

Service-Learning Fact Sheet and Policies

Blyth-Templeton Academy (BTA) aims to help students identify their gifts and use them in a way that brings them joy and serves others. With this in mind, a BTA education includes service-learning activities both through group events scheduled by the school, and an individual service experience required for students who are pursuing a BTA diploma.

Individual Service-Learning Requirements

Students should choose an assignment that allows them to pursue opportunities they find meaningful and would like to gain experience in or learn more about. The individual service-learning experience must consist of nonpaying volunteer work and must meet the following guidelines:

- The student, not the parent/guardian, will take the lead on identifying an appropriate opportunity, communicating with the site and the Service-Learning Coordinator, completing paperwork, and scheduling.
- The student must complete at least 75 hours of service with a single organization over a period of no more than one year.
- The student must serve members of an underserved or disadvantaged community that the student is not a part of. Programs such as museums and libraries that serve the general public are eligible.
- At least 65 hours must involve direct service to people. Up to 10 hours may involve training, administrative work, or tasks that do not involve interaction with members of the community being served.
- Service may be performed during free periods of the school day or when school is not in session (after school, weekends, vacations). On a case-by-case basis, students in 9th and 10th grade may be approved to sign out during free periods or Flex period to perform service.
- The service-learning experience must begin after the end of 8th grade. Students who have met the requirement, according to Blyth-Templeton Academy guidelines, during their tenure at another school should provide documentation of their previous service to the Service-Learning Coordinator.
- In general, service must be completed no later than the end of Term 1 of 12th grade. If the student has not attended BTA prior to 12th grade, it must be completed by the end of Term 3.
- Service-learning is a pass/not pass class and will be listed on the student's transcript. If the requirement is not completed by the deadline described above, it will be listed with the designation "incomplete."

Required Forms

1. **Before hours can be logged, the student must submit:**
 - **an individual service-learning agreement** signed by the student, parent, service supervisor, and BTA Service-Learning Coordinator and

- **a completed pre-service reflection form.**
- 2. The student must maintain a **service log**, which must be signed by the site supervisor **each time the student attends.**
- 3. The **student** will complete an **evaluation** at the conclusion of the service-learning experience.
- 4. The site **supervisor** will complete an **evaluation** at the conclusion of the service-learning experience.

Eligible Activities

Many volunteer activities might be worthwhile but do not meet BTA guidelines. For example:

- Activities that do not involve interaction with people being served are not eligible. For example, caring for animals, planting trees, and testing waterways for pollution are not eligible, but taking service animals to visit with nursing home patients or conducting environmental education for underserved communities would be eligible activities.
- Programs that do not support underserved communities, such as camps for mainstream children, are not eligible.
- Activities that are inherently partisan or political, such as campaign work, are not eligible. Activities such as voter registration, which does not favor one candidate or party, are eligible.
- Activities that are inherently religious (such as prayer services or teaching religious school) are not eligible. Non-religious activities organized by faith-based organizations (such as mentoring or providing meals to the hungry) are fully eligible.
- Service with groups whose programs are inconsistent with school values may not be used to fulfill the individual service-learning requirement.

Group Service-Learning Activities

To build camaraderie and a culture of service, group service-learning activities are scheduled by the school, usually during Community Meeting time. Students are required to participate in these group service-learning events throughout the school year. These events do not count toward the individual service-learning experience.