

# SERVICE IN SCHOOLS

2015-2016 Summary Report



# Service in Schools 2015-2016 Summary Report

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# Service in Schools

**Service in Schools** (SIS), a joint partnership of the NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE) and NYC Service, strives to expand the number of NYC students engaged in transformative community service and service-learning experiences that enable them to use their voice, skills, and critical thinking to affect positive change in their communities and the world.

SIS offers a range of resources for schools to empower students, as well as recognize and help schools sustain outstanding service and service-learning programs.

In the 2015-16 school year, schools were asked to report on their service and service-related activities through the End-of-Year SIS Survey. This summary report synthesizes the survey results, highlights student and school outcomes, community partner participation, and service patterns across NYC public schools.

*“Service in Schools does a wonderful job of announcing service opportunities... The Service in Schools Grant is also very important to support school efforts to engage students in meaningful community service. Besides the monetary value of the funds, the funds help to inspire and solidify the commitment of personnel working with young people to develop the youngsters’ awareness of the value of service and its benefits to themselves and the community.”*

-Margarita Rosario, Service-Learning Grant Winner  
Marble Hill High School for International Studies  
(10X477)

*“Service in Schools has been very adept in providing a vast array of support for our service-learning initiatives, including the use of the newsletter, the Institute sessions, and all the accompanying resources. I feel that they continue to be instrumental in our efforts to push service-learning to a higher level.”*

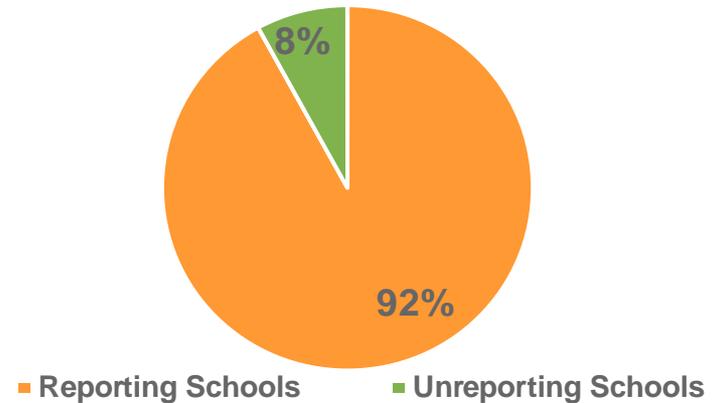
-Stelio Voutsas, Service-Learning  
Institute Participant  
Long Island City High School (30Q450)

# Overall Survey Participation

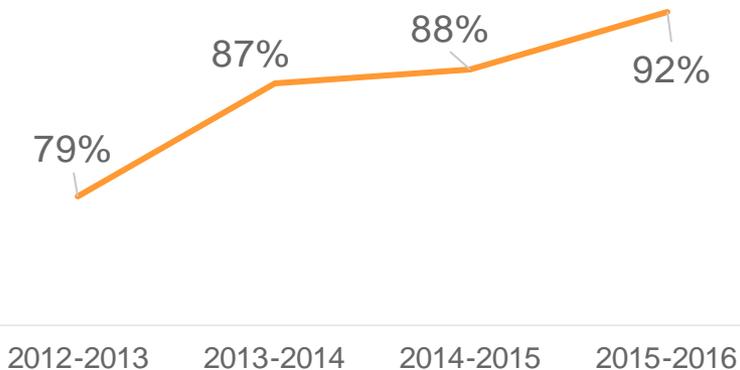
**92%** of schools reported on their service and service-learning activities in 2015-16.

Out of the 1,629 New York City public schools\* with designated service coordinators, **92%**, or **1,502** schools, participated in the End-of-Year SIS Survey. Participation increased 4% from the 2014-2015 SIS Survey.

