

Service Hour Guidelines

Service Learning is defined as

An educational method by which participants learn and develop through active participation in service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community. Service learning is coordinated with a school or community service program and with the community. It is integrated into and influences the lifelong learning of a participant and includes structured time for the participants to reflect on the service experience.

Service learning teaches the skills of civil participation and develops an ethic of service and civic responsibility. Students can provide service in the community on a voluntary basis to public, nonprofit agencies, civic, charitable and governmental organizations and school campus.

Service Learning and Volunteer Service Program is divided into three tiers.

Tier I Service Learning Hours required for graduation.

Tier II Service Learning and Volunteer Service Hours required to qualify for the Florida Academic Scholars Program (one of the Bright Futures Scholarships).

Tier III Volunteer Service Hours required earn a silver cord at graduation.

Community Service Application and Approval Forms

This form is available from the Student Volunteer Service Program Coordinator and must be filled out completely and submitted prior to undertaking any service that is not connected with a school recognized club or organization. A student does not need this form if he/she is participating in a service activity undertaken by a school-sponsored club, class or organization of which he/she is a member. Please note, however that not all projects undertaken by school clubs and organizations count for service hours. The community service Application and Approval Form must be turned in ten days prior to undertaking the project.

Tier I

The Service Learning Graduation Requirement

Community involvement is critical to success in education. Student participation in community service activities build an awareness of society and a connection between classroom and real world issues. Service Learning is a method through which students learn about and develop a commitment to addressing needs in their communities.

Service Learning hours, as a graduation requirement, provide students with the opportunity to develop a long lasting sense of responsibility to society.

Students, who wish to earn a Standard Diploma, must meet the graduation requirement of 40 service learning hours plus a written reflection. Students should be encouraged to use their service learning experiences as discussion or written topics whenever appropriate as a part of class assignments.

Tier 1-40 Hours

Guidelines Specific to the 40 Hour Service Learning Requirement

1. All high school students seeking a Standard Diploma are required to participate in the program.
2. Service performed over the summer or performed as part of an organization that is not a school sponsored club or organization must meet Service Learning Guidelines to earn Service Learning hours.

3. All Service Learning Hours must be documented on the Service Learning Record-Graduation Requirement Tier 1 Log Sheet. Tier 1 Log Sheets must be returned to the Service Learning Coordinator. Students must retain a copy of this form for their records. Students may start earning Service Learning Hours as soon as they are promoted to ninth grade.

Tier II – 75 Hours

Florida Academic Scholars (part of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarships)

Seventy-five (75) documented hours of service is one of the qualifications for the Florida Academic Scholars Program (Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program). These hours could include a combination of the Service Learning required hours and hours earned for the Student Volunteer Service Program.

1. Hours earned as part of the Student Volunteer Service Program must be documented on the Volunteer Service Record Tier II/III Log Sheet and must comply with rules of that program.
2. The Florida Academic Scholars Program requirements listed on the reverse side of Tier II/III Log Sheet must be completed.
3. The student must give copies of the log sheets required to verify service hours for the Florida Academic Scholars Program Scholarship to his/her guidance counselor.

Tier III

The Student Volunteer Service Program

All students who have earned a total of 250 Volunteer Service Hours will receive a silver cord to wear at commencement. An adjustment to the 250 total hours required to receive a silver cord should be made for students who enter the Broward County Public Schools after their freshmen year.

Student Volunteer Service Program Forms

The Tier II/III Log Sheet

(The Volunteer Service Record)

Hours earned as part of the Student Volunteer Service Program must be documented on the Tier II/III Log Sheet. These forms must be submitted to the Student Volunteer Service Program Coordinator. Students should turn in Service Records regularly and should keep a duplicate copy of all forms for their records.

Tier III-250 Hours

Guidelines specific to the Silver Cord Program

Services performed over the summer or performed as part of an organization that is not sponsored by the school must be approved in advance (See Community Service Application and Approval Form.)

General Guidelines for Tiers I, II, & III

1. All services must comply with the policies of the School Board of Broward County, Florida.
2. Student volunteer service hours may be earned in both the school and or the community.
3. Services for which a student or an organization that a student belongs to receives financial/or other substantial compensation will not be counted. This would include revenues from ticket sales or donations. For example, participation in a car wash sponsored by a club would not count as community service. An exception to this guideline would be if the organization is donating the profits (less expenses) to a bonafide charity. Another example, the school chorus puts on a performance at which admission is charged and all of

the proceeds less the cost of cleaning their uniforms is donated to a charitable organization.

4. Participation in and travel to theatrical musical performances, festivals or community events will count as service hours if both (a) and (b) below are met:

A. The performance meets an identified community service need.

B. The performance is not a fundraiser for the organization nor the student is paid, or receives academic credit. For example, students participating in the Florida Youth Orchestra or school bands/orchestras may receive hours for performing at a retirement home, charitable and civic events or for a non-profit agency.

