COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE LEARNING

Projects that make a difference!

A catalogue for teachers, support staff, principals, community partners, and CLC coordinators / community development agents (CDA)
Index

‣ What is Community-Based Service Learning? Page 3
‣ CBSL statistics Page 4
‣ CLC-QEP Connections Page 5
‣ How can CLC Coordinators help? Page 6
‣ Where to start? Page 7
‣ Examples of projects
  • Resume writing and interview practice! Page 8
  • Blanket Exercise Page 9
  • Authentic Writing Page 10
  • Unearth our Past Page 11
  • Feed Your Body, Heart and Soul Page 12
  • Chick Hatching Page 13
  • Food In Our School & Community Page 14
  • Grand Plants Page 15
  • Slice of Life Page 16
  • Music Through the Decades Page 17
  • Students “GrEAU”-ing organic crops Page 18-19
  • Video Conferencing Page 20

‣ Do You Feel Inspired? Page 21

‣ Appendices
  • Appendix 1 - Project Overview Page 22
  • Appendix 2 - Making Curriculum Connections Page 23
  • Appendix 3 - Giving Students a Voice Page 24
  • Appendix 4 - Collaborative To-Do List Page 25
  • Appendix 5 - Project Timeline Page 26
What is a CBSL project?

Simply put, Community-Based Service Learning is a teaching strategy that helps students to achieve academic and social education goals while meeting an authentic community need. **CBSL is not an add-on—but is integrated in the curriculum. These projects can align with the QEP, making it easier to evaluate students’ work.**

**Volunteering vs. CBSL**

If students *collect* trash off a riverbank, they are providing a valued service to the community as *volunteers*.

If students *collect* trash from a riverbank, *analyze* their findings with a local fisherman, and *share* the results with *residents*, they are engaging in **community-based service learning.**

**Benefits of CBSL**

- Students demonstrate more enthusiasm on school days involving a CBSL project
- Community partners provide specialized knowledge/expertise/resources
- CBSL projects can be embedded into most subjects at every grade level
- Accommodates diverse learning styles
School-Community Partnerships: Student Benefits

How do school-community partnerships contribute to student learning?

- **An improved desire to be at school from typically disengaged students**
  - Principals: 80% agree
  - Teachers: 92% agree
  - Coordinators: 97% agree

- **Experiential (i.e., hands-on, real life) learning opportunities for students**
  - Principals: 94% agree
  - Teachers: 87% agree
  - Coordinators: 91% agree

- **Development of life skills (e.g., making healthy meal choices, financial literacy...etc.)**
  - Principals: 86% agree
  - Teachers: 87% agree
  - Coordinators: 94% agree

- **Positive school climate (e.g., inclusive, welcoming, collaborative)**
  - Principals: 100% agree
  - Teachers: 95% agree
  - Coordinators: 94% agree

According to surveys:

- **95%** of teachers, principals and coordinators agree that resources and activities introduced through school-community partnerships support the achievement of school goals.

> My students have contributed to projects that have a life outside the confines of the school. They have benefited by seeing their hard work come to fruition and be recognized….my students have developed working relationships with amazing and inspiring adults. I have seen my students benefit greatly from these interactions.

> Secondary Teacher, EMSB

More volunteers to:

1. Share specialized knowledge or skills with students
2. Act as mentors (i.e., caring adults who offer guidance and encouragement)
3. Assist with out-of-class reading time

CLC School Representation at Partnership Tables

"Our presence has created a movement in which our community has a better understanding of who we are as a school and what we do as an anglophone school board." Principal, SWLSB

Average number of partnership tables attended by CLC school coordinators:

- **4-6**
- Focus:
  - Early Childhood
  - Student Success
  - Health Services
How does the CLC approach contribute to the achievement of cross curricular competencies and the broad areas of learning?

1244 activities and programs developed or supported by coordinators

73% of activities and programs are tied to the Quebec Education Plan

63% support personal and social competencies

58% support student health and wellbeing

50% support citizenship and community life

44% support intellectual competencies

27% of CLC activities and programs contribute to:

- Establishment & development of school-community partnerships
- Parental engagement & support
- Lifelong learning and recreational opportunities for adults
- Early childhood education

Facts & figures based on reports submitted in May 2015 from all 37 CLC School coordinators. For more information, comments or questions, please contact a member of the Provincial Resource Team.
How can CLC Community Development Agents help?

