



High School Graduation Requirement: Community Service Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is Collegium's community service requirement?

A: In order to graduate from high school, all high school students must fulfill Collegium's community service requirement. Each student is required to perform a minimum of 10 hours of community service per school year, for a total of 40 hours over 4 years of high school. A student may not complete all of his/her hours in one year. As an example, if a student volunteers 10 hours in his/her freshman year, and then 30 hours in his/her sophomore year, the student is still expected to perform 10 hours of community service in each of his/her junior and senior years.

Q: Why is there a service requirement for graduation?

A: The intent of this requirement is to underscore the importance of giving back to the on a regular and ongoing basis. Additionally, performing community service creates a world of new opportunities for our students. Some previous students have even chosen career paths based on their volunteer experiences.

Q: Does community service help a student beyond meeting a graduation requirement?

Students' service hours and experiences can be used to bolster college applications. Admissions counselors at universities look at students' volunteer experiences as another layer to an application.

Exposure to different environments has benefitted previous students, allowing them the opportunity to explore new situations leading to a path of study in college based on their volunteer experiences.

Q: What type of hours can be considered for this requirement?

A: Community service hours performed for a nonprofit organization. The definition of community service is "work that is done without pay to help people in a community." With so many student groups on campus the question has been asked if acts of advocacy will count towards this requirement. The definition of advocacy is "the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal." Time spent advocating for a cause or proposal does not count towards the requirement.

Q: Are there any restrictions to the number of hours performed at Collegium?

A: No. In previous school years there was a limit of 20 out of the total 40 hours allowed to be performed at Collegium. However, that requirement has changed. If a student chooses to perform all 40 hours at Collegium, that is now acceptable.

Q: What if I wish to perform more than 10 hours per year?

A: Great! However, 10 hours per year is the minimum number of hours needed to meet the requirement. More hours are encouraged, and exceeding the minimum number of hours will help set you apart from other candidates when it is time to apply for college. However, the additional hours will not count towards meeting your graduation requirement.

Q: How are hours tracked?

A: Collegium uses a web-based system called X2VOL that is accessible through the Family Connection in Naviance. X2VOL allows students to enter their service hours online at any time; check for any available



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volunteer opportunities; sign up for them; and, receive reminders about the opportunities. Students can check the status of any submitted hours at their convenience.

Q: How do I log my hours?

A: At the beginning of each school year, new high school students will be provided an orientation to the [X2VOL system](#). After the X2VOL orientation, students will enter all service hours into the X2VOL system through [Family Connection in Naviance](#). Students will have the opportunity to record reflections after each volunteer experience. These reflections are stored in X2VOL and can be used during the college application process.

Students will be shown the desktop version of X2VOL. An X2VOL mobile app is available for students to log their hours. Please be advised the mobile app is limited in functionality. If a student wishes to see comments on an entry, they will need to use the desktop version.

Q: Where can I volunteer?

A: The process for choosing an organization to volunteer with is fairly simple. If an organization chooses to post opportunities in X2VOL, students can view the opportunities and select ones of interest. There may be some organizations that choose not to post opportunities in X2VOL, but are approved organizations. A current list of approved organizations is available in X2VOL on the dashboard. If you wish to volunteer at one of these organizations, please contact them directly to see what opportunities they have available.

Q: What if I want to volunteer at an organization that is not on the approved list?

A: In order for an organization to be considered as an approved location it must be a nonprofit with a 501 (c) (3) designation, and it must serve the community at large. Some examples of types of organizations which have been approved include libraries, public schools, houses of worship, and food pantries. If you would like to volunteer at a location that is not listed, please contact Mrs. Balsam (jbalsam@ccs.us or (610) 903-1300, ext. 6606) with contact information for the organization. She will determine, with the input of the administrative team, if the organization meets the community service criteria, and if approved, add the organization to the approved list of organizations in X2VOL.

Q: What if I volunteer with an organization before getting it approved?

A: If the organization can be approved after your service is completed, you will be awarded the number of hours which were verified with the organization. Please remember getting an organization approved prior to performing hours will ensure you are performing hours which can be verified, and prevent the disappointment of performing hours with an organization that doesn't meet the above criteria. If a student performs hours at an organization that cannot be approved, the hours will not count towards the graduation requirement.

Q: I don't know where to volunteer, who can help me?

A: Mrs. Balsam (jbalsam@ccs.us or (610) 903-1300, ext. 6606) helps students find suitable organizations based on their interests and goals.



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Q: How are service hours verified?

A: All hours are verified through an email address or phone number connected with the organization. For example, if a student performed service hours at Collegium, the student should provide the supervising staff person's email address when entering the contact information in X2VOL. Providing this information when the entry is inputted into X2VOL will greatly reduce the amount of time needed to verify hours with the organization.

Q: Who can verify hours?

A: Hours are typically verified with the organization's volunteer coordinator, but sometimes it is the person who directly supervised the student during the volunteer activity. All hours must be verified through a non-family member in order to be considered.

Q: Can hours be performed during the school day?

A: Hours performed during the school day are not typically accepted; however there are some exceptions to this rule. If a student is helping with a specific Athletics Department event such as Field Day or Hoops for Heart at one of the elementary buildings, these hours may be submitted for consideration if the student is in good academic standing and has no discipline issues. Volunteering during the school day is a privilege, and approved only in certain circumstances for specific CCS events. Please see Mrs. Balsam with any questions.

Q: When do hours need to be performed?

A: Service hours performed July 1st – June 30th will be attributed to the correlating school year. For example, hours performed from July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017 will be attributed to the 2016-2017 school year.

Q: When do senior hours need to be complete?

A: By May 1st of the year you plan to graduate. Completing hours by this date ensures students that their hours will be verified in time for graduation. Hours received after May 1st may not be verified in time for graduation. If hours are not completed and verified in time for graduation, the student will be able to participate in commencement exercises; however, their diploma will be retained by administration until all hours are completed and verified.

Q: Who can I contact with questions?

A: Mrs. Balsam at jbalsam@ccs.us or (610) 903-1300, ext. 6606.