

Student Driven Cooperative or Nonprofit Association

The idea behind a student driven cooperative is to give the students an actual representation and demonstration of a cooperative and its functions. To begin the cooperative, students must first determine the function, role or service the cooperative will provide to the school or community. These can stem from desired service learning projects or a special need of the school.

Cooperative suggestions could include a class pet, managing a snack bar at an extracurricular event, taking care of a flower bed and garden, a study cooperative to share notes taken in class and provide "study buddies" and group study times and locations, and offering day care during parent/teacher conferences.

Students will be responsible for electing three officer positions. These positions will be the president (chairperson), treasurer and secretary. Each one of these offices has a very specific role. The president facilitate meetings and decision making and will work in conjunction with the other officers as well as cooperative members. They will work to secure funds to the project if needed. The treasurer will keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements. The secretary will design a schedule and weekly newsletter.

All students participating in a cooperative will participate and have designated duties. This is the most important premise of a working cooperative, that all must participate for the end benefit and common good of all.

In order to secure a service learning project outcome, a reflection should be included. This should be in the form of an essay in which several questions are answered. Questions should be answered in paragraph form (one per question). The questions are:

- what the student accomplished as a cooperative member,
- how the cooperative allowed use of time and talent,
- what other cooperatives could benefit the school and community and why.

