

Place-Based Learning

Place-Based Learning is a teaching and learning process that uses the local environment and community as the context for learning. Place-Based Learning focuses learning on the central concepts and principles of multiple disciplines, involves students in problem-solving and other meaningful tasks, allows students to work autonomously to construct their own learning, and culminates in realistic, student-generated products.

Elements of Place-Based Learning

- ❖ **Use of the Local Environment as a Context for Standards-based, Integrated Learning:** Place-based learning where students participate in community-based investigations using a service learning strategy.
- ❖ **Service Learning**
 - **Watershed Monitoring:** Students pursue long-term field studies in their watershed. Monitoring focuses on such things as water quality testing, soil erosion, wildlife, plant populations, and transportation issues all in the same area, over succeeding years. Community members help direct the field studies toward meeting the community's scientific needs.
 - **Watershed Restoration:** Students do hands-on work that meets real local needs. Students identify the needs through their own field studies in collaboration with watershed groups, and design the restoration projects in partnership with local stakeholders, including teachers, parents, businesses, natural resource specialists, community groups, and governments.
 - **Community Education:** Students share what they've learned with their community, by hosting educational events, or by producing media such as posters, brochures, or videos. Community education projects such as encouraging water conservation, or labeling storm drains to discourage dumping of hazardous materials, benefit the watershed directly.
- ❖ **Reflection and Evaluation:** Through reflection exercises such as journal writing, students acknowledge the value of their work for their environment, for their community, and for themselves.