TCMS MERIT

★ WHERE CURIOSITY LEADS TO EXCELLENCE ★

Welcome to the
MERIT Program!

EXPLORE
ideas beyond the classroom.

THINK
creatively and solve authentic problems.

COLLABORATE
with other motivated learners.

DEVELOP
leadership and communication skills.

CHALLENGE
yourself to reach your full potential.



Curious Minds. Limitless Potential. Bright Futures.

HANDBOOK

MERIT PROGRAM

Maximizing Education to Realize Intellectual Transformation

The Thomas County School System offers gifted and high achieving students in grades 5-12 a unique program integrated into our middle and high school campuses. The purpose of the MERIT program is to challenge students to achieve their maximum academic potential while providing a supportive learning environment for advanced study and recognition for outstanding academic achievement.

Beginning in sixth grade at Thomas County Middle School, students will receive an academic course in Spanish each year, allowing students who begin the program by sixth grade to earn two full years of high school Spanish credit while still in middle school. In seventh grade, students may choose Latin to earn two years of a foreign language credit. MERIT 8th grade students will have the opportunity to earn high school credit for Algebra I, 9th Grade Literature/Composition, Physical Science, Spanish, Basic Agriculture, and Intro to Computers.

Students who wish to be designated as "MERIT" must complete a minimum of 20 hours community service per year, and they must participate in at least one extracurricular activity and two academic competitions per year.

To retain MERIT status at Thomas County Middle School, a student:

1. Must take academic classes designated as part of the MERIT program.
2. Must maintain an academic accumulative average of an 85 or better.
3. Must take foreign language as a class each year beginning in fifth grade.
4. Must complete 20 hours of community service each year.
5. Must maintain an exemplary disciplinary record.
6. Must maintain good attendance.

MERIT

EXCELLENCE. OPPORTUNITY. FUTURE.

Meet Our MERIT LEADERSHIP TEAM

We are honored to lead, support, and champion the MERIT program and our amazing students.



Erin White

MERIT DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Erin White is the MERIT District Director for Thomas County Schools. She is passionate about creating opportunities for gifted and advanced learners to challenge themselves, grow academically, and reach their full potential. Erin works closely with school leaders, teachers, and families to ensure every MERIT student has the support and resources needed to succeed today and thrive in the future.



Dana Studdard

TCMS MERIT COORDINATOR

Dana Studdard serves as the TCMS MERIT Coordinator. She is dedicated to guiding students as they explore their abilities, pursue their interests, and achieve at high levels. Dana supports students, families, and teachers through the MERIT experience and helps ensure our middle school students are prepared for advanced learning and future success.



Nancy Rogers

MERIT CURRICULUM COORDINATOR

Nancy Rogers is the MERIT Curriculum Coordinator. She works to provide rigorous, engaging curriculum and meaningful learning experiences that inspire students to think critically, solve problems, and become confident, responsible leaders. Nancy partners with teachers to continually elevate instruction and support student excellence.

★ Our Commitment. *Their Future.* Endless Possibilities. ★

Together, we make every moment matter.

MERIT TEACHERS

A team of highly qualified teachers who provide rigorous, engaging instruction designed to challenge gifted and high-achieving learners while fostering creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and innovation.

Fifth Grade

English Language Arts
- Veronda Gillis

Mathematics
- Sarah Rigdon

Science
- Brandi Clapper

Social Studies
- Allyson Smallwood

Sixth Grade

English Language Arts
- Betsy Garbett

Mathematics
- Kedist Chen-Black

Science
- Samantha Sturrup

Social Studies
- Amanda West

Spanish
- Ben McLain

Seventh Grade

English Language Arts
- Kristi Keve

Mathematics
- Gavin Wilson

Science
- Kimberly Simmons

Social Studies
- Heather Ward

Spanish
- Dina Ortiz

Eighth Grade

English Language Arts
- Rena Ramirez

Mathematics
- Stacie Layne

Science
- Katie Brewer

Social Studies
- Brenton Smith

Spanish
- Amanda McConnell

Additional Merit Staff

Latin
- Charlie Gammel

Computer Science / AI
- Will Hanna

MERIT Focus (Study Hall)
- Laurel Johnson
- Djuana Rinehart

THOMAS COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL

MERIT HONOR CODE

INTEGRITY • RESPONSIBILITY • RESPECT • EXCELLENCE

1. RESPECT

I will treat students, teachers, staff, guests, and school property with courtesy and respect. I will help create a safe, kind, and welcoming learning environment.

2. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I will submit work that is my own. I will not give or receive unauthorized help.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

- *Plagiarism*
- *Copying or imitating another's work*
- *Submitting work completed by another person*
- *Downloading or copying material from the Internet*
- *Reusing previously submitted work without permission*
- *Paraphrasing a source without giving appropriate credit*

3. HONESTY

I will tell the truth and provide accurate information. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, and I will not change records or information.

4. SCHOOL AND FAMILY COMMUNICATION

- *Use kind and respectful words when communicating.*
- *Do not forge or change a parent's or guardian's signature or email.*
- *Do not ask someone to give a false signature.*
- *Keep school communication honest and respectful.*

5. ASSESSMENTS

- *Follow all directions and testing rules.*
- *Ask your teacher questions if you need help.*
- *Use only allowed materials and devices.*
- *Keep your answers and test materials private.*
- *Do your own work.*
- *Do not take pictures, copy, or share test questions or answers.*
- *Do not access information before, during, or after a test.*
- *Complete all assessments honestly and independently unless told otherwise.*

6. ATTENDANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

- *Attend class regularly and arrive on time.*
- *Avoid unnecessary absences and early checkouts.*
- *Complete missed work and meet deadlines.*
- *Schedule appointments outside school time when possible.*
- *Bring needed materials and be ready to participate.*

7. RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

- *Use school technology only for learning.*
- *Do not access, share, or create inappropriate content.*
- *Do not bypass security or restrictions.*
- *Do not record or photograph anyone without permission.*
- *Do not harass, embarrass, threaten, or exclude others online or in person.*

8. CONDUCT AND CHARACTER

I will follow the highest standards of behavior in and out of school. I will show kindness, practice self-discipline, and represent MERIT with pride.

THE MERIT PLEDGE

I will strive to demonstrate integrity, curiosity, responsibility, and respect in every classroom, every assignment, and every interaction. I understand that being a MERIT student is not simply about academic achievement—it is about choosing to do what is right, even when no one is watching.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Honors vs. Advanced Courses

The MERIT program at Thomas County Middle School consists of different course levels. All courses taught in the program meet state performance standards and are designed to prepare students for success in Honors and Advanced Placement courses at the high school level. Topics are broken into discrete modules that are taught in tandem with the framework students need to develop strong study skills.

In Advanced classes:

- The curriculum builds on the core curriculum
- Students do more extensive writing and research projects.
- Students tackle problems that require more analytical thinking
- Projects and activities demand more independent thinking and self-discipline than projects in core classes.
- Performance and grading standards are higher than in core classes.

In Honors classes:

- The curriculum builds on the **advanced curriculum** and includes more content.
- The course moves at a more rapid pace.
- The course has a different curriculum map and instructional calendar.

In all MERIT classes, students are expected to:

- Read multiple texts at or above their Lexile level inside and outside of class for their studies and assignments (Ex. novels, research documents, research articles on the Internet, non-fiction texts, etc.)
- Analyze and synthesize primary and secondary sources used in research
- Engage in higher-level inquiry-based and project-based learning
- Produce higher-level writing assignments and constructive responses on assessments (Higher level = Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation of concepts studied)

High School Courses

As MERIT students enter eighth grade, they have the opportunity to enroll in several high school-level courses, including **9th Grade Honors Literature and Composition I, Algebra, and Physical Science**. MERIT students may also begin earning high school world language credits in middle school through **Spanish I in seventh grade and Spanish II in eighth grade**. Students may also have the opportunity to take **Latin I and/or Latin II during seventh and eighth grades**.

These advanced courses provide a rigorous curriculum while giving MERIT students the opportunity to **earn high school credits before entering high school**.

High School Credit and GPA

Because these are high school-level courses, the grades students earn become part of their **official high school academic record and transcript**. Grades earned in these courses may be included in the calculation of a student's **high school grade point average (GPA)** in accordance with district and high school grading policies.

Students and families should understand that the academic expectations for these courses reflect the rigor and responsibility of high school coursework. MERIT students are encouraged to approach these classes with consistent effort, strong study habits, and a commitment to academic success.

