A MARYLAND GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

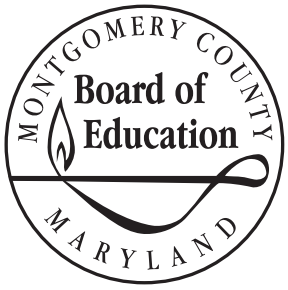
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

Student Service Learning (SSL)

GUIDE FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Give a little time…
make a big difference

Montgomery County Public Schools
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND



VISION

We inspire learning by providing the greatest public education to each and every student.

MISSION

Every student will have the academic, creative problem solving, and social emotional skills to be successful in college and career.

CORE PURPOSE

Prepare all students to thrive in their future.

CORE VALUES

Learning
Relationships
Respect
Excellence
Equity

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850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org
MARYLAND

Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award
2010 Award Recipient

August 2015

Dear Middle and High School Students, Parents, and Guardians:

Student Service Learning (SSL) provides students the opportunity to actively participate in our community and build the skills they need to be successful students and citizens. I am proud of the thousands of SSL hours logged each year by our students.

The SSL booklet for the 2015–2016 school year provides information about the Maryland State Department of Education SSL graduation mandate. Completing 75 SSL hours is a requirement for high school graduation in Maryland. Program facts, meaningful community involvement, SSL documents, best practices, and beneficial outcomes of SSL are included in the booklet. In addition, you will find important information about the SSL approval process, SSL awards programs, the distinction between SSL and "volunteering," tips for parent involvement, recordkeeping logs, and more. Through meaningful service-learning involvement at school and in the community, students view SSL as more than a graduation requirement; SSL is an opportunity to strengthen character, develop responsibility, learn new skills, explore careers, and develop avenues for civic engagement.

Please refer to the important information included here, on the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) website at www.mcpsssl.org, and in school newsletters to determine MCPS SSL guidelines and identify the approved opportunities to meet the requirement in meaningful ways. If you have additional questions, please contact the SSL coordinator at your student's school.

Sincerely,

Larry A. Bowers

Mr. Larry A. Bowers
Interim Superintendent of Schools

LAB:daf

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 122 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850 ♦ 301-279-3381

BASICS OF STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING

WHAT IS STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING?

- Student Service Learning (SSL) is a teaching method that combines meaningful service to the community with curriculum-based learning. (www.mdservice-learning.org)
- Students improve their academic skills by applying what they learn in school to the real world; they then reflect on their experience to reinforce the link between their service and their learning. (Learning in Deed)

WHO IS REQUIRED TO PERFORM SERVICE LEARNING?

- Any student in a Maryland public school earning a diploma must complete 75 hours of service, prior to graduation.
- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students may begin working on this requirement, over the summer after completing Grade 5. Hours are accrued throughout middle and high school.

WHY IS SSL A CONDITION OF GRADUATION IN MARYLAND?

- In 1992 the Maryland State Board of Education adopted a mandatory service requirement, which became effective in 1993 and has affected every graduating class since 1997.
- This graduation requirement is intended to result in students becoming life-long contributors to the community.
- The service-learning requirement is not intended to take the place of kind actions that students perform to assist family members, neighbors, or members of their faith organizations.
- Civic engagement and political participation are key elements of service learning.

WHERE CAN ONE FIND INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING (SSL) REQUIREMENT?

- The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) website: www.mdservice-learning.org.
- The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) website: www.mcpsssl.org.
- Local school system publications and newsletters.

HOW CAN MCPS STUDENTS MEET THE SERVICE LEARNING REQUIREMENT?

- Enroll and successfully complete specific middle and high school courses that use SSL activities to achieve curricular objectives during the instructional day.
  Note: High school courses that achieve curricular objectives through service-learning activities are identified in the *MCPS High School Course Bulletin.*
- Enlist in school-sponsored clubs and organizations that have a service focus and earn SSL hours for involvement outside of the instructional day.
- Participate in opportunities with community organizations that are preapproved by MCPS for SSL.

HOW SHOULD MCPS STUDENTS DOCUMENT THEIR SERVICE?