Percentage of Schools that Completed SIS Survey



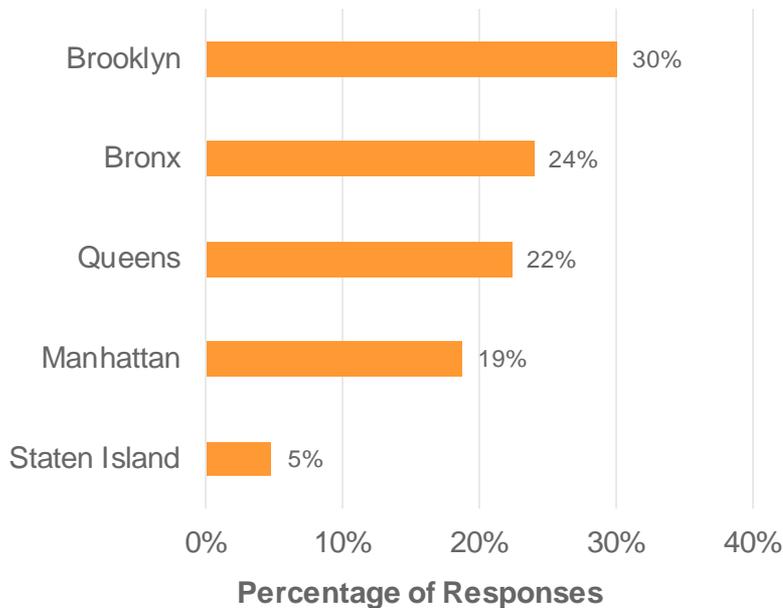
Participation Rate by Year



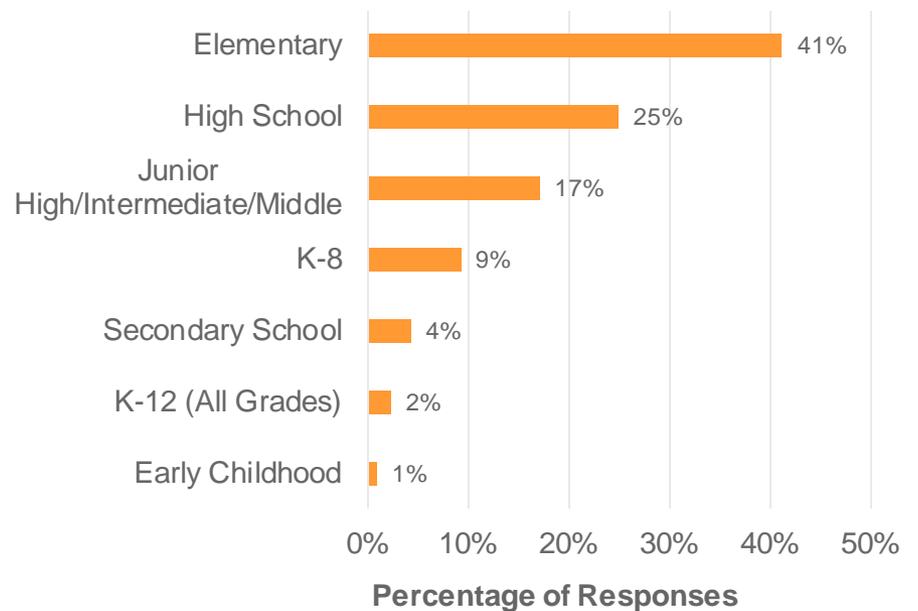
# Demographics of Responding Schools

Of the **1,502** schools that responded to the survey, the most responses came from Brooklyn schools at **30%** and the highest response rate came from elementary schools at **41%**.

