grade; (tutoring) helps kids learn how to read. Like, if I didn't teach G how to read, he'd be below standards. But now, since I have, you'd say that he's actually gained some more reading. And he's actually doing better with his books.

One tutor noted how through tutoring, she was able to pass on the help that she and the other tutors had needed when they were younger: "Other people helped ME read, and other people helped T and M read (other tutors from her class) or something. And, so, we're like doing it to another person."

Some of the tutors appeared to recognize that their influence extended beyond just teaching their tutees to read. In fact, two of the fifth grade tutors independently gave the

same recommendation: expand the current peer tutoring program by giving tutees an opportunity to observe the older students in their classrooms. One of the tutors stated,

I think we should set up this time - not like go make them (the tutees) help us do our work in fifth grade, but show them – prepare them for what they're gonna see in the future and show them what we're doing right now and how to do them... just like we go to their class, they go to ours...not to make them do the work, but like to get prepared for fifth grade and older grades.

The other tutor said, "I think it would be kind of fun to have them (the tutees), like, see what we do in fifth grade." When asked what she would like to show the tutees, she said, "Kind of like, how you have to study kind of hard to get these hard things, and but also how much fun this grade can become." Other tutors indicated that even though they were the ones in the 'helping' role, they were still able to learn from their tutees. One fifth grader reported, "Like how they're (the tutees are) trying to read better and persevering through it? It helps me be better to do the same thing." Another fifth grade tutor stated, "I enjoyed teaching the children? Because like I get to teach them what I know? And sometimes they can teach me new things that I don't even know."

In addition to the input from the interviewees, the parent survey results show evidence of the positive impact service learning has on SEL 3C.2a. Of the 24 parents who responded to the survey, 21 believed that the service learning program had motivated children to come to school. Four fifths (N=20) of the parents reported that service learning had made the children feel more connected to school. These results all appear to support the idea that service learning significantly impacts students' role and self-concept in the school setting.



*Late elementary benchmark 3C.2b: Identify and perform roles that contribute to one's local community.* Whereas the peer tutoring program helped students identify/perform roles within the school community, the extension group helped students to establish roles within the broader community. Although the late elementary benchmark would typically be considered to be the one third graders should strive for, the steps the extension students completed during their service learning group seem to be most closely aligned with the benchmark set forth for the late high school level (3C.5b.: Work cooperatively with others to plan, implement, and evaluate a project that addresses an identified need in the broader community). Those steps – working together in cooperative groups to identify/research service organizations, inform others about their organizations' work, and plan/implement/reflect upon a fundraising event – are described in detail during the Procedures portion of this paper. These learning experiences served to change students' understandings of community and their role within it. One of the third grade teachers remarked that service learning, “really creates a community, like kids that have a sense of community.” She went on to say that providing students with this sense of community was important because,

I think right now that's lacking because they - I don't know if they're connected to THEIR community, so to speak, but I do think that they need to be connected to their community and also to like this whole other world of community through the internet and stuff because that's not... not escapable.

The building principal remarked that,

the kids who were like a part of the third grade service learning group, in particular, really wanted to make a difference with their community. You know,

really wanted to come up with these ways to help support different things that were going on AROUND them not just in the school. And I think that is huge.

The fourth grade teacher noted that, in her mind, the community engagement engendered through service learning not only addresses social emotional learning, it's also aligned with the intent of common core:

the whole idea of common core – not only is it to do the academics, but it's also to have a well-rounded student. And I think in order to be well-rounded, you have to be aware of what's going on in your community. You have to - I think a well-rounded individual gives back to the community? I think that if they (the students) start realizing that it's fun AND rewarding and serves a purpose at nine or ten years old, they'll continue to do it as they get older.

During their interviews, some extension students noted how their understanding about what community means changed through service learning. For example, one student said,

at first, I thought of community as just lots of people just living together and being nice to each other. But then I learned that community is people not only being nice to people but other things like animals and more than just that. Like pretty much the whole earth.

Many of the students reported having new understandings regarding the responsibility of caring for our communities. Some students expressed this in their concerns about others' irresponsible behavior. Some of these comments included:

I learned that ... that lots of people care about themselves instead of others.

Learning that from how many people are polluting the ocean from Sea Turtle Conservancy. And just polluting in general, and killing animals.

People need to, like, they can't just be lazy and - stop doing what's right. They have to think about stuff like, if you're polluting, you have to stop. Someone doesn't need to tell you, you need to think, so we needed to tell everyone – help. You need to help.

We need to work harder (in the community) and I see some people working very hard because other people don't. So I think we should all take our part so that the people that do work a ton should work less. Because everybody should take action.

Many extension students spoke also about how the service learning experience made them feel differently about their personal roles/responsibilities within the community:

I think I learned most about how to like, be – like organize things. And that you can really help out and stuff, and make a change that can be in like, the Caribbean, or in your town.

I feel like I should be helping a lot more now? That I did this – learning about helping other people?

(what) we learned is that community service is always best. You shouldn't be selfish and you should do community work. I'm not saying that your whole life has to be community work, but you can do SOMETHING!

(service learning) made me feel like... when we talked about recycling on Earth Day, I didn't really know what I was supposed to do. And then – it (service

learning) made me feel like, the community needs your help, you shouldn't just sit there and do nothing. You could help.

When one of the extension students was asked what the point to the service learning group had been, she replied, "Well, why do it is... to help your community. Why should you help – you should help because you're helping your community and helping people - helping a whole bunch of things at once." Another student noted that she appreciated stepping into this new role, because it made her,

feel better, because, I mean, sometimes you get frustrated, and if you can't do anything big and you feel like, 'those guys are doing something big, and I want to do something like that'. And you might feel sorry for yourself, for some reason. But if you DO something... it makes you feel better... you don't need to do such a big thing to feel happy. But, it does make you happy.

Results from the Civic Attitudes Survey indicated significant increases in the area of *Civic Responsibility* from pretest to posttest. Individual survey item results showed that the experience helped students understand that it IS their responsibility to help solve problems in their community, and that the things they do have an impact on the community. These results, taken together with the students' and teachers' comments, appear to reflect increased feelings of civic engagement and civic responsibility, hallmarks for SEL Standard 3C.

### **Service Learning and Academic Standards**

A potential benefit to using service learning as an educational strategy is that not only does it address students' social emotional learning; it is also addresses students' academic learning. Nearly all of the teachers interviewed were able to identify clear

ways of meeting academic standards through service learning. Most felt that service learning could be tied to a variety of academic standards. The fifth grade teacher said about service learning,

you could probably tie it to anything, depending on what it is – you just have to get creative... I know that we have this curriculum that is all set for us and all that, but we could look at our essential questions and see where - 'cause service learning, you could do it once a quarter, or once in the fall and once in the spring. But you could definitely – I think there's ways to tie it all to standards.

One of the third grade teachers thought that service learning could very easily be tied to academic standards by

creating some type of unit on it, really looking to...where it could fit in. Like seeing what you study, and seeing like, instead of, like, studying something, you take the service project and you tie in everything that you need to teach, like an opinion writing unit or something.

