



# High School Community Service Handbook

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## Georgetown Day School Community Service Program

### Why does GDS require students to do community service and what's the requirement?

Educating GDS students about the concerns and problems of the larger community and developing in each student an understanding that each of us has a responsibility to be of service to others has been an important element of life at GDS from the beginning. In days when the School was small, such involvement was voluntary and projects were initiated by discussion among teachers and students. Activities included everything from making recordings for the blind to providing books and materials for African-American students whose public schools had been closed by a Virginia school board unwilling to comply with court-ordered desegregation.

As the High School grew, it became more difficult to involve all our students in service activities on an informal basis. To address this, Georgetown Day School established a formal community service requirement to be fulfilled before graduation.

**THE REQUIREMENT:** Today, each GDS High School student must perform a minimum of 60 hours of independent community service **before** the start of senior year, at no more than 2 non-profit organizations, with at least 20 hours completed **before** the start of junior year (no more than 30 hours from the summer between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade count). The work should consist of direct service (putting students in direct contact with the population being served; not administrative or advocacy work). Most high school students far exceed the minimum requirement. Community service hours are noted on each report card as well as in the student's college profile. Successful completion of the 60 hours is required for a student to receive a GDS diploma.

In doing community service, we hope that students will respond to real and authentic needs in the community that will allow them to explore their passions and learn lessons and skills that will be helpful throughout life. In addition, service to the community ensures that students will leave GDS having begun to live a life infused with the School's mission, which promotes:

- Respect for the integrity, worth, and diversity of others
- The embrace of intellectual, creative, and physical challenges
- Strength of character
- Concern for others
- Self-reliance, curiosity, and imagination

In addition to work at various local and international non-profits, many GDS High School student clubs feature community service projects for which students can receive school credit if they commit to participating regularly. While students can fulfill their community service requirement through these club projects, more significantly, they find the work to be fun, worthwhile, and rewarding. Participation in community service clubs fosters the development of leadership skills and enables students to work together to help solve some of society's most pressing social problems. In addition to formal clubs, students may get together informally after school or on weekends to do community service together. These ongoing projects offer students the support of and social interaction with their peers while providing the service organization with a steady group of volunteers. Students are invited to participate in any of the already-organized activities or to create their own. For more information, students should talk to the student or faculty club chair or to the Community Service Director.

This handbook explains the guidelines for the program and information about how to get started. There are 7 simple steps to completing your 60-hour community service graduation requirement. If you have any trouble at any point in this process, contact the Community Service Director.

**Georgetown Day School Community Service Program**  
**Steps to Complete the Community Service Requirement**

There are 7 simple steps to completing your 60-hour community service graduation requirement. If you have trouble at any point in this process, contact the Community Service Director for help.

**STEP 1: Decide what type of service you want to do.**

- *NOTE: Check out the community service guidelines online at the GDS website to make sure that the type of work you want to do is consistent with what is allowed by GDS.*
- *HINT: What social issues do you feel passionate about addressing? What are you good at? What do you want to learn? Do you want to do physical work, work inside or outside, or work with young or old people, animals, or the environment? What time and transportation constraints are there? Do you want to work locally or abroad? Do you want to work with an organized program you may have to pay for or want to serve for no cost?*

**STEP 2: Choose 1-2 organizations you might like to work with.**

- *HINT: Look online at the GDS website for organizations others have volunteered with in the past or search one of the volunteer or non-profit databases for organizations that offer the type of service-work that you're interested in (e.g. Idealist, GuideStar, VolunteerMatch, ServeDC).*

**STEP 3: Contact the organization and set up your service schedule.**

- *HINT: Some organizations offer online volunteer applications or contact email addresses; however, calling the organization's volunteer coordinator may be more effective.*
- *NOTE: Many organizations offer or require training or orientation prior to beginning work.*
- *HINT: You should call the organization yourself to set up your service (instead of having your parents call). The organization wants to know that it's going to get a good volunteer who is actually interested in what s/he will be doing.*

**STEP 4: Complete the Pre-Service Agreement Form.**

- *HINT: This form is found online at the Community Service Office and must be signed by you, your parent/guardian, and the GDS Community Service Director before you begin working.*
- *NOTE: If you don't get this form signed, your service may not be approved or count towards your graduation requirement.*