5. A student may earn volunteer hours by helping at an event or performance at which admission is charged or a donation collected, providing that the student is not a member of the organization benefiting from the event. For example, a student, who is not a member of the Drama Club, may volunteer to usher and collect tickets at a drama club production and earn service learning hours.

6. Rehearsal and practice time will count for volunteer service projects to be performed or conducted specifically to meet a community service need.

7. Service learning hours documented for community service as part of non-credit granting workshops, programs or conferences will count as volunteer service.

8. Fundraising activities for non-profit charities will count as volunteer service hours as long as the activity complies with Broward County School Board Policies 6206 and 6208 and providing the student is not volunteering for an organization that benefits the school (i.e. a booster club fundraiser). For example, a high school student government may hold a candy sale and donate all of the profits to the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis. However, the conduct of the project including depositing the money in the school account must be in accordance with School Board policies. Service hours may not be earned based on the amount of funds raised or products sold.

9. Volunteering at events or programs sponsored by governmental agencies will count. For example, students serving as an usher at public institutions such as the Broward Center for the Performing Arts or Coral Springs City Center are eligible to receive service learning hours.

10. Activities organized by profit making or non-profit organizations to address a community service need will count as volunteer service hours.

11. Services performed for day care centers, retirement homes, and animal hospitals count for volunteer hours. A student may earn service hours by volunteering with a doctor, lawyer or dentist only when “pro bono” work is being performed. For example, if a doctor volunteers to give physical examinations to school athletes, a student may assist and earn service hours.

12. Service performed on staff at non-profit athletic or music camps for no financial compensation will count as volunteer services hours.

13. Time out of class may not be used for hours, however a maximum of five (5) volunteer hours per week can be earned by participation in an organized, supervised and approved peer tutoring program in which the tutoring takes place when school is in session. However, the tutoring sessions cannot take place during any of the tutor’s academic classes.

14. Service hours will be awarded for students volunteering on political and issue campaigns. To receive service hours, a student cannot be paid for working on the political campaign. A student is not eligible to

receive service learning hours for volunteering on the political campaign of a school board employee or in school board elections. Students are not eligible to receive service learning hours for campaigning or being engaged in political activities during the school day and on school campuses.

15. Students may receive volunteer hours for helping at religious institutions as long as those hours do not include participation in a religious service, teaching religion or proselytizing. For example, a student is not eligible for service learning teaching Sunday school, singing in the choir or serving as an altar server. However a student may receive service hours for assisting in landscaping, clean up days or volunteering in the day care center. In addition, students serving as teen aides (i.e. copying materials, walking kids to bathrooms, assisting with supervision) are eligible for service learning credit as long as the student is not teaching religious studies.

16. In general, service rendered directly to a for profit institution or organization will not count. Volunteering at a "For Profit" summer camp does not qualify for service learning. Please note that the collection of a fee does not determine the "Not For Profit" status. The State of Florida issues a 501(c)(3) certificate to "Non Profit" organizations.

17. Service Learning Hours shall not be granted to students who volunteer at for profit summer camps (i.e. Sagemont, American Heritage, Pine Crest). Students who volunteer at governmental sponsored or non-profit summer camps shall be eligible to receive Service Learning Hours for their work.

18. Service for a student's family or family business will not count.

19. Service performed as the result of disciplinary action taken by the school or the courts will not count.

20. Participation in campus or competitive activities such as athletics, plays, debate meets, etc. will not count.

21. Service performed as an academic requirement, other than that performed as part of the approved volunteer service learning courses will not count. 22. Babysitting, or similar services, performed for an individual family, will not count. Babysitting services for school related activities will count. 23. Volunteer hours may not be certified by a family member or fellow student

24. Service hours will not be awarded for any in kind or monetary donations of any kind including canned food collections, toy collections, etc. For example, a service hour value cannot be established for the donation of a specific number of cans of food. The time spent collecting the cans of food (as long as it does not occur during the school day) can count.

25. The number of service hours that are earned cannot be doubled or in any way increased by any agency or school for student participation in a specific project. Agencies found to be practicing the doubling of hours will be removed from the list of those agencies approved by the programs.

26. Participation in self-improvement workshops, clinics, conferences or conventions will not count for volunteer hours. If workshops, clinics, etc. have a specific service component, the hours spent on that activity can count.

27. Hours spent helping others (not family members) in disaster preparations or clean up may count. In this instance the Prior Approval form may be waived. A letter from the parent or guardian indicating that the volunteer service was performed with their permission must be submitted with the log sheet. For example, students volunteering their time to assist neighbors in putting up and taking down hurricane shutters will count towards service learning.

28. A student may receive service hours credit for the time donating blood at an off-campus facility or after school. Donation of blood during the student's school day does not qualify for service learning. However, a student who donates blood at a church/synagogue blood drive is eligible for service learning credit.

Appeals Process

If a student's volunteer hours have been denied by the school based Student Volunteer Service Coordinator the student may appeal that decision to the Department of Student Activities and Athletics. The appeal must be in writing and a copy of the Log Sheet referencing the hours in question must be attached. The letter must contain a telephone number and address at which the party initiating the appeal can be reached.