



CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

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Information

on the

Community Involvement Graduation Diploma Requirement

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Introduction

Every student entering secondary school in Ontario is required to complete 40 hours of community involvement in order to receive a diploma (Ontario Secondary Schools, Grade 9 to 12: Program and Diploma Requirements, 1999). The purpose of this requirement is to encourage students to develop an understanding of the various roles they can play in their community and to help them develop a greater sense of belonging within the community.

This document provides information on the community involvement diploma requirement for students and parents, as well as, for the persons and organizations who are asked by students to sponsor a particular community involvement activity. If further information is required, please contact the guidance department or Principal in your school.

Students will select one or more community involvement activities in consultation with their parents. Selection of activities should take into account the age, maturity, and the ability of the student, the location and environment of the proposed activity, and the need for any special training, equipment, and preparation. The safety of the student is paramount.

It should be noted that students will not be paid for performing any community involvement activity.

A parent is not required to sign a form or to be consulted if the student is eighteen years of age or older.

Roles and Responsibilities of School Board

School boards are responsible for the implementation of community involvement activities through their secondary schools. The Board has developed a list of approved activities. This list is included in this information package, along with a list of activities that the Ministry of Education and Training has stated are ineligible. A board will not approve student participation in any activities that are on the Ministry's list of ineligible activities.

Roles and Responsibilities of Secondary School Principals

Principals will provide information about the community involvement requirement to parents, students, and the community sponsors. Principals will also provide students with the information and forms they will need to complete the community involvement requirement, including the board's list of approved activities from which to choose. After a student completes the 40 hours of community involvement and submits all

documentation of their completion to the school, the principal will decide whether the student has met the community involvement requirements and, if so, will record it as completed on the student's official transcript.

Roles and Responsibilities of Students

In consultation with their parents, students will select an activity or activities from the board's list of approved activities. Students are reminded that activities may not be one that is specified on the ministry and/or the board lists of ineligible activities. If the activity is not on the board's list of approved activities, the student must obtain written approval from the Principal before beginning the activity.

Before beginning any activity, students will provide the Principal or other school contact with a completed "Notification of Planned Community Involvement Activities" form indicating the activity or activities that they plan to do. This form must be signed by the student, and by his or her parent if the student is under eighteen years of age. More than one such form may be submitted when additional activities are planned that were not included on a previously submitted form.

A "Completion of Community Involvement Activities" form must be completed by the student, the student's parent (if the student is under eighteen years of age), and the community sponsor (that is, the person or organization that provided the community involvement opportunity for the student). The student must submit the form to the principal or other school contact upon completion of the 40 hours or at appropriate intervals determined by the principal.

Students from the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario are expected to participate in community involvement activities in a manner that is consistent with the gospel values. Suggestions include: showing respect for the community sponsor and their workplace, punctuality, appropriate dress and grooming, good manners, a willingness to listen and follow instructions, a willingness to clarify instructions when in doubt, and the ability to maintain confidentiality.

Roles and Responsibilities of Parents

Parents should provide assistance to their child in the selection of their community involvement activities. Parents are also encouraged to communicate with the community sponsor and the school principal if they have any questions or concerns. A parent must sign the "Notification of Planned Community Involvement Activities" form and the "Completion of Community Involvement Activities" form if the student is under the age of eighteen years.

Roles and Responsibilities of Sponsors in the Community

One of the purposes of the community involvement requirement is to develop strong ties between the students and their community, fostering valuable and long-term relationships. Persons and organizations within the community may be asked by the student to sponsor a community involvement activity. Any training, equipment, or special preparation that is required for the activity should be provided by the person or organization. It is crucial that students are able to fulfill their community involvement requirement in a safe environment. The person overseeing the student's activity must verify the date(s) and the number of hours completed on the "Completion of Community Involvement Activities" form.

