The purpose of this guide is to help you satisfy the community service requirement for graduation.

What Is Community Service?

Community service is any voluntary activity that is designed to address a problem or need in the community. The community service you choose to perform should also reflect your personal interests and skills. Worthwhile community service requires an on-going commitment on your part for which you receive no monetary benefit. In other words, you work for free.

Why Is Community Service Important?

Community service is a valuable and important part of your high school experience. It is designed to expand your view of your local community, while instilling a sense of purpose and pride regarding your own abilities and interests. Don’t underestimate the power and importance of community service in your life.

Community service has also become an important part of college and university applications. Many college and university admissions officers use community service as a method to separate and select their applicants and is also used to determine who receives scholarships and student loans. It is often the amount and quality of community service that separate equally talented applicants. In that regard, it is best to select one type of community service and remain with it throughout your high school career rather than accumulate an array of different types of community service. Community service

What Are the Community Service Graduation Requirements?

To complete the community service graduation requirement for Miami-Dade County Public Schools, you must perform some type of community service. There is no set a required number of community service hours. However, if you wish to be eligible for Florida Academic Scholars or the Superintendent's Diploma of Distinction, you must complete a minimum of 75 hours of service.

What Types of Community Service Satisfy the Requirement for Graduation?

You may do any of a variety of voluntary activities to meet the graduation requirement. You can spend time with senior citizens in convalescent homes, tutor elementary students, work in a homeless shelter and much more. You may conduct your community service at a school or in the community. You may work as an individual or you may work in a group. Below is a brief description of the types of community service that are acceptable.

School-Site Community Service

Volunteering at a school is an excellent way of meeting the requirement for community service while also helping meet the special needs of a school. If you choose this type of service, you should commit to providing on-going support and assistance to the school. Additionally, your service must not be completed as part of a regular school course in which you are receiving academic credit (with the exception of the elective courses in community service).
Examples of School-Site Community Service include the following activities:

- Student plans, coordinates, and monitors a school-wide letter writing campaign in support of an issue of local importance.
- Student tutors other students in reading or math for a semester.
- Student serves as a Community Service aide to an appropriate teacher or counselor and assists with the efforts to implement and monitor community service experiences.

**Group Community Service**

Group community service activities provide excellent opportunities for you to complete your community service requirement while also helping meet the special needs of an individual neighborhood or community. This type of community service provides excellent service opportunities for organized student groups such as service clubs, honor societies, and athletic teams. Membership in a service club or organization does not in itself meet your community service responsibilities. However, you can work with others in the organization to meet your community service responsibility.

Examples of Group Community Service include the following activities:

- Students develop an "Adopt-A-Park" program that includes organizing and monitoring regular work details and beautification.
- Students work regularly at a senior citizens’ center assisting with feeding and visitations.
- Students work regularly at a child care center and assist with child care or school work (e.g., reading stories or helping with homework).

**Individual Community Service**

Individual community service activities allow you to complete the service requirement while addressing a community need which interests you. When working on this type of community service, you should be committed to providing on-going assistance to the community.

Examples of Individual Community Service include the following activities:

- Student hosts story hours for younger children at a community library or at a nearby elementary school.
- Student reads to or records for the blind.
- Student serves as a volunteer at a museum or cultural center.
- Student participates in the PTSA.

**How Do I Select Meaningful Community Service?**

You should think about the following questions before you begin community service:

- What need or problem exists in the community that interests you?
- What activities can you perform that address this need or problem?
- Does your community service represent a voluntary activity for which you are not paid?
- Does the service you select match your interests, talents, and abilities?
- Are there any special qualifications you need to perform the community service?
• Will you be able to spend the necessary time performing the community service?
• What planning steps are needed before you begin the community service?
• Who needs to be contacted before you begin the community service?

The organizations and agencies listed below typically welcome volunteers. This list should help you develop ideas for the service you would like to perform.

• Chambers of Commerce
• Charities
• City governments
• Civic organizations
• Convalescent homes
• County agencies
• Cultural centers
• Day care centers
• Elementary or middle schools
• Hospices
• Hospitals
• Libraries
• Museums
• Parks
• Political organizations
• Recreation centers
• Religious organizations
• United Way agencies
• Zoos

Additionally, you are strongly encouraged to involve your parents or guardians in the process of selecting the community service you would like to pursue. While this is your activity, their support is also necessary.

How Do I Receive Credit for Community Service When It Is Completed?

You may complete your community service anytime between the summer after completing 8th grade and 12th grade; however, it is strongly suggested that you not wait until your senior year to begin work on this graduation requirement. To receive credit for the community service you perform, follow the procedures outlined below.

Documenting and Reporting Your Community Service

• You are required to complete the Community Service Report which is available on the school's website at www.mkhs.dadeschools.net and provide an official letter printed on business stationery from the person who supervised your community service.
• The original Community Service Report and the letter must be submitted to the school registrar in Room 1131
• Retain a copy of your Community Service Report and letter to ensure that the total number of community service hours that is reflected in you academic history is accurate.
• Contact the school registrar or your counselor if you have questions regarding community service or this information.

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