### Survey Responses by Borough

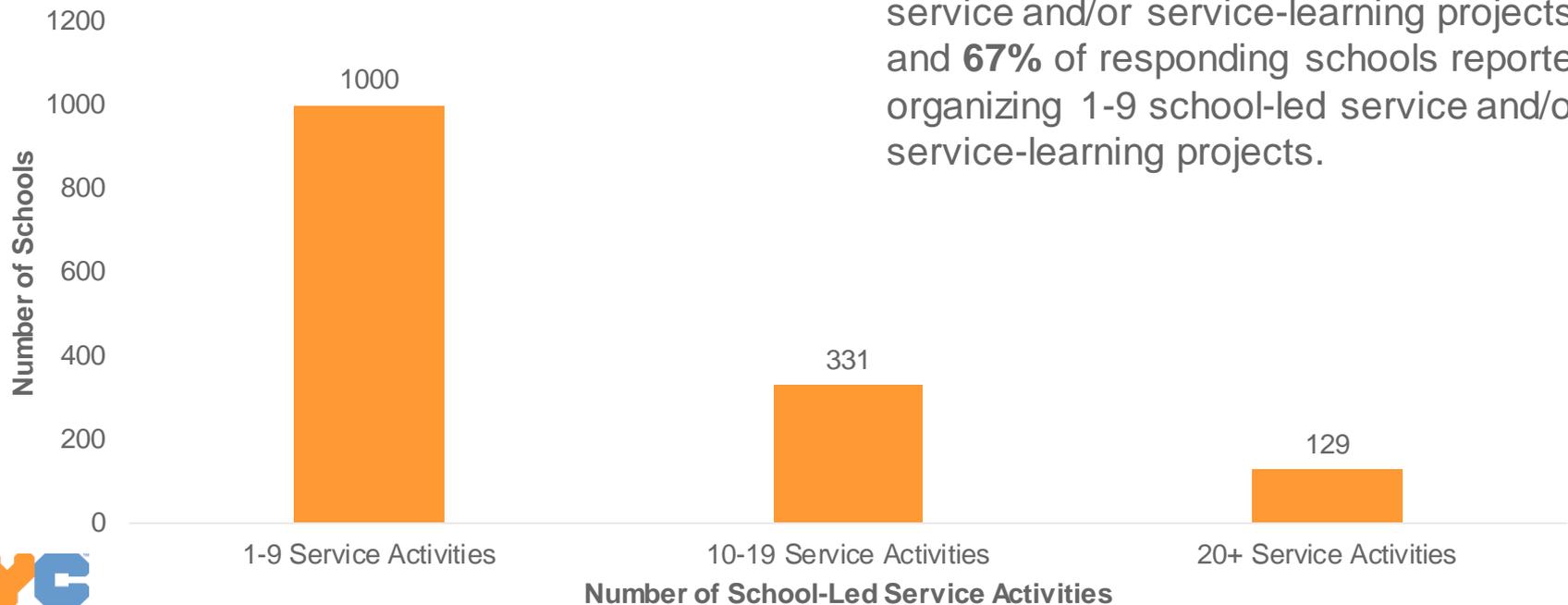


### Survey Responses by School Type



# Students in Service

Schools' responses indicate that approximately **452,718** students participated in at least one school-led service and/or service-learning activity between September 2015 and June 2016.

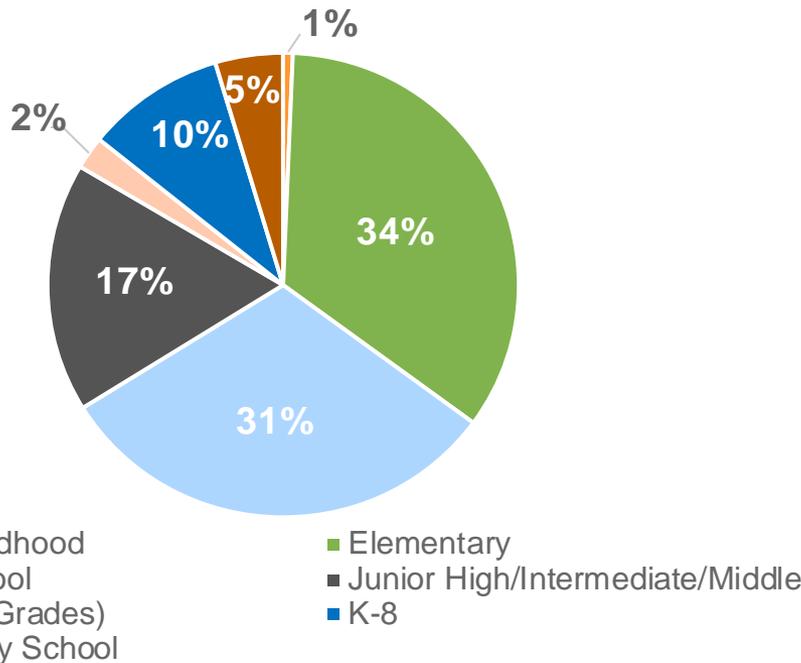


Students performed approximately **10,846\*** school-led service and/or service-learning projects between September 2015 and June 2016. Approximately **31%** of responding schools organized 10 or more school-led service and/or service-learning projects and **67%** of responding schools reported organizing 1-9 school-led service and/or service-learning projects.

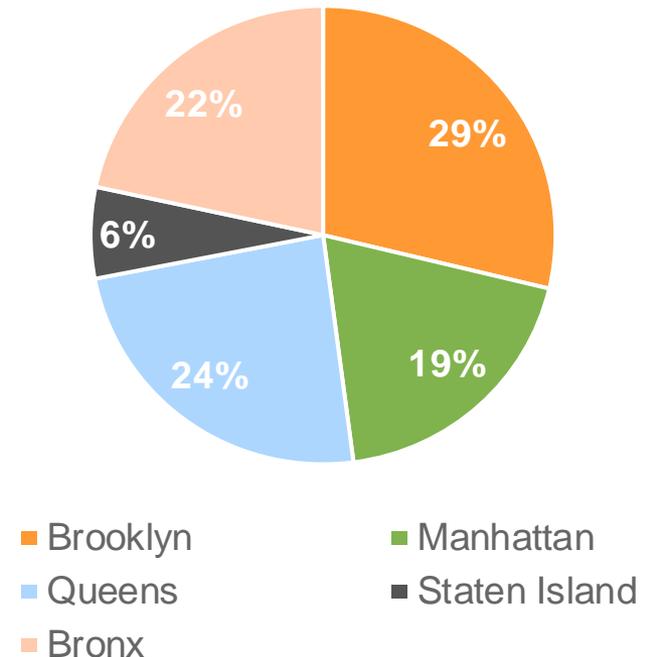
# Service Projects by School Type & Borough

Of the **10,846\*** school-led service and/or service-learning projects organized by responding schools, the majority were conducted by elementary schools at **34%** and high schools at **31%**. The borough that performed the greatest number of service projects was Brooklyn at **29%**.

