



HAMILTON

LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



HTHS Community Service Program. Stronger. Together.

Beginning in the 2017-18 school year, the Hamilton Township High School community service requirement for all HTHS students will be thirty hours. Students who already have earned at least thirty hours have met the service hours requirement and are encouraged to continue their volunteer service, working toward the Principal's Service Award [200 hours] and the Superintendent's Service Award [400 hours].

Under the new requirement, there are two categories of community service that qualify for the half-credit required by HLSD Board of Education Policy IKF for all students for graduation. The first category is HTHS Organized. The second category is Personal Service-Learning Plan. Students can earn hours in either category or both categories. The two categories are explained below.

HTHS Organized

Hamilton Township High School organizes volunteer events and notifies students about community service efforts that enable students to work together in large groups. An HTHS Organized volunteer experience can take place on or off our campus, but must be approved by HTHS prior to the event. Attendance will be taken at the event and students will be given credit for their service time by a school staff member who directly enters the service in the student's Progress Book record.

Personal Service-Learning Plan

Students who want to pursue a volunteer experience apart from an HTHS Organized event must complete a Personal Service-Learning Plan. A Personal Service-Learning Plan describes how a particular volunteer event supports the student's career plan after high school. The Plan must be updated as needed and each volunteer event proposed by the student must be approved before the volunteer event takes place. Weekly journal entries are required for each approved volunteer experience within the Personal Service-Learning Plan.

Community Service Changes

Q: What are some examples of HTHS Organized events?

A: We'll probably have 10-12 events/activities that fall in this category.

We still will consider aiding for a teacher, assisting with extra-curricular team events, and helping keep the building clean and running smoothly as approved community service. However, what we really want to do is create a workable list of approved events or activities that more students can work together to serve a greater need. For example, HTHS will work with the Mid-Ohio Food Bank to organize Saturday mornings at their location in Grove City where HTHS students will work side-by-side packing boxes of meals to counter food insecurity. Activities connected with our larger charity work count in this category, too. Our Autism efforts and Race for the Cure activities are good examples of HTHS organized events. The official list will be shared with students.

Q: If an event isn't organized by HTHS but I want to do it, can it count?

A: Yes, but only on the condition that you have included it in your Personal Service-Learning Plan (PSLP).

A PSLP is required of anyone who wants to claim service not organized by HTHS. The PSLP is a Google Form that you must complete and it must be approved by the Community Service Coordinator. Service-Learning must address a real community need and **at least one** of the following conditions:

1. Teaches the student civic responsibility
2. Supports specific content in the HTHS curriculum
3. Promotes the student's career aspirations

Q: If I do only HTHS Organized events/activities do I need to have a Personal Service-Learning Plan?

A: No

Q: What prompted the changes to the community service program?

A: Mostly the desire to bring students together to work toward common goals

We've practically mastered high school community service over the last fifteen or so years. We have one of the most successful programs in Central Ohio. However, there's always a way to improve how we do what we do. Bringing students together will create a stronger HTHS force and impact more people.

Q: Will there be a new way to claim hours?

A: Probably

HTHS Organized events/activities service will be entered for you. Personal-Service Learning Plan hours must be claimed by the student. Already claimed hours still count. Students will have a few weeks at the beginning of the school year to enter any hours that qualified under the old program. A new way of reporting hours is being considered.

Q: Going from 80 hours to 30 is a dramatic change. Why are we dropping 50 hours?

A: Quality over Quantity and State Law supports it

Our new service experiences will be high quality experiences enjoyed by more people. According to the Ohio Revised Code (3313.605), we "may only grant high school credit for a community service education course if approximately half of the course is devoted to classroom study of such matters as civic responsibility, the history of volunteerism, and community service training and approximately half of the course is devoted to community service." The Community Service course is worth ½ credit. Half-credit courses equal a minimum of 60 hours. Half of our community service course is *devoted to community service*, so half of the 60 hours equals 30.