

Mission Statement for Community Service

Aim

- Expose students to people who are at a disadvantage (social, medical, economic).
- Help students realize they can make a difference and give them the tools to do it.
- Develop awareness and better understanding of the communities they live in.
- Develop a community of caring and committed individuals at Commonwealth School.

Types of organizations and restrictions

- Commonwealth salutes all kinds of service in the community, from work for political causes to volunteering on a farm, but for purposes of the school's requirement – *that of getting students out into the city to help its citizens in need* – we ask that a substantial portion of the credit toward the fulfillment of the requirement be earned through service directly to those citizens.
- The remaining hours can be earned by working for an approved organization that does not directly work with people face-to-face.
- We strongly urge service for an organization that is under-funded and/or understaffed where a volunteer's help would really make a difference.

Requirements

- 70 hours
- If split between two organizations, at least 30 hours in each.
- Half of a student's requirement should be done by the end of the summer of freshman year, with the rest being completed by the end of the summer following the student's sophomore year.
- Community Service is a requirement for graduation. Failure to complete Community Service by the end of the summer of sophomore year will result in the student being asked to do an additional 20 hours.

Procedures and Validation

- Submit a proposal for approval by the Community Service Coordinator before commencement of service.
- After a student's service is done, a form completed by the person who was his or her service supervisor and an essay outlining the experience must be submitted to the Community Service Coordinator for credit to be earned.

Suggestions

- For purposes of getting to know the city and its people better, we strongly recommend service at an organization new to the student.
- If a student is already familiar with an organization and really wants to continue working with it, we recommend doing half of the requirement with it and half with a new organization.

Calendar

- Students should begin thinking about where they would like to serve during the first semester of freshman year. Assistance is available from the Community Service Coordinator and the student's advisor. Past students have chosen projects in service for Project Week, and while time spent on a project does not count toward the requirement, it is an opportunity for a student to get to know a particular organization better.
- Students should use the spring term to select and visit places where they might like to work and get started. For those who have completed their sports requirement and choose not to do a spring sport, ample time to serve opens up in the afternoons in April and May.
- Students should aim to do half, or more, of their requirement in the summer following freshman year.
- Students must complete their requirement by the end of the summer following sophomore year.
- The deadline for turning in all supervisor forms and essays is the first day of school of junior year.

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