

Community Service Program

Introduction

All students must complete a minimum of 40 hours of volunteer community service before they graduate. These 40 hours can be completed at any time that they are enrolled at ECHS. This requirement must be completed before they can be granted their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). The main responsibility for organizing the program and making the required contact lies with the student and the parents. The purpose of this government-initiated program is to encourage students to develop awareness and understanding of civic responsibility and the role they can play in strengthening their local communities.

If students do not earn a minimum of 40 hours, they will not attend Commencement or receive their graduation diploma. Students and their parents must make sure that they:

- Complete the required number of hours
- Make sure that they follow the criteria described below of activities that are eligible

At the annual Commencement, a special recognition is given to the grade 12 student who has accumulated the most volunteer hours. You are therefore encouraged to record all your hours.

Procedure

1. Students are required to record their hours on the Hour Republic website.
2. Students and their parents are to find a proper activity, and fill in all the required information in Hour Republic.
3. The activity must be verified electronically through Hour Republic by both the organization and a parent before the school can approve the activity.
4. If approved by the principal, the hours are added to the student records and an update is provided with each report card.
5. If a student and his parents are not sure if an activity will meet the criteria, they should contact the principal for clarification, before participating in the activity.
6. All community service hours completed during the current school year must be handed into the office by June 1st of the same school year in order to be counted towards the hours required for graduation.

Criteria

The community service activities can take place in a variety of settings, such as, non-profit organizations, public sector institutions (including hospitals and old-age homes) and informal settings. This service should be people-focussed and include a sharing of time and talents. The activities must occur outside of regular school hours and outside of regular curriculum program expectations. The hours will be acquired outside the students' immediate families.

The following activities are **NOT** eligible:

- Extra-curricular school activities
- Activities that count towards a credit like co-op
- Paid work; or unpaid work for a for-profit business, including farm work
- Duties normally performed in the home or for immediate family members like grandparents, aunts, uncles and married siblings
- Duties normally performed by a paid employee or any general labour and babysitting unless there is a specific need in the family (non-relation), like a special needs child, elderly people or illness
- Factory work if the student is under 15 years of age
- Anything involving the operation of a vehicle, power tools or scaffolding
- Regularly scheduled church activities, ie: babysitting, choir practice and musical accompaniment
- Babysitting for any reason

Some suggested activities:

- Charitable Organizations – assisting with special events, programs, clerical tasks
- Environmental Projects – flower/tree planting, recycling projects
- Animal Care – volunteering in a veterinarian clinic or animal shelter
- Community Organization – assisting with special events, food banks, community day camps
- Church Organizations – volunteer for Campfire!, Anchor Camp, VBS
- Sports/Recreation – coaching, organizing special events
- Health Agencies – volunteering in hospitals, blood donor clinics
- Senior Citizens – assisting in seniors' residences, providing food for seniors