Percentage of Service Projects by School Type



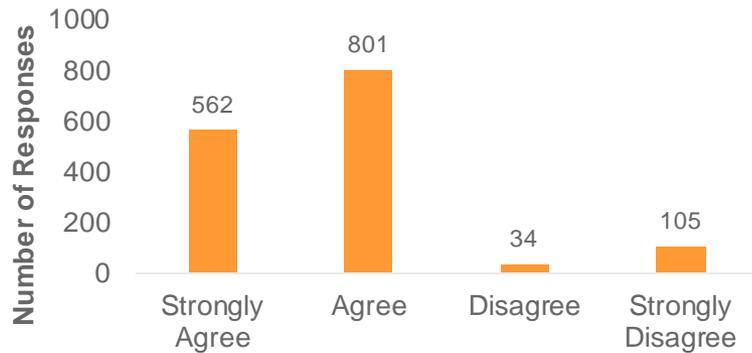
Percentage of Service Projects by Borough



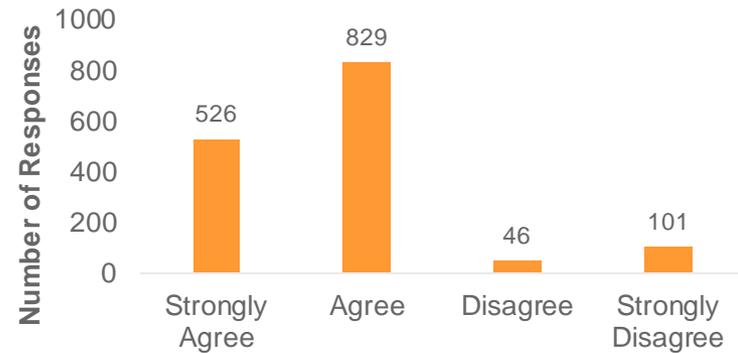
# Reported Student Outcomes

Overwhelmingly, educators reported that service activities led to positive outcomes for the students performing the service. They agreed that service activities improved critical skills and students' attitudes towards the community.

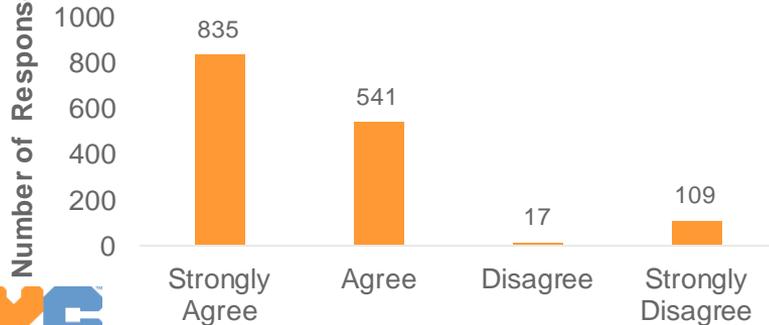
*Students strengthened their decision-making skills*



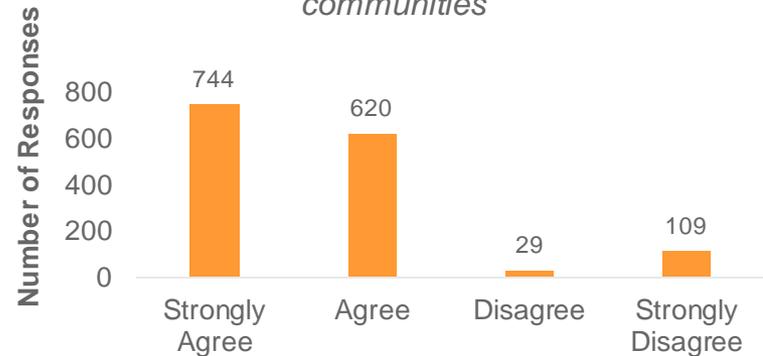
*Students improved their critical thinking skills*



*Students developed a sense of responsibility towards others*



*Students created positive change in their communities*



# External Partnerships and SIS Resources

- Approximately **75%**, or **1,122** responding schools, reported that they accessed resources and/or partnered with at least one external organization to support their service initiatives this year.
- **73%** of respondents reported that at least one SIS resource was helpful in supporting their implementation of community service and service-learning into their classroom and/or school community.