1. Help identify an authentic need using local data
2. Connect teachers with community experts and resources
3. Identify videoconferencing opportunities that support the curriculum
4. Apply for and manage grants for projects and assist with project planning in collaboration with local partners

**Characteristics of a successful CBSL project**

- Focus is on issues that are meaningful to students
- Students have opportunities to learn outside of classroom
- Students have voice and choice – learning tasks are active
- Clear curricular connections – not an add-on
- Shared roles and responsibilities between school and community partners.
Where to start?
Let’s work together to develop a new CBSL project that meets the needs of your school and community.

Can you draw connections between the 3 categories?

**People to keep in mind**

Seniors  
Local organizations  
Local businesses  
Farmers  
Alumni  
Parents  
Clubs & groups  
Video conferencing network

**Topics for inspiration**

Aboriginal Education  
for Reconciliation  
Environment  
Life Skills  
Politics  
Travel  
Social Justice  
Local History  
Intergenerational projects  
Health & Wellbeing  
News  
Arts & Culture  
Literacy Improvement

**Curriculum topics**

English  
French  
Geography  
History  
Citizenship Education  
Mathematics  
Science & Technology  
Music-Visual Arts  
Physical Education  
Ethics and Religious Culture
Resume writing and interview practice!

English Language Arts

CVR High School, Ormstown, QC

Teachers worked with local businesses to proactively address the issues of youth employment and retention in the region.

Students wrote their own curriculum vitae, and in return, local businesses took the time to read them and give feedback. This taught students how to improve their presentation and job application skills. To take things to the next level, who that did really well had the opportunity to practice an interview with some managers and company owners.

**Student feedback**

“I like the fact that it was actual business people, not fake people saying ‘we run a business.’ I find that was very cool!”

“It helps me think of what I’m getting ready for, as a teenager trying to find a job”

“We learned different methods of working, and it’s different because [we’re] not learning in just one spot”

“I think I had to work a lot harder for that, to impress business owners”
“The KAIROS Blanket Exercise is an interactive learning experience that teaches the Indigenous history we’re rarely taught. Developed in response to the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples—which recommended education on Canadian-Indigenous history as one of the key steps to reconciliation, the Blanket Exercise covers over 500 years of history in a one and a half hour participatory workshop.

Blanket Exercise participants take on the roles of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Standing on blankets that represent the land, they walk through pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance. They are directed by facilitators representing a narrator (or narrators) and the European colonizers. Participants are drawn into the experience by reading scrolls and carrying cards which ultimately determine their outcomes. By engaging on an emotional and intellectual level, the Blanket Exercise effectively educates and increases empathy.

It is important that the exercise be followed by a debriefing session where participants have the opportunity to discuss the experience as a group. This often takes the form of a talking circle lead by an elder.

http://kairosblanketexercise.org/about
Authentic Writing

English Language Arts and Français, langue seconde

“The more real-life contexts we can provide in our classrooms for student reading and writing, the better. There is a close relationship between authentic literacy activities and improvement in reading and writing a variety of genres”.

-Literacy Today

Real-life texts for students to read, write and produce

In English Language Arts students from the beginning of elementary school to the end of secondary school are reading, writing and producing real-life texts for a variety of purposes. These texts include letters, lists, recipes, poetry, picture books, short stories, editorials, ads, graphic organizers, brainstorming, etc.

Examples of Authentic Writing in CLC Schools

• C is for Coast - Early Literacy Book
• Once Upon a Memory - Local History
• Senior Buddies - Intergenerational
• Up Next Recordings - Promotion and Marketing
• Special Edition Community Newsletter - Secondary Students of Metis Beach
• Authentic Writing - Blog Post
Unearth our Past
History, English Language Arts, Visual Arts
Quebec High School, New Carlisle High School and Laurentian Regional High School

Three CLCs across Quebec participated in a project called “Unearth our Past”, supported by Blue Metropolis. Students from Quebec High, New Carlisle, and Laurentian Regional visited a local cemetery in search of buried local heroes or role models and turned the stories of these lives into short dramatic works, to be presented at local schools and in the community.

Photo by Monique Dykstra.