One of the first grade teachers echoed this theme when she stated,

you could probably find ways to fit it in with multiple things. Really a lot of the speaking and listening areas... those are sometimes hard areas to assess, too. Maybe tying that in some way? But there's got to be like math things you could tie it in with – like real world applications of math things you're working on. Maybe do some research with the informational reading standards – you know, whatever the project is that you want to focus on. I mean, I think there'd be ways to tie it in to most areas. And then, kind of with the big unit ideas, too, in social studies.

Some of the teachers said not only could service learning meet a variety of different standards, it can meet those various standards at the same time. When one of the third grade teachers was asked if there was a benefit to using service learning as an educational strategy, she replied,

It's beneficial for sure, and especially if we can integrate it into science and social studies. And I truly believe that, because when we get people out there and say 'hey guys, we have this big problem – this river that we are all depending on, it's getting contaminated, and this is what the results are'. Then they investigate what's happening and what we can do to help. Well who do we need to talk to? And then it goes past just raising money to actually doing things. So yeah – especially science. And in math – you know? Actually, it's all connected because they have to be able to read, to work out what the real problems are, to see what they are.

The other third grade teacher noted that service learning would meet multiple standards by,

creating some type of unit with it and being able to tie in different pieces of the curriculum with that project. Or having something that fits in with everything that I'm doing. So like, it wouldn't be that we have to take up this huge amount of time for this project, it would be more like here's what we're working on ... here's where it fits in with writing, here's where it fits in with science, here's where it fits in with math and reading... I see the service project as a sort of umbrella over all of the different standards. And all of it fits, all of the standards and everything fit under that umbrella.

Though many teachers spoke to the hypothetical potential service learning has to meet academic standards, some talked about how the current program already *did* meet multiple standards. For example, the building principal noted that during the extension group,

the kids are researching, they're looking at things that matter within their community. Most of them had to do some sort of a speaking and listening component. You know, just talking about reaching out to others in the community, sending e-mails to companies and HR people. Trying to get other people interested ... you know, unbelievable amounts of state standards.

As noted by the building principal, a number of CCSS standards in the area of English Language Arts were indeed addressed during that service learning project (a full summary of the activities and lessons conducted during the 12-week service learning extension group was provided during the "Procedures" portion of this paper). Table 8 outlines the third grade CCSS English Language Arts standards that were covered during those lessons/activities.

It should be noted that grading of the standards listed above was not completed during the current project. The activities completed during the service learning extension group were intentionally NOT graded, as this researcher's Institutional Review Board expressed caution regarding the potential impact the researcher's dual role might have on students.

Table 8

*3rd Grade CCSS ELA - Standards Addressed During Extension Group*

<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.2</u> - Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.5</u> - Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.7</u> - Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.9</u> - Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1</u> - Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.4</u> - With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.5</u> - With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.6</u> - With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.7</u> - Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.8</u> - Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1</u> - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 3 topics and texts</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.3</u> - Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.4</u> - Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.6</u> - Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.



The third grade co-teacher of the service learning extension group noted that not only did service learning demonstrate the ability to meet Common Core standards, she also felt that was an excellent match with CCSS pedagogy. In her words,

This (service learning) is problem based learning. A lot of common core is being able to present them (the students) with a problem and allowing them opportunities to find solutions. And this problem based learning thing that we're rolling out more next year and ... integrating it with our science and social studies, the service learning piece fits perfectly in there.

She later stated that service learning also provides opportunities for real world learning connections, another hallmark of CCSS pedagogy:

The service learning piece is getting these communities involved with us and us with them. It's bringing people in to talk to kids, and then letting the kids go out and show, 'look at what I did with the information that you showed me'. It's combining a lot of what they're doing with the community and that's just it. It's that whole piece - it's not just anymore 'what is your teacher telling you?' - it's 'what can we do within the community?'

In her interview, she reported that not only was service learning a good fit with CCSS pedagogy, it was also a very good fit for the Next Gen Science standards. She felt that service learning would be an excellent fit with the science/engineering activities she has planned for next school year.

A few teachers spoke to the impact elementary service learning might have on their future education and beyond. For example, the fourth grade teacher noted that elementary service experiences might prepare students for middle and high school:

And when you get into junior high and high school, I'm thinking with the Beta Club or the National Honor Society, they have to do community service type projects. I think if they (the students) start doing it (service learning) in elementary school, it's going to not be a strange demon when they get older – 'Oh, I've got to find something I've got to work on.' I think as they get older, it would be like 'Oh, I COULD do...', and they would be able to put in and create their own ideas.

The building principal talked about how skills introduced during service learning will serve students well in the future:

If you taught kids to advocate for what they needed? I mean, I remember – I'll never forget S (student from third grade group) coming up to me and saying, 'hey, we want to do X, Y and Z - can we do this, does this work, are you OK with it?' For having a young kid be able to feel comfortable enough to come up to the principal and say 'hey, I'd like to do this'... yeah, the advocacy is huge. Talking about the college and career readiness –that's what our district's mission is, to make sure that every kid is college or career ready by the time they leave this district. And you just gave them skills that they will need for life.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

#### **Stakeholder Views of Service Learning**

The current study demonstrates that the service learning model has strong buy in from all three stakeholder groups: students, teachers, and parents. Students, for their part, found the current service learning program to be engaging and worthwhile. Interview responses showed that they felt they'd accomplished much during their tenure in the service learning program, and that they found the overall experience to be enjoyable. Many of the interviewees expressed the belief that service learning programming should be offered in the schools, and most indicated that they themselves would be eager to do service learning again.

The teacher interviewees reported that the current service learning program, and service learning in general, has worth as an educational strategy. Every teacher asserted that their students had been highly engaged during the service learning program, and that the students benefitted from the program through attainment of many worthwhile skills. All teacher interviewees indicated that service learning improves students' social emotional skills, and the majority indicated that service learning builds students' academic skills as well. Some teachers did note that time pressures and scheduling issues made implementing service learning a challenge at times. Others gave constructive criticism regarding the lack of clarity surrounding the service learning program's goals and activities.

Overall, the teachers interviewed reported favorably regarding the promise and potential of using service learning as an educational strategy. However, given the intense pressure and scrutiny teachers face in today's classroom, the decision to include service learning in one's teaching repertoire is not one that is undertaken lightly. The teachers' comments make plain the need, going forward, for articulated program objectives, as well as the collection of data to support program impact. Lessons must be purposeful and well planned to make certain academic standards are appropriately addressed. Many teachers spoke to the need for collaboration between different staff members – teachers, grade level teams, and support staff – in order to increase both the quality and the feasibility of service learning implementation. These implementation components will be critical if the elementary service learning program is to succeed.