# Monthly Newsletters

- Throughout the 2015-2016 school year, SIS published **10** monthly newsletters that highlighted program updates, service opportunities and resources, shared information about potential partner organizations, and spotlighted effective school models.
- Over the course of the year, the number of subscribers to SIS' monthly newsletter grew from just under **20,000** to nearly **25,000**, a **25%** increase.



**SERVICE IN SCHOOLS** **SERVICE LEARNING** May 2016

### PROGRAM NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS

#### High School Students Participate in the Service in Schools Leadership Institute

Over spring break, high school students from across all five boroughs gathered together to participate in the Service in Schools Leadership Institute. The Institute was a week-long youth leadership program facilitated by Maureen Connolly from CBK Associates. The students, known as Service in Schools (SIS) Leaders, were chosen from a very competitive pool of nearly 200 applicants. Each one of the 32 students selected expressed a deep desire to serve as an agent of change in their community.

During the Institute, SIS Leaders discussed issues that affect their communities, as well as leadership strategies they can put into practice in order to address these issues. They learned about the fundamentals of service-learning and how they can serve as role models for their peers, family members, and youth in the community. Based on their preferences and interests, SIS Leaders were separated into five groups focused on researching different issues affecting NYC: hunger, homelessness, health, water pollution, and animals. To enrich the SIS Leaders' learning on these topics, Service in Schools invited representatives from The Bowery Mission, Bronx River Alliance, Fit 4 Life NYC, Food Bank For New York City, and the Humane Society of New York to meet with the student leaders during the Institute. SIS Leaders interviewed and collaborated with these partner organizations in order to learn more about the issue at hand, as well as discuss what they can do to help. After meeting with these representatives, the SIS Leaders began preparing lesson plans and activities for the May 27<sup>th</sup> SIS Youth Service Summit, which brought together over 200 elementary school students from across the city to engage in service activities led by the SIS Leaders. During the lessons, SIS Leaders informed the younger students about the issue and how they can take action and make a positive difference. Additionally, SIS Leaders incorporated a work of children's literature and a service project that benefited the partner organizations into each lesson.

The SIS Leadership Institute proved to be a meaningful and fun experience for all parties involved. Service in Schools was impressed by the SIS Leaders' enthusiasm to learn and become an impactful source of change. We would like to thank this year's participants for their hard work and dedication to addressing the needs of their community.

**NYC Department of Education** **NYC Service**  
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor [nyc.gov/service](http://nyc.gov/service)

# SIS Website

- The SIS website was updated throughout the year to include up-to-date tips and strategies, as well as links to high-quality resources and service-focused programs developed by the NYCDOE, community-based organizations, and other city and national organizations.



- About Us >
- Academics >
- Choices & Enrollment >
- Offices & Programs >
- Performance & Accountability >
- Rules & Policies >
- Schools in the Community >
  - > Charter Schools
  - > Campus Governance
  - > District Planning
  - > Facilities
  - > Get Involved with NYC Schools
  - > Adult Education
  - > In the City
  - > Innovations
  - > New Schools and PRO SE
  - > **Service in Schools**
    - > About Us
    - > Community Service
    - > Service-Learning
    - > Partners
    - > Videos
  - > State/Federal Education Policy & School Improvement Programs
- Student Support, Safety & Activities >



NYC Schools Account  
[schools.nyc.gov/myaccount](https://schools.nyc.gov/myaccount)

STAY CONNECTED  
**SIGN UP!**



DOE Home Page > Schools in the Community > Service in Schools

## Service in Schools

**Service in Schools**  
 Service in Schools strives to expand the number of NYC students engaged in community service and service-learning experiences that enable them to use their skills and critical thinking to strengthen communities. Watch videos of Service in Schools in action.

**Community Service**  
 Community service is an activity that engages students with real-life solutions to strengthen communities. Learn about how to get your school started with a community service project.

**Service-Learning**  
 Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with classroom curriculum, allowing students to connect academic studies with real-life solutions to strengthen communities. Learn about how to get your school started with service-learning project.

**NYC Service** | Department of Education

Sign up for the Service in Schools Newsletter

\* Email Address:

\* First name:

Last name:

\* Which best describes your connection to the DOE?  
 Select one...