Listen to an interview on CBC about the Quebec High School visit to Mount Hermon Cemetery and highlights from the final performances.

In 2015/16, Blue Metropolis connected schools with filmmakers to create a short film on the theme of Heroes in my Backyard. This is an example of community partners and schools collaborating to engage students in learning and their local history.
Marguerite Cox’s CBSL project called *Feed Your Body, Feed Your Heart, Feed Your Soul*, integrated Social Studies and Language Arts. The idea was to create a cookbook which would present the history of food in the community of Chevery, Quebec.

However, her project quickly grew into so much more. Primary students were asked to find old-fashioned recipes from their community to include in the cookbook. Marguerite and her 18 students then decided to bake some of the goodies and occasionally open a small bakery to sell to students and staff.

From there, the students wanted to do something good with the money they had made from selling the treats and book. They sent money to the victims of the Philippines Typhoon Haiyan (2014), help fund a student through the Hilde Back scholarship in Kenya and helping endangered elephants in Kenya. The students also gave back to their own community by spending time with seniors, sharing their baked goods and telling stories.

“The students learned so much… Leadership, mentoring, cooking, safety in the kitchen, compassion, writing, storytelling, listening skills and most of all, they learned that it takes a team to make it all happen.”-Marguerite Cox
Belle Anse Elementary School’s teacher Marissa McCallum received chicken eggs from a local farm, which her Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, Primary Cycle One and Two students were able to see hatch right in their classroom. The students witnessed the process starting from 48 hours before hatching up until the baby chicks were ready to go back to the farm. Along the way, students learned about the life cycle of the chicks and how to take care of them.

Through the celebration and education of the students’ local heritage, environment and community, Ms. McCallum observed a great deal of engagement and learning from her 14 students. “They learned about an aspect of our town they are not fully aware of,” comments Ms. McCallum. She also says that with the help of the nearby farm, students were about to see what can be done, and is available, locally. “They also learned about the life cycle of an animal that they are not familiar with on a daily basis and how this animal is used.”

There are a lot of resources and lesson plans to help teachers bring this unique experience into their school. You might want to start with a document from Nova Scotia entitled Egg-ricultural Egg-periences.

Work Oriented Training Program (WOTP) students at St Michael’s jumped into action and took over food preparation for their school for two days a week after a local restaurant that had provided school meals ended that service. The class also made sandwiches daily for students who needed a lunch.

As if that was not enough, the class wanted to support seniors in their community. They took some of the by-products (such as chicken bones for making soup) and made meals for members of the community who are shut in or less mobile.

The project was fully integrated into the curriculum and taught practical skills like procedures for safe handling of food and working in a professional style kitchen.

Their teacher, Billy Boudreau, commented, “The students are more engaged by projects, especially those that require much hands-on work. This project helped to allow for that to happen.”

The students also learned the “value of giving back to the community and making healthy choices.” This is a great example of service learning; students identified an authentic need and came up with a solution, all the while learning and making a contribution to their community.
Through the “Grand Plants” project, Cycle 2 students from Riverview Elementary fostered a love for plants and then spread that love, like the seeds of their plants, to their grandparents, who were invited to the school to be involved in the project.

**The project gave students a greater understanding of...**

- the importance of plants
- how easy growing and planting can be
- what will help plants grow
- the impact of global warming
- the need for intergenerational ties and activities

Students were in awe and amazement by how well their plants grew. Another success of the project was seeing the students enjoying the time spent with their grandparents at school and while working on the project. While it’s not always easy to coordinate schedules and find the time to get everything done, students were engaged. For instance, “some students, who were previously afraid of worms and compost (“Yuck! That’s sheep’s poo”!) began to take interest in how soil becomes more nutritious for plants and were excited to find worms when we turned the soil in the community garden outside.”
Slice of Life

History, Français, langue seconde

Pope Memorial Elementary School, Bury, QC

Slice of Life is a story of how a local artifact can get students and the wider community to talk about their history and reflect on the changes over the past century, both locally and globally.

It started with a two-inch thick slice of tree from a towering pine, cut down outside Pope Memorial Elementary School in the town of Bury. Students counted the rings and determined the age (109 years to be exact).

Next, their teacher Jocelyn Bennett read a book about a thousand year old tree and what had happened during that time period. French teacher Celine Carbonneau asked her students to bring in artifacts from that period and wrote about it in French, later presenting to the community.

