



Service Learning Program

Introduction

A key component of Rosslyn Academy's mission and core values is its emphasis on service. We seek to inspire and equip students to develop their God-given gifts so that they will go out into the world community to serve others by following the pattern of Jesus Christ. Service is one of the five core values (Service, Christlikeness, Community, Excellence, and Intellectual Virtue) that Rosslyn intentionally prioritizes and is deeply embedded in the educational experience provided at Rosslyn. Students at each grade level are taught the value of service and are given the opportunity to put this into action through important programs, as well as through the natural development of character that occurs in our daily interactions.

The purpose of this document is to provide a brief philosophy of service based on our Christian beliefs and values. This foundational document provides guidance for how we currently embody service and will shape how we may develop our service programs in the future.

Philosophy of Service

What is service?

Service is using the gifts that God has bestowed on each of us to be the hands and feet of Christ as we share his love with those in need. We view service as an act of seeking to see Christ's Kingdom come on Earth, and we believe that this is an essential act of worship.

Why do we serve?

1. We serve because Christ served.
 - a. Jesus modeled that we are called to serve, to care for the least of these, and to carry one another's burdens.
 - b. Luke 4: 16-21, John 13:1-17, 1 John 3:16-18, Galatians 6:2
2. We serve because we are called to do so in Scripture.
 - a. Isa 58: 5-10, Duet 15:4, Acts 20:35, Phil 2:4, Gal 5:13, Matt 23:11-12
3. We serve because we have each been given unique gifts.
 - a. Romans 12:6-8, 1 Cor. 12:4-6, 1 Peter 4:10
4. We serve as an act of worship to God.
 - a. Matthew 25:40, Rom 12:1-2
5. We serve because we believe the Kingdom of Christ is at hand
 - a. Luke 10:9, Mark 1:15, Matthew 16:19, Revelation 11:15
 - b. The Kingdom is not only near us and in us, but is moving towards a comprehensive translation of all the universe: a new heaven and a new earth.
6. We serve because we seek Christ's Shalom for our community.
 - a. Jeremiah 29: 7, Col. 1:19-20



Where do we serve?

We seek to serve those that are poor, vulnerable, wounded, and lonely wherever we encounter them. We believe that we all live in a broken and sinful world; therefore, we all experience different forms of poverty that accompany this brokenness. We believe that poverty is greater than simply an absence of material wealth. We affirm that “poverty” is the result of relationships that do not work, that are not just, that are not for life, that are not harmonious or enjoyable. Poverty is the absence of shalom in all its meanings.”¹ We all suffer from the effects of this absence in different ways, because we all experience broken relationships with God, ourselves, our community, those outside of our community, and with our environment. Therefore, we all know, and have experienced, poverty.

These Forms of Poverty include:

- Poverty of Spiritual Intimacy
- Poverty of Being
- Poverty of Community
- Poverty of Stewardship²

These forms of poverty and need permeate all levels of society; therefore, we seek to partner with Christ to see his Kingdom come and to seek His shalom for our community. We strive to do this through acts of service, pursuing relationships of mutuality and respect, and sharing the love of Christ in our homes, our school, throughout Nairobi and the larger Kenyan community, with Creation, and within ourselves.

How do we serve?

We believe in a relational model of service. Since poverty, in all of its forms, is the result of broken relationships, true Christian service must be relational. We recognize that just as we have been given gifts to serve others, every individual we encounter has been created in the image of God and has been bestowed with unique gifts. Therefore, we seek to establish relationships that are sacrificial and generous, while embracing a posture of humility and an openness to receive and learn from others.

These Service-Oriented Relationships are based on:

- Mutuality
- Respect
- Humility
- Reciprocity
- Love

¹ Myers, B. L. (1999). *Walking with the poor: Principles and practices of transformational development*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

² Corbett, S., & Fikkert, B. (2012). *When helping hurts: How to alleviate poverty without hurting the poor-- and yourself*. Expanded ed. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.



Service Learning Defined

Service and Service Learning are not necessarily the same thing. Service Learning is a pedagogy that intentionally connects classroom learning with service opportunities outside of the school. A robust Service Learning program should:

- Connect community service or outreach with classroom learning and the curriculum
- Take students outside of the school setting and into the local community, to address real community needs
- Create authentic, meaningful relationships between students and those being served
- Increase and enhance student learning, as well as students' desire and ability to serve others.

There is compelling evidence that a robust Service Learning program has multiple benefits to students. These include: 1) academic achievement, 2) civic engagement, 3) beliefs and values, and 4) leadership, spiritual, and personal development. All of these are in line with the mission statement and desired student outcomes of Rosslyn Academy³.

