



Henrico County Public Schools has a Community Service program for students in grades 6 – 12. These students may participate in voluntary assignments and activities to serve organizations as well as individuals within the community. Students in grades 6 – 8 and grades 9 – 12 have different criteria. Middle School students can receive school based certificates for completing hours in the range of 1 – 10, 11 – 20, and 21+ hours.

High School students can receive a special seal on their diploma and notation on their transcript for serving 80+ hours during their 9 – 12 years. Hours from middle school do not carry over from year to year, but high school hours do carry over each year. The goal of community service is to enhance the quality of life within the student’s school and community. Community Service Learning combines instruction, 21st Century Skills, and voluntary participation in supporting activities or obtaining contribution of goods.

For the 2016 – 2017 school year, students will use a Community Service form that allows students to record seven different instances of community service performed. Furthermore, **this letter** serves as pre-approval. While many activities do count for community service, there are some activities that do not. By signing this form, parents/guardians are acknowledging that their student can perform community service to earn a special seal on his or her diploma and that some activities are not allowed.

In summary, students can volunteer for a school, a non-profit agency, or help an individual who cannot help themselves. Activities tied to a grade, some sort of compensation, or a school sport or club does not count. The most common question is volunteer opportunities that related to a religious organization. If the activity serves a community function (e.g. camps, feeding programs, after school or summer care) these can count. If the activity is related to teaching religious doctrine or performing in a religious service, these hours would not count. If you have any questions, please see the Community Service Leader of each school. More information can be found at: <http://blogs.henrico.k12.va.us/socialstudies/community-service/>.

There is always a risk that students will volunteer for a worthy cause and find out later that it did not qualify within our guidelines. We are trying to minimize this occurrence with these procedures. All final decisions for approval will be made by the Secondary Social Studies Specialist, Mike Hasley at (804) 652-3752 or mjhasley@henrico.k12.va.us.

Furthermore, in April and May of 2017, high school students will hear about deadlines to turn in forms. For students in grades 9 – 11, the deadline is important to track their cumulative hours per year. If a student in grades 9 – 11 misses the May deadline, they can still turn in the hours the next school year. However, for Seniors, the deadline must be met in order to complete all the paperwork and order the seals.

Please check off and sign below to acknowledge the terms of community service.

I acknowledge that my son or daughter will be performing community service and understand that some community service activities may not qualify for a community service seal.

This permission form covers each year your student is enrolled at any high school in HCPS.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Student Signature

Student Printed Name and Graduation Year (Print Clearly)



**2016 – 2017 Community
Service Learning For Grades 6 - 8**

Henrico County Public Schools

Guidelines for Teachers, Parents, and Students

Community Service Learning For Grades 6-8

Henrico County Public Schools

Purpose of Community Service Learning (CSL)

To extend learning beyond the classroom and into the community, to promote civic responsibility through active participation in service experiences, to foster a sense of caring for others, and to develop a habit of volunteer service to those in need.

What is Community Service Learning?

Community Service Learning (CSL) is an educational process, which enhances the quality of life within the school and the community. Community Service Learning combines instruction, 21st Century Skills, and voluntary participation in supporting activities or obtaining contributions of goods.

What are the benefits of Community Service Learning for Middle School Students?

- Students may receive credit for activities completed the summer prior to 9th grade, provided that appropriate procedures for prior approval as outlined on page 2 of this document are followed.
- Students receive an invaluable learning experience outside of the normal classroom setting.
- Service learning places curricular concepts in the context of real-world situations.
- Students analyze, evaluate, and synthesize these concepts using problem-solving skills, while at the same time helping their community.
- Students generate positive school-community relations and relations within the school.
- Students experience a good feeling of people helping people.

The key to determining whether or not the service meets the criteria is asking the question, *Who benefits from the service?*

The answer should be:

Those organizations which are identified as an educational institution, those with non-profit status, or an individual in need such as the poor, the sick, or those with special needs.

What types of activities constitute Community Service Learning?

- Activities which benefit the school or community provided that the community organizations benefiting from the services are non-profit, with the exception of hospitals, nursing homes, or educational activities. Religious organizations are permitted for any non-proselytizing activity.
- Activities which are not self-serving for a student or the student's family member.
- Activities which **are not tied to a grade** (i.e. - Musical performances with school groups to such places as nursing homes, will not count if the activity is tied to a grade in the music class.)
- Activities which render service to individuals who cannot otherwise provide for themselves.