List of Ineligible Activities from The Ministry of Education

The ministry has developed a list of activities (Policy/Program Memorandum No. 124a) that are ineligible activities and therefore may not be chosen as community involvement. An ineligible activity is an activity that:

- is a requirement of a class or course in which the student is enrolled (e.g., cooperative education portion of a course, job shadowing, work experience);
- takes place during the time allotted for the instructional program on a school day. However, an activity that takes place during the student's lunch breaks or "spare" periods is permissible;
- takes place in a logging or mining environment, if the student is under sixteen years of age;
- takes place in a factory, if the student is under fifteen years of age;
- takes place in a workplace other than a factory, if the student is under fourteen 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, or scaffolding;
- involves the administration of any type 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 tradesperson whose trade is regulated by the provincial government;
- involves banking or the handling of securities, or the handling of jewelry, works of art, antiques, or other valuables;
- consists of duties normally performed in the home (i.e., daily chores) or personal recreational activities;
- involves a court-ordered program (e.g., community-service program for young offenders, probationary program).

The Board's List of Ineligible Community Involvement Activities

In addition to the list of ineligible activities determined by the Ministry of Education, the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario has also determined that an ineligible activity is an activity that runs counter to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Students should not participate in any activity or organization that the Church would deem non-life giving or that does not respect the dignity of the persons.

In the event that a student would like to participate in an activity that is not clearly within the guiding principle's, the student must submit a letter to the school Principal detailing the proposed activity. The Principal will review the request and the student will receive notification regarding the appropriateness of requested activity. The activity should not commence until permission has been granted. If the activity is completed without permission, the activity will not be counted in the required hours for community involvement. School Principals are not obliged to approve an activity.

The Board's List of Eligible Community Involvement Activities

Below is a suggested list of community involvement activities. It is neither complete nor comprehensive but is intended to assist students and parents to determine acceptable activities and find a starting point for local organizations. Based on the Catholic Graduate Expectations, guiding principles for activities include:

- Attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching and acts to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good;
- Presents information and ideas clearly and honestly and with sensitivity to others;
- Thinks reflectively and creatively to evaluate situations and solve problems;
- Makes decisions in light of gospel values with an informed moral conscience;
- Takes initiative and demonstrates Christian leadership;
- Respects the rights, responsibilities and contribution of self and others;
- Ministers to the family, school, parish, and wider community through service;
- Contributes to the common good.

Fundraising – may include canvassing and assisting with the organization of events for the benefit of the community and/or non-profit organizations, e.g., walkathons, celebrity games, gala events, bazaars, etc.

Sports/recreation – may include coaching and/or helping to organize tournaments, sporting events, track meets, summer games or volunteering as a leisure buddy or pool assistant, camp counselors

Community Events – may include helping to organize winter carnivals, parades, and summer fairs

Community Projects – may include participating in organized food drives; soup kitchens, food bank, or support services for community groups

Justice Initiative Projects – may include anti-poverty, third world, community charity such as snow suit fund

Environmental Projects – may include participating in community clean-up, flower/tree planting, recycling, and general beautification projects and activities

Work with Seniors – may include assisting in a seniors' residence, e.g. – serving snacks, helping with activities, or participating in visiting and reading programs

Committee Work – may include participation on advisory boards, neighbourhood associations, and regional associations

Parish Community Activities – may include participation as a youth minister, Children's liturgy, retreat organizer, Liturgy committee, Choir, Childcare, Social Justice initiatives, Pastoral council representative, parish committees, arch diocesan committees

Youth Programs – may include volunteer assistance in the operation of youth programs such as Scouts, Guides, recreation centre activities, breakfast programs, March Break programs, Leaders-in-Training, summer playground activities, and camps

Office/Clerical Work – may include volunteer activity in reception, computer work, and mailing for individuals or groups providing charitable or general community benefit

Work with Animals – may include volunteer involvement with animal care or assistance at a local animal shelter

Arts and Culture – may include volunteer assistance at a gallery, performing arts production or program, or in a community library program

Activities for Individuals – may include any volunteer activity that assists someone who requires the assistance with shopping, tutoring, light snow removal, housekeeping, writing letters or transcribing, or involves hospital visitation or volunteering, involvement with chronic care, or service as a volunteer reading buddy, or child care volunteering

School Community Service – may include participation in OSADD/OSAID, Think Fast, Youth in Action, Peer Tutoring (non-credit)

*With thanks to the Toronto Catholic District School Board.