

Service Cord Guidelines

Smithson Valley High School

14001 Hwy 46 West, Spring Branch, TX 78070 (850) 885-1000

- ⊞ **Purpose:** To recognize students who engage in a high level (quantitatively and qualitatively) of service to the community by awarding a service cord to be worn during the senior graduation ceremony.
- ⊞ **Hours:** Required is an average of 40 per year, 160 hours total for the student's high school career. For students who do not attend Smithson Valley for all four years, the student will be required to perform 40 hours per year that they have attended SVHS. If a student earns 30 hours one year, 50 the next, 35 the next, and 45 the final year, the total is still 160, and the student will qualify for the service cord. Service hours from the summer before the Intent to Serve (ITS) is signed are allowed. **ITS must be filed before the end of the first semester in order to receive credit for the summer hours.**
- ⊞ **Student responsibilities:** Students must declare their intent to participate in the program by signing a Declaration of Intent to Serve (ITS). This and verification forms are both available in the Assistant Principals' (AP) office or A-174. Forms may be available in a downloadable version from the campus website. The verification forms are to be attached to the Service Cord Log. It is the **student's responsibility to maintain copies of all paperwork.** The Service Hour Log may be kept by the student or turned in to P.C. Ingraham (A-174) as desired, but the Intent to Serve **MUST** be on file in order to participate in the Service Cord program. In addition, **all hours must be submitted in the spring of each year for review and verification** by the Service Awards Committee. Not more than 10% (16 hours) of the required hours can be from court-ordered community service activities or "purchased" i.e. donations of socks, books, canned food, etc. For the ease of verification, hours are to be earned in one-hour increments (i.e. two 30 minute sessions will not considered as one hour).
- ⊞ **Guidelines:** Students **may not** receive any form of payment or compensation for the service performed. The following may NOT count toward service hours: school activities (ex.: decorating for prom or homecoming); duties associated with an elected school office that should be carried out in the normal course of duty for that office; family obligations (ex.: babysitting/caring for other family members or friends); duties performed in association with a student's employment; tutoring a friend (ex. study groups, proof reading a friend's paper, studying for an exam). **Parents/guardians may NOT sign to verify hours. The overriding issue should be that the community service is done primarily to benefit others in the community at large, and should be something out of the student's normal course of action. The final approval will be with the committee.** The following **may** count toward service hours and is NOT comprehensive: volunteer duties associated with a church; Boy Scout/ Girl Scout service hours; river clean up; Elf Louise/ Elf Tabitha; highway cleanup; blood drives (including giving blood); structured tutoring (such as of younger students, adult education, literacy programs, citizenship programs); service hours honored by PALs, NHS, and Student Council. **Activities about which the student is unclear should be cleared through a member of the Service Awards Committee or call Ingraham at school (830) 885-1064 or home at (830) 964-2623.**
- ⊞ **Deadlines:** Students may declare their intent to participate in the program at any time. However, all the hours must be completed by April 1st of the student's senior year. The committee will review senior applications during the last two weeks of April each year and then review all others student applications following that. Files will be maintained in A-174. **The final responsibility for maintenance of record resides with the participant.**

The Service Awards Committee at this time consists of:

Katie Kirk, PAL 2
Coordinator

Kayla Booker, PAL1
Coordinator

P.C. Ingraham
Chairperson

Chris Smith
Assistant Principal

For more information, contact P.C. "Cricket" Ingraham at (830) 885-1064, the address above, or cricket.ingraham@comalisd.org