Making Service-Learning integral to Secondary School Curriculum: the Experience of Tsung Tsin College

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Backgrounds

- Voluntary service or community service more common in HK schools now
- Drive for civic education since 1996
- Delivery haphazard & desired student learning outcomes uncertain
Current Problems

- Inadequate “community-mindedness” & excessive stress on exams
- No teacher training for the pedagogical method
- No deliberate connection between service and learning
- No coherent strategy & implementation at school level
- No support for participating teachers & students
- Learning left to chance & not optimized
Opportunity Ahead

- Curriculum reform
  - generic skills & character building (values & civic-mindedness)
  - less exam-oriented, more student- & growth-focused
- Service-learning & reform
  - pedagogy transformative by nature
  - possible cultural change in school & system
Exploiting the Opportunities

- Better recognition of the potential of service-learning for positive student learning
- Incorporating service-learning into the school developmental vision
- Better school planning, better input of resources & better execution
- Teacher training in the pedagogy: together with scaffolding & co-operative learning skills
- More collaboration with the community
Background of TTC

♦ Tuen Mun – satellite town (around 400,000 residents)
♦ SES of pupils’ families (majority low)
♦ School type (CMI, 1200+ pupils)
♦ Sponsoring body: Protestant church
♦ Vision
  - Life-enriching Education
  - Outcomes: 3 Haves & 4 Cans & 1 Purpose
  - Values: 1Q3Cs in / for T & L
Concrete Examples of Service-learning in TTC

- EQ Ambassador Project
- V-Net Scheme
- Service-Virtue Scheme
- LEAD Project
- Tuen Mun Network of Health Promoting Schools
EQ Ambassador Project
Serving the bereaved children in the Tuen Mun community

Other Support Services:
- School Social Worker from HKFY
V-Net Scheme
Encouraging pupils to join voluntary service
Service-Virtue Scheme

Integrating Service-Learning into curriculum
2005-2006 《Volunteerism Anchoring in Schools》 QEF Project
2005-2006 《Volunteerism Anchoring in Schools》 QEF Project
LEAD Project (Learning through Engineering, Art and Design) Using IT skills to serve deprived children
Tuen Mun Network of Health
Promoting Schools

Leading & promoting health education & service among schools in the community
Lessons Learnt (1)

- Incorporating the role of service-learning into the school vision
- Provision of a facilitative structure
  - suitable programs
  - adequate resources
  - core team & supportive staff
  - integration of service-learning into curriculum
- Recognition of the nature of learning by doing
Lessons Learnt (2)

Inadequacies & Possible Remedies

- Lopsided towards junior form – new subject offerings in the new senior secondary curriculum
- Link between service & learning not strong enough – more conscious effort
- Teacher training inadequate – training in the pedagogy & cooperative learning skills; better scaffolding
Conclusion

Students need to be taught (by teachers & other professionals) the theory & practice of service-learning and then helped (by the school) to serve in order to benefit more, emotionally, socially and academically, from the learning model.