

Community Service Manual

Community Involvement

As stated in Ontario Secondary Schools, Grades 9 to 12: Program and Diploma Requirements, 1999 (OSS), every student who begins secondary school during or after the 1999 - 2000 school year must complete a minimum of 40 hours of community involvement activities as part of the requirements for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Effective July 1, 2011, students are able to start accumulating community involvement hours in the summer before they enter grade 9.

Purpose of Community Involvement

The purpose of the community involvement requirement is to encourage students to develop an awareness and understanding of civic responsibility and of the role they can play in supporting and strengthening their communities. (OSS: page 9). In addition, community involvement can enhance one's self-confidence and self-image, offer networking for future employment, and provide an experience for students to include in their portfolios. In essence, it is about learning to make a difference in the community.

When Must Students Complete Community Involvement?

Community involvement activities can be carried out starting in the summer before entering grade 9 and prior to graduation outside of class hours. You may engage in activities during lunch breaks, in the evenings, on weekends, during school breaks, and during the summer months.

Recording Your Community Involvement

Before starting your volunteer activity please collect a Community Involvement Form and obtain the approval of the Guidance Department. Completed forms must be signed and submitted to the school to ensure your community involvement hours are recorded.

What types of activities are eligible?

You will be surprised by all of the interesting community groups and organizations that need and want your help. There is a partial list of possible activities and contacts at the end of this document.

Students will select one or more community involvement activities in consultation with their parents. Selection of activities should take into account the age, maturity, and ability of the student, the location and environment of the proposed activity, and the need for any special training, equipment, and preparation. The safety of the student is paramount. It should be noted that students will not be paid or receive credits towards their OSSD for performing any community involvement activity.

Eligible Activities are volunteer activities that may be counted towards 40 community involvement hours that must be accumulated by students as a graduation requirement. Eligible activities are those activities that provide services to improve the community or well-being of its members and may be performed for not-for-profit organizations. If an activity does not fall within the categories approved by the school, and is not on the list of ineligible activities students must obtain written approval from the Principal or Guidance Counselor before beginning the activity.

Eligible Activities include:

- **Elementary Schools**
assist with school events, assist School Councils, activities for children;
- **Secondary Schools**
organization and leadership of school activities that benefit the community;
- **Animal Care**
volunteering in an animal shelter, or on a farm;
- **Arts and Culture**
volunteering in libraries, and community productions;
- **Charitable Organizations**
assisting with special events, programs, clerical tasks;
- **Child/Youth Programs**
assisting with child/youth programs, volunteering in a **not-for-profit** child care Centre or camp;
- **Community Organizations**
assisting with special events, food banks, community support services, shelters, clerical tasks;
- **Community Service for Individuals**
assisting community members in need;
- **Environmental Projects**
beach cleaning, flower/tree planting, beautification projects, recycling projects;
- **Health Agencies**
volunteering in clinics, hospices, and donating blood (time required to donate);
- **Law Enforcement Agencies**
volunteering for activities sponsored by the police;
- **Political Organizations**
activities related to legitimate and recognized political organizations;
- **Senior Citizens**
assisting in seniors' residences, providing services for seniors in the community;
- **Sports and Recreation**
coaching, organizing special events, assisting with projects/events; or
- **Service Focused Club Activities**
those activities that expand community service to others beyond the school day (holiday dinner participation, environmental action activities, etc.).

If an eligible activity also falls within the definition of ineligible activities, the activity will be deemed ineligible. Activities at for-profit organizations, such as private camps, child care Centre's, or farms will not be eligible.

What types of activities are ineligible?

Ineligible Activities are activities that may not be included in community involvement hours by students as outlined by both the Ministry of Education and Canadian International Academy. An ineligible activity is an activity that:

- Involves any work for a for-profit organization; is a requirement of a class or course in which the student is enrolled;
- Takes place during the time allotted for the instructional program on a school day with the exception of an activity that takes place during the student's lunch breaks or "spare" periods, which is permissible;
- Takes place in a factory, if the student is under 15 years of age;
- Takes place in a workplace other than a factory, if the student is under 14 years of age and is not accompanied by an adult;
- Would normally be performed for wages by a person in the workplace;
- Involves the operation of a vehicle, power tools, or scaffolding; involves the administration of any type or form of medication or medical procedure to other persons;
- Involves banking or the handling of securities, or the handling of jewelry, works of art, antiques, or other valuables;
- Consists of duties normally performed in the home or personal recreational activities;
- Involves a court-ordered program.

