



STAR ACADEMY
FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED

COMMUNITY SERVICE GUIDELINES

10 Atwood Street, Wellesley, MA

www.staracademyboston.com

GENERAL DEFINITIONS

A photograph of three young people participating in a community service activity outdoors. They are wearing blue shirts and high-visibility yellow safety vests. One person is kneeling and holding a large white plastic bag, while another person is laughing and looking towards the camera. The background shows trees and a bright, sunny day.

As part of the graduation requirements, high school students must complete at least 40 hours of community service.

Community service activities are those in which students work to benefit at least one other unrelated person without receiving compensation or academic credit.

WHAT?



The work you do must be under the auspices of an organization (e.g., city government, council on aging, school, hospital, nursing home, newspaper, or charitable organization). Work you do to help a friend or neighbor (e.g., babysitting, shoveling, tutoring) typically does not count toward the requirement.



Service to benefit for-profit businesses (e.g. child care and camps, landscaping companies, dance studios, gymnastics, or martial arts schools, etc.) is not applied to the requirement even if you receive no payment or academic credit.

WHEN AND HOW?

Community service activities may be performed any time during your Star Academy career, beginning with the summer vacation before the year you enter. You may perform one activity over a period of time or participate in many different activities. Service activities may be performed after school, during evenings, weekends, and vacations.

The first step is to select an appropriate community service project.

You are encouraged to come up with or create your own placements and projects either individually, with friends, or with a club. In many cases, you will need to call the sponsoring organization/contact person to arrange for your community service.

While Star Academy works with the community to develop service opportunities, those service placements are not guaranteed.

VERIFYING YOUR SERVICE

To document your community service, you must fill out the Community Service Verification Form.

You should complete the form no later than two months after the performance of the service activity.

You must complete a form for each different service activity you perform. However, if you do one activity repeatedly during a year, you only need to turn in one form for all of the service hours combined.

You will be given credit for your community service activity in the year in which your verification form was received. Your report cards will display the total number of hours of service for which you have received credit, up to the number of hours you are required to do. You will not receive a letter grade for community service.

ORGANIZATION-BASED SERVICE

In general, service performed for profit-making organizations is NOT applicable, with the exception of hospitals, nursing homes, and newspapers. Unpaid work done at for-profit businesses such as most landscaping companies, dance, gymnastics, and martial arts schools, and daycares is not applicable. Service performed for individuals should be performed under the umbrella of an organization (e.g., tutoring a student through a school, helping the elderly through the Council on Aging).

Activities such as babysitting, tutoring, or yard and housework to help a friend or neighbor typically do NOT count toward the requirement.



RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS



In order to be applicable, an activity may not be associated with the rituals, services, or ceremonies of any specific religion, proselytizing, or fundraising to support a specific religion or religious institution.

Thus, participation in religious services (e.g., choir membership, altar service, reading from the Torah), while a worthy endeavor, is NOT counted. However, educational activities and non-religious activities which benefit the religious community (in non-financial ways) or the community at large ARE applicable.

Participation (as members or officers) in religious youth groups is NOT generally applicable unless the groups are organizing and/or performing specific community service activities.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Traditional after-school activities are NOT applicable. Thus, participation (as officers or as members) in student government, bands, clubs or teams is NOT applicable unless the groups are organizing and/or performing specific community service activities.

ACTIVITIES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICE CREDIT

- Service for which academic credit is earned
- Service for individuals (e.g., friends, neighbors) without an umbrella organization (This includes, for example, tutoring, yard work, babysitting, etc.)
- Service at for-profit businesses (e.g., law firms, landscape companies, dance studios, gymnastics or martial arts schools, daycares, even if you are not paid).
- Participation in religious rites, services or ceremonies (e.g., altar service, choir, Torah reading)
- Proselytizing
- Fundraising to support religious institutions (e.g., most rummage sales and carnivals)
- Traditional after-school activities, unless service activities are performed

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES



Cultural & Historical

- Museum Guide/Aide
- Charitable Theatrical & Musical
- Performances



Health & Social

- Hospital Aide
- Caregiver
- Nursing Home Assistant



Environment

- Recycling Projects
- Habitat Preservation
- Park Service Work



Social & Civic Action

- Election Volunteer
- Charitable Fund Raising
- Shelter Volunteer



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