In many ways, the feedback from the parents was the most interesting, as few research studies to date have solicited parents' views regarding the value and impact of service learning. As schools become increasingly aware of the benefits arising from strong home-school partnerships, the relevance of parents' feedback regarding school programming is evident. If schools and families are to work together to develop the 'whole child', it is important that we come to common understandings of what we hope for our students, as well as what programs we value. During the current study, parent respondents showed overwhelming support regarding the value of service learning overall, with every respondent agreeing that the service learning program was a good use of their children's time. In keeping with the teachers' and students' interview responses, all of the parents indicated on the survey that their children enjoyed and looked forward to the service learning activities. The vast majority parents noted that service learning

provided their own children with a wide range of benefits, from improved academic confidence and reading skills, to increased self-esteem; from improved group participation skills and an increased desire to help others, to an improved connection with the school. Most parents reported that not only was the recent service learning experience worthwhile, but that the children had been taught strategies that they could continue to use in the future.

The parents' responses also gave some evidence that service learning offers an opportunity to involve parents/students together when planning for projects, or when reflecting upon accomplishments. Students from the extension group, in particular, seemed most likely to engage parents in dialogue around their project, with some parents indicating their children asked for their input/advice. However, the current responses from the parents did not indicate that this dialogue consistently occurs, nor that it is universal across groups of students. In order to optimize the home/school connection, common sense dictates that the service learning program should include multiple, intentional activities designed to engage parents and students in dialogue regarding program activities. Since the current study did not fully assess the potential home/school connections that might be established in this manner, this would be an area for further research.

### **Impact of Service Learning on Social-Emotional Functioning**

Through the results of the Civic Attitudes Survey, the interviewees' responses, and the parent survey results, the current study finds evidence that the elementary service learning program had a positive impact on students' civic attitudes and self-concept. Statistically significant increases from pretest to posttest were found on the Civic

Attitudes Survey in the areas of *Civic Responsibility*, *Civic Efficacy: Group Skills*, and *Civic Efficacy: Individual Skills*. On the survey and during the interviews, students reported feelings of increased self-esteem, self-efficacy, competence, and self-worth as a result of their service learning experiences. In addition, the extension students perceived significant improvements in their ability to plan and problem solve from pretest to posttest, and express increased willingness to stand up for their personal beliefs. Parents indicated that their children showed increased levels of self-esteem and academic confidence as a result of the service learning experience. Teachers noted that participation in service learning served to boost their students' self-confidence and made them feel 'special'. All of these aspects of social emotional functioning that relate to students' self-concept align with ISBE's SEL Goal #1.

Clear evidence was also found during the current study showing student growth in interpersonal skills and dispositions aligned with ISBE's SEL Goal #2. Extension students showed significant improvements regarding beliefs about their effectiveness while working in cooperative groups (from pretest to posttest on the Civic Attitudes Survey). Students reported seeing value in teamwork and feeling that they were able to accomplish much together. Some spoke about specific gains they'd made in areas such as compromise or effective communication that helped them when working in groups. Parents, for their part, reported that many of their children learned group participation skills during their service learning experience, and that service learning had increased their desire to help others. Some teachers noted students' improved effectiveness during group work. Others focused on the social and interpersonal traits, including empathy and caring, that students developed during their service learning experiences. These traits

allowed them to establish respectful relationships and friendships with other students. All of these interpersonal traits/skills align with ISBE's SEL #2.

As was mentioned previously in this document, explicit ties can easily be observed between service learning and students' development of the attributes/skills aligned with SEL Goal #3. In peer tutoring, school-wide behavioral and academic expectations are reinforced through the relationships built between tutors and tutees. Tutors' interview responses show that they identify strongly with their newfound helping role, and feel they are making positive contributions to the school community. Extension students' responses, on the other hand, indicate increased identification with their roles as citizens of the larger community. The extension students report increased levels of civic engagement and feelings of civic responsibility; this paired with students' understanding that they have a palpable impact on the communities that surround them, can lead students to fuller participation as citizens in the future. Development of these attributes aligns with ISBE's SEL Goal #3.

### **Linking Service Learning and Academics at the Elementary Level**

Through the interviewees' responses, parent survey results, and alignment of the extension group activities with CCSS ELA standards, the current study shows clear evidence that service learning can be an effective method for meeting academic standards. Teachers noted that service learning can clearly be used to address CCSS ELA standards, especially those standards pertaining to reading/understanding informational text, conducting research, writing, speaking and listening. In addition, several teachers talked about ISBE's Social Studies standards, and felt that service learning was a good fit with the ideas of community helpers and citizenship. The Next

Gen Science standards also appear to be a promising area for incorporating service learning. Though the science standards were not specifically addressed in the current service learning program, this would be an interesting area for further development and study. Some teachers noted that service learning offers a perfect opportunity to utilize pedagogy that is in keeping with Common Core, namely problem-based learning and real-world application of academic skills.

One of the most valuable aspects of service learning is the significant flexibility that it offers. Service learning techniques can provide challenge/enrichment for high achieving students, or can be used to intervene with struggling students. Projects can be tied to any one aspect of the curriculum (math, writing, reading, etc.), or they can be used to address multiple pieces of the curriculum at once. Established project plans can be introduced to students, or student voice can drive the entire project from start to finish. Though this extreme adaptability can be quite valuable, it can also become a potential weakness. When a service learning program tries to be “all things to all people” without clearly delineating program goals and objectives, it becomes difficult to ascertain the true impact of the program. As was mentioned previously, purposeful planning, collaboration, and progress monitoring are critical to assuring academic standards will be met.

The co-teaching model utilized during the third grade service learning extension group is another unique aspect of the current study. Although other researchers have discussed the involvement of support staff in service learning programs (Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007), the specific form of this involvement was not explicated. Both of the third grade teachers specifically spoke to the value of the co-teaching model, and felt



strongly that it was the best strategy for service learning. The benefits come from the different skills sets offered by the teacher and the support staff member. In the co-teaching model, the teacher is the expert on curriculum and standards. She/he is the one who fully understands what standards have already been covered, what is next to be introduced, and the pacing and scaffolding required. Her/his instructional expertise is instrumental to making sure that all students learn. A support staff member serving in the role of service learning facilitator/co-teacher is in charge of meeting the K-12 Standards for Quality Service Learning Practice, and understands the I-PARDE process. She can build and maintain the knowledge base and materials required for successful service learning projects, and have a pool of related resources from which to draw. A service learning facilitator/co-teacher is able to create relationships with local service organizations, and knows which ones can help with certain projects. In addition, having a support staff member in a facilitator/co-teacher role allows needed flexibility to pull small groups of students when completing certain tasks (such as contacting service providers at a time that is convenient for them).

### **Limitations of the Current Study**

The Civic Attitudes Survey was specifically created to answer research questions during the current study. Because of this, it had not been pilot tested prior to administration as a pretest/posttest. It was noted that although explanations were provided for all of the survey items during group administration of the Civic Attitudes Survey, students reported that they found several items confusing when they were reading them (before that additional explanation was provided). In addition, though the measure appeared to demonstrate promising results in terms of content validity and

reliability during the current study, these results were achieved with only a small group of third grade students. Further pilot testing is needed to more thoroughly demonstrate the value of the Civic Attitudes Survey in measuring the civic attitudes of elementary students. This pilot testing should include potentially rewording the items, or even the Likert-Style response categories, in order to reduce the need for excessive explanation regarding items' content. The survey should also be administered to a larger sample of students in grades 2 through 5 to investigate its reliability/validity with a more representative population of elementary students.