- All service for which SSL hours are desired must be documented on MCPS Form 560-51: *Student Service Learning Activity Verification.* All SSL forms are available on the website (www.mcpsssl.org) and in middle and high schools.
- Documentation of all service is due to the school-based SSL coordinator according to specific timelines as follows:
  - Documentation of service performed during the summer is due by the last Friday in September.
  - Documentation of service performed during the first semester is due by the first Friday in January.
  - Documentation of service performed during the second semester is due by the first Friday in June.
- Students should keep copies of all their SSL documents.

THE ABCS OF STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING

A

APPROVAL AND AWARDS

- Organizations and opportunities that award student service learning (SSL) hours must be preapproved by MCPS.
- Preapproved organizations and opportunities listed on the website are identified with a graduation cap icon.
- To work with those organizations and opportunities not identified with a cap icon, students must complete MCPS Form 560-50: *Individual SSL Request* (see pages 11 and 13), and have it approved first.
- MCPS Form 560-51: *Student Services Learning Activity Verification* (see pages 10 and 12), documents all SSL involvement.
- Documented hours are recorded on all report cards.
- The Superintendent's Student Service Learning Award recognizes those who meet the 75-hour graduation requirement by the first Friday in April of a middle school year.
- The Certificate of Meritorious Service recognizes those who have documented 260 SSL hours by the first Friday in April of their senior year.

B

BENEFITS AND BEST PRACTICES

- Meaningful civic engagement helps students develop workforce ethics and leadership skills
- High-quality SLL explores careers, strengthens character, and develops self-esteem and pro-social behaviors.
- Best practices of service learning
- Meet recognized needs in the community
- Achieve curricular objectives
- Gain necessary knowledge and skills
- Plan ahead
- Work with service organizations
- Cultivate a sense of responsibility
- Reflect throughout the experience

C

CONDITIONS AND COORDINATION

- SSL includes phases of preparation, action, and reflection.
- The action phases may be direct, indirect, or advocacy.
- All service must be preapproved and must occur in a public place (not a private residence).
- One SSL hour is awarded for every hour of service performed outside of the instructional day.
- All service must be supervised by an adult representative of the organization (not a parent or relative).
- Only exception to the nonprofit rule: SSL hours may be awarded for direct service to patients/residents in assisted-living facilities and nursing homes, with approval of MCPS Form 560-50: *Individual SSL Request.*
- All SSL opportunities must be secular (nonreligious) in nature.
- Door-to-door neighborhood canvassing and telephone solicitation are not allowed.
- Students receive no financial compensation for SSL.
- Each secondary school has an SSL coordinator. They promote approved organizations and opportunities and maintain students' SSL records.

VOLUNTEERING, COMMUNITY SERVICE, SERVICE LEARNING: THE SAME OR DIFFERENT?

The Student Service Learning (SSL) program in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) should not be confused with the act of "volunteering" or "performing community service," nor should the SSL program be confused with those in other jurisdictions. The following chart characterizes the MCPS SSL program. More complete information is available on the website (www.mcpsssl.org).

VOLUNTEERING OR PERFORMING COMMUNITY SERVICE	STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING
This is not a requirement.	This is a Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) graduation requirement. It was not instituted to replace kind acts that support family and community members, neighbors, or members of their faith organizations.
There are no established guidelines.	Guidelines are established by MSDE and MCPS.
This may occur on the spur of the moment.	This requires planning in advance of the service.
Documentation of the service is not required.	Documentation of SSL secular activities is required using MCPS Form 560-51: *Student Service Learning Activity Verification*. Systemwide timelines support timely and accurate record keeping.
The age requirement varies.	Individuals begin work on the student service learning (SSL) requirement after Grade 5 and continue through high school.
This may occur in a variety of locations.	This must be done in a public place, not a private residence.
This may be performed without adult supervision.	This must be supervised by an adult representing the organization, not a student's relative.
This may occur with a wide range of organizations.	This must be done with preapproved organizations.*
There is no person affiliated with the school system and no MCPS coordinator involved.	There is an SSL coordinator at every middle and high school providing information and maintaining service-learning records on students.
This may be performed with an organization that has no general liability insurance.	Organizations identified with a graduation cap icon on the website (www.mcpsssl.org), have shown proof of general liability insurance.
There is no school-system recognition of contributions.	MCPS award programs recognize the exceptional service of secondary students.
The focus is on the *action* phase only.	This focus is on three phases: *preparation, action, and reflection.*
This may serve any organization or opportunity.	Organizations and opportunities must be identified with a graduation cap icon at the website (www.mcpsssl.org) or MCPS Form 560-50: *Individual SSL Request* must be granted to each student in advance of any service.

