

# Frequently Asked Questions:

## *New Service-Learning Policy*

### **What is the new service-learning requirement?**

The new board policy requires that students complete two service-learning projects in order to graduate. In compliance with the new state civics mandate, at least one of the service-learning projects must be completed in a student's civics or AP Government course. The second project should be completed in a 9th or 10th grade course or independently.

### **What qualifies as service-learning?**

While the policy shifts the requirement away from hours to a project-based model, the guidelines in terms of the components of service-learning, restrictions on service activities, etc will remain the same. You can find more information regarding service-learning at [www.cps.edu/servicelearning](http://www.cps.edu/servicelearning).

### **What is a service-learning project?**

A service-learning project is a civic learning experience that allows students to connect what they are learning in class to contribute to the common good in their schools and communities. All service projects must include *preparation, action and reflection* components. Service-learning projects should meet the following standards of excellent practice: student voice, meaningful service, curriculum integration, reflection, community partnerships, progress monitoring, diversity and duration and intensity. For more information about the standards of quality practice please visit our website, [www.cps.edu/servicelearning](http://www.cps.edu/servicelearning) or contact Lauren M. Woods, Service-Learning Coordinator, [lmwoods3@cps.edu](mailto:lmwoods3@cps.edu).

### **What are the requirements for independent service learning projects?**

Schools may choose to allow students to complete one of the service learning project requirements independent of a specific course. However, these projects must be completed with a certified CPS service learning partner organization and meet the guidelines of service learning as determined by the Department of Social Science and Civic Engagement. Students will be required to work with the designated school Service Learning Coach to receive approval *BEFORE* the project can be implemented. All independent projects must follow the existing requirement that service-learning include preparation, action and reflection. Students will be required to present documentation that they have met all three components. A course code for independent service learning projects will be provided upon request.

### **Do students need approval before they begin an independent service-learning project?**

Yes. Students must have all independent service-learning projects approved by their Service-Learning Coach before they begin. Students must complete a Project Preparation and Project Reflection Form and submit to the Service-Learning Coach. A copy of this form will be made available online at [www.cps.edu/servicelearning](http://www.cps.edu/servicelearning).

**Where can I find a list of certified CPS service learning partners and organizations?**

A list of certified Service-Learning Community Partners will be made available online at [www.cps.edu/servicelearning](http://www.cps.edu/servicelearning) under “Community Partners”. Service-Learning Coaches will also be supplied with this list.

**What about individual community service hours that students might perform? How will those be recorded?**

The ITS team is working to create a field on the transcript in which non-credit bearing community service hours can be recorded. This will allow students to showcase their service to prospective colleges, employers and scholarship review committees. Counselors and/or service learning coaches will be able to enter community service performed by students and the cumulative amount will appear on the final transcript.

**What will change about how service-learning is recorded and tracked?**

Currently schools utilize the Service Learning Hours page in IMPACT SIM to manually record the number of hours that students complete. We are working with ITS to create a way in which completed projects can be recorded in Gradebook in mass and automatically populate in IMPACT SIM.

**How will the role of service-learning coach shift or change given the new policy?**

With the new policy service learning coaches and counselors will see a decrease in paperwork as they will no longer be required to enter individual hours or create plans for individual community service opportunities. However, coaches will play a critical role in helping staff to develop and implement high-quality service learning projects connected to course content. In addition, coaches will still be required to complete reporting requests regarding implementation. Finally, for schools that opt to require students to complete independent service learning projects, coaches will work with students to identify high quality independent project opportunities and to collect documentation of those projects.

**Will this new service-learning policy apply to current CPS students?**

No, the new policy will only apply to incoming Freshmen in the 2016-17 class. All current students will still be required to complete 40 service-learning hours (or the equivalent of up to 3 projects in which 1 project is equal to 15 hours) and have those hours tracked via SIM.

*For further questions regarding Service Learning in CPS including existing resources and related supports contact Lauren Woods, Service Learning Coordinator, at [lmwoods3@cps.edu](mailto:lmwoods3@cps.edu). For information on additional civic engagement programming and supports available to schools please feel free to contact Jessica Marshall, Director of Social Science and Civic Engagement, at [jmmarshall2@cps.edu](mailto:jmmarshall2@cps.edu).*