Another limitation of the current study was a reliance on student and teacher volunteers for completion of the interviews, and parent volunteers for the parent survey. Because the results are based solely on voluntary participants, it is possible that more critical viewpoints were not fully represented. Though interviewees were intentionally questioned regarding the negative aspects and challenges of service learning during the semi-structured interviews, it is still possible that the current results over-inflate participants' positive perceptions.

A last limitation of the current study is the generalizability of the findings. As the current study was completed at a single school, it is possible that the results obtained are unique to that setting. In addition, it is possible that the results were influenced by the nature of the student participants themselves. Though many other studies of service learning have specifically assessed its impact on 'at-risk' or struggling students (Bowman-Perrot et al., 2013; Ginsberg-Block et al., 2006; Robinson, Schofield, & Steers-Wentzell, 2005; Wade & Yarborough, 2007; Werner, Voce, Openshaw, & Simons, 2002; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007), the current study's results primarily reflect service

learning's impact on students already performing at high levels. As was mentioned in the Procedures section of this paper, peer tutors were selected according to specific criteria, which included their ability to be good role models for the tutees. Tutees, on their part, had to meet certain criteria as well, including the ability to follow school-wide behavioral expectations while working with tutors. The third grade team selected students for the extension group not only by their test scores, but also by their consistently strong performance in the classroom. Because the current sample of students might be considered naturally responsible and motivated, with relatively well-developed social emotional functioning, it may be difficult to generalize the positive effects they encountered to a broader population of students.

### **Recommendations**

The results of the current study shed light on the positive potential service learning have at the elementary level. Future research might help articulate how service learning impacts elementary students' civic attitudes at different grade levels, and whether certain types of experiences are most beneficial at certain grade levels. Further pilot testing and exploration of the Civic Attitudes Survey would hopefully provide validation of the four factors proposed during the current study (*CA*, *CR*, *EG*, and *EI*). In addition, pilot testing would serve to improve the understandability of the scale, and to extend its use to a larger population of elementary students. As was mentioned previously, the current study is relatively unique in its inclusion of parents' feedback regarding service learning. This is most definitely an important area for further research. Future studies might attempt to delineate what aspects of service learning parents find most valuable, and whether the program objectives set forth for service learning correlate

with parents' own goals for their children. Additional study would be warranted to address targeted attempts to build home/school partnerships through service learning, and evaluating the success of such attempts. Lastly, further study of the co-teaching model for service learning programming could serve to clarify this method, and allow for implementation in other schools.

APPENDIX A  
STUDENT ASSENT SCRIPT FOR PEER TUTORS TO  
PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

### Student Assent Script – Peer Tutoring

“As some of you may already know, I am going to school for a doctorate degree at Loyola University. As part of my studies, I had to choose a topic that was important to me to research. I chose something called ‘Service Learning’, which is when students use their skills, talents, and things they’ve learned in school to help other people and help their community. Peer tutoring is one type of service learning.

Two things that every good service learning program should have are: 1) taking the time to reflect on what we’re doing, and 2) making sure students are involved in planning the activities. I’m going to start holding meetings every other week for the peer tutors during lunch and/or recess time. The meetings will give us a chance to think about how things are going in Peer Tutoring, and to plan learning activities for the tutees. I’ll also be asking tutors to fill out six short (meaning no more than 5-10 minutes) reflection pages between now and the end of the school year. Both of these things are voluntary – it’s up to you whether you want to attend the meetings or complete the reflections. It is also up to you whether you want me to include your anonymous (meaning nobody knows who wrote them) reflections in my final research project.

At the end of the year, I’ll be interviewing some of the tutors about our peer tutoring program. To make it fair, I’ll choose the tutors who will be interviewed by putting all the tutors’ student numbers into a jar, then start pulling out some numbers (around ten of them) without looking. I’ll only interview tutors if I have their parents’ consent first.

Do you have any questions about the meetings, reflections, or my research study?

Thank you so much!”

**APPENDIX B**

**RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR PARENTS OF PEER TUTORS**

Date:

Dear parents of [REDACTED] peer tutors –

Some of you may know that I am currently going to school for a doctorate degree at Loyola University. Part of my doctoral training has involved choosing a topic that I care deeply about to research. I chose ‘Service Learning’ as my research topic. Service learning includes many different programs in which students use their skills, talents, and academic learning to help other people and help their community. (Peer tutoring is one type of service learning.) As part of my research, I want to find out more about how service learning fits with Common Core/Illinois state standards; how it affects the people who do it; and whether teachers, parents, and students think it’s worthwhile. I’m hoping that this study will help us make the [REDACTED] tutoring program the best it can be, and possibly help to plan for future programs like it.

Below is a description of my proposed research, as well as detailed information about your rights and your child’s. Your child will be presented with this same information next week. If you have any questions at all, please don’t hesitate to call or e-mail me. Thank you so much for your time!

Sincerely,

Vicki Miceli-Randolph, [REDACTED] School Psychologist  
(224) [REDACTED]  
victoria.miceli-randolph@[REDACTED]



APPENDIX C  
PARENT CONSENT FORM FOR PEER TUTORS

## Parent Consent Form for Peer Tutors

**Project Title:** *Effects of an Elementary School's Service Learning Program*

**Researcher:** *Vicki Miceli-Randolph*

**Faculty Sponsor:** *David Shriberg, Department of School Psychology at Loyola University of Chicago*

### **Introduction and Research Purpose:**

I am asking that your child take part in a doctoral research study I'm conducting as a student of Loyola University's School Psychology Ed. D. program, under the supervision of David Shriberg from the Department of School Psychology. The topic of the study is service learning.

Service learning has been shown to positively impact students in many ways, both academically and emotionally. The purpose of the current study is to examine how an elementary service learning program impacts students, parents, and teachers; and how it might be used to help students achieve grade level standards. Your son/daughter is being included in this study as a member of the DHES Peer Tutoring program. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to allow your child to participate in the study.

### **Project Procedures:**

For the research study, I will be keeping notes/reflecting on our peer tutoring activities and progress. The tutors will be asked to complete six short reflection pages between now and the end of the school year, each of which will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. In addition, tutors will periodically be invited to meet during lunch and/or recess to plan tutoring activities or to reflect as a group. If you give your permission for your child to be in the study, his/her anonymous reflections will be included in the data used to assess the service learning program. Also with your permission, he/she can take part in the periodic tutor meetings during lunch and/or recess.

At the end of the current school year, I'll be interviewing some of the tutors regarding the [REDACTED] peer tutoring program. If your child is randomly selected to be part of the interview process, I will notify you by phone and provide you with a copy of the interview questions that will be asked. With your permission (you and/or your child are free to decline), the interviews would be audiotaped, then transcribed. The audio recordings would be erased after transcription.