*Service with organizations and opportunities not identified with a graduation cap icon on the website (*www.mcpsssl.org)* require granting of approval in advance, using MCPS Form 560-50: *Individual SSL Request.*

HOW TO FIND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES APPROVED FOR SSL

You do not need to create an account to search for SSL-approved organizations or opportunities.

- Go to mcpsssl.org
- Click SSL Community Opportunities (the Montgomery County Volunteer Center site)
- Search options:
  - All SSL-approved opportunities
  - Calendar
  - SSL Opportunities by city
  - All Organizations
  - Advanced Search

Remember: The organization and the opportunity must be identified with a graduation cap icon to reflect MCPS SSL approval.

- If you are interested in an organization, call or e-mail the contact listed. Consider using the script on page 7 when you speak to your contact on the phone.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ORGANIZATIONS IDENTIFIED WITH A GRADUATION CAP ICON

ORGANIZATIONS IDENTIFIED WITH GRADUATION CAP ICON HAVE DONE THESE THINGS:	ORGANIZATIONS IDENTIFIED WITH GRADUATION CAP ICON HAVE AGREED TO DO THESE THINGS:	ORGANIZATIONS IDENTIFIED WITH GRADUATION CAP ICON—
Registered with Montgomery County Volunteer Center (MCVC)	Provide activities that are secular in nature	Do not include site visits or background check by MCPS or MCVC personnel
Sent a representative to an orientation where the MCPS SSL guidelines were explained	Advise students of the need that will be addressed, overall expectations, and safety information	Parents and guardians may contact individual organizations to verify safety and background-check information.
Signed an Organization Responsibility and Assurance document	Cover the SSL phases of preparation, action, and reflection	Parents and guardians are responsible for determining if an organization or service opportunity is appropriate and safe for their children
Obtained official tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)	Supervise all activities in public places (not private residences)	
Provided proof of general liability insurance coverage	Prohibit door-to-door neighborhood canvassing opportunities or telephone solicitation	
	Evaluate student performance at regular intervals and share results with student	
	Maintain log and verify service on MCPS Form 560-51: *Student Service Learning Activity Verification*, according to program timelines	
	Award 1 SSL hour for every hour of service (maximum 8 hours per day)	
	Comply with all federal, state, and local laws that forbid discrimination based on race, creed, sex, age, disability, or national origin	
	Prohibit verbal abuse, threats, physical violence, or sexual harassment directed at others	

CONTACTING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE IDENTIFIED WITH A GRADUATION CAP ICON REFLECTING MCPS SSL APPROVAL ON THE WEBSITE (WWW.MCPSSSL.ORG).

Students should seek parent/guardian approval prior to making any community organization contact for service learning.

SAMPLE STUDENT SCRIPT FOR TELEPHONE OR OTHER COMMUNICATION EXCHANGE WITH A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE

1. Hello, my name is _____.
   (Clearly state first and last name.)

2. I am _____years old and in the _____grade.
   (Clearly state age and grade.)

3. I go to _____School in _____Maryland.
   (Clearly name your school and the city it is in.)

4. I am interested in a Student Service Learning opportunity with your organization that I saw on the website.

5. I would like to learn more about the_____
   (Clearly identify the opportunity shown on the website that was of interest.)

OR

6. I would like to come to your organization to see what I can do to support your work and earn Student Service Learning hours.

