

Community Service Requirement



2011-2012

Community involvement helps students to develop a greater understanding of and sense of accountability to their peers, school community and the wider world. Toronto New School thus considers participation in one's community to be an integral component of the learning process and as such promotes volunteerism at all grade levels.

“Where
teenagers
learn how to
think, not
what to
think.”

1. Introduction

Every student must complete a minimum of 40 hours of community involvement activities as part of the requirements for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). The purpose of the community involvement requirement is to encourage students to develop awareness and understanding of civic responsibility and of the role they can play and the contributions they can make in supporting and strengthening their communities.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the School

A list of approved community involvement activities has been developed by the school and the school's insurer. This list is included below, along with a list of activities that the Ministry of Education and Training has stated are ineligible. The school will not approve student participation in any activities that are on the ministry's list of ineligible activities. The school must ensure that all participants, including students and community sponsors, are adequately covered by insurance.

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of the Head of School

The Head of School is required to provide information about the community involvement requirement and is also required to provide students with the information and forms they will need to complete the community involvement requirement, including the list of approved activities from which to choose. After a student completes the 40 hours of community involvement and submits all documentation of their completion to the school, the Head of School will decide whether the student has met the community involvement requirement and, if so, will record it as completed on the student's official transcript.

2.3 Roles and Responsibilities of Students

In consultation with their parents, students will select an activity or activities from the board's list of approved activities, or choose an activity that is *not* on the list, provided that it is not an activity specified on the ministry's and the board's lists of ineligible activities. If the activity is not on the board's list of approved activities, the student must obtain written approval from the principal before beginning the activity.

Before beginning any activity, students will provide the principal or other school contact with a completed *Notification of Planned Community Involvement Activities* form indicating the activity or activities that they plan to do. This form must be signed by the student and by his or her parent if the student is under eighteen years of age. More than one such form may be submitted when additional activities are planned that were not included on a previously submitted form.

A *Completion of Community Involvement Activities* form must be completed by the student, the student's parent (if the student is under eighteen years of age), and the community sponsor (that is, the person or organization that provided the community involvement opportunity for the student). The student must submit the form to the principal or other school contact upon completion of the 40 hours or at appropriate intervals determined by the Head of School.

2.4 Roles and Responsibilities of Parents

Parents should provide assistance to their child in the selection of their community involvement activities. Parents are also encouraged to communicate with the community sponsor and the Head of School if they have any questions or concerns. A parent must sign the *Notification of Planned Community Involvement Activities* form and the *Completion of Community Involvement Activities* form if the student is under the age of eighteen years.

2.5 Roles and Responsibilities of Sponsors in the Community

One of the purposes of the community involvement requirement is to develop strong ties between the students and their community, fostering valuable and long-term relationships. Persons and organizations within the community may be asked by the student to sponsor a community involvement activity. Any training, equipment, or special preparation that is required for the activity should be provided by the person or organization. It is crucial that students are able to fulfil their community involvement requirement in a safe environment. The person overseeing the student's activity must verify the date(s) and the number of hours completed on the *Completion of Community Involvement Activities* form.

3. Community Service Activities

3.1 The Ministry of Education's List of Ineligible Activities

The ministry has developed a list of activities that may not be chosen as community involvement activities and that are therefore ineligible activities. An ineligible activity is an activity that:

- is a requirement of a class or course in which the student is enrolled (e.g., cooperative education portion of a course, job shadowing, work experience);
- takes place during the time allotted for the instructional program on a school day. However, an activity that takes place during the student's lunch breaks or "spare" periods is permissible;
- takes place in a logging or mining environment, if the student is under sixteen years of age;
- takes place in a factory, if the student is under fifteen years of age;

- takes place in a workplace other than a factory, if the student is under fourteen 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 handling of substances classed as “designated substances” under the Occupational Health and Safety Act;
- requires the knowledge of a tradesperson whose trade is regulated by the provincial government;
- involves banking or the handling of securities, or the handling of jewellery, works of art, antiques, or other valuables;
- consists of duties normally performed in the home (i.e., daily chores) or personal recreational activities;
- involves a court-ordered program (e.g., community-service program for young offenders, probationary program).

3.2 Community Involvement Activities Approved in Principle

The following list of school approved activities suggests types of activities from which students may choose. Other activities of a similar nature may be approved at the school level.

HELP YOUR NEIGHBOURS

- provide service to seniors or to others who have difficulty leaving their homes -raking, shoveling (no snow blowers), shopping (students should not drive vehicles for this purpose), visiting, reading, meal preparation.
- Assist a neighbour with child care -take child to par, watch child while parent prepares dinner
- Tutor younger students - read take to library, help with homework.

HELP YOUR COMMUNITY

- volunteer at a seniors’ home/center - visit, read play cards or board games, take senior for walks, make crafts
- help organize local community events - food drives/banks
- take part in environmental initiatives - cleaning and recycling operations, park cleanup, planting trees and flower beds (students should not use power tools - lawn mowers, hedge trimmers, wood chippers, etc.)
- get involved in charitable activities - walk-a-thons, daffodil sales, canvassing for organizations
- assist with sports teams - community leagues, pars and recreation programs
- volunteer in *leadership* roles with community groups - guides or scouts

- volunteer in hospitals, libraries or any organization recommended by the Volunteer Centre of Toronto
- volunteer with social service agencies - Red Cross, United Way, Food Banks
- get involved in the democratic political process - scrutineer, canvassing, campaigning
- service through religious communities/places of worship
- assist with literacy initiatives - at local libraries, day care centers, community centers.

HELP YOUR SCHOOL OR OTHER SCHOOLS

- help with sports teams - run skills drills, assist coach
- help in the library - shelving books, tidying up, changing bulletin boards
- tutor other students with special needs - peer buddy
- assist with planning of arts or athletic events - publicity, set up for track meets, sell tickets, attend coat check, offer technical support
- facilitate school events such as parent information nights - meet and greet visitors, give guided tours, serve refreshments
- assist with environmental activities - encourage recycling, plant trees, flowers, work on grounds crew (students should not use power tools)
- participate in charitable initiatives - food drives, holiday drives for toys or food
- sit on school councils, committees - school governance, be a peer mentor/mediator, help with orientation of grade 9 students

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