

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is service-learning?

*Service-learning is a teaching method that combines meaningful service to the community with **curriculum-based learning**. Students improve their academic skills by applying what they learn in school to the real world, and then reflect on their experiences to reinforce the link between their service and learning. (Learning in Deed)*

2. What is the graduation requirement for service-learning?

The Service-Learning Graduation Requirement was passed in 1992 by the Maryland State Department of Education. This requirement mandates that public school students earn a minimum of 75 hours of service-learning prior to graduation.

3. What is Allegany County's plan for service-learning?

*Service-learning has been infused into the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grade subject areas. Students will receive hours in Creative Arts, English, Math, Science and Social Studies in 6th-8th grade. In 9th grade, students will receive hours in English, Science and Government. **All the required hours will be counted during school time.** In grade 6, students will receive one hour for the service-learning orientation at the beginning of the year. Twenty hours will be awarded for participation at North Bay Adventure Camp. The remaining 9 hours will be completed through an interdisciplinary project planned by the team. This project will be planned based upon a needs assessment completed by students and will encompass the 7 Best Practices. In grades 7 and 8, students will receive 3 hours in each of the 5 required courses. Grade 9 students will receive 5 hours in each of the 3 required courses. Students may count a maximum of 30 hours in sixth grade, 15 hours in seventh grade, 15 hours in eighth grade, and 15 hours in ninth grade towards the 75 **required** hours.*

4. How do you know if a student completed service-learning requirement?

At the end of each school year, students' hours will automatically be generated on the report card. This will inform parents and students of the status of completed requirements for that year. At the end of 9th grade, if a student has fulfilled the service-learning requirement, PASS appears on the report card along with the hours completed. However, if a student does not complete the service-learning requirement by the end of the 9th grade, the number of hours will appear and PASS will be added only when he/she completes the requirement in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade.

5. What if a student goes beyond the required hours during the course of one year? Can the additional hours be counted towards the requirement? (For example; if a student goes beyond 30 hours in 6th grade, can these hours be counted towards the 75?)

*No, students may count a maximum of 30 hours in sixth grade, 15 hours in seventh grade, 15 hours in eighth grade, and 15 hours in ninth grade towards the 75 **required** hours. However, if a student would like to go beyond the required hours at that grade level, he or she may do so to work towards the service-learning elective credit at time of graduation.*

6. What does a student need to do in order to receive credit for additional hours?

A Verification/Reflection Form needs to be completed and submitted to the homeroom teacher. This form can be picked up at the Guidance Office, from the homeroom teacher or online at www.acps.allconet.org.

7. How many additional hours need to be completed to receive the service-learning elective credit at graduation?

At least 132 hours beyond the required 75 hours need to be completed by the end of grade 12.

8. Can these hours be completed during school time?

Yes, but not all hours. To earn a Service-Learning Elective Credit, students must have a mix between curriculum based and independent projects.

Activities might include serving in a non-profit agency such as the food bank or senior centers

OR

Serving with organizations or clubs such as scouts or 4-H

9. Who keeps track of these hours?

At the middle school level, the homeroom teacher will enter the hours into the online data base which will keep a running total of hours. At the high school level, the school contact person will enter the hours into the online data base. However, we recommend that students keep track of additional independent hours as well.

Service-Learning projects should be designed to meet the Seven Best Practices:

- *Meet a recognized need in the community*
- *Achieve curricular objectives through service-learning*
- *Reflect throughout the service-learning experience*
- *Develop student responsibility*
- *Establish community partnerships*
- *Plan ahead for service-learning*
- *Equip students with knowledge and skills needed for service*

Stages of an effective high quality service-learning project:

1. Preparation

- *Introduce the concept of service-learning and good citizenship*
- *Identify a community or school need*
- *Develop specific skills needed to carry out the project*
- *Explore issues related to the project*

2. Action (3 types)

- *Direct Service: tutoring, mentoring, and visiting the elderly.....*
- *Indirect Service: drives, collections, fundraisers, clean-ups, construction, environmental*
- *Advocacy: lobbying, speaking, performing, writing.....*

3. Reflection

- *Explore the impact and importance of citizen service to the community*
- *Reflect on what was learned*
- *Instill habits of participation as a citizen*

I have read the above information and understand it fully

Signature

Date