7. I am in school every day until _____.
   (Clearly identify the time school is out.)

8. I cannot miss my own instructional program to earn SSL hours.

9. I am available on _____.
   (Clearly identify the weekend days and holidays you are available.)

10. When would be a good time for us to meet?

11. I look forward to seeing you then. Thank you.

PARENTS CAN HELP STUDENTS ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR SSL GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

- Help your child identify opportunities in school and in the community where a real need can be met through the SSL program.
- Keep copies of all SSL paperwork
- Ask your child questions about the project he or she is working on. What are you learning? Who are you serving?
- Read your child's reflection statement before it is submitted for review by MCPS and the Maryland State Department of Education.

CHOOSE AN APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATION

Parents are responsible for determining if an organization or service opportunity is appropriate and safe for their child. Organizations are required to—

- Advise students of the purpose of the organization
- Provide service-learning activities that are secular in nature;
- Provide information on expectations and safety;
- Address the SSL phases: Preparation, action, and reflection;
- Supervise all activities in public places;
- Evaluate and share feedback on student performance at regular intervals;
- Award 1 SSL hour for every hour of service;
- Comply with all federal, state, and local laws that forbid discrimination; and
- Prohibit verbal abuse, threats, physical violence, or sexual harassment against others.

The list of organizations on the website includes organizations tagged with the cap icon and others without the cap icon.

Organizations identified with the cap icon are preapproved by MCPS. Those not identified with a cap icon require that students complete Form 560-50: Individual SSL Request, and have their requests approved first.

See the list at http://www.montgomeryserves.org/volunteers/student-service-learning-ssl.

THINGS TO KNOW

- The SSL graduation requirement is 75 student service learning hours.
- Parents and relatives cannot serve as a child's SSL supervisor.
- Get to know the coordinator in your child's school.
- Remember to read school and PTA communications to keep on top of local and state guidelines.
- Attend school meetings and ask questions
- Check the SSL portion of your child's report card to ensure that hours have been documented.
- *The Superintendent's SSL Award* is given to students who meet the 75-hour graduation requirement by the first Friday in April of a middle school year.
- *The Certificate of Meritorious Service* is given to those students with 260 or more SSL hours by the first Friday in April of their senior year.

Go to the SSL website (www.mcpsssl.org) for general information and to find all the forms your child will need.

DEADLINES

For service performed—	Turn in documentation—
During the first semester	The first Friday in January
During the second semester	The first Friday in June
During the summer	The last Friday in September

Celebrate your child's service and learning accomplishments!

For communications in other languages, special announcements, and frequently asked questions, visit the MCPS website, www.mcpsssl.org , and the Maryland State Department of Education website, www.mdservice-learning.org.

STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING RECORD

This form is provided as an option to maintain a running record of service provided with approved organizations that meet the Maryland State Department of Education SSL graduation requirement. Make additional copies as needed.

Name_____ ID number_____

DATE	ORGANIZATION	SERVICE ACTIVITY	SUPERVISOR	HOURS

- MCPS Form 560-51: *Student Service Learning Activity Verification* documents all SSL activities.
- Documentation of service performed during the summer must be turned in to the school SSL coordinator by the last Friday in September.
- Documentation of service performed during the first semester must be turned in by the first Friday in January.
- Documentation of service performed during the second semester must be turned in by the first Friday in June.

Office of Special Education and Student Services
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland 20850

STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING ACTIVITY VERIFICATION

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS: Complete this form legibly in blue or black ink. Submit it to the school student service learning (SSL) coordinator by the following deadlines:

Service completed during the summer — **DEADLINE: Last Friday in September.**
Service completed during 1st semester — **DEADLINE: First Friday in January.**
Service completed during 2nd semester — **DEADLINE: First Friday in June.**

STUDENT INFORMATION—To be completed by the student prior to review from the nonprofit tax-exempt organization.

Name _____ _____ ____ _____
Last First MI ID Number

Parent/Guardian _____ Phone: Home _____ Work _____

School _____ Grade _____ First Period Teacher _____

Student e-mail address _____

Student Reflection: Think about your service-learning activity. Respond to the following questions in a written paragraph below.