Goals of Service Learning Program at Rosslyn

- Foster Christ-likeness within students as they grow in Christ's example of selfless love through practicing generosity, kindness, empathy and compassion.
- Increase students' awareness of needs in the world and instill a desire within each student to respond compassionately to those needs through life-long, humble and relational service.
- Develop cross-culturally competent global learners that pursue relationships of mutuality, respect, humility and love.

Current Service Programs at Rosslyn

Cultural Field Studies (CFS): An important part of service is taking time to learn about others. We believe that relationship provides the open doorway for reciprocal service and growth to occur. Therefore, the Cultural Field Studies program creates intentional space for deeper levels of understanding between the people of Kenya and our students in Grades 5th-12th. Students are given the opportunity to participate in cultural interactions that build relationships as well as engage their hearts, hands, and minds in practical service projects.

The Christmas Project: The Christmas Project is an annual event where the Rosslyn community voluntarily provides financial and/or material assistance for worthy local organizations and charities. Through this, God's love is shown to those who are less fortunate. A committee of Rosslyn staff members receive applications and review them to identify particular "projects" which will help change lives and to see that all the funds given are used as intended. Students take initiative to raise money through bake sales, toy drives, doing extra chores at home, class projects and other creative ways. This project seeks to

³ Swaner, L., & Erdvig, R. (2018). *Bringing it to life: Christian education and the transformative power of service-learning*. Colorado Springs, CO: Association of Christian School International.



teach the value of working together, sharing generously, and giving back to the community. In the past few years, Rosslyn has been able to help several charitable organizations in significant ways.

Class Service Projects: Teachers are encouraged to incorporate service initiatives into their classrooms and curriculum whenever possible. This type of service may take place during the school day, after school, or on the weekend. These projects may take place within our own Rosslyn community or take place beyond our walls. Such initiatives promote a shared learning experience of service and are a way for the school to model its commitment of service to others.

Student-Led Service Initiatives: When possible, student-led service initiatives are encouraged at Rosslyn, as they are evidence of an effective and successful Service Learning Program. These initiatives can be directed by student groups (NHS, Project Imagine, etc.) or individual students. The Service Learning Coordinator, school administrator and staff advisor/sponsor will provide support and oversight to these students.

Student Leadership Team, Chapel Visionary Team, Worship Teams: Students in Middle and High School have the opportunity to serve on their respective school's Student Leadership, Chapel Visionary, and Worship teams. These teams help lead music and help coordinate the weekly chapel services held in each school (Coordinated and Directed by HS/MS Chaplains).

Practical Ideas for Service Projects

As we continue to grow and improve in the area of service, here are some practical ideas and suggestions that will hopefully enliven our desire to create meaningful service opportunities for our students. Listed below are ideas for projects both outside and inside our community.

Ideas for Types of Service Projects/Partnerships outside of Rosslyn Community:

- Visiting schools to read to lower grade students/having upper-grade students from these schools visit Rosslyn to read to our lower grade students.
- Delivering food/goods to schools/homes and having planned activities for engagement (games, stories, drama, etc.)
- Assist with labor projects (but these should include person-person interaction, training, opportunities to be taught by the local community, etc.)
- Organize sports days where Rosslyn teams play friendlies with teams from outside communities, host meals, shared pool time, etc. (This could also be reciprocal with Rosslyn teams being hosted).
- Visit sites where our students can learn more about agriculture and income-generating initiatives (farming, dairy projects, chicken projects, biogas, sewing, etc.) and offer assistance if needed.



- Food and goods collections by class/grade/school with an emphasis on developing relationships through reciprocal site visits and activities.
- Music classes/Band/Drama visit schools/homes to perform, and those schools are invited to visit Rosslyn to do the same.
- Visit newborn centers and assist the staff with feeding, nurturing, etc. (With the emphasis being on offering assistance to, and learning from, the staff. Most newborn centers do not have nearly enough funds or personnel. The caregivers are highly trained, and in no way can their skills be replicated by students. However, feeding/holding babies is the one task that can be entrusted to others so they can attend to more pressing needs or just receive a much-deserved break).
- Environmental Initiatives such as tree planting and trash collection/recycling in the greater community, along highways, etc.

Types of Service Projects within Rosslyn Community:

- Service Days: students assist the grounds and maintenance crews (gardening, landscaping, cleaning, etc.). The emphasis isn't to work just to work, but to learn from our support staff, and be guided and taught.
- Create a teacher/staff support program giving students the opportunity to sign up for blocks of time where they assist teachers/admin/office staff with tasks (similar to work-study program).
- Environmental Initiatives such as tree planting, trash collection/recycling throughout the campus and neighboring and assisting in the plant nursery

