

OCDSB Guidelines for Community Involvement

A GRADUATION REQUIREMENT



What Is Ministry of Education Policy?

Since September 1999, all students in Ontario have been required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of community involvement as part of the secondary school diploma requirements. Effective July 1, 2011, students will be able to start accumulating community

involvement hours in the summer before they enter grade 8.

What Is the Purpose of Community Involvement?

Community Involvement helps students to:

- increase their awareness of **community** needs
- identify with their **community**
- accept **community** membership
- learn to make a difference in the **community**
- develop a positive self-image through contribution to **community** life

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles, read in conjunction with the list of ineligible activities, are intended to assist students and parents/guardians in determining whether a planned activity is suitable for the completion of the Community Involvement requirement.

- ✓ It is crucial that the activity be fulfilled in a safe environment and that the activity be determined by the student in consultation with parent(s) or guardian(s).
- ✓ The activity must be in the nature of a service or benefit provided by the student to meet a need of the community, or individual members of the community.
- ✓ The needs of both the student and the community should be carefully considered in selecting appropriate Community Involvement activities.
- ✓ The activity cannot be an exploitation of the community or vulnerable members of the community.
- ✓ A contact activity supervisor must be named.
- ✓ The activity should provide a learning opportunity for the student.

Who Shares Responsibility for the Implementation of Community Involvement?

The Student

- plans activity with parents/guardians
- secures placement(s)
- hands in planning report to principal
- gets involved
- obtains signatures upon completion
- submits documentation to principal

The Parent/Guardian

- provides assistance in placement selection
- communicates with the school and placement about concerns
- co-signs Notification and Completion form if child is under 18

The Secondary School

- approves activities **before** placement
- receives documentation from student
- records completed activity in Ontario Student Transcript
- provides accommodation for special needs

The School Board

- provides for student liability coverage
- provides planning forms through the school
- provides reporting forms through the school

Examples of Community Involvement Activities

The following list is not exclusive but contains some examples of activities that are suitable for completion of the Community Involvement requirement. Many other activities aimed at the betterment of the community may be suitable, providing they abide by the guidelines stated.

1. **Not-for-profit Agencies** – includes activities for any institution or foundation that conforms to the ethical standards of the Board and the Ministry of Education
2. **Support for Individuals** – includes assistance to those in need with shopping, housekeeping, writing letters or transcribing, hospital visitation or chronic care
3. **Learning Assistance** – includes activities in structured programs that promote tutoring, mentoring, coaching, reading buddies or whose purpose is to help others who require that assistance
4. **Ethical Contributions** – includes affiliation with a club, religious organization or political organization that seeks to make a positive and ethical contribution to the community or supports ethical work of a global nature
5. **Community Projects** – includes participating in food drives or supporting groups such as 4H Clubs, Welcome Wagon or Meals-on-Wheels
6. **Community Events** – includes helping to organize winter carnivals, parades and community celebrations
7. **Sports/Recreation** – includes coaching and helping to organize Special Olympics, sporting events or games, or volunteering at a recreation centre
8. **Environmental Projects** – includes participating in community clean-up, flower/tree planting, recycling and neighbourhood beautification projects
9. **Work with Seniors** – includes assisting in a seniors' residence, serving snacks, supporting craft activities or participating in visiting and reading programs
10. **Youth Programs** – includes assistance with youth programs, March Break programs, Leaders in Training, socializing special needs youth, summer playground activities and camps
11. **Religious Activities** – includes participating as a volunteer in programs for children, childminding, Sunday school assistance, clerical tasks and other events
12. **Arts and Culture** – includes assisting at a gallery, performing arts production or in a community library program
13. **Committee Work** – includes participating on advisory boards, neighbourhood associations and regional organizations
14. **Office/Clerical Work** – includes activities in reception, computer work and mailings for groups providing charitable or general community benefit
15. **Fundraising** – includes walk-a-thons for community benefit, celebrity games, gift wrapping, gala events and sales for charitable purposes
16. **School Community Service** – includes service within the school community that provides benefits to others and takes place outside the time allotted for the instructional program on a school day, such as peer mentoring, tutoring or helping

Note: Being a member of a committee, club or organization of itself is not an eligible activity, although services provided by that committee, club or activity may be eligible, if they meet the criteria stated.

Where an activity does not clearly fall within the guidelines, principals have the discretion to approve areas of involvement on a case-by-case basis. Please complete the Notification Sheet available from your child's school. A principal is not obligated to approve an activity.



What Activities Are Not Eligible for Community Involvement?

The Minister of Education has deemed that the following are 'ineligible activities' for Community Involvement.

Any activity that:

- would displace a paid worker
- would pay the student
- takes place during the instructional program of a school day
- is required as part of a credit course, such as a co-operative education placement, 'Take Our Kids To Work' experience in grade 9, job shadowing or the work experience component of a course
- involves playing on a school sports team
- is part of regular family responsibilities
- is part of a court-ordered community service program, alternative measures program or any diversionary program that uses community service
- involves the operation of a vehicle, power tools or use of scaffolding
- involves the administration of any form of medication or medical procedure to other persons
- involves the handling of substances classified as "designated substances" under the Occupational Health and Safety Act
- requires the knowledge of a tradesperson (eg. electrician)
- involves banking, securities or other valuables
- involves a student under 16 in a logging or mining environment
- involves a student under 15 in a factory environment
- involves a student under 14 in any working environment (unless accompanied by an adult)
- involves a placement with a "for profit" organization or business.

In addition to the above list, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board excludes door-to-door canvassing as a possible Community Involvement activity, except under special circumstances (i.e., the student is age 16 or over; parental or other responsible adult supervision is provided; and the fund-raising is in support of a recognized charity, excluding for school or religious purposes). Any association with an organization, or an organization activity that does not comply with the ethical standards, policies, procedures and regulations of both the Ministry of Education and the Board are not eligible for Community Involvement.