- **What** did you do?
- **What** need did your service address?
- **Who** benefitted from your service?
- **What** did you learn about yourself?
- **How** was this experience connected to something you learned in class at school? (For example, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Arts, Physical Education, Health, Foreign Language, etc.)

SAMPLE

Must be completed legibly in blue or black ink to document service for which SSL hours are awarded.

NONPROFIT TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION INFORMATION—To be completed by the supervisor after the phases of preparation and action have occurred, and the student reflection paragraph has been read and approved.

Organization _____ Federal Employer Identification # __ __- __ __ __ __ __ __ __ Phone _____

Address _____ _____
Street City State ZIP Code e-mail

Describe Activity (performed) _____

Service Record

Date From	Date To	# Days of Service	# Hours Per Day (8 in a 24 hour period maximum)	Total # Hours Completed (award 1 SSL hour for every hour of service)

Supervisor _____ _____
Print Name Title

_____ ____/____/_____
Signature, Supervisor Date

SSL COORDINATOR USE ONLY

☐ Check if automatic hours are attached to this activity as a result of course instruction.

Verification form submitted to coordinator ____/____/_____
Date

Hours earned previously _____ + Hours for this activity _____ = Total hours including activity _____ Date ____/____/_____

MCPS Form 560-51, June 2015

Office of Special Education and Student Services
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland 20850

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING (SSL) REQUEST

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS: Complete this form legibly in ink and have it approved by the student service learning (SSL) coordinator prior to earning SSL hours with an organization or opportunity that is not identified as MCPS SSL Approved at the website *www.mcpsssl.org*. Maintain copies of all forms.

STUDENT INFORMATION—To be completed by the student allowing 2 weeks for review by the school SSL coordinator.

Student's Name _____ School _____ ID _____
Last *First*

E-mail _____ Grade _____ First Period Teacher _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Phone: Home _____-_____-_____ Other _____-_____-_____

Service Activities to be done include _____

Proposed dates of service: From ____/____/____ To ____/____/____. (maximum 1 school year)

_____ ____/____/____
Student Signature *Date*

PARENT/GUARDIAN APPROVAL: My signature below verifies that:

- I approve and accept full responsibility for my child's participation in this opportunity with this organization.
- I know this request must be approved by the SSL coordinator prior to my child beginning the activity.
- I understand that by participating in this activity my child will not receive direct supervision from MCPS staff or from anyone who has participated in the MCPS SSL training available to nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations.
- I understand that there are appro[illegible]d where supervision is provided by MCPS staff or superv[illegible]ticipated in SSL training and agree to adhere to MCPS guidelin[illegible]

_____ ____/____/____
Parent/Guardian Nam[illegible] *Date*

SAMPLE

Must be completed legibly, in blue or black ink, and granted in advance of service with an organization that is not identified with a graduation cap icon on the website, www.mcpsssl.org

NONPROFIT, TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION INFORMATION AND AGREEMENT—To be completed by the supervisor

Organization Name _____ Federal Employer Identification # __ __ - __ __ __ __ __ __ __

Address _____ _____ _____ _____
Street *City* *State* *ZIP Code*

Phone _____-_____-_____ Fax _____-_____-_____ E-mail _____

Secular activities to be performed by student include _____

My signature below verifies that

- I am 18 years old or older.
- I agree to the SSL guidelines attached to this form.
- I agree to supervise the student in the above activities in a public place.

_____ _____ _____ ____/____/____
Name (Print) *Title* *Signature, Supervisor* *Date*

APPLICATION REVIEW BY SSL COORDINATOR

☐ Approved ☐ Disapproved

☐ This does not meet SSL guidelines.

☐ Other (explain) _____

_____ ____/____/____
Signature, Student Service Learning Coordinator *Date*

Student Follow Up: Submit completed MCPS Form 560-51: *Student Service Learning Activity Verification* to the School SSL coordinator according to these deadlines.

