

Student Guide to Community Service

Addendum D
Revised 11/2014

The purpose of this guide is to help you as you plan and implement your required community service project. If you have additional questions, see your counselor or the person in your school selected by the principal to coordinate community service activities. Seniors may also receive additional help from their government or economics teacher.

What Is a Community Service Project?

Community service projects are planned, organized, and voluntary efforts designed to address a problem or need in the community. To be meaningful, community service projects must address a **real** need or problem found within the school or community. The community service project you choose to do should also reflect your personal interest and skills. In addition, worthwhile community service projects require an on-going commitment on your part.

What Are the Community Service Graduation Requirements for Miami-Dade County Public Schools?

To complete the community service graduation requirement for Miami-Dade County Public Schools, you must complete a community service project between 9th and 12th grade. **No set number of service hours is required for the project unless you are working toward the Florida Bright Future Scholarship program or the Superintendent's Diploma of Distinction. It should be noted that the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship's Florida Academic Scholars Award requires 100 hours of community service, the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship's Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) requires 75 hours of community service, and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship's Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars requires 30 hours of community service.** For further information about these programs, see your counselor. **Please note: for specific community service requirements for other programs such as AICE or IB, please see your school counselor.**

You can also meet the community service requirements for graduation by successfully completing the following elective course:

- **Voluntary School/Community Service** (.5 credit; social studies elective)

What Types of Projects Meet the Requirement for Graduation?

You may do any of a variety of projects in order to meet the graduation requirement. You can spend time with senior citizens in convalescent homes, tutor elementary students, work in a homeless shelter - and more! You may complete your project at a school or in the community. You may work as an individual and/or you may work in a group. Below is a brief description of the types of projects that are acceptable.

School-Site Service Projects

School-site service is an excellent way of meeting the requirement for community service while also helping meet the special needs of a school. If you choose to complete a school-site project, you should commit to providing on-going support and assistance to the school.

Examples of School-Site Projects include:

- Student plans, coordinates, and monitors a school-wide letter writing campaign in support of an issue of local importance.
- Student tutors other students in reading or math for a semester.
- Student serves as a Community Service aide to an appropriate teacher or counselor and assists with the efforts to implement and monitor community service experiences.

Group Community Service Projects

Group community service projects provide excellent opportunities for you to complete your community service requirement while also helping meet the special needs of an individual neighborhood or community. Group community service projects provide excellent service opportunities for organized student groups such as service clubs, honor societies, and athletic teams. Membership in a service club or organization does not in itself meet your community service responsibilities. However, you can work with others in the organization on community service projects in order to meet your responsibility.

Examples of Group Community Service Projects include:

- Students develop an Adopt-A-Park program that includes organizing and monitoring regular work details and beautification.
- Students work regularly at a senior citizens' center assisting with feeding and visitations.
- Students work regularly at a children's home and assist with childcare or school work (e.g., reading stories or helping with homework).

Individual Community Service Projects

Individual community service projects allow you to complete the service requirement while addressing a community need which interests you. When working on an individual project, you should be committed to providing on-going assistance to the community.

Examples of Individual Community Service Projects include:

- Student hosts story hours for younger children at a community library or at a nearby elementary school.
- Student reads to or records for the blind.
- Student serves as a volunteer at a museum or cultural center.

How Do I Select a Meaningful Community Service Project?

You should think about the following questions before selecting a community service project:

- What need or problem exists in the community that interests you?
- What project can you develop in order to work on this need or problem?
- Will your project provide an important service?
- Does the project match your interests, talents, and abilities?
- Are there any special qualifications you need in order to work on the project?
- Will you be able to spend the necessary time on the project?
- What planning steps are needed before beginning the project?
- Who needs to be contacted before the project begins?

The organizations and agencies listed below typically welcome volunteers. This list should help you develop ideas for community service projects.

- Chambers of Commerce
- Charities
- City governments
- Civic organizations
- Convalescent homes
- County agencies
- Cultural centers
- Day care centers
- Elementary or middle schools
- Hospices
- Hospitals
- Libraries
- Museums
- Parks
- Recreation centers
- Religious organizations
- Service organizations
- United Way agencies
- Zoos

Additionally, you are strongly encouraged to involve your parents/guardians in the process of selecting your project. While this is your project, their support is also necessary.

Project Summary Report

Addendum B

Student's Name _____ I.D. # _____

School _____

Grade Level _____ Title of Project _____

Grade Level Project Completed _____ Project Completion Date _____

Directions:

1. Complete the Project Summary Report in ink and sign it. Print clearly or type.
2. Complete all parts of the required essay as outlined below on your own paper.
3. Attach the essay to the Project Summary Report form. (It is strongly suggested that a duplicated copy be made of the essay.)
4. Have the completed Summary Report reviewed and signed by a parent/guardian.
5. Submit the Summary Report and attached essay for final approval and signature. (Seniors submit the Summary Report for approval to their government or economics teacher. All other students submit the Summary Report to the appropriate counselor or the principal=s designee.)

Required Essay: Summarize your community service experience in essay form. Address each of the following in your essay.

- A. Briefly describe your project and the main activities of your project. Describe changes you made from your original proposal.
- B. Briefly outline the steps you took to plan, implement, and complete the project. Indicate how much time you spent in completing all aspects of this project.
- C. Describe the problems that occurred during the project. Explain how these problems were handled.
- D. Describe the impact you believe your project had on the community or on the people who received your service.
- E. Describe what you learned about your community as you worked on your project. Describe what you learned about yourself and the importance of giving something back to others.

I have reviewed my son/daughter's Project Summary Report and understand that a community service project must be completed in order to meet the graduation requirements for Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Parent/guardian's signature _____

Student's signature _____

Signature of approving teacher, counselor, or principal's designee _____