High School Course Placement

Enrollment in high school courses during middle school is based on a comprehensive review of each student's academic performance. Placement decisions are made using multiple measures to ensure that students are prepared for the rigor of high school-level coursework.

The following information is considered when determining eligibility:

- **Exemplary performance on the Georgia Milestones Assessment** in the corresponding subject area
- **MAP Growth assessment scores** that demonstrate readiness for advanced coursework
- **Consistently strong classroom grades** in the subject area

After an initial list of eligible students is developed, **seventh-grade teachers review the recommendations and provide additional input** regarding each student's academic readiness, work habits, and ability to succeed in an accelerated learning environment. This collaborative process helps ensure that placement decisions are thoughtful, well-informed, and in the best interest of each student.

TCMS CLUB DESCRIPTIONS

Club/Organization Brief Description	Sponsor Room # Grades:	Contact Email	Meeting Day/Time	Competitive
4-H 4-H is the nation's largest youth organization where kids learn through fun, hands-on projects in STEM, healthy living, agriculture, and civic engagement. Great for students who ride the bus since it meets during school hours.	TBA 5-8	Cindy Mott Wynn cmwynn@uga.edu	TBD Once a month, some Sat. (usually at the 4-H office).	DPA-yes
Archery Club (FCA Outdoors) All skill levels are welcome! Come practice shooting a bow while uniting and inspiring to make the world a better place.	618 5-8	Ben McLain bmclain@tcjackets.net	Tuesdays 3:30-4:30	Yes
Builders Club Are you interested in helping your community? This is the club for you! Sponsored by Kiwanis. We are a student-led service organization focusing on leadership development.	820 5-8	Logan Odom lodom@tcjackets.net	TBD	No Only Service Learning Projects
Chess Club This club is for anyone who wants to learn more about chess: beginners and intermediate players. This is a great opportunity for students to expand their knowledge of a timeless game while improving their problem-solving skills and having fun at the same time.	615 5-8	Betsy Garbett jgarbett@tcjackets.net	Tuesdays 3:30-4:30	Yes
Dance Club The TCMS Dance Club is an exciting opportunity for students who love to dance, perform, and work as a team. Members will learn a variety of dance styles while building confidence, creativity, teamwork, and stage presence in a fun and positive environment. Throughout the school year, Dance Club members may perform at selected school events, community functions, and athletic events.	Dance Studio 6-8	Katie Gaston kgaston@tcjackets.net	Monday 3:15-4:30	No

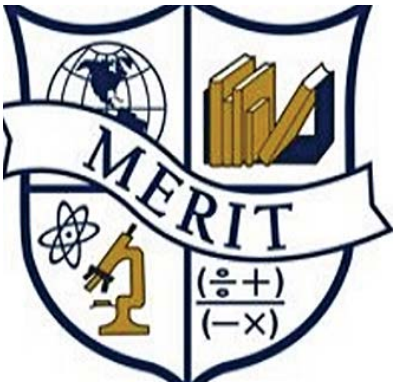
Club/Organization Brief Description	Sponsor Room #	Contact Email	Meeting Day/Time	Competitive
Disc Golf Disc Golf is a healthy, inexpensive, recreational activity that provides upper and lower body conditioning, aerobic exercise, and mental stimulation. From keeping score to choosing the right angle, to knowing standings in competition, playing by the numbers is part of disc golf. Disc golf is played like golf except, instead of a ball and clubs, players use a flying disc. Disc golf is quick and easy to learn, so anyone can play!	720 5-8	Gavin Wilson gwilson@tcjackets.net Britain Pyle bpyle@tcjackets.net	Weekly starting in February (Day TBA) 3:30-5:00	No
Drama Club Drama Club gives middle school students the opportunity to explore acting and theatre through rehearsing and performing short plays and skits. The program concludes with a community performance where families and community members are invited to watch the collection of student-performed and student-directed plays. Drama Club encourages creativity, collaboration, and confidence while introducing students to both acting and directing.	819 5-8	Kimsey Hodge khodge@tcjackets.net	Wednesdays Year Round 3:00 - 4:00	No
Dramatic Jackets Show Choir Dramatic Jackets Show Choir is a performance ensemble where students develop skills in singing, movement, and stage performance. Students must audition and are selected based on their audition. Members rehearse musical numbers that combine vocals and choreography.	819 5-8	Kimsey Hodge khodge@tcjackets.net	Wednesdays Year Round 3:00 - 5:00	Yes
Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) FCA focuses on serving local communities around the globe by engaging, equipping, and empowering coaches and athletes to unite, inspire, and change the world.	612 5-8	Wade Davidson wdavison@tcjackets.net	Beginning in September Weekly 7:30 am	No
FCA Outdoors The Fellowship of Christian Athletes Outdoor program is designed for any student who wants to learn more about the outdoors while growing in their faith.	608 5-8	Kevin Keve kkeve@tcjackets.net Ben Huntzinger bhuntzinger@tcjackets.net	Tuesdays 3:30-4:15	No

