

**Midland High  
School  
Service Learning  
Program**





## THE SERVICE LEARNING REQUIREMENT

### What is Service Learning?

Service Learning is a service without pay to a non-profit organization or an individual or group in need of assistance. The service must be for the benefit of others outside the school community.

### What is the Value of Service Learning?

Service Learning helps students:

- acquire life skills
- understand their responsibilities as citizens in the community
- improve their self-esteem
- take and accept new challenges
- have the opportunity to integrate classroom learning into “real life” learning experiences

Service Learning provides students with:

- opportunities to assume responsibilities
- opportunities for higher level thinking skills
- the positive experience of helping others
- a chance to explore new roles
- an experience to enrich their learning
- opportunities for career exploration

### What You Need to Know

To graduate from Midland High School, a student must earn twenty four (24) hours of Service Learning credit. Administrators and counselors will make the determination regarding what is acceptable service to meet this requirement.

**REQUIRED FORMS:** There are three forms used in association with the fulfillment of the service requirement.

**Individual Service Project Form:** Before beginning a service project, this form must be filled out and submitted to a counselor or administrator for approval. If approved, the counselor/administrator will sign this form. At the completion of the project, the adult supervisor who can validate the completion of the service hours for this project will sign the form. When the project is completed and the form is signed, the form should be returned to the counseling office.



It will be kept in the student's individual community service file. Students may not earn service hours for the following:

- Working for private companies or individuals
- Work for which they receive pay or any material remuneration
- Any work assigned as a disciplinary measure

**Verification of Service Hours Log:** This logs keeps a running total of the service hours the student has earned. Each time a project is finished and the Individual Service Project Form is submitted to the counseling office, this form should be updated. It requires a brief description of the project by name (e.g. S.M. public library) and the number of hours completed for that project.

**Service Learning Off Campus Permission Form:** If the student will be doing service off campus that is not being done in connection with a school club or organization, parents/guardians will need to sign this form authorizing the student to perform service not being supervised by the school. The form requires that a parent/guardian acknowledge that the school is neither supervising nor transporting the student to the location of the service project and requires the parent to give permission for the student to perform this service. Examples where students might need a Service Learning Off Campus Permission Form in addition to an Individual Service Project Form include work done for:

Peer Tutoring	Senior Mentoring	Eagle Scouts
Summer Ball	Educational Foundation	Cemetery
Habitat for Humanity	City Hall	Cyclones
Athletic Boosters	Fire Dept.	4H
Churches	City Park	Midland Schools
Proctor	Boy Scouts	Cub Scouts
Ark	Historical Society	Nursing Home

The parent permission form must be submitted with the Individual Service Project Form at the time the student seeks approval for a project.

It is possible for a student to earn dual credit for service. That is, the student may earn service for an outside group or agency or an on-campus group, and it will count towards the graduation requirement at MHS if the service would otherwise be approved at MHS.

Honesty in reporting service hours is of the utmost importance. Any student who falsifies the reporting of service hours may be prohibited from participating in the graduation ceremony. True service to others can be one of the most rewarding experiences life has to offer. It is not to be tainted by dishonesty.

### PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Service Learning at Midland High School is an integral component to the overall education program. All students in grades 9 through 12 are required to complete 6 hours of Service Learning each school year.\* The number of hours completed may exceed 6 hours each year, but



additional hours cannot be carried over from one year to another.\* All hours must be verified by May 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Seniors must complete their service requirement by April 1.

Students who attend the school from Grades 9 through 12 must complete a *minimum* of 24 hours of service in order to graduate, which includes 6 hours of service during each year they attend Midland. (Any student earning between 50-100 hours of Service Learning will be given special cords at graduation.)

**Note\***

- Class of 09 6 hrs requirement must be met
- Class of 10 12 hrs requirement must be met
- Class of 11 18 hrs requirement must be met
- Class of 12 24 hrs requirement must be met

**Transfer Students**

Transfer students and their parents will receive the Service Learning Handbook at registration and will meet with the coordinator as part of their orientation. Transfer students shall get credit for any prior documented service, provided it meets the criteria of the District 7 program. All transfer students must meet the District 7 requirement of twenty-four (24) hours of service learning. However, students entering District 7 after the first day of their senior year shall have their hours prorated on the following basis:

First Term	12 hours
Second Term	9 hours
Third Term	6 hours
Fourth Term	3 hours

**Finding a Project and Project Approval**

The Service Learning bulletin board, located outside the guidance office lists current volunteer opportunities. Students are advised to check the board on a regular basis. Guidance Counselors will also provide Students with a list of participating organizations. Students are encouraged to seek out placements based on interest, proximity to home or school, and personal scheduling issues.

