

# Lawrence County School District

## Walnut Ridge High School

### COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING



#### **The Law---**

##### **Class of 2027 Graduation Requirement:**

Students in the Class of 2027 and beyond are now required to complete community service to earn a high school diploma in Arkansas (Act 237 of 2023). The law requires that students earn 75 hours of community service in order to graduate. WRHS recommends students earn 15 hours in 9th grade, then 20 hours in each grade thereafter (10th, 11th, and 12th) to equal 75 hours.

#### **What Is Community Service Learning?**

“It is the combination of linking service to learning that makes the experience valuable to students. Through CSL, students take what they are learning in the classroom and apply that to improving their school and community.” -Act 648 1993

##### **Community Service Learning includes:**

- **Preparation** - an awareness of community needs and ways in which the student can address those needs through community service with a learning component
- **Action** - the criteria by which student learning will be evaluated so that earning of the credit can be verified
- **Reflection** - the conscious examination of what was learned or experienced during the CSL activity

*Planning---Doing---Learning*

# Types of Community Service

**Direct Service** - serving directly with a service population

This might include: tutoring, serving meals, working with patients, participating in events

**Indirect Service** - serving behind the scenes to better a community problem

This might include organizing a fundraising event, stocking a food pantry, collecting donations

**Advocacy** - bringing awareness to a cause or problem

This might include: speaking, performing, lobbying

## What counts as Community Service Learning?

- **Not Paid**
- **Not for a Grade**
- **Must Benefit Someone or Some Agency/Organization (Church, Community Organization, Charity/Non-Profit, School Service, etc.)**
- **Could be accomplished by participating with a School Group, a Non-School Group, or Individually**

## Safety Precautions

Service should only be completed at a parent's discretion.

Parents are responsible for giving permission, vetting all situations, and going through precautionary safety protocols.

Caution should be used when service is provided to an individual in a private setting. Examples of valid service opportunities in this area could be providing unpaid yard care, cleaning, etc. to an elderly or disabled neighbor; shopping and/or delivering groceries to a homebound person; picking up and delivering medicine or supplies to an invalid. This should be at the discretion of parent.

Service should never be in a situation where students are alone with only one other person.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- **Can I volunteer without a school district employee present?**

Students can serve at locations vetted and approved by parents. Please see the safety precautions included in our training slides.

- **How can a school district employee certify my service hours?**

Any district employee including bus drivers, paraprofessionals, teachers, principals, etc. who are present where you are serving can be the person who authenticates or certifies your service.

- **Can I serve in a local elementary school, middle school, junior high school, etc.?**

Yes---If they have an event where they need help they will advertise this through Remind, School Announcements, newspapers, etc.

- Can a student work a concession stand for a booster club and earn service hours at the same time?

As a District we interpret the rules to mean that this is acceptable. If a given booster club chooses a higher standard on this and does not allow it, that it is up to that club.

- What are examples of sites that guardians or parents can approve?

Most places a student might serve will involve an agency with a “non-profit” or 501c3 status but that is not always the case. A “for-profit” nursing home could be a good place to volunteer. City events like Beatles on the Ridge or marathons for the American Cancer Society, St. Judes, etc. are good examples of events requiring many volunteers. You can find these options with online research. There are no absolute rules on this other than our safety protocols.

- Can service reported for the National Honor Society, Key Club, or other clubs be used for this requirement?

Yes. A student can report the same activities to different groups requiring service logs. Example: A student can volunteer to help with a Red Cross Blood Drive and report those hours to Key Club, and this can also count for the community service graduation requirement.

- Can this service be completed during the school day?

Yes. Some classroom projects, activities, field studies, and events will qualify for community service hours.

- Could we complete a mission trip for community service, and does the travel time count?

Travel time to any community service activity does not count. Example: on a 3-day mission trip to another state or to a foreign country to help run a health clinic: count the hours spent in service at the clinic, but do not count the travel time.

- If we earn more than 15 hours in the freshman year do the hours “roll over” to another year?

You need 15 hours in the freshman year, 20 hours in the other years and a total of 75 hours during high school. You can earn as many as you want in any given year to go toward the 75 hours required.

- Does this apply to all schools?

AR Act 237 of 2023, the LEARNS Act applies to all public schools in Arkansas.

## **How Do You Document Community Service Hours?**

**Use form below; keep a personal record of your service hours for your own documentation.**

## Community Service Learning Volunteer Form

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Times Worked: \_\_\_\_\_

Hours Earned: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*If the activity is for an extended time, this form can be completed ONCE for the duration of the CSL activity---a week, month, etc.*

Activity/Activities Performed-- Preparation & Action: (Please describe below)

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Reflection on what you learned/experienced during the CSL activity:

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Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Please return this form, signed by all parties, to your assigned teacher.**