Service completed during the summer — **DEADLINE: Last Friday in September.**
Service completed during 1st semester — **DEADLINE: First Friday in January.**
Service completed during 2nd semester — **DEADLINE: First Friday in June.**

MCPS Form 560-50, Rev. 6/15 DISTRIBUTION: Copy 1/Student Service-Learning Coordinator; Copy 2/Student →

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING (SSL)

This MCPS Form 560-50: *Individual Student Service Learning (SSL) Request* must be completed and submitted to the school SSL coordinator PRIOR to beginning an opportunity for which SSL hours are desired with an organization that is not identified as MCPS SSL approved on the website www.mcpsssl.org. Please allow 2 weeks for the SSL Coordinator to review this request. The following guidelines must be met by the nonprofit, tax-exempt organization for the *Individual Student Service Learning (SSL) Request* to be granted.

- All activities must be performed through a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization in a public place, following phases of preparation, action, and reflection.
- All activities must be secular in nature, based on a recognized need in the community and completed outside of the instructional day.
- The supervisor must be over 18 years of age and someone other than a member of the student's family.
- The activity must be performed without financial compensation.
- One service-learning hour must be awarded for one hour of service, maximum 8 hours per 24 hour period.
- The nonprofit, tax-exempt organization must comply with all federal, state, and local laws that forbid discrimination on the basis of race, creed, gender, age, disability, religion, and/or national origin.
- The nonprofit, tax-exempt organization must prohibit verbal abuse, threats, and/or physical violence directed toward others.
- The nonprofit, tax-exempt organization must prohibit sexual harassment.

Student Follow Up: Submit completed MCPS Form 560-51, *Student Service Learning Activity Verification* to the School SSL coordinator according to the following deadlines:

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Office of Special Education and Student Services
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STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS: Complete this form legibly in ink and have it approved by the student service learning (SSL) coordinator prior to earning SSL hours with an organization or opportunity that is not identified as MCPS SSL Approved at the website *www.mcpsssl.org*. Maintain copies of all forms.

STUDENT INFORMATION—To be completed by the student allowing 2 weeks for review by the school SSL coordinator.

Student's Name _____ School _____ ID _____
Last *First*

E-mail _____ Grade_____ First Period Teacher_____

Parent/Guardian _____ Phone: Home _____-_____-_____ Other _____-_____-_____

Service Activities to be done include_____

Proposed dates of service: From ____/____/____ To ____/____/____. (maximum 1 school year)

_____ ____/____/____
Student Signature *Date*

PARENT/GUARDIAN APPROVAL: My signature below verifies that:

- I approve and accept full responsibility for my child's participation in this opportunity with this organization.
- I know this request must be approved by the SSL coordinator prior to my child beginning the activity.
- I understand that by participating in this activity my child will not receive direct supervision from MCPS staff or from anyone who has participated in the MCPS SSL training available to nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations.
- I understand that there are approved SSL organizations and opportunities available to my child where supervision is provided by MCPS staff or supervisors from nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations that have participated in SSL training and agree to adhere to MCPS guidelines.

_____ _____ ____/____/____
Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT) *Signature* *Date*

NONPROFIT, TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION INFORMATION AND AGREEMENT—To be completed by the supervisor

Organization Name_____Federal Employer Identification #__ __ - __ __ __ __ __ __ __

Address _____ _____ _____ _____
Street *City* *State* *ZIP Code*

Phone _____-_____-_____ Fax _____-_____-_____ E-mail _____

Secular activities to be performed by student include_____

My signature below verifies that

- I am 18 years old or older.
- I agree to the SSL guidelines attached to this form.
- I agree to supervise the student in the above activities in a public place.

_____ _____ _____ ____/____/____
Name (Print) *Title* *Signature, Supervisor* *Date*

APPLICATION REVIEW BY SSL COORDINATOR

☐ Approved ☐ Disapproved

☐ This does not meet SSL guidelines.

☐ Other (explain)_____

_____ ____/____/____
Signature, Student Service Learning Coordinator *Date*

Student Follow Up: Submit completed MCPS Form 560-51: *Student Service Learning Activity Verification* to the School SSL coordinator according to these deadlines.