**STEP 5: Do the work (and keep track of your hours)!**

- *HINT: Use the GDS Service Time Sheet to help keep track of your hours if your organization doesn't have another way of keeping track of the hours for you.*
- *HINT: Consider keeping a journal at the end of each day of service; you may be able to turn this in as your reflection paper (if you actually reflect in the journal on the nature of the service)*

**STEP 6: Turn in your hours using the Post-Service Evaluation form.**

- *HINT: Take this form with you on the last day you do service with your organization so that your supervisor can sign the form.*
- *HINT: Staple any certificates, time sheets, or emails confirming your service to the form in place of a supervisor's signature.*

**STEP 7: Reflect on your experience.**

- *HINT: Save yourself time! Keep a journal (min. 10 hand-written pages) of your experiences. Turn in this journal with your Post-Service Evaluation Form and your reflection is complete!*
- *Other reflection options: Turn in a 3 to 5 page, typed reflection on the experience, or make an oral or visual presentation to your advisor, grade-dean, or community service director.*

## Georgetown Day School Community Service Program

### Community Service Guidelines

#### Appropriate service work should follow these guidelines:

- The organization you choose to work with should...
  - Have a recognized history of demonstrated service
  - Have a specific on-the-job supervisor with whom the GDS Community Service Director can communicate and who will be responsible for evaluating your work
- When choosing an organization, make sure you can...
  - Get there on your own (you will be expected to provide your own transportation to and from service work).
  - Meet your commitments (this is your responsibility to both GDS and the organization)
- Of the work you do...
  - At least 30 hours of your project should offer you direct contact with the population you are serving.
  - A maximum of 30 hours may be advocacy or research work for an organization.
- You may not...
  - Do service or work for pay.
  - Work directly under the supervision of a parent or close relative.
  - Volunteer to work at a private camp, your church or synagogue, or your music or dance school, unless you wish to be involved in service outreach through that organization (because one of the goals of this program is to open up new horizons).
  - Count clerical, fundraising, or administrative ("office") work; working in the office at a nursing home, for example, will not provide you with the same level of experience that you will gain by working directly with the residents.
  - Apply more than 30 hours of service done between your 8th and 9th grade years to the 60-hour requirement.
  - Include hours completed while participating in a service-learning course at GDS.

#### **VOLUNTEERING VERSUS COMMUNITY SERVICE: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?**

**Volunteering:** Giving your time for free to another person, organization, company, or issue

**Service:** Helping an individual, cause, organization, or community

**Community Service:** Performing a volunteer action or service which has a direct impact intended to better your community, generally in conjunction with a non-profit organization and working directly with the population (or environment) being served

#### **DIFFERENT TYPES OF SERVICE**

**Direct Service:** Service that puts individuals in direct contact with those in need

**Indirect Service:** Services that use and funnel resources (especially administrative, organization or financial resources) to the community through individuals or organizations; there is little to no involvement with the service-recipients

**Advocacy:** Service wherein individuals use their words and talents to help eliminate a specific problem

**Georgetown Day School Community Service Program**

**Pre-Service Agreement**

This form must be completed before beginning work towards your 60-hour community service requirement. If you do not complete this form, or if your service request is denied, your work will not count towards your service requirement. Please keep a signed copy of this form for your records. To find out what types of service fulfill the 60-hour requirement, please look online at [www.gds.org](http://www.gds.org) > Programs > Community Service > HS Service > High School Guidelines. Note that 20 hours must be completed by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Junior Year and all 60 are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Senior Year.

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class of** \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Address \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Website \_\_\_\_\_

On-Site Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Email \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Dates of Service From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Work (what will you be doing, why it is consistent with HSCS guidelines, and why/how do you believe you will be performing a service for your community?):

**Student's Agreement:** I understand that I will be performing this service as a representative of Georgetown Day School and will behave in accordance with the expectations, rules and policies set forth by both GDS and the organization I hope to serve. I understand that by agreeing to volunteer, I am committing to fulfill my responsibilities to that organization and will do so to the best of my abilities.