This inspired the students and community to research the history of the town and vote on the most significant town and world events over the past 109 years.

You can see pictures and read more about the project and how the community got involved in an entertaining article by Rachel Garber in The Record.

Inspiration can be found in the strangest places.
Music through the decades is a wonderful service learning project addressing the authentic community need of reducing isolation of seniors from the Mary-Elizabeth Residence in Châteauguay. The project was led by two teachers from the New Frontiers School Board, Moira Lemme from Centennial Park Elementary School and Melissa Ianniciello from St. Willibrord.

The project started with students interviewing seniors and taking notes about music they loved throughout their lives. The students took the information back to the classroom analyzing the results with surveys and bar graphs, then answered questions using the information.

Perhaps not surprisingly, some students less engaged by math, “took the assignment very seriously as we were analyzing data. They wanted to understand - what the averages were and most common answers.”

Ms. Lemme noted “projects like this lead to better understanding for students, especially typically lower scoring students who can make connections and be excited about the work they are doing”. Finally, the students performed the songs for the seniors.
In 2014, Mecatina CLC School started a student-run business and hydroponic garden. Their goal was to create a business that applied the technology and science concepts they had learned in class with their desire to improve their community.

Mecatina School is situated on the rocky coastline of La Tabatière, on the Lower North Shore of the St. Lawrence River, where there is no access to the community by road. Goods and supplies are sent in by boat or airplane. When produce arrives, it tends to be old or harvested before it’s ripe, forcing residents to pay a high price for food with reduced nutritional value.

Science teacher Chris Wong and his students decided to establish an environmentally friendly hydroponic garden using GMO-free, certified organic seeds. By selling their crops at $2-$3.50, they would be able to support the business while offering the isolated community fresh vegetables and herbs at a lower cost than what they would normally find in stores. The sustainable and efficient business also helps decrease the environmental impact from the transportation of food into the village.

Every Friday on their free period, one of the students delivers over 30 heads of lettuce, 10 bags of chives, 10 bags of dill and 10 bags of basil to the two local
stores in the community. The veggies and herbs are organic, fresh and delicious, and it’s usually only a matter of days before the product is sold out.

The success of Gr’EAU came after months of hard work. Neither the students nor Wong had worked on a project like this before, so it was a learning experience for everyone. A great deal of research, planning and labour went into the garden’s construction. The students worked for many hours after school and even on weekends.

The team received a $300 grant from the CLC Initiative and a $1,800 loan from the Governing Board (which has since been turned into a donation) in order to purchase their supplies. Starting in November and finishing by mid-March, the team constructed a system where up to 600 plants grew at once in a 48 square foot space.

Despite its success, construction of the garden wasn’t always smooth sailing. Wong said that one day, when he and the students went to purchase wood in -30 degree Celsius stormy weather, they ran into some difficulty. “We were carrying the sheets of plywood and the really bad winds made them act just like sails,” he said with a laugh.

With the numerous ways Gr’EAU gives back to the school, community and the students themselves, it’s safe to say that everyone involved is a winner. Because of the interest in the project, the students took the time to develop a promotional website and were interviewed numerous times in English and French. See Gr’EAU’s website at greau.weebly.com, for more photos, their proposals and additional details about the business.
Video Conferencing

Video conferencing is a useful tool that can help you with your CBSL project. A website we suggest is:

www.cilc.org

The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC), established in 1994 as a nonprofit, specializes in access to applications and the utilization of video conferencing for live interactive content and professional development, as well as web-based collaborative learning environments for K-adult education. Their mission is “to support, advance and enhance lifelong learning through the use of collaborative technologies and innovations.”

Unique benefits include…

▪ Programs are INTERACTIVE! Participants are able to see and hear the experts, so engaging dialog occurs.

▪ Programs are high-quality, evaluated by educators for educators.

▪ You can find many of our Content Providers in TIME magazine’s list of top museums

▪ While many programs charge a fee for their professionally-produced, interactive programs, many offer discounts, and some are totally FREE!

▪ CILC.org is the premier one-stop website where organizations can find programs that align with curriculum, reserve programming, and proceed to the interaction with the content provider
Do You Feel Inspired?