Also at the end of this school year, I'll be inviting the parents of students in [REDACTED]'s peer tutoring program to complete a short survey about their experiences. I'm hoping to

gather feedback from parents and from teachers to find out if they think peer tutoring is worthwhile.

**Risks and Benefits:**

There aren't any foreseeable risks involved for participants in this research study beyond what you'd expect your child to experience in everyday life. The benefits of this research are that it will be used to improve the [REDACTED] peer tutoring program, and possibly to plan for future programs like it.

**Confidentiality:**

All of the research information that I collect will either be saved on an external private hard drive, a password protected computer, on the secure Survey Monkey database, or in a locked file cabinet. The collected data will not include names or other information that could be used to identify you or your child. Audiofiles from the student interviews will be kept on a password-protected device, and will be erased after being transcribed. If you decide to give permission for your child to participate in the interviews, but do not allow audiotaping, I will take notes on a password protected computer. Your name, your child's name, and the name of our school also won't be included in the final research document, as that information is confidential.

**Your Rights:**

Participation in this research study is completely voluntary. Your child can continue in the Peer Tutoring program whether they decide to take part in the study or not. It is your choice whether your child's anonymous reflections are included in the study, or whether he/she can take part in the lunch/recess meetings or end-of-year interviews. In addition, the group meetings during lunch and/or recess are always voluntary for the tutors – they are not required to attend in order to continue in the Peer Tutoring program. Lastly, if for any reason your child no longer wants to be a peer tutor, he/she always has the freedom to withdraw from the program.

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to ask me directly, or you can call/e-mail me at any time [phone: (224) [REDACTED]; e-mail: victoria.miceli-randolph@]. You may also contact my faculty sponsor, David Shriberg [phone: (312) [REDACTED]; email: Dshribe@[REDACTED]]. If you have questions about your child's rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at (773) 508-2689.

Your signature below indicates that you've read the above information, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and give permission for your child to participate in this research study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*If you have agreed to permit your child to participate in this study, please **check** the appropriate space regarding your audiotape preferences (should they be randomly selected for the interviews).*

\_\_\_\_ I **AGREE** to allow my child's interview to be audiotaped for research purposes.

\_\_\_\_ I **DO NOT AGREE** to allow my child's interview to be audiotaped for research purposes.

APPENDIX D

STUDENT ASSENT SCRIPT FOR EXTENSION GROUP PARTICIPANTS

### Assent Script for Students in Extension Groups

“Many of you may already know me – my name is Mrs. Miceli-Randolph, and I’m the school psychologist at [REDACTED]. I am studying at Loyola University right now to learn some new things. Part of my studies included picking something I was really interested in and researching it. I chose something called Service Learning, which is when students use their talents, interests, and things they learn at school to help others and their community.

For the next round of I & E, (Mrs. S [REDACTED] and) I will work with you to find out ways you can make a difference in your community, or in the world. We will be reading, researching, and thinking about a community problem, then we’ll make a plan for helping to solve that problem. Our group will meet during the normal “switcheroo” time in either the classroom or in the media center. We’ll do a lot of work together during class, though there may be some independent work you’ll complete on your own.

With your parents’ permission, I’ll ask you to complete an anonymous survey (meaning no one knows who filled the survey out) at the start and end of our project. I’d also like to use the work we complete together to help decide if service learning is a good way to meet standards, and to see if it has a positive impact on students. Any work that’s included in the study won’t include names, since your personal information always needs to be kept confidential.

If you decide you don’t want your work to be included in the research, that’s OK. You don’t have to be in the study unless you want to. Even if you say “yes” now to be in the study, you can stop later – you won’t be in trouble. Also, if you don’t like a question during the study, you don’t have to answer it.

At the end of the year, I’ll be interviewing some of you about our group. To make it fair, I’ll choose the students who will be interviewed by putting all your student numbers into a jar, then start pulling out some numbers - around ten of them- without looking. I’ll only interview students if I have their parents’ consent first.

What questions do you have about this study? (allow time for Q&A). If you have questions later, you can ask me or Mrs. S [REDACTED] those questions at any time. Thank you so much, and I look forward to our group!”

APPENDIX E  
RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR PARENTS OF EXTENSION GROUP STUDENT  
PARTICIPANTS

## Parent Recruitment Letter for Third Grade Extension Group

Date:

Dear third grade parent –

For the third quarter intervention and extension block, your child has been recommended for a Language Arts extension group. This extension group is intended to provide additional challenge for students who have demonstrated strong performance in reading.

This quarter, the extension group will be co-taught by Mrs. S [REDACTED] and Vicki Miceli-Randolph, the school psychologist. For the next six to eight weeks, the extension group will be completing a service learning unit designed to complement the students' studies of citizenship. "Service learning" is an educational strategy in which students apply their academic skills to develop service projects benefitting their schools or communities. These projects can take many forms: from tutoring younger peers, to investigating the causes of hunger and organizing a food drive, to planning and implementing school-wide clean-up efforts. The primary difference between service learning and typical community service is that with service learning, service projects are directly tied to curricular standards and are intended to extend students' learning through real-world application of skills. Service learning has been shown to have a positive impact on students, both academically and socially.

The third grade service learning unit is being implemented as part of Vicki Miceli-Randolph's doctoral research project for Loyola University. Her research is focused on exploring how service learning can enhance Common Core/Illinois state standards; how it affects the people who do it; and whether teachers, parents, and students think it's worthwhile. Attached to this letter is a consent form. It describes the proposed research, and gives detailed information about your rights and your child's. All of the students in the extension group will be provided with this information as well. We welcome any questions you may have about this service learning



unit, as well as questions about the overall research project. We are really looking forward to working with this group, and hope that your child finds this unit to be an engaging and rewarding experience!

Sincerely,

Vicki Miceli-Randolph

[REDACTED]

(224) [REDACTED]

victoria.miceli-randolph@

A [REDACTED] S [REDACTED]

Third Grade Teacher

(224) [REDACTED]

APPENDIX F

PARENT CONSENT FORM FOR EXTENSION GROUP STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

## Parent Consent Form for Extension Groups

**Project Title:** *Effects of an Elementary School's Service Learning Program*

**Researcher:** *Vicki Miceli-Randolph*

**Faculty Sponsor:** *David Shriberg, Department of School Psychology at Loyola University of Chicago*

### Introduction and Research Purpose:

I am asking that your child take part in a doctoral research study I'm conducting as a student of Loyola University's School Psychology Ed. D. program, under the supervision of David Shriberg from the Department of School Psychology. The topic of the study is service learning.

Service learning has been shown to positively impact students in many ways, both academically and emotionally. The purpose of the current study is to examine how an elementary service learning program impacts students, parents, and teachers; and how it might be used to help students achieve grade level standards. Your son/daughter is being included in this study as a member of a service learning extension group. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to allow your child to participate in the study.