**Student's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Approval:** My child and I have discussed the responsibilities involved in this service, including any special considerations that may arise regarding issues addressed by the organization, location, population served, transportation, the physical nature of the service, etc. I know this request must be consistent with the HS Community Service Guidelines and approved by the Community Service Director **prior** to my child beginning the activity. I approve and accept full responsibility for my child's participation in this opportunity with this organization and understand that my child will not receive direct supervision from GDS faculty, staff or chaperones during this time, as it is an independent project. I hereby release from liability GDS from any and all liabilities pertaining to travel to and from and work related to or taking place at my child's desired community service site.

**Parent/Guardian Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**For office use only:** This service activity is:  
 Approved       NOT Approved: (Reason \_\_\_\_\_ )  
Signature of GDS Community Service Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Georgetown Day School Community Service Program**  
**Post-Service Evaluation Form**

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class of** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Actual Dates of Service** From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Hours Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Today's Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 1: CONFIRMATION OF HOURS**

*NB: In all cases, a signature, description of work done, and total of hours completed is required*

- OPTION 1: A certificate from the organization I served is attached.
- OPTION 2: A time sheet from the organization I served is attached.
- OPTION 3: A GDS service time sheet is attached and is signed by my supervisor at the organization where I completed my service.
- OPTION 4: Please have your on-site supervisor complete the following and attach a business card.

**I confirm that the student named above completed a total of \_\_\_\_\_ hours while working with the organization named above.**

**On-Site Supervisor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervisor Email** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Brief description of work completed by student:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 2: REFLECTION TYPE**

*Your reflection should answer two (2) fundamental questions: 1) How did your service benefit others? 2) How did it transform you? See suggested reflection topics and questions for more details (online and attached).*

- OPTION 1: Turned in journal reflecting on experience (minimum 10 handwritten pages)
- OPTION 2: Turned in 3-5 page typed, double-spaced reflection (page 3 must be full page)
- OPTION 3: Made an oral or visual presentation to CS director, advisor, or grade dean

I (print name) \_\_\_\_\_ certify that the student named above made a 20 minute oral / visual (circle 1) reflection on his/her service to me on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).  
**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **(or attach signed reflection form)**

- OPTION 4: Other (must be approved by CS Director): \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR OFFICE USE**

**Signature of Receipt** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Entered to CSSL by** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## Georgetown Day School Community Service Program

### Suggested Reflection Questions

While completing your community service requirement, we ask that you reflect on the experience. Your reflection should answer two (2) fundamental questions: 1) How did your service benefit others? 2) How did it transform you? Use the following questions to guide you as you thoughtfully complete this assignment.

**NOTE: Advisors and Grade Deans, please feel free to use this form to take notes on the student's oral or visual reflection. In this case, turn this form in along with the Post-Service Evaluation form.**

- Start by telling us about the experience:
  - What and when did you do for your project?
  - What were the strengths and weaknesses of this experience?
  - Why did you choose this particular service experience?
  - What did you expect before beginning your work?
  - How did your experience and expectations differ?
  - With whom did you work?
  - Did you meet anyone who made a strong impression on you? If so, describe your relationship with this person (or persons).
  - How did you impact the organization's work?
  - Did you learn anything new or surprising about people in general or about the group you were working with specifically?
- Then dig deeper:
  - Why was the work you did service (helping to make things better for a community) rather than volunteerism (giving your time for free)?
  - How did your service benefit others? Did it?
  - Was the work you did sustainable?
  - What could have been done to make a bigger and more sustainable impact on the issue/organization/people?
  - What skills did you bring to your experience and which did you acquire?
  - Did you gain skills you'll use 10 years from now?
  - How did your work affect you? Did it?
  - What did you learn from your participation in this community service?
  - Will you approach anything differently as a result of this experience? If so, what?
  - What social issues (if any) has this experience made you think about?
  - What would you do to address those issues if you become a policy maker 20 years from now?
- What else should we know?
- What made you say "huh" and why?

Reflection options:

- OPTION 1: Turn in journal reflecting on experience (minimum 10 handwritten pages)
- OPTION 2: Turn in 3-5 page typed, double-spaced reflection
- OPTION 3: Make an oral or visual presentation to CS director, advisor, or grade dean

I (print name) \_\_\_\_\_ certify that \_\_\_\_\_  
(student) made a 20 minute oral / visual (circle 1) reflection on his/her service to me on  
\_\_\_\_\_ (date). Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Extension: \_\_\_\_\_