If so, we’ve attached some **tools** at the end of this document which may be helpful for the planning of your next CBSL project. You can find the full size PDF file of any of the appendix documents by clicking [here](#).

**Questions to ask yourself**

What topics inspire me? What topics inspire my students? What are some issues in my **community that need some youthful energy and spirit**? How can community partners enhance learning and engagement?

**Remember!**

CBSL projects are a great opportunity to develop projects that weave the **Broad Areas of Learning, Cross Curricular Competencies and Subject Specific Competencies** together in a project rooted in the local community.

More examples of CBSL projects developed across the CLC Network can be found at [clcpresents.blogspot.ca](mailto:clcpresents.blogspot.ca).

*If you have any questions, contact Ben at bloomer@learnquebec.ca*

**HAVE FUN!**

Student Video: Important To Us - [bit.ly/2cNImOf](mailto:bit.ly/2cNImOf)
Appendix 1 - Project Overview
Appendix 2 - Curriculum Connections
Appendix 3 - Student Voice
Appendix 4 - Collaborative To-Do List
Appendix 5 - Time Line
Identify the parts of the Quebec Education Program that you can work into your project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Cross-Curricular Competencies*</th>
<th>Broad Areas of Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELA/FLS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Health and Well-Being</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal and Career Planning</td>
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<td>Science and Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental Awareness &amp; Consumer Rights and Responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>Exercises critical judgement</td>
<td>Media Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>Adopts effective work methods</td>
<td>Citizenship and Community Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Development</td>
<td>Cooperates</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Communicates appropriately</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* For evaluation in report card

> Be specific Choose **subject competencies, subject content, or cross-curricular competencies** and fill in the boxes below. Detail how this competency or content will be addressed in your project.

**Subject competency, subject content, or cross-curricular competency**

**Evaluation approach**
Student Voice & Meaningful Community Service
Including students in the project in authentic ways

1. Students articulate a need in the community
   - Students brainstorm solutions & actions to take

2. Teacher
   - How will you help students with the various aspects of the project?
   - As a teacher, what do you need to do to get students to be successful in each area?
   - What questions do you need to ask them?

3. Students execute their plan and adjust
   - Students participate in setting evaluation criteria

4. Students

Student products
What will students be making?
Partnerships

Purpose: Write down all the things that need to happen to make the project successful. Reflect on the strength of each player in the community. How can they help you?

Coordinator

Strengths
- Knowledge of authentic community needs
- Logistical Support
- Identify Funding
- Identify & liaise with Relevant Partner(s)
- Find Complementary Video Conference

To Do List

Partner

Strengths
- Access to real-world learning spaces
- Access to specific funds $
- Specialized knowledge
- Expertise/Potential mentorship
- Resources/materials
- Collaboration

Teachers, Professionals, Support Staff

Strengths
- Link to other subjects
- Project planning and design
- Access to specific funds $
- Expertise of school professionals
- Engaging others

Family

Strengths
- Access to vast networks
- Encourage students
- Participate in celebration
- Family/Community knowledge
- Access to resources
- Volunteer
Use the timeline below to plan what you will do when. Be realistic about how long it will take to investigate community needs, prepare for service, take action, reflect repeatedly on the project, demonstrate their learning and celebrate achievement.

**Timeline and Milestones**

- Investigate community needs
- Prepare for service
- Take action
- Demonstrate learning
- Celebrate accomplishments!

**Reflection** At each stage, what reflective questions can you be asking your students?

- Investigate community needs
- Prepare for service
- Take action
- Demonstrate learning
- Final reflection
Photo Credits:

PEES School-Community Garden: Photo by Ben Loomer

Intergenerational Programs: Art Class: https://flic.kr/p/fTJ5tt

Dunedin Internship Speed Dating 2012: https://flic.kr/p/de7G3H

Kairos Blanket Exercise: Photo by Kairos Canada

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Seedling: https://flic.kr/p/FNof5y

Tree Stump: https://flic.kr/p/9kcUAV

Chicken Soup: https://flic.kr/p/6oD23t

Talent Show: https://flic.kr/p/DMyX9

Special thanks to Lianne Finnie for developing the catalogue and the CLC teachers for sharing their stories.

“Sharing is good”

-Lisa Howell, teacher at Pierre Elliot Trudeau Elementary School (PETES)