\* Required field

[Sign Up!](#)

# SIS Twitter Account

- The SIS Twitter account (@NYCDOEService) has continued to expand its reach and communicate regularly with service coordinators, educators, students, and partners. The Twitter account helps to increase awareness of SIS program offerings as well as upcoming service opportunities, resources, and more.
- From the time the Twitter account launched in January 2015, SIS has tweeted **300** times and has accumulated **256** followers. This is a 133% increase in followers since June 2015.



# School Site Visits

- In response to feedback from educators in prior years, SIS continued its robust strategy to increase on-the-ground and technical assistance for school-based staff.
- With the support of Civic Corps members, SIS team members conducted nearly **60** site visits to advise and assist schools in growing school-led service and service-learning. During site visits, the SIS team met with educators, observed school-led service projects and service-learning classes, and more.
- Through site visits, SIS was able to build relationships with educators and schools to learn more about the school-led service and service-learning taking place within their community as well as support them in enhancing their school's culture of service.

# Partner Fair

- In October, SIS hosted the 2015 Partner Fair at Brooklyn Law School to connect educators with a variety of community service and/or service-learning opportunities.
- The Partner Fair featured **14** partner organizations.
- Educators developed new connections with the participating organizations and learned about useful resources to support their efforts in growing a culture of service in their schools.

*“The Partner Fair was a super helpful way to help me get started and feel less overwhelmed.”*

-Megan Perrini  
Staten Island School of Civic Leadership  
(31R861)

*“Wonderful, professional environment with real, applicable offerings.”*

-Joe Sicilian, Jr.  
Curtis High School (31R450)



# Service-Learning Institute

- SIS held its second annual Service-Learning Institute, a five-day professional learning series for educators focused on implementing and building capacity for service-learning. The Institute was facilitated by Cathryn Berger Kaye of CBK Associates, international service-learning and education consultant.
- This year's Service-Learning Institute cohort consisted of **53** educators, including a new group of 40 educators, as well 13 educators who participated in the 2014-2015 Service-Learning Institute. Through this tiered approach, the Institute educated the new cohort on developing best practices for implementing service-learning in their school, while the initial cohort expanded on their learnings to build their capacity to become service-learning leaders.

*“Ms. Kaye allowed me to recognize how simply and logically service can be embedded. I took my existing curricula and found ways to make students authentically engage with the social issues and give back to themselves, each other, and the larger global community.”*

-Diana Di Rico  
Baruch College Campus High School  
(02M411)



# Service in Schools Leadership Institute



- The SIS Leadership Institute is a 30-hour service and leadership training for select high school students which aims to cultivate young leaders to become agents of change in their community. This was the third year SIS conducted the training. This year's training was led in partnership with CBK Associates.
- Acceptance to the program was especially competitive this year, as SIS selected **32** high school students from across NYC out of **176** applications.

# Youth Service Summit

- SIS's third annual Youth Service Summit drew **206** students from **10** elementary schools who engaged in a full day of service led by **26** of the high school students who participated in the SIS Leadership Institute.
- Projects at the Youth Service Summit addressed homelessness, water pollution, hunger, animals, and health, and included representatives from **5** NYC-based community organizations related to these topics.
- All students at the Youth Service Summit completed a cumulative total of **900** hours of service.



# Service-Learning Grant Awards

- SIS continued its Service-Learning Grant program, this year awarding grants of **\$1,000** to support **100** schools that proposed targeted and meaningful service-related projects.
- Of the 100 grant-winning schools, **96** (or **96%**) completed the SIS End-of-Year Survey.
- Throughout the winter and spring, SIS was in ongoing communication with the grant winners through site visits and phone calls to gain insight on the progress they were making on their projects and to provide support as needed.

*“Our school used our grant monies for a community health fair. Students canvassed local businesses to ask them to support the fair. They assessed the community health needs and worked the health fair, running activities and providing the community support and resources. Students were able to explore healthy lives and choices. Overall, the graduating seniors that participated were able to learn valuable skills that will assist them in the future: assessment, communication, leadership, and community advocacy.”*

-Stacey Thomas  
Bronx Design and Construction Academy (07X522)

# SIS Kids Care Clubs



- SIS continued its second year of the SIS Kids Care Club Grant program to build capacity among elementary schools interested in developing a service program.
- Of the **43** schools that applied, **6** were awarded the **\$500** grant, as well as ongoing technical and on-the-ground assistance from SIS and generationOn to support their efforts in creating and sustaining a service club.
- This second cohort of SIS Kids Care Clubs included 2 additional schools (6 total), building on last year's cohort of 4 schools.
- A culminating event, the Celebration of Service, was held in June to recognize the service these clubs performed throughout the year.