### Project Procedures:

For the research study, I will be keeping notes/reflecting on our service learning activities and progress. The six to eight week service learning unit will begin with students being introduced to the concept of service learning. The students will then be led through the process of investigating, designing, and implementing a service project. Periodically throughout the service learning unit, students will be given the chance to reflect upon their learning both verbally and in writing. The project will culminate in a research project that demonstrates students' understandings of the issues. If you give your permission for your child to be in the study, his/her anonymous reflections, as well as portfolios of his/her work, will be included in the data used to assess the service learning program. Your child will also be asked to complete an anonymous student questionnaire designed to assess civic attitudes and engagement at the beginning and end of the service learning unit.

At the end of the service learning unit, I'll be interviewing some of the extension group students regarding their experiences. If your child is randomly selected to be part of the interview process, I will notify you by phone and provide you with a copy of the interview questions that will be asked. With your permission (you and/or your child are free to decline), the interviews would be audiotaped, then transcribed. The audio recordings would be erased after transcription.

Also at the end of this school year, I'll be inviting the parents of students in the extension group to complete a short survey about their experiences. I'm hoping to gather feedback from parents and from teachers to find out if they think service learning is a worthwhile educational strategy.

**Risks and Benefits:**

There aren't any foreseeable risks involved for participants in this research study beyond what you'd expect your child to experience in everyday life. The benefits of this study are that it introduces students to an educational strategy that may positively impact students (based on other research). In addition, the study will be used to evaluate the current service learning program and possibly plan for future programs like it.

**Confidentiality:**

All of the research information that I collect will either be saved on an external private hard drive, a password protected computer, on the secure Survey Monkey database, or in a locked file cabinet. The collected data will not include names or other information that could be used to identify you or your child. Audiofiles from the student interviews will be kept on a password-protected device, and will be erased after being transcribed. If you decide to give permission for your child to participate in the interviews, but do not allow audiotaping, I will take notes on a password protected computer. Your name, your child's name, and the name of our school also won't be included in the final research document, as that information is confidential.

**Your Rights:**

Participation in this research study is completely voluntary. It is your choice whether your child's anonymous reflections and/or portfolio are included in the study, or whether he/she can take part in the interviews at the end of the service learning unit. If you, or your child, are uncomfortable with a specific activity or question being asked, you can choose not to complete those items. Lastly, if for any reason your child does not want to participate in the current extension group, the teachers can find a different group for him/her.

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to ask me directly, or you can call/e-mail me at any time [phone: (224) ██████████]; e-mail: victoria.miceli-randolph@]. You may also contact my faculty sponsor, David Shriberg [phone: (312) ██████████]; email: Dshribe@]. If you have questions about your child's rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at (773) 508-2689.

Your signature below indicates that you've read the above information, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and give permission for your child to participate in this research study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*If you have agreed to permit your child to participate in this study, please **check** the appropriate space regarding your audiotape preferences (should they be randomly selected for the interviews).*

\_\_\_ I **AGREE** to allow my child's interview to be audiotaped for research purposes.

\_\_\_ I **DO NOT AGREE** to allow my child's interview to be audiotaped for research purposes.

APPENDIX G  
STUDENT SURVEY FOR PRE/POST ASSESSMENT OF EXTENSION GROUP  
PARTICIPANTS

## Student Survey

Dear Student:

This survey will help me to better understand what you think about your role in the community. **Please try to answer these questions as honestly and accurately as possible.** It is important that I understand how you think and feel about these issues. If there are any words or questions you don't understand, please let me know. I will make sure to explain the word or question to everyone taking this survey, so that we all understand the question in the same way.

Everything you say will be kept private, so please don't write your name on the survey. Instead, just complete the Student Information section on this page to help me match your responses with another survey we'll take later this year.

Thank you so much for your time and effort!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Miceli-Randolph

### STUDENT INFORMATION

1. Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Gender (circle one): Boy      Girl
4. What is your first initial? \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** On the following page, please circle the number that shows what you think about each statement.

	Not at all	Not Really	Sort Of	Definitely
<i>Example:</i> I like ice cream.	1	2	3	4

	Not at All	Not Really	Sort Of	Definitely
1) I am aware of problems and needs in my community.	1	2	3	4
2) I care about the people in my community.	1	2	3	4
3) I want to help when I see someone having a problem.	1	2	3	4
4) It isn't my responsibility to help solve problems in my community.	1	2	3	4
5) The things I do don't really impact my community much.	1	2	3	4
6) I talk about community problems with my friends or parents.	1	2	3	4
7) I work with others to solve community problems.	1	2	3	4
8) I believe I can persuade others to do things that improve the local community.	1	2	3	4
9) I can name agencies and organizations that address local needs and problems in my community.	1	2	3	4



10) I know how to contact knowledgeable people to get information about local problems.	1	2	3	4
11) I use information from a variety of sources to solve problems in my community.	1	2	3	4
12) I am able to solve more problems by working with other people than I can by working alone	1	2	3	4
13) I don't have the ability to make things better for people in my community.	1	2	3	4
14) When it comes to fixing community problems, I have no idea where to start	1	2	3	4
15) We are all responsible for keeping our community clean	1	2	3	4
16) When I see something that needs to be done, I try to get my friends to work on it with me.	1	2	3	4
17) I feel like I can stand up for what I think is right, even if my friends disagree.	1	2	3	4
18) Once I know what needs to be done, I am good at planning how to do it.	1	2	3	4
19) I am good at getting others to work together	1	2	3	4
20) I want to help solve the world's problems.	1	2	3	4
21) I believe I can make a positive difference on the world around me.	1	2	3	4

<b>22) I am confident in expressing my opinions in front of adults.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
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<b>23) It's everybody's job to take care of our community.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
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<b>24) I can use my interests, skills, and talents to make the world better</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
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<b>25) I'm only interested in problems that affect me or my family</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
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APPENDIX H  
RECRUITMENT SCRIPT FOR PARENTS OF STUDENTS RANDOMLY SELECTED  
FOR INTERVIEWS

**Verbal Script to be presented to parents by phone if they have questions regarding why their child was randomly selected to complete an interview**

“Hi, (parent name) – how are you? I’ve really enjoyed working with (child’s name) in (Peer Tutoring or the Extension Group). I hope that they enjoyed the experience!

As you already know, I am doing a research study for Loyola University on the topic of service learning. Part of my study involves interviewing students from both Peer Tutoring and the Extension Groups to find out what they thought about their experiences. Since there isn’t enough time to interview every student in these programs, I randomly selected students to interview. (Child’s name) was randomly selected for these interviews. I gave (child’s name) a copy of the interview questions that would be asked so (he/she) could share them with you. (*\*the student interview protocol will be provided to child*) The interviews are voluntary – if your child doesn’t want to participate, or if they don’t want to answer specific interview questions, that’s totally fine. If I do interview (him/her), the feedback will be confidential. I will not include (his/her) name or any other information that might be used to identify (him/her) in my research. Also – I’ll ask (him/her) if it’s OK to audio record the interview, so I don’t miss anything that’s said. Those recordings will be erased as soon as I transcribe the interview. If (he/she) or you are uncomfortable with my recording the interview, though, I would simply take notes on a password-protected computer.

Do you have any questions at all?