Before undertaking each Service Learning Project, each student must complete the Individual Service Project Form and submit the form to their Guidance Counselor. The Guidance Counselor will either sign the form to indicate that the project qualifies as an appropriate volunteer opportunity or return the form to the student indicating that the project is not approved. *A student will not receive service credit if he or she has not obtained pre-approval of the Service Project.*

**The general project requirements for obtaining Service Learning credits are:**

1. Must have an educational objective.



2. The student receives no monetary compensation for the service.
3. The service is conducted for a nonprofit agency.
4. The service has received prior approval from the student's guidance counselor.
5. The service is completed by May 1 of each school year for Freshmen (may begin earning credit June 15 before their Freshman year), Sophomores, and Juniors (Service Learning performed After May 1 will be credited to the follow school year). Seniors must complete their service by April 1 of the school year.
6. The service is performed outside of one's family, i.e. babysitting, housecleaning, caring for a grandparent, etc. are not eligible.
7. The work does not qualify as an extracurricular activity, e.g. participating in a sport or activity not offered by the school.
8. The service offers the student the potential to give and grow.
9. Internships and political campaigns are not considered Service Learning.

Co-curricular activity is based on a belief that active people are happy people. Midland has a holistic approach to education; participating positively in the activities we offer will help students to be more well-rounded.

#### **Exempt Students**

Some students with developmental disabilities may be exempt from this requirement. These cases will be discussed individually with the Special Needs Coordinator and the Service Learning Coordinator. Students attending out of district special education schools will be exempt from the requirement. However, if the student returns to District #7, he/she will follow the requirement set forth for transfer students.

#### **Student Integrity**

Students are expected to approach service learning with the same integrity as they do their other academic endeavors. Students shall not receive remuneration or credit in any other organization, including court ordered community service hours, for those projects which are approved and then completed for the service learning graduation requirement.

#### **Discipline**

Students are expected to maintain the high level of behavior that is expected of all District 7 students. Students come under the jurisdiction of all District 7 discipline policies on their way to, from and during the completion of their Service Learning Hours. Service Learning is a school sponsored program, and all school rules apply.

A student who fails to meet obligations, including absences and tardiness, or who fails to perform in an acceptable manner, may be removed from the service learning experience. Dismissal from a service learning site for inappropriate behavior may warrant a referral to the Administration. In the event of dismissal, the service site and/or Service Learning Coordinator may elect to withhold hours. Students with continual behavior problems at service sites may have to meet the requirement through the alternate written research project.



### **Falsifying Documents**

Falsifying service learning documents will result in an Administrative referral and appropriate discipline as per District 7 policy. The student may lose hours previously earned at that site and/or Level II disciplinary intervention may be applied.

### **Liability**

The service site shall be responsible for maintaining such insurance or a self-insurance program (or its equivalent). All students must have an insurance waiver or insurance verification on file.

### **Student Supervision and Safety**

Student safety and supervision is of utmost importance. The following guidelines have been established to provide students with a safe and proper environment for their service learning experience.

1. It is required that the site provides adult supervision and guidance for the student at all times.
2. Students should be clear as to their responsibilities, and to whom at the site they are to report.
3. Students may not participate in any activity involving the use of dangerous or potentially dangerous tools and/or equipment. Hazardous areas are dangerous and unsuitable for student learners. Under no circumstances will students perform their service learning in an area that involves dangerous activities.
4. Students will be assigned responsibilities and activities consistent with their age, experience, and maturity level.
5. Students may not operate a motor vehicle while performing service learning. The site will not assign and/or allow students to drive while engaged in the service learning experience.
6. Students may not transport individuals in a motor vehicle as part of their service learning experience.
7. Students will not be expected to participate in service learning activities at either unreasonably early or late hours of the day or evening.
8. Students engaged in clinical, medical, hospital or related settings will not attend to any duties resulting in exposure to fluids, excretions, or contamination known to be harmful, contagious, or injurious.
9. The site may not allow students to participate in service learning without the expressed consent of both the parent/guardian and the Service Learning Coordinator.
10. In case of injury or illness, the site will notify the parent/guardian as per the medical release information on the Service Learning Agreement.