Roles and Responsibilities

What are the roles and responsibilities of the major participants?

There are five main participants in the Community Involvement process, they are the School, the Principal, the Parents/ Guardians, the Student, and the Community Sponsor. Each role has specified responsibilities which are:

The School Must:

- Develop a list of approved community involvement activities (found at the end of this document)
- Ensure awareness of the Ministry of Education list of ineligible activities
- Not approve student participation in any activities that are on the Ministry's list of ineligible activities
- Implement community involvement activities through the school

The Principal Must:

- Provide information about the community involvement requirement to staff, parents, students, and community sponsors
- Provide students with the forms they will need to complete the community involvement requirement, including the list of approved activities from which to choose
- Determine whether the planned activity is on the approved list
- Give approval if the activity selected is not on the approved list
- Decide whether the student has met the community involvement requirement once the 40 hours has been completed and all documentation has been submitted
- Track hours on the report card and record the requirement as completed on the student's official transcript

The Parents/Guardians Must:

- Provide assistance to their child in the selection of safe nurturing environments for completion of their community involvement activities
- Communicate with the community sponsor and the school principal if they have any questions or concerns
- Sign the “Activity Notification” and the “Completed Activities” sections of the Community Involvement Form if the student is under 18 years of age

The Student Must:

- Before beginning any activity-
- In consultation with their parents, select an activity or activities from the school’s approved list, or choose an activity that is not on the list, provided that it is not an activity specified on the Ministry’s list of ineligible activities
- Complete the “ACTIVITY” section of the Community Involvement Form indicating the activity or activities that they plan to do
- Complete the “LOCATION” section by obtaining the signature of the community sponsor (the contact signature at the bottom indicates the willingness of the sponsor or organization to participate in this initiative)
- Sign the form and obtain signature of the parent (if the student is under 18 years of age)
- Have the form verified by the principal or other school contact to ensure that it describes an approved activity, etc.
- Obtain approval from the Principal or Guidance Counselor before beginning any activity that is not on the school’s list of approved activities
- Obtain necessary verification signatures for the “COMPLETED ACTIVITIES” section of the Community Involvement Form
- Submit the form to the Principal or Guidance Counselor upon completion of the 40 hours or at appropriate intervals determined by the Principal or Guidance Counselor.

The Community Sponsor Must:

- Sign the student’s passport to indicate willingness to sponsor a student and to verify completion of hours
- Provide any training, equipment, or special preparation that is required for the activity (It is crucial that students are able to fulfill their community involvement requirement in a safe environment.)

The Process

1. Plan

Students under the age of eighteen should plan an activity in consultation with their parent(s)/guardian(s). The activity must fall within the guiding principles the School has established, and should be identified on the School's list of examples.

2. Confirm

Students should confirm the details of the activity with the organizer who will be responsible for the activity.

3. Describe

Students must list the activity on the Community Involvement Form. If the activity is not on the Schools list of examples, the student must get approval of their principal or school designate prior to the completion of the hours.

4. Submit

Upon completion of the planned activity, students should have the supervisor of the activity print their name and sign in the designated area on the form. The students must then submit the form to the Principal or Guidance Department.

My Personal Start-up Plan

Things I should discuss with my parents:

My First Steps:

People I can go to for help:

Action Steps:

List of Local Organizations:

Nature Foundation - manager@naturefoundationsxm.org

Diabetes Foundation - discoor@sintmaarten.net

Pawsitive SXX - pawsitive.sxm971@gmail.com

Rotary club(s) of St. Maarten

White + Yellow Cross

Sister Basilia Centre

Pride Foundation

Aids foundation

Lion's Club

K.1 Britannia

Red Cross

E.P.I.C