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- The nonprofit, tax-exempt organization must comply with all federal, state, and local laws that forbid discrimination on the basis of race, creed, gender, age, disability, religion, and/or national origin.
- The nonprofit, tax-exempt organization must prohibit verbal abuse, threats, and/or physical violence directed toward others.
- The nonprofit, tax-exempt organization must prohibit sexual harassment.

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Service completed during the summer — **DEADLINE: Last Friday in September.**
Service completed during 1st semester — **DEADLINE: First Friday in January.**
Service completed during 2nd semester — **DEADLINE: First Friday in June.**

STUDENT INFORMATION—To be completed by the student prior to review from the nonprofit tax-exempt organization.

Name _____ _____ _____ _____
Last First MI ID Number

Parent/Guardian _____ Phone: Home _____ Work _____

School _____ Grade _____ First Period Teacher _____

Student e-mail address _____

Student Reflection: Think about your service-learning activity. Respond to the following questions in a written paragraph below.

- **What** did you do?
- **What** need did your service address?
- **Who** benefitted from your service?
- **What** did you learn about yourself?
- **How** was this experience connected to something you learned in a class at school? (For example, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Arts, Physical Education, Health, Foreign Language, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

NONPROFIT TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION INFORMATION—To be completed by the supervisor after the phases of preparation and action have occurred, and the student reflection paragraph has been read and approved.

Organization _____ Federal Employer Identification # __ __- __ __ __ __ __ __ __ Phone _____

Address _____ _____
Street City State ZIP Code e-mail

Describe Activity (performed) _____

_____

Service Record

Date From	Date To	# Days of Service	# Hours Per Day (8 in a 24 hour period maximum)	Total # Hours Completed (award 1 SSL hour for every hour of service)

Supervisor _____ _____
Print Name Title

_____ ____/____/_____
Signature, Supervisor Date

SSL COORDINATOR USE ONLY

☐ Check if automatic hours are attached to this activity as a result of course instruction.

Verification form submitted to coordinator ____/____/_____
Date

Hours earned previously _____ + Hours for this activity _____ = Total hours including activity _____ Date ____/____/_____

MCPS Form 560-51, June 2015

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BEST PRACTICES OF STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING

1. THE STUDENT MEETS A RECOGNIZED NEED IN THE COMMUNITY.

- Examines pressing community needs—preparation
- Strategizes to address problems associated with community needs—preparation
- Provides direct, indirect, and/or advocacy service—action

2. THE STUDENT ACHIEVES CURRICULAR OBJECTIVES.

- Uses academic standards to establish mastery objective—preparation
- Applies academic learning to recognized community needs—preparation, action, reflection
- Assesses progress toward and attainment of mastery objectives—preparation, action

3. THE STUDENT GAINS NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS.

- Explores citizenship and career options—preparation, action
- Understands expectations associated with participation—preparation
- Cooperates with team members and community partners—action

4. THE STUDENT PLANS AHEAD.

- Identifies tasks, timelines, and outcomes—preparation
- Assesses own skills and interests—preparation
- Takes leadership opportunities—preparation, action

5. THE STUDENT WORKS WITH EXISTING SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS.

- Identifies nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations with which to partner—preparation
- Creates collaborative, reciprocal relationships through involvement—action
- Respects the human dignity and contributions of others—action, reflection

6. THE STUDENT DEVELOPS A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY.

- Evaluates own performance—reflection
- Strengthens character through civic engagement—action
- Participates in a variety of service opportunities—action

7. THE STUDENT REFLECTS THROUGHOUT THE EXPERIENCE.

- Evaluates overall impact of service and learning—reflection
- Analyzes what was learned from multiple perspectives—reflection
- Explores next steps to continue service-learning involvement—reflection

11-05 Adapted from *Maryland's Seven Best Practices of Service Learning*

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW CAN MCPS STUDENTS EARN SSL HOURS?