Thank you so much for allowing your child to participate in (Peer Tutoring or the Extension Group)!”

APPENDIX I  
STUDENT ASSENT SCRIPT FOR STUDENTS RANDOMLY SELECTED FOR  
INTERVIEWS

**Student Assent Script to be presented to students randomly selected for interviews**

“Your parents have agreed to let me interview about (peer tutoring/the extension group). Are you OK with being interviewed?”

The questions I’m about to ask you are the same ones I gave you a copy of before. *(\*a copy of the student interview protocol will be provided to all students randomly selected for interviews)* It will help me with my research to find out more about what (peer tutoring/the extension group) was like for you. Please be as honest as you can. Remember that this interview is voluntary – you don’t have to answer any question you don’t want to, and you can stop the interview at any time.

Is it OK if I record our interview so I don’t miss anything that you’ve said? O.K., let’s begin.”

APPENDIX J

PARENT CONSENT FORM FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENT INTERVIEWS

## **Parent Consent Form for Individual Student Interviews**

**Project Title:** *Effects of an Elementary School's Service Learning Program*

**Researcher:** *Vicki Miceli-Randolph*

**Faculty Sponsor:** *David Shriberg, Department of School Psychology at Loyola University of Chicago*

### **Introduction and Research Purpose:**

I'm asking for permission to interview your child regarding his/her service learning experiences. These interviews are part of the ongoing doctoral research study I'm conducting as a student of Loyola University's School Psychology Ed. D. program, under the supervision of David Shriberg from the Department of School Psychology. The purpose of the interviews is to gather student feedback regarding the impact elementary service learning had upon them. Per our earlier phone conversation, your son/daughter was randomly selected from all of the peer tutors and service learning extension group participants to complete an individual interview.

Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to allow your child to participate in an individual interview.

### **Interview Procedures:**

I will be asking your child the same questions that were listed on the interview sheet I sent home with him/her on \_\_\_\_\_. Interviews will take place during the week of \_\_\_\_\_ in my office, and should take approximately ten minutes. With your permission (you and/or your child are free to decline), the interviews would be audiotaped, then transcribed. The audio recordings would be erased after transcription.

### **Risks and Benefits:**

There aren't any foreseeable risks involved for interviewees beyond what you'd expect your child to experience in everyday life. The benefits of this study are that your child has the opportunity to share his/her honest opinions about service learning, and will know that his/her feedback is valued. In addition, this feedback will be used to evaluate the current service learning program and possibly plan for future programs like it.

### **Confidentiality:**

Interviews will not include names or other information that could be used to identify you or your child. Audiofiles from the student interviews will be kept on a password-protected device, and will be erased after being transcribed onto a password-protected computer. If you decide to give permission for your child to participate in the interviews, but do not allow audiotaping, I will take notes on a password-protected computer. Your



name, your child's name, and the name of our school won't be included in the final research document, as that information is confidential.

**Your Rights:**

Participation in this research study is completely voluntary – there is no penalty for not participating. It is completely your choice whether your child can take part in the interviews. If you, or your child, are uncomfortable with any of the questions being asked, he/she can choose not to answer them.

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to ask me directly, or you can call/e-mail me at any time [phone: (224) ██████████; e-mail: victoria.miceli-randolph@ ]. You may also contact my faculty sponsor, David Shriberg [phone: (312) ██████████; email: Dshribe@ ]. If you have questions about your child's rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at (773) 508-2689.

Your signature below indicates that you've read the above information, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and give permission for your child to participate in this research study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*If you have agreed to permit your child to participate in the interview, please **check** the appropriate space regarding your audiotape preferences*

\_\_\_\_\_ I **AGREE** to allow my child's interview to be audiotaped for research purposes.

\_\_\_\_\_ I **DO NOT AGREE** to allow my child's interview to be audiotaped for research purposes.

APPENDIX K  
STUDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

## Student Interview Protocol

*Tell me about your experience with (Peer Tutoring or Service Learning Extension group) this year.*

*Are there some things that you enjoyed about the experience? What were these things?*

*Are there some things that you did not enjoy about the experience? What were these things?*

*What do you feel you learned from your experience in the service learning program?*

*Did being part of (Peer Tutoring or Service Learning Extension group) make you a better student at all? If so, how?*

*Did being part of (Peer Tutoring or Service Learning Extension group) change the way you feel about yourself? If so, how?*

*Did being part of (Peer Tutoring or Service Learning Extension group) change the way you feel about your community? If so, how?*

*What would you change to make (Peer Tutoring or Service Learning Extension group) better?*

*Would you want to do something like (Peer Tutoring or Service Learning Extension group) again in the future?*

APPENDIX L

RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR STAFF INTERVIEWS

**Recruitment Letter for Staff Interviews (e-mailed to building principal and all participating teachers)**

Hi, everyone –

As you probably already know, I'm currently working on a doctoral research project for Loyola University. The focus of my research has been on service learning at the elementary level. I would really like to interview teachers from kindergarten, first grade, fourth grade, and fifth grade in order to hear your opinions about service learning in general, as well as gather any feedback you have about the Peer Tutoring program and Extension Group in particular. (The interview questions that I would be asking you are listed below) **\*\* *Teacher/Principal Interview Protocol* was attached to bottom of e-mail \*\***. Your feedback will help me both to answer my research questions, and to improve any future service learning/peer tutoring projects. The feedback will be confidential - I will not include your name or any other information that might be used to identify you in my research.

The interview should take no more than 10 minutes. Participating in the interviews is totally voluntary - you are free to decline to participate. If you are willing to let me interview you about service learning/peer tutoring, I will work around your schedule to try to find the best time to talk.

Thank you all so much for your support this year, both with these interviews and with your willingness to support the programs themselves. It is very much appreciated!

Sincerely,

Vicki Miceli-Randolph

APPENDIX M

CONSENT FORM FOR STAFF INTERVIEWS

## Consent Form for Teacher/Principal Interviews

**Project Title:** *Effects of an Elementary School's Service Learning Program*

**Researcher:** *Vicki Miceli-Randolph*

**Faculty Sponsor:** David Shriberg, Department of School Psychology at Loyola University of Chicago

### **Introduction and Purpose:**

As you know, I am currently working on a doctoral research project as part of the School Psychology Ed. D. program at Loyola University, under the supervision of David Shriberg from the Department of School Psychology at Loyola University of Chicago. I chose 'Service Learning' as my research topic. Service learning includes many different programs in which students use their skills, talents, and academic learning to help other people and help their community. As part of my research, I want to find out more about how service learning fits with Common Core/Illinois state standards; how it affects the people who do it; and whether teachers, parents, and students think it's worthwhile. I'd like to invite you to take part in this research study through an interview in which you give your opinions about service learning and the specific programs at [REDACTED] (namely the Peer Tutoring and the Service Learning Extension groups).

