

Civics Service Learning Parent Letter

Why are we required to do service learning?

Service learning is an effective way for youth to develop the drive and desire to become lifelong volunteers and engaged citizens. Students can participate in activities through outside organizations as well as at Rachel Carson Middle School. Service learning at Rachel Carson aligns with the FCPS Portrait of a Graduate and the development of responsibility to the local and global community.

The Fairfax County Public Schools expectations regarding service learning states, **to receive credit, all service must involve work by the student and provide a benefit to the community. Credit will not be given for mere attendance at an event, or for a project or activity that benefits only the student, his or her relatives, friends, or neighbors.** Additionally, a student cannot benefit from the service in any way financially or academically. If you would like to read the FCPS regulation on service learning, go to this url:

[https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/BYLOY86B50EF/\\$file/R3200.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/fairfax/Board.nsf/files/BYLOY86B50EF/$file/R3200.pdf)

Changes to RCMS Service Learning

This year students will earn service learning hours through a meaningful and authentic learning project. Students will earn 7 hours of service during school by investigating issues within the community, constructing an action plan of how they can impact their community, and creating a reflective product in which they can showcase their service learning experience. Students will complete the research, action plan, and reflective product during Panther Time lessons and in civics class. By completing these assignments, students will earn 7 of the required 15 hours of service learning. These assignments will also count as grades in civics class.

Students will independently earn their remaining 8 service learning in their community based on the theme they select and research. Students may utilize the provided "Category" document in Schoology for ideas about where to volunteer for hours. For the 2023-2024 school year, If students already completed service learning hours prior to the start of 8th grade, they may use these completed hours as a part of their 8 hours of service learning in the community.

Some helpful hints:

- Check for service opportunities on Schoology on Carson Student Central and Carson Parents/Guardians courses
- National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) hours **cannot** be counted towards the 15 civics hours. Service is a major component of National Junior Honor Society; therefore, as a member you should realize it would not be fair to count your work for that organization and for Civics too.
- All 15 service hours need to be recorded in x2VOL, available through [Naviance](#) in Schoology. The 7 hours completed by researching, creating the action plan and reflective product will be recorded in May with your civics teacher. For the remaining 8 hours, you must collect the email address of the adult for whom you are performing service. If you are unable to get the adult's email please type in the email address of your parent to verify you have completed the service opportunity. **The email address must be entered into x2VOL within a week of performing the service experience so that your service can be verified in a timely manner.**
- Communicate to your service learning supervisor (of your service and which you received their emails), and let them know that they should expect an email to verify the hours you did with them. This will make recording hours in our online program x2vol go much more smoothly.

Requirements: All students must complete the interest survey, research, action plan, and reflective product to earn 7 hours. The remaining 8 hours will be due by May 1, 2024. There will be a service hour check in January and entered in SIS to inform parents how many hours their child has earned thus far. All 15 hours need to be recorded and submitted in x2VOL (accessible through Naviance) and **verified by the supervisor on or before the due date.**