Club/Organization Brief Description	Sponsor Room #	Contact Email	Meeting Day/Time	Competitive
FCCLA Family, Career and Community Leaders of America. FCCLA is a nonprofit national career and technical student organization for young men and women in Family and Consumer Sciences education in public and private schools through grade 12.	FCS Lab 5-8	Megan Palmer mpalmer@tcjackets.net	First Thursday of each month 7:30 AM	No
FFA The FFA (formerly known as the Future Farmers of America) is a premier youth leadership organization. It prepares middle and high school students for career success and personal growth through agricultural education. Members learn about agriscience, business, and technology, while developing practical skills through hands-on experiences and community service.	Ag Room 5-8	Tyler Jackson tjackson@tcjackets.net	Monthly on Tuesdays 7:00 AM	Yes
Girls With Poise Our goal is to empower young girls by cultivating confidence, grace, and leadership through the teaching of proper etiquette, personal grooming, and self-development. We are committed to shaping future leaders who carry themselves with dignity, inspire others, and make a positive impact in our communities and beyond.	Girl's Conditioning Room 5-8	Deborah Anderson danderson@tcjackets.net Valarie Williams vwilliams@tcjackets.net Tashara Jackson tajackson@tcjackets.net	2nd Thursday of each Month	No
Heart & Soul - Girls on the Run Running Club for girls! What fun! Girls of all abilities learn to embrace their inner strength and make meaningful connections with others.	802 6-8	Rena Ramirez rramirez@tcjackets.net	Weekly (Spring)	No
Interact Club Interact Club is a student service organization sponsored by The Rotary Club of Thomasville that encourages middle school students to develop leadership skills while giving back to their community. Members participate in service projects, volunteer opportunities, and activities that promote teamwork, responsibility, and compassion.	722 5-8	Melissa Artz martz@tcjackets.net Jill Russell jrussell@tcjackets.net	Thursdays 3:20-4:00	No

Club/Organization Brief Description	Sponsor Room #	Contact Email	Meeting Day/Time	Competitive
Jigsaw Puzzle Club Promotes critical thinking, visual -spatial reasoning, collaboration, and problem solving through the study of jigsaw puzzles!	616 5-8	Kedist Chen-Black kchenblack@tcjackets.net	Bimonthly for semester one	No
Jotting Jackets Calling all storytellers, poets, and idea-makers! Do you love to write or want to try something new? Join our school's creative writing club! We'll dive into fun and inspiring activities, share our stories, and even enter writing competitions. No experience needed-- just bring your imagination!	719 5-8	Kristi Keve krkeve@tcjackets.net Rena Ramirez rramirez@tcjackets.net	1st and 3rd Thursday of each month 3:30-4:30	Yes
Latin Club The Thomas County Schools Junior Classical League is a chapter of both the Georgia and National Junior Classical Leagues, which are organizations committed to an appreciation of the impact of the Classical Greek and Roman cultures on modern life. It is an academically competitive club and participates in several testing events, as well as state and national in-person events.	703b 6-8	Charlie Gammel cgammel@tcjackets.net	Fridays 7:30	Yes
LEGO League- 2 Teams First Lego League encourages students to think like scientists and engineers. They compete in three areas: Robot, Core Values, and Project. Students will research and solve a real-world problem. They will build, test, and program a robot.	614 0r Hanna's Room 5-8	Will Hanna whanna@tcjackets.net Sarah Rigdon srigdon@tcjackets.net Sam Sturrup ssturrup@tcjackets.net Brandi Clapper bclapper@tcjackets.net	Weekly 3:30-4:30	Yes Students must apply for this club in August.
Math Olympiad **5th/6th** Come explore mathematical concepts while developing flexibility in solving non-routine problems with multiple solution paths.	510 5-6	Sarah