

Assessing the Level and Value of Service in Schools

STUDENTS IN ACTION



“Students in Action is a national youth recognition and reward program, designed to pass the tradition of service and volunteerism on the next generation of young Americans.”

Seven Goals

- Engage the school community
- Establish an effective SIA leadership team
- Expand volunteer capacity
- Expand financial capacity
- Tell service stories
- Grow and expand the mission of SIA



Three Pillars

Leadership

Engagement

Impact

Students in Action trying to better understand its effect on students in Minnesota.

Undoubtedly SIA has a measurable impact on high schools and community service programs, but what about its effect on individual students?

This project works with students to learn how they have personally grown from the program. Keeping with SIA's goal to move from an “hours x dollars = value” assessment model, the type, duration, and depth of service is also being considered.

By developing a “Spectrum of Service” that explores different levels of engagement, the goal is to both qualitatively and quantitatively assess the true contributions youth are making.

Spectrum of Service

Source	Motivation	Perspective	Level	Commitment	Disruption	Value to Client
Self-Initiated	Automatic	Collaboration	Embedded Decision-Maker	Lifestyle-Changing	Emotional	Leadership
Partnered	Internal	Understanding	Internship	Ongoing Casual	Intellectual	Programming
Prepackaged	Self-Serving	Alone Together	Client Interaction	Short-Term Intense	Resources	Financial
Optional	Social	External Direction	Trained Volunteer	Short-Term Casual	Time	Labor
Mandatory	External	Obligation	Unskilled Outsider	One-Time	None	Client is Serving

The Spectrum of Service was conceived to be a simple 1 - 5 scale to evaluate the “value” of service performed. This would be used to weight the traditional person-hours assessment of service or reflect a truer sense of impact. As discussion moved from contrasting bringing canned food to a dance and international service trips to differences in motivation such as mandatory service or building a college résumé, it became obvious that more could be done. The spectrum evolved into aspects of service and levels within those aspects. The ability to look at a particular service activity and “graph” it through different characteristics provided a visual interpretation as well as data for analysis. While still very much a work in progress, this model has become the basis for meaningful discourse on service.



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Community-Based Research in Mathematics

Mission: To incorporate mathematics into a broader community by partnering with organizations to explore real-life problems with an emphasis on service-learning and social justice.

mathresearch.breckschool.org