### **Procedures:**

If you agree to participate in my research, I will conduct an interview with you at a time and location of your choice. The interview should take about 20 minutes. Here is a copy of the general interview questions that I would ask (*give interview questions to participant*). With your permission, I will audiotape and take notes during the interview. The recording is to accurately record the information you provide, and will be used for transcription purposes only. If you choose not to be audiotaped, I will only take notes instead. If you agree to being audiotaped but feel uncomfortable at any time during the interview, I can turn off the recorder at your request. Or if you don't wish to continue, you can stop the interview at any time.

### **Benefits:**

There is no direct benefit to you from taking part in this study. I do hope, though, that this study will help us make the [REDACTED] service learning program the best it can be, and possibly help to plan for future programs like it.

### **Risks/Discomforts:**

It's possible that you might feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions because you don't want to jeopardize my research project. Although I want to assure you that I'm

looking for honest feedback, you do need to know that you're free to decline to answer any questions you don't wish to, and you stop the interview at any time. I won't be asking you for any identifying information during our interview, so the chances that confidentiality could be compromised should be very small.

**Confidentiality:**

To minimize the risks to confidentiality, the audio recording of your interview will be kept on a password protected device. I will transcribe that audio recording by typing it onto a password protected computer, and then delete the recording as soon as the transcription is complete. The transcription will be saved on either the password-protected computer, or on a private external hard drive. The transcription of the interview will be shared with one other researcher for the purposes of verifying my coding and improving the study's validity. However, no identifying information will be included on the transcription. Once the research is completed, I will destroy the transcriptions. If results of this study are published or presented, your name and any other personally identifiable information will not be used.

**Rights:**

*Participation in research is completely voluntary.* You are free to decline to take part in the project. You can decline to answer any questions and are free to stop taking part in the project at any time. Whether or not you choose to participate in the research and whether or not you choose to answer a question or continue participating in the project, there will be no penalty to you.

**Questions:**

If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to ask me directly, or you can call/e-mail me at any time [phone: (224) ██████████; e-mail: victoria.miceli-randolph@]. You may also contact my faculty sponsor, David Shriberg [phone: (312) ██████████; email: Dshribe@]. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at (773) 508-2689.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Statement of Consent:**

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to participate in this research study. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.



---

Participant's Name *(please print)*

---

Participant's Signature

---

Date

APPENDIX N

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR STAFF INTERVIEWS

### **Teacher/Principal Interview Protocol**

*Tell me about your experiences with the service learning program this year*

*What did you feel went well with the service learning program this year?*

*What do you think could have been improved in the service learning program this year?*

*Did you feel like service learning was an effective strategy for meeting Common Core State Standards?*

*Did you feel like service learning was an effective strategy for meeting ISBE's Social-Emotional Learning standards?*

*Do you think there are any benefits to utilizing service learning as an educational strategy?*

*What would increase the chances of your using service learning in your classroom?*

*Who do you think is best suited to facilitating service learning programs at the elementary level?*

APPENDIX O  
RECRUITMENT LETTERS FOR PARENT SURVEY

**Initial Recruitment Letter for Parent Surveys (sent via e-mail, with link to SurveyMonkey.com attached)**

June 3, 2015

Dear [REDACTED] Parents,

As a doctoral student at Loyola University, I am very interested in studying the impact of service learning in elementary schools. During the current school year, your child took part in one of the service learning projects that was implemented at [REDACTED] (either Peer Tutoring or the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Service Group). I would very much like to get your feedback about the project your child was involved in. Could you please take a few minutes to complete the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9KHQX2Z?> Just click on the link, and you will be taken right to the parent survey. The survey should take no more than 5 minutes to complete.

Your perspective as a parent is extremely valuable, and I truly appreciate your taking the time to share your thoughts. I also welcome any additional ideas you might have on making these programs better -- feel free to include any additional comments or suggestions at the bottom of the survey.

Thank you again for your time, and for everything that you do to support your child's education!

Sincerely,

Vicki Miceli-Randolph, [REDACTED] School Psychologist

(224) [REDACTED]

victoria.miceli-randolph@

Second Recruitment Letter for Parent Surveys (sent via e-mail with link to SurveyMonkey.com attached)

June 22, 2015

Dear [REDACTED] parents,

I hope that you all are enjoying your summer so far (despite all the rain - holy cow!)

I want to thank all the parents who have already completed the survey about the Peer Tutoring Program or 3rd Grade Service group. Thank you so much for taking the time to share your thoughts - your feedback and comments have been really helpful!

We always want to spend students' time as wisely as possible at school, and your perspective is incredibly important in determining whether programs like these are worthwhile. If you haven't yet had a chance to fill out the brief survey, I would so appreciate your going to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9KHQX2Z> to complete it. If at all possible, please complete the survey by this Friday (June 26th), before the survey closes.

Thank you again for all that you do, and enjoy your summer!

Vicki Miceli-Randolph, [REDACTED] School Psychologist

(224) [REDACTED]

victoria.miceli-randolph@

APPENDIX P  
PARENT SURVEY





*...helped your child develop group participation skills?*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

*...helped your child develop leadership skills?*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

*...increased your child's academic confidence (i.e. made them feel better about their reading, math, writing, speaking or listening skills)?*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

*...helped your child become a better reader?*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

*...helped your child do better in math?*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

*...helped your child improve his/her writing skills?*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

*...helped your child improve his/her speaking or listening skills?*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

*...taught your child problem solving skills?*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

*...taught your child strategies that he/she will be able to use again in the future?*

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

---

**During the service learning experience, did your child (circle one) ...**

<b><i>Tell you that he/she enjoyed their service learning experience?</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b><i>Discuss with you the things he/she did during service learning?</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b><i>Ask for your input or advice regarding his/her service learning project?</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b><i>Tell you that he/she wanted to continue in the service learning program?</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

**Additional comments/feedback about the service learning program:**

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## VITA

Vicki Miceli-Randolph was born and raised in Elgin, Illinois. As an undergraduate, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of Illinois, Champaign in 1992. After a year of volunteer service with Lakefront SRO working with homeless adults in Chicago, she began attending Loyola University, Chicago. She received her Master of Education and Education Specialist degrees in School Psychology from Loyola University, Chicago in 1996.

Currently, Vicki is a full time elementary school psychologist for a school district in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago. She lives in Elgin, Illinois, along with her husband and three children.



## DOCTORAL RESEARCH PROJECT APPROVAL SHEET

The Doctoral Research Project submitted by Vicki Miceli-Randolph has been read and approved by the following committee:

David Shriberg, Ph.D., Director  
Professor, School of Education  
Loyola University Chicago

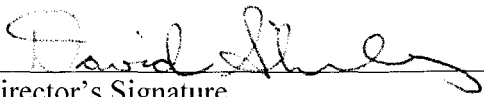
Michael Boyle, Ph.D.  
Clinical Assistant Professor, School of Education and Director, Andrew M. Greeley  
Center for Catholic Education  
Loyola University Chicago

Patricia Schmidt, M.S.Ed.  
Building Principal

The final copy has been examined by the director of the Doctoral Research Project and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the Doctoral Research Project is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The Doctoral Research Project is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

8/15/15  
Date

  
Director's Signature