

SIGNATURE SCHOOL

COMMUNITY SERVICE

QUICK LOOK:

DEFINITION:

Signature School defines Community Service as an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for our students:

- Time and talent are donated to non-profit causes, organizations, or groups that provide services to the general community without monetary or other personal reward.
- Assistance is given to persons in need/causes who would otherwise not be able to help themselves without the assistance of volunteers from the greater community. Service can be educational, civic, or needs-based in nature.
- Real, purposeful activities with significant outcomes are accomplished.
- Students are encouraged to participate in service with elements of personal challenge: tasks that extend students as individuals, allow them to plan their own activities, and/or open them to new interests, learning, and new recipients of their service.

GUIDELINES:

- A minimum of 25 hours of service per year is required. Hours not completed in a year show up as an **NP** (no pass) on your transcript and leave a deficit which must be made up in order to graduate with a Signature diploma.
- The **Report and Reflection Form** is how you record the service that you do.
- An adult other than your parent who has supervised your work **must fill out** the bottom portion of the first page and sign it.
- Turn your completed form in to the box in the foyer in a timely manner.
- Activities that a student benefits from personally (money, grade, credit, prestige, etc.) do not count.
- All service to organizations that students are members of and/or tryout for **are no longer considered valid** for the 25 hours required by Signature. This includes school clubs, speech, boy/girl scouts, church/synagogue/mosque/temple-related service, religious outreach, athletics, math competitions, plays, musicals, instrumental performances, EPYO, dog obedience clubs, etc.

Students can still use these groups to serve the larger community (for example, work in a church-sponsored soup kitchen, raise money for Heifer International in Global Awareness, build houses in Haiti with a girl scout group, etc.) and these service hours will count.

- Hospital-related service must be patient-oriented (or family of patient) in order to count (For example, playing classical music in the hallway near ICU would count; whereas, working in the gift shop would not.).
- Nursing home service, even if the facility is for profit, is **not limited**, but resident interaction is required (no filing in the office).
- Service will now be required to be with a Signature-approved organization. If a student wants to serve with an organization that is not on the list of community partners, s/he will have to apply to the community service committee for the organization to get approval and become a community partner. Contact the teacher responsible for logging your hours to get approval before doing the service.
- Tutoring requires the adult supervisor to be the classroom teacher of the person being tutored or an organized afterschool program like Patchwork Central or the YMCA.
- Copies of all forms will be on the website and on the community service bulletin board in the main lobby.
- We are here to help you and welcome all questions.

DEADLINES:

- All hours completed from May 1 of the previous school year through November 30 of **first semester** must be turned in by **December 1**.
- For freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, all hours completed from December 1 through April 30 of **second semester** must be turned in by **May 1**, or a **No Pass (NP)** will be given on your permanent transcript and the deficit will carry over to the following year.
- All **senior** hours (including any deficits) are due by **April 1**, or you will not participate in commencement.
- If the April 1 deadline is not met by **seniors**, all hours must be received by the **May 1** deadline or a Signature diploma will not be awarded and a **NP** will be given.

A community service guide and all new forms will appear on the Signature website. Please do not hesitate to ask questions or e-mail to clarify. The following teachers are the grade level advisors:

Seniors: Ms. Dixon

Juniors: Ms. Ahmed, Ms. Dixon (IB CAS) and Ms. Pareja (IB certificate)

Sophomores: Ms. Doyle and Ms. Dixon

Freshmen: P.E. teachers (Doyle, Dixon, Agler)

2011-2012 IMPORTANT CHANGES TO NOTE:

There is no longer a 20/5 community hours/Signature hours split. The minimum is 25 hours in any combination of community and school.

There is no longer a class of activities that have a 5-hour maximum. Those activities no longer count towards your service for Signature. We encourage you to keep track of all service to other organizations you belong to add to your college applications your senior year.

We will provide a list of approved community partners for you to choose from. If an organization is not on the list, you must get approval before service will count. Without prior approval, the hours served will not count for Signature, but you may add them to your own log for future use.

Hours for tutoring will only count if the classroom teacher of the person being tutored is the supervisor. Organized tutoring programs will also work (Patchwork, for example).

Freshman community service forms will be handled by the P.E. teachers.

Sophomore community service forms will be handled in Health and Multicultural America by those teachers.

Community service reflection forms and logs will be handled by the following people:

Freshmen: your P.E. teacher

Sophomores: Ms. Dixon and Ms. Doyle in their sophomore classes

Juniors:

IB full diploma candidates: Ms. Dixon and Ms. Ahmed in CAS

IB certificate candidates: Ms. Pareja

Seniors: Ms. Dixon