

June, 2011

Dear Parents and Next Year's Ninth Grade Students,

Every year, ninth grade students at Rose Hill Junior High serve the community through our service learning program. This annual tradition has not only taught students important career skills and the value of volunteering, but has demonstrated to our community the capabilities and responsibility of our students. Each year, many students far surpass their goal, accumulating hundreds of hours of service. Over the last thirteen years, Rose Hill students have contributed tens of thousands of hours of service to our community.

We are excited about continuing this tradition at Rose Hill this next year. Our goal is to build on student strengths and interests, and involve students in hands-on learning, problem-solving, and connecting academic knowledge with real life. We hope to teach students the value of "giving back to the community" in which they live.

Students are required to complete **thirty (30) hours of service**. *Fifteen of the hours may be completed over the summer*, which is why we are contacting you prior to summer vacation. We welcome the unique opportunities that students have over the summer to take mission trips, volunteer with local community or recreational activities, or pursue personal volunteer experience. *At least fifteen hours must be completed during the school year*. Ten of the thirty hours may be completed by participating in such in-school service activities as ASB, mentoring, peer-tutoring, etc. The remaining hours must be done outside of the normal school day. During the year, each ninth grade student will research contemporary issues. Through this activity, they will explore possible types of service projects. By the end of October, every student should have a clear plan for implementing his or her hours of service.

Completion of the thirty hours of service will be tracked in the social studies classes. Questions about service learning should be directed to each student's social studies teacher, although the social studies department chair has final authority over the program. Frequently, opportunities for service will be published to each class so that students can take advantage of local and seasonal service events. **The completed hours are due June 1, 2012**. Students will then report on their service-learning experiences.

Enclosed with this letter is a form answering frequently asked questions, as well as a form to record completed hours. We invite your comments, ideas, suggestions, and questions. Please call anytime, and thank you for your support of this important part of your student's education.

Sincerely,

Larry Whalen  
Social Studies Department Chair



# Frequently Asked Questions About Service Learning

## *How many hours of service do I need to complete by June 1, 2011?*

Each ninth grade student must complete **thirty hours** of approved service. Fifteen may be done over the summer. Ten may be done during school hours while serving in such capacity as ASB officer, mentor, or peer-tutor, etc.

## *How should I get started?*

You will be given a chance to do some research into local service organizations in your English class. By the end of October, you should have a clear plan for completing your hours. The Kirkland Youth Council also publishes a handbook called *Where To Care* (<http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us/Assets/Youth/Youth+PDFs/Where+To+Care+Guide.pdf>), which will assist you in finding local service organizations. Simply using the telephone book is another possibility.

## *Where can I complete my service-learning hours?*

We encourage students to find a service opportunity that will take advantage of their own interests and abilities. For example, if you enjoy reading and books, you could consider volunteering at the library. If you like working with people, consider volunteering at a nursing home. Try to think about what really matters to you. This is an opportunity to show that you care about your community.

## *Can I work for a local business?*


You may certainly work for a **non-profit** organization. The purpose of the organization should be service. Sweeping floors for a restaurant or some other for-profit business will not benefit the community but will help meet a profit margin.

## *How do I sign up to be a volunteer?*

Call them up and ask them! Many organizations, such as hospitals and libraries, have an application process for volunteers. The important thing is to leave yourself enough time in the school year both to apply to volunteer and to actually complete your hours.

## *Can I work for my neighbor?*

Many students take advantage of unique opportunities for service. If your neighbor requires extra assistance due to age or disability, they would welcome your assistance. However, volunteering for a neighbor just because they're convenient is not an acceptable reason. There



are other ways to contribute. Some students have organized car washes to raise money for a local charity. Other students have used their technological expertise to teach computer skills to elementary students, using a former teacher as a contact person.

***What type of presentation will I have to do in the spring?***

The presentation will depend on what your social studies teacher assigns. Some students complete a reflection essay. Other students give an oral presentation complete with pictures and PowerPoint, or make a movie. The important goal is to choose a service activity that engages your interests and uses your abilities.

***Do I have to do all thirty hours with one organization?***

Not at all. Many students complete a couple hours on one activity and a few on another, thereby taking advantage of various seasonal opportunities for service. It is still necessary to complete a form for each service activity, however.

***How do we keep track of our hours?***

Included in this packet of information is a form to show that you completed your hours. You will need to complete a form for each place that you volunteer, but if you volunteer at a place more than once, you only need to do the form once.

***Can I volunteer with my church?***


We encourage students to do their service “where their heart is”. If serving in your church is a matter of the heart, then you’re welcome to serve there. Many churches serve the community through food banks, clothing drives, etc. Students find numerous opportunities to serve through their church.

***Why does the form look like a job recommendation form?***

For many students, volunteering is their first opportunity to do “real work”. We ask for an evaluation at the end so that students can use the experience as a reference when they apply for their first “real job”.

***What advice would past ninth graders give us about service learning?***

Start right away! Don’t put it off! And if you do half your hours over the summer, don’t forget to get the signature on the form before school starts!



# Service Learning Record

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## Rating System:

1 = Excellent 2 = Good 3 = Fair 4 = Poor 5 = Failing 6 = Does Not Apply

### Circle One

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Reports regularly and punctually.                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. Attends to tasks assigned to him/her by agency.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. Is attired and groomed appropriately.                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. Performs tasks with a positive and willing attitude.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. Is capable of independent work.                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. Responds creatively to criticism.                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. Is aware of own strengths and weaknesses.              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. Handles problems situations well.                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. Makes an effort to learn about the agency and clients. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. Establishes good rapport with staff, clients, others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11. Overall rating of student's performance.              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Description of services that student provided:

Additional comments:

I certify that the above student accomplished \_\_\_\_\_ hours of satisfactory service.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*