### **What is Service Learning?**

Service-learning offers a unique opportunity for America's young people -- from kindergarten to university students -- to get involved with their communities in a tangible way by integrating service projects with classroom learning. Service-learning engages students in the educational process, using what they learn in the classroom to solve real-life problems. Students not only



learn about democracy and citizenship, they become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform.

Service-learning can be applied across all subjects and grade levels; it can involve a single student or group of students, a classroom or an entire school. Students build character and become active participants as they work with others in their school and community to create service projects in areas like education, public safety, and the environment.

### **Why is Service-Learning Important?**

A recent national study of programs suggests that effective service-learning programs improve grades, increase attendance in school, and develop students' personal and social responsibility. A growing body of research recognizes service-learning as an effective strategy to help students by:

- Promoting learning through active participation in service experiences;
- Providing structured time for students to reflect by thinking, discussing and writing about their service experience;
- Providing an opportunity for students to use skills and knowledge in real-life situations;
- Extending learning beyond the classroom and into the community; and
- Fostering a sense of caring for others.

Service-learning also strengthens both education and local communities by:

- Building effective collaborative partnerships between schools or colleges and other institutions and organizations.
- Engaging parents and other adults in supporting student learning
- Meeting community needs through the service projects conducted
- Providing engaging and productive opportunities for young people to work with others in their community

### **The Impact of Service-Learning: A Review of Current Research**

Research studies of service-learning, an educational method that intentionally connects Service Learning to classroom learning, demonstrate that service-learning programs can have positive impacts on youth in three general areas: academic engagement and achievement; civic attitudes and behaviors; and social and personal skills. The studies also demonstrate that students gain the maximum benefit when their service-learning experience includes a direct tie to the curriculum, planning and design of service projects by students, structured reflection on the service experience in the classroom, and continuity of service for at least one semester.



**INDIVIDUAL SERVICE PROJECT FORM**  
**MUST RECEIVE PRIOR APPROVAL FROM GUIDANCE COUSELOR IN ORDER TO**  
**RECEIVE CREDIT**

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

In the space below, provide the following information:

**Educational Objective:**

**Name of Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Brief Service Project Description:**

**Anticipated Days and Hours for the Project:**

**Name of Supervising Adult:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address for Supervising Adult:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRIOR TO THE PROJECT: MUST secure approval from a counselor or administrator.**

Counselor's/Administrator's Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Approval \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

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**AT THE COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT:**

Number of Hours Completed \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name of Person Verifying Completion \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Sponsoring Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Person Verifying Completion \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number of Person Verifying Completion (if outside school) \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of duties the student performed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of how effectively the student performed their service work: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**THIS FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE COUNSELING OFFICE PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE PROJECT AND AT THE COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT.**



**SERVICE LEARNING  
OFF CAMPUS PARENT PERMISSION FORM**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As part of Midland High School's 6-hour (annually) service learning requirement, a student has the option of performing meaningful service off campus during non-school hours. If a student chooses this option, no school personnel will be present to supervise him/her. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to assure that the student is being properly supervised. Although the service will be done off campus, the student's guidance counselor or an administrator must approve outside service projects before they are begun. This approval is merely for the content and purpose of the project and does NOT imply any approval of the supervision arrangements for the activity. No Midland School District personnel are to be held responsible or accountable for any aspect of an outside service project undertaken by a student. Transportation to, from, or during the activity is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

**THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE COUNSELING OFFICE PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SERVICE PROJECT. IF THIS FORM IS NOT ON FILE PRIOR TO THE PROJECT BEGINNING, THE STUDENT WILL NOT RECEIVE CREDIT FOR THE PROJECT.**

Your child has requested permission to participate in the service project described below.

**DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE PROJECT DURING NON SCHOOL HOURS:**

Briefly describe the nature of the service project proposed:

Location of the project:

Proposed date(s) of the project:

Sponsoring agency, if applicable:

Expected number of hours:

As the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_

Print student's name Grade level I.D. # \_\_\_\_\_

By my signature below I authorize my child to participate in the service project described above. I acknowledge that no school personnel will supervise my child, and I agree that no employee of the Midland School district will be held responsible or accountable for any aspect of my child's participation in this project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent/guardian Date Printed name of parent/guardian