- Full participation in service-learning aspects and successful completion of specific middle and high school courses
- Participation in service-learning activities outside of the instructional school day promoted by school-sponsored clubs or organizations. The advisor verifies the SSL hours
- Participation with MCPS SSL Approved organizations and opportunities outside of the instructional school day; both the organization and the opportunity must be pre-approved
- Submission of the MCPS Form 560-51: *Student Service Learning Activity Verification*, to the SSL coordinator, according to systemwide deadlines

WHAT ARE THE FORMS USED TO DOCUMENT SSL AND WHERE CAN THEY BE FOUND?

- MCPS Form 560-51: *Student Service Learning Activity Verification*, is required to document every SSL activity.
- MCPS Form 560-50: *Individual Student Service Learning Request*, is required to be completed and approved by the SSL coordinator in advance of participation in any opportunity with an organization that is not identified with the MCPS SSL approval icon on the Montgomery County Volunteer Center website.
- SSL forms are available in any middle or high school and can be downloaded from the MCPS SSL home page at www.mcpsssl.org. Students should keep copies of all SSL documents.

WHAT CRITERIA IS USED TO DETERMINE IF AN OPPORTUNITY IS ELIGIBLE TO EARN SSL HOURS?

All MCPS SSL approved activities are—

- Pre-approved;
- Provided through specific MCPS courses; school-sponsored activities; or official tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations;
- Secular (nonreligious) in nature;
- Provided in a public location;
- Supervised by an adult representing the nonprofit organization;
- Eligible to earn 1 SSL hour for every hour of service outside of the school day (maximum of 8 hours in a 24-hour period); and
- Focused on the three phases of service learning: Preparation, Action, and Reflection.

All MCPS SSL-approved activities may NOT—

- occur in a private residence or on private property,
- be supervised by a parent or relative,
- be religious in nature,
- receive financial or other compensation, or
- involve door-to-door canvassing or telephone solicitation.

Are there activities that do not result in SSL hours?

Yes. Some activities for which students may not earn SSL hours include service that—

- involves door-to-door distribution or neighborhood canvasing of any kind;
- involves supervision by parent or relative or by an individual younger than 18 years of age;
- is not sponsored and supervised by an MCPS SSL-approved tax-exempt nonprofit organization;
- is religious in nature;
- is performed in a private residence or on private property; and
- results in financial or other compensation.

How are student records toward the SSL diploma requirement maintained?

The SSL coordinator is available in every middle and high school to provide information about the SSL requirement, opportunities, timelines, and forms. The hours documented on the *Student Service Learning Activity Verification* forms are entered into each student record from Grade 6 through Grade 12. The SSL hours "required," "completed," and "remaining" are reflected on the report card every nine weeks. Students should keep copies of all SSL documents.

Is there a list of MCPS SSL-approved organizations and MCPS SSL-approved opportunities?

Yes, on the MCPS SSL homepage, www.mcpsssl.org, click on "SSL Community Activities" that connects to the Montgomery County Volunteer Center website. Organizations and opportunities that are identified with MCPS SSL approval icon . Both the organization and the opportunity must be identified with the MCPS SSL approval icon.

Can students participate in SSL activities with nonprofit organizations that are located outside of Montgomery County?

Yes. MCPS students may participate in SSL opportunities with a wide geographic range of nonprofit organizations. Opportunities with nonprofit organizations that are not identified with MCPS SSL approval require prior approval of MCPS Form 560-50: *Individual Student Service Learning Request*.

Additional information is available on the MCPS SSL homepage at www.mcpsssl.org. Go to the "Frequently Asked Questions" section.

This document is available in an alternate format, upon request, under the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*, by contacting the Department of Public Information and Web Services, at 850 Hungerford Drive, Room 112, Rockville, MD 20850, or by telephone at 301-279-3391 or via the Maryland Relay at 1-800-735-2258.

Individuals who request (need) sign language interpretation or cued speech transliteration in communicating with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) may contact the Office of Interpreting Services in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program at 301-517-5539 or 301-637-2958VP, or send an e-mail message to interpreting_services@mcpsmd.org.

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