# SIS Kids Care Clubs (Continued)

*“The money was used to create a friendship bench and lending library for the school. Working on this project really empowered the students; the students became confident and showed a sense of pride when working on this project. The students really showed initiative in putting this project together.”*

-Dawn Spahn  
P.S. 32 Belmont (10X032)

*“Our club used the grant money to purchase supplies to create coloring books and gift bags filled with coloring supplies to donate to [Providence House Shelter]... The students learned about homelessness through interviews and several read-alouds... We also discussed the value of home and what home means to us. We created a class quilt to share with others to express the importance of a home... The students realized that they would need the help of everyone in order to be successful, so they worked together to create a school letter to invite their school community to participate in their efforts.”*

-Jacqueline Sylvan  
P.S. 135 Sheldon A. Brookner  
(18K135)

# Service Seal

- The NYCDOE offers a locally-approved seal to recognize graduating students for earning a minimum of **100** hours of service over their high school years.
- This year:
  - **549** students from **22** schools across all **5** boroughs earned the seal.
  - **135** of these students earned the minimum of **100** hours.
  - The remaining **414** exceeded the **100** hours, with **8** of these students earning **1,000** hours over the course of their high school careers (the maximum number of hours that can be reflected in the NYCDOE system).
- This is the second year the NYCDOE has offered service seals to students. The number of service seals awarded this year increased 20% from the number of service seals awarded in 2014-2015 school year.

# 2015-2016 NYC Civic Corps SIS Civic Corps Members

- Civic Corps members proved to be an invaluable addition to SIS enabling the program to increase its ability to interface with schools both on the ground through site visits as well as through providing expanded programming opportunities and resources.
- Additionally, our Civic Corps members made it possible for SIS to broaden its communication mechanisms, collaborate with key partners, and increase its programmatic support citywide.
- Over the year, SIS worked with two Civic Corps members. Due to attrition, one Civic Corps member left mid-year.

# 2015-2016 NYC Civic Corps AmeriCorps Performance Measure Goals

As of June 2016, the Civic Corps members overwhelmingly exceeded their performance measure goals.

Capacity Building	Goal	September-June Benchmark	Goal Achievement Status
Total volunteers leveraged by NYC Civic Corps members	300	489	Exceeded
New volunteers recruited by NYC Civic Corps members	200	298	Exceeded
New volunteers trained by NYC Civic Corps members	25	33	Exceeded
Existing volunteers managed by NYC Civic Corps members	100	191	Exceeded
Total hours served by volunteers recruited or managed by NYC Civic Corps members	2,000	3,279	Exceeded

# Reviewing 2014-2015 Recommendations

1. Continue to broaden service-learning opportunities and resources to build capacity among educators at all levels through providing a tiered system of professional learning that is sustainable and scalable.

SIS accomplished this goal by continuing to provide service-learning professional learning resources and opportunities that supported both the breadth and depth of schools' needs. Throughout the 2015-2016 school year, SIS held the second annual Service-Learning Institute, which brought together a new cohort of 40 educators, as well 13 educators who participated in the 2014-2015 Service-Learning Institute. Through this tiered approach, the Institute educated the new cohort on how to build their school's capacity throughout the city, while also offering an intermediate level professional learning experience to expand on the learnings of the initial cohort of Service-Learning Institute participants.
2. Further expand communication and awareness about SIS resources, opportunities, and partner organizations, while also improving the depth, purposefulness, and helpfulness of outreach.

Through monthly newsletters, the Twitter account, website, email blasts, and school visits, SIS has successfully increased communication and awareness of our offerings. Since June 2015, the number of subscribers to SIS' monthly newsletter grew from just under **20,000** to nearly **25,000**, a **25%** increase. Since June 2015, the number of followers of SIS' Twitter account grew from **110** to **256** followers, a **133%** increase. **73%** of survey respondents found at least one SIS resource to be helpful.
3. Deepen the relationships and connections to schools through site visits that are better structured to address their individual and unique needs.

SIS completed nearly **60** site visits this year, meeting with educators, administrators, and students and providing guidance for service implementation. Through providing this support, SIS continued to build the capacity of educators in enhancing the culture of service at their schools. SIS partnered with service-learning expert Liz Pitofsky of the Service Learning Project (SLP), who trained SIS team members on the nuts and bolts of service-learning to prepare them to support schools in navigating implementation challenges and provide guidance for enriching their service initiatives. SIS strategically structured school site visits by utilizing pre- and post-visit communication with educators. Before and throughout their visits, the SIS team engaged in research in order to equip themselves with the most relevant resources to provide schools during their visits. In addition to site visits, SIS members also attended special service events and ceremonies that they were invited to by educators.

