

**All students must complete 40 hours of community involvement in order to graduate with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. These hours may be performed between grade eight and grade 12 graduations. Verification must be submitted, for approval, to the office for each volunteer placement. It is strongly recommended that students provide information about the organization before volunteering so it can be confirmed the hours will be recognized. Also note that time spent 'volunteering' for family members will not be approved or recognized.**

## **Community Involvement Hours**

All students must complete 40 hours of community involvement in order to graduate with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. These hours may be performed between the summer before grade nine and grade 12 graduation. Verification must be submitted, for approval, to the office for each volunteer placement. *It is strongly recommended that students provide information about the organization BEFORE volunteering so it can be confirmed the hours will be recognized.*

### **1. What do I get out of volunteering?**

Community involvement:  
encourages civic responsibility;  
promotes community values;  
develops positive life-long community ties;  
develops self-esteem;  
supports students' career explorations;  
improves networking;  
develops student interests and skills;  
reinforces the value of volunteering.

### **2. Where am I allowed to volunteer? / What am I allowed to do?**

The following are examples of suitable volunteer activities:

- assisting with sports teams in the community or in a school. (e.g. coach, assistant, equipment manager, trainer, statistician) provided the regular coaches are not paid.\*\*
- conducting sports clinics (e.g. volleyball clinic for elementary school or community group);
- planning/working at special school events or activities sanctioned through school staff, (e.g. arts shows, sports meets, drama festival) grade 9 welcome, science fair, guide for parents' night, technical crew);
- assisting with environmental projects, (e.g. clean-up, flower or tree planting, recycling program);
- assisting in hospitals, nursing homes, senior's residences, and other care
- giving institutions;
- assisting in libraries, museums, community centres;
- volunteering with community agencies (e.g. Goodwill, Salvation Army, United Way, etc.);

- assisting with food drives or fundraisers;
- assisting with non-profit recreation programs, park programs, summer camps;
- volunteer for school or community breakfast programs, food banks, soup kitchens, etc.;
- assisting with tutoring and mentoring programs;
- participating on committees (e.g. advisory boards, school committees);
- churches;
- cemeteries.

### 3. What am I NOT permitted to do?

An ineligible activity is an activity that:

- is a requirement of a class or course in which the student is enrolled (e.g. co-operative education portion of a course, job shadowing, work experience);
- takes place during instruction on a school day. However, an
- activity that takes place during the students' lunch hour breaks or "spare" periods of time is permissible;
- takes place in a logging or mining environment, if the student is under 16 years of age;
- takes place in a factory, if the student is under 15 years of age;
- takes place in a workplace other than a factory, if the student is under 14 years of age and is not accompanied by an adult;
- would normally be performed for wages by a person in the workplace;
- involves the operation of a vehicle, power tools (e.g. drill, snowblower, electric/gas lawnmower/weed eater), or scaffolding;
- involves the administering of any type or form of medication or medical procedure to other persons;
- involves handling of substances classed as "designated substances" under the Occupational Health and Safety Act;
- requires the knowledge of a trades person whose trade is regulated by the provincial government;
- involves banking or the handling of securities, or the handling of jewellery, works of art, antiques, or other valuables;
- consists of duties normally performed in the home (e.g. daily chores) or personal recreation activities; and
- involves a court-ordered program (e.g. community-service program for young offenders, probationary program).

In addition to those that the Ministry has listed as ineligible, SHDHD will not support:

- any activity that places the student in a dangerous situation;
- any activity that provides direct financial benefit or gain;
- care or service to members of the student's family;
- "Take Our Kids to Work" experiences;
- playing on a sports team; and
- any association with an organization or an organizational activity that does not comply with the ethical standards, policies, procedures and regulations of both the MOE and AMDSB.

#### **4. How do I submit my hours?**

When an activity has been completed, the "Completion of Community Involvement Activities" form available on the school website must be signed by the community sponsor. Hours and involvement must be approved prior to them counting towards graduation requirements.

#### **GETTING STARTED**

Step #1: Plan an activity in consultation with parent(s)/guardian(s). The activity should be one that involves services to others.

Step #2: Students should confirm the details of the activity with the community sponsor who will be responsible for the activity and the school office.

Step #3: Students are to complete their planned activity and should then have the Tracking Form completed and signed by the community sponsor. Repeat these steps until the 40-hour requirement has been fulfilled.

#### **Additional information:**

The Board's insurance will protect both the student and the community sponsor. Community sponsors will be responsible for ensuring that their liability insurance will protect them for their involvement in this program. The Board's insurance does not provide coverage for the negligence of the community sponsor. It is recommended that students involved in the program purchase Student Accident Insurance.

The Board expects the community sponsors to ensure that student volunteers

are provided with safety instructions, and are trained and supervised to ensure a safe and mutually beneficial volunteer experience. The hours required for training shall not be counted towards the 40-hour requirement.

This graduation requirement should not be left to the last minute! Our community offers many opportunities to get involved and we encourage students to begin in the summer following their Grade 8 school year. Remember, we cannot count community involvement hours that are completed for a profit organization so please have your work approved before completing the hours.