

Instruction

Student Volunteers and Community Service

The district is committed to preparing its high school students for active participation in community affairs through a student service learning program. Student service learning is defined as an unpaid activity within the curriculum, school or outside community that provides service to an individual or group to address a school or community need. The activity must be developmentally appropriate and meaningful to the student.

The program aimed at teaching skills and habits the Board of Education perceives as essential for good citizenship, strives to allow students to develop a wide range of personal, intellectual, academic and social skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, negotiation, communication, planning and evaluation. It will help students become effective employees, colleagues, citizens and leaders.

Through participation in student service learning, a student will have opportunities to:

- develop knowledge and respect for community and citizenship;
- learn that problems can be solved by working together;
- learn the responsibilities involved in citizenship;
- explore career opportunities;
- increase self-esteem and appreciation for others;
- become sensitive to others and appreciate cultural diversity;
- overcome barriers among children.

Community Service

A student may earn a maximum of 2.0 credits (elective) towards graduation. No more than 1.0 such credit may be earned per school year. Each .5 credit of community service represents 50 hours.

Effective with the Class of 1999, community service is encouraged for all students. For graduating students will have completed not less than fifty (50) hours of actual community service, one-half credit shall be provided for community service learning, applicable toward the district's graduation requirement. Students may complete their fifty hours during anyone of the four high school years, but all fifty must be completed in one school year.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 10-221a [a] An Act Concerning High School Community Service
Herndon v. Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Board of Education, 899 F. Supp 1443 (North Carolina) 1995
Immediato v. Rye Neck School District, 873 F. Supp 846 (New York) 1995

Policy adopted: April 11, 2000

HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 Hamden, Connecticut

Instruction

Community Service Credits

I. Introduction

The core concept of offering Community Service credit is the belief that high school students are worthy citizens, capable of giving of themselves and willing to do so when encouraged. Community service programs in high school are a definite growing trend nationwide and are based on the premise that volunteerism, when developed at a young age, has a greater chance of being carried over to later stages in life and is an essential part of our democratic society. It also assists our students in becoming productive members of our society and provides an opportunity for students to give back to the community through service.

II. Guidelines

Students will have a wide range of choices for community service and may work individually or in a group. It can be school-based or in the community.

Students will be assigned to the community service advisor, who will assist them in selecting a focus for their community service, and monitor and evaluate the student's progress. The community service advisor will be a certified teacher or school administrator.

Students should select an organization or group within the community which is significant to that student. All projects must be approved by the parent/guardian, advisor, guidance counselor and principal.

- Students may complete their 50 hours or more during any one of the four years at Hamden High School.
- The 50 hours of community service must be completed in one school year. If fifty hours are not attained in one year, the student must begin again in another year.
- Community service activities must be approved in advance by the community services advisor in consultation with the student's guidance counselor and school principal.
- It is the responsibility of the student to procure the appropriate community service experience.

Instruction

Community Service Credits (continued)

II. Guidelines (continued)

- It is the responsibility of the student to maintain an activity log which documents the date and time of service performed and a brief description of the specific service performed on each date. Each entry must be signed and dated by the student's community service advisor.
- It is the responsibility of the student to present documentation of completion to his/her community service advisor.
- Students can complete 50 hours of service through any school organization if the appropriate club advisor verifies and documents the hours of service.
- Students will attend 10 hours of classroom instruction before or after school.

Upon completion of fifty hours of community service and ten hours of related classroom instruction, each student will receive one-half (.5) credit in community service towards their high school diploma.

III. Procedural Guidelines

Phase One

- a. The student will select a focus area from one of the several Board areas of service:
 - tutoring
 - homeless/hunger and abused care
 - non-profit child care
 - care for the elderly
 - environmental care
 - disabled and health care
 - civic

From the broad areas of focus, a student will select a specific agency, organization and activity.

Instruction

Community Service Credits (continued)

III. Procedural Guidelines (continued)

Phase One (continued)

Suggested Activities

Hospitals

- draw pictures to brighten rooms
- record original stories for patients
- tutor young patients
- register donors at a blood drive

Libraries

- repair worn books
- make and distribute bookmarks
- short story hours for younger children

Schools

- provide a buddy system for new students
- offer child care during parent open house
- teach a sport in an after-school program
- sponsor food drives for homeless shelters
- be a peer advocate
- tutor children at all school levels

Homeless Shelters

- hold a blanket drive
- make and decorate knapsacks of baby quilts
- bake cookies
- take instant photos of children for families
- help with food distribution

Recreational Centers

- put on puppet shows
- volunteer assistance for sports center or clinic
- build benches or playground equipment

Day Care or Senior Centers

- be a pal to a child or elderly person
- collaborate on story or joke books for hospitalized children

Instruction

Community Service Credits (continued)

III. Procedural Guidelines (continued)

Phase One (continued)

- b. Students will contact the organization and secure permission to serve as a volunteer.
- c. The project must be approved by the parent/guardian, advisor, guidance counselor and principal.

Phase Two

- a. After the community service project has been completed, the student will have a representative of the organization or agency sign an evaluation form.
- b. The form will be reviewed by the advisor who will notify the student's guidance counselor in order that the .5 credit is entered on his/her transcript.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-221a High school graduation requirements. Community Service

HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Hamden, Connecticut

**EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT BY AGENCY OR
ORGANIZATION**

You have been assisting the above-named student from Hamden High School in carrying out a community service project. We appreciate the assistance you have rendered to this student. Would you please complete this form and return it to the student.

Name of Student: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Describe the student's services: _____

How did these service benefit your agency/organization? _____

Please note the student's attitude towards this project.

_____ Excellent _____ Good _____ Average _____ Poor

Indicate the period of service: From: _____ To: _____

Total number of hours student applied to this community service project: _____

Signature of Representative

Date

A total of _____ hours of community service has been fulfilled.

Signature of Advisor

Date

HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Hamden, Connecticut

STUDENT SELF-EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Name of Student: _____

Grade: _____ Advisor: _____

1. Describe your community service project.

2. Why did you choose this project?

3. How was the service carried out and who benefited from the service?

4. How did you benefit from the service and what did you learn from the experience?

5. What would make the project better next time?

HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Hamden, Connecticut

STUDENT DAILY ACTIVITY LOG FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Name: _____

Grade: _____

1. Community Service Project: _____

2. Date of Service: _____

3. Time: _____

4. Brief Description of Specific Service Performed: _____

Advisor's Signature

Date