# 2015-2016 Recommendations and Proposed Next Steps

Based on program implementation and outcomes as well as feedback collected from the End-of-Year Survey, SIS identified successes and challenges to inform the work going forward. Below is a list of recommendations to support and expand school-led service and service-learning opportunities in schools citywide.

1. Vigorously promote awareness of SIS and its opportunities and resources; expand SIS' online presence, and consistently update its existing online presence. Provide consistent and efficient communication to educators, administrators, and partner organizations that are in contact with SIS.
2. Expand SIS' reach by strategically targeting schools for site visits. Assess the most efficient strategies for scheduling and providing site visits across the city. Prioritize site visits to schools that have not previously participated or received a site visit from SIS.
3. Expand existing SIS opportunities by increasing the number of educators accepted into each institute and creating more opportunities focused on students in grades 6-8.

# Recommendation 1:

**Vigorously promote awareness of SIS and its opportunities and resources; expand SIS' online presence, and consistently update its existing online presence. Provide consistent and efficient communication to educators, administrators, and partner organizations that are in contact with SIS.**

- Survey responses and general feedback indicate a strong desire from educators and administrators to increase and expand service in their schools, particularly through grants and site visits from SIS. However, many respondents stated they were unaware of the existence of SIS and its programs prior to receiving the end-of-year survey. SIS would benefit from increasing awareness of SIS through promoting its opportunities to educators and students across the city via various platforms, including email, social media, and word of mouth.
- 68% of survey respondents considered at least one form of communication from SIS (SIS newsletter, SIS website, and/or SIS communication from Central Office) to be “somewhat helpful,” “helpful,” or “very helpful.” This indicates that educators and students who utilize SIS' communication resources tend to be satisfied with the resources.
- To increase awareness of SIS opportunities in schools across the city, SIS will increase communication and outreach with NYC schools, as well as provide prompt and thorough communication to individuals who are already in contact with SIS. Additionally, SIS will continue to update its online presence in order to keep it relevant and useful to educators and students, as well as expand its online presence by tweeting more regularly and engaging with followers and partner organizations more on Twitter, as well as creating a Facebook page.

# Recommendation 2:

**Expand SIS' reach by strategically targeting schools for site visits. Assess the most efficient strategies for scheduling and providing site visits across the city. Prioritize site visits to schools that have not previously participated or received a site visit from SIS.**

- Survey responses and general feedback indicate a strong desire for more site visits, particularly from schools that have never received a site visit from SIS. This presents an opportunity for SIS to expand its reach and, consequently, improve upon the quantity and quality of school-led service projects across NYC. In addition to continuing to provide consistent and high-quality site visits to schools already involved in SIS programs, SIS should promote site visits to schools that would like to learn more about SIS, as well as schools that would like to receive support in implementing new or existing service programs.
- In order to manage an increase in site visits with a limited staff, SIS will design a streamlined system for schools to schedule site visits while prioritizing schools that have never received a site visit from SIS. SIS is considering utilizing Google Forms as a platform for educators and administrators to submit site visit requests. When completing a site visit request, submitters would be asked to include detailed information about themselves, their school, the reason for the visit, and the SIS resources (including site visits) that the school has utilized in the past. SIS will use this information to identify schools that would most benefit from additional support or demonstrate strong examples of service-learning models that SIS will highlight across NYC.
- To enhance SIS' site visits, SIS will continue to build its staff capacity on how to provide quality service-learning consultation. Additionally, SIS will continue to provide thorough pre- and post-site visit communication to its site visit recipients.

# Recommendation 3:

**Expand existing SIS opportunities by increasing the number of educators accepted into each institute and creating more opportunities focused on students in grades 6-8.**

- SIS programs, such as the Service-Learning Institute, SIS Leadership Institute, and Youth Service Summit, have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants, and survey responses and general feedback indicate a strong desire for increased and expanded service-focused programming offered by SIS. SIS will consider expanding opportunities for educators and students to participate in SIS programs by providing more spots in each program, as often due to attrition, the number of active participants in some SIS programs tends to decrease over the course of the program.
- Additionally, SIS is considering creating additional opportunities for junior high/intermediate/middle school educators and/or students given that an SIS program specifically for that grade range does not currently exist. Responses from the End-of-Year Survey from junior high/intermediate/middle schools show the percentage of service projects completed by junior high/intermediate/middle schools (17%) is about half the number of projects completed by elementary schools (34%) or high schools (31%). This suggests that junior high/intermediate/middle schools would benefit from targeted SIS supports and opportunities to bolster these schools' culture of service.

# For More Information:

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