Note: If training is required by the organization, i.e. candy striping at a hospital, the hours required for training may be included as credit for community service. Most organizations will not commit to train students unless the volunteer agrees to a substantial number of volunteer service hours.

What types of activities MEET the criteria of Community Service Learning?

- Participating in service projects as a member of a service club or community organization.
- Students who leave school to participate in an elementary school, as a part of an **instructional program** approved by the principals in each school may receive service credit for the instructional time rendered.
- Reading to the blind.
- Volunteering one's services at a local hospital, nursing home, etc.
- Volunteering one's services to individuals, i.e. senior citizens or the disabled.
- Hosting outside groups for school festivals.
- PTSA and Booster projects
- Volunteering as a coach or instructor for non-profit organizations such as Little League or the Richmond Ballet.
- Volunteering for the Board of Elections or political campaigns.
- ALL tutoring (not paid); including tutoring done before or after school, during lunch or study hall.
- Outreach programs of religious organizations and other non-profit organizations, which provide non-proselytizing service to the poor, sick, needy, etc.
- Participating in events, i.e., marathons, walks, races, which benefit charitable organizations. One hour of service credit will be awarded for each hour of service provided to the charity. Schools may establish criteria for school sponsored events as deemed appropriate.

Individual projects not specified in these examples may be accepted based on the criteria described on page 1. A detailed booklet or brochure will be available on the HCPS web site to help students determine some of the opportunities available.

It is intended that CSL Coordinator in each school help identify opportunities for students to be involved and to offer assistance to students when needed. Students are responsible for identifying and establishing service activities.

What types of activities DO NOT meet the criteria of Community Service Learning?

- Virginia High School League and co-curricular activities, with the exception of service clubs.
- Religious activities related to religious education, worship, or evangelizing.
- Any activity for an organization which is not identified as non-profit, unless the activity is education related.
- Any court-ordered service to the community.
- Community Service hours that are required by clubs; e.g., Beta Club. Hours served beyond the minimum requirement can be used for the club and toward the seal.

How will Community Service Learning be incorporated into the curriculum?

Teaching students about service to others, and the invaluable learning experience offered through Community Service Learning, will be included in the Sixth Grade Transition Program of each Middle school. The CSL Coordinator in each school will work with school administrators to effectively provide this information to all rising sixth graders.

Community Service Learning will be incorporated into the curriculum, including United States History and Civics and Economics courses. Each school will determine the most appropriate way to implement Community Service Learning into the school program. It is appropriate to include this project in this curriculum, as these courses open the door for discussion of participatory citizenship, the role of many governmental agencies, as well as the current involvement of local, state, and national governments in service learning.

What procedures must be followed in order to receive CSL credit?

Teachers supervising this program will receive from the CSL Coordinator a sufficient number of **Community Service Logs** at the beginning of first semester. The secondary Social Studies Specialist will also provide to each school principal sufficient copies of the **Community Service Logs** and the **Summary of Guidelines**. These items will be available to parents in the packet of forms usually provided at the school's Fee Night.

1. Each participating student will be expected to have his or her parent/guardian sign the **HCPS CSL Parent Form** prior to completing any community service. This will be given to students at registration and during the school week of Constitution Day (Sept. 17). Once signed, this form will act as a pre-approval for activities.
2. Since not all activities are approved, students and parents need to be aware of which services qualify or do not qualify. Teachers can still guide students on the appropriate activities as will the Secondary Social Studies Specialist.
3. Each student will provide the designated teacher with a signed **Community Service Log** or a certificate, or other means of valid documentation which indicates the type of project completed, the dates of the project, and the amount of hours spent to complete the project. Such documentation will require the signature of the adult responsible for coordinating the efforts of the project.
4. As each project is completed, the designated teacher will provide a signature confirming credit for service rendered. The **Community Service Log** can be used for a maximum of seven activities.
5. Any student who transfers to a high school in the Henrico County Public School system with documented hours of Community Service at a high school outside of Henrico County will be awarded credit for those hours as long as they were completed during his/her high school career.

Responsibilities of the Middle School CSL Coordinator

- Coordinate with the feeder elementary schools CSL Coordinator to plan and provide an orientation for rising 6th graders including procedures for approval of summer projects. It is recommended that one 12-month school employee (preferably the director of school counseling or principal) be identified and trained to receive and review all requests for approval during the summer.
- Ensure that a link is provided on the school web site to the HCPS CSL web page.
- Lead an orientation of the CSL guidelines to all teachers charged with introducing and approving the CSL program to students in grades 6 - 8.
- Work with school administrators to provide an effective means of providing this information to all students.
- Provide a school implementation plan of action to the secondary Social Studies Specialist no later than the end of September.
- Submit a mid-year report of service and an end-of year report to the secondary Social Studies Specialist by the set deadlines.
- Keep track of hours served for the appropriate award levels (1-10 Bronze, 11-20 Silver, and 21+ Gold) and take sufficient care that that students get the correct end-of-year recognition. Middle School hours do not carry over from year to year.

Responsibilities of the Middle School Principal

- Works with MS education, school based leadership, and CS contact (more if needed) to develop and monitor year long plan.

Responsibilities of the Faculty and Staff

- Encourage students to participate and discuss benefits and opportunities during class.
- Highlight curricular connections.



Community Service Learning for Grades 6 - 8
A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR STUDENTS



- Step 1** Listen to teacher's presentation about Community Service Learning and read the **HCPS CSL Parent Form**.
- Step 2** Turn in the **HCPS CSL Parent Form**. Be sign and be sure to include the signature of a parent or guardian. **This must be completed and submitted to your teacher prior to the commencement of any service.**
- Step 3** Choose the appropriate Community Service Learning activity/activities for your interests. Collect a **Community Service Form** from your teacher.
- Step 4** Perform the service project(s).
- Step 5** Complete **Community Service Form**. *This must include the signature of your project supervisor.*
- Step 6** Submit the completed **Community Service Form** to your teacher.
- Step 7** Receive Community Service Learning seal on your high school diploma if the minimum requirements have been met.



Community Service Learning for Grades 6 - 8
GETTING STARTED



**A GUIDE
for
STUDENTS WHEN CONTACTING AGENCIES**

Before Calling an Agency:

Please make sure your parents are aware that you are calling an agency.

1. Decide what you would like to do. Look through the Community Service Learning Volunteer Opportunities brochure for suggested organizations and activities.
2. Decide on the time you have available (day, month, hours, etc.).
3. Have a calendar, pen, and paper with you when you place the call.
4. Be professional when talking on the phone. *(Be sure to dispose of chewing gum before placing a call.)*

TO HELP YOU WHEN YOU MAKE THE CALL, it is a good idea to know what you are going to say.

The following is a simple guide:

“Hello. I am a student at (Name of School) . May I speak to the volunteer coordinator?” (use the name of the person if available).

“Good afternoon. My name is _____ and I am a student at _____ . I am interested in volunteering my time to our community. I would like to talk to you about what I could do to help your organization. Is this a good time for you?”

From this point on, you will need to simply follow the lead of the other person. Be sure to find out:

- what services are needed,
- when the services may be performed, and
- who you should contact upon arriving at the site.



Community Service Learning for Grades 6 - 8 Summary of Student Guidelines for Parents



This summary sheet along with a **HCPS CSL Parent Form** is included in the packet of information provided to all parents at the beginning of the school year.

Parent approval for specific service will be indicated by the signature on the form and is required to be submitted to the appropriate teacher before any service is provided.

Activities that qualify for service credit

MUST:

- demonstrate volunteer, non-paid service.
- benefit an educational or a non-profit and be a non-proselytizing activity with the exception of hospitals and nursing homes, or an individual in need (as described in the guidelines).

Activities that qualify for service credit

MUST NOT:

- be self-serving for the student or the student's family member.
- be tied to a grade in any way.

The key to determining whether or not the service meets the criteria is asking the question,
Who benefits from the service?

The answer should be:

Those organizations which are identified as an educational institution, those with non-profit status, or an individual in need such as the poor, the sick, or those with special needs.

BEFORE rendering any service, the student must complete and submit the **HCPS CSL Parent Form**. The parent and student signature indicates an acknowledgement of the process and qualifications for community service. This also acts as pre-authorization for the student to perform community service. This form must be turned in before a student receives a **Community Service Form**.

When submitting hours of service to the CSL Coordinator the student must include the:

1. date(s) of service,
2. number of service hours provided,
3. name of the person or organization benefiting from the service provided,
4. description of the service performed, and
5. name, signature, and contact information (phone or e-mail) of the adult supervisor of the service.

The adult supervisor of the service is required to sign the **Community Service Form** indicating completion of the service as described on the form and the number of hours of service performed. The student is to submit this form to the school's CSL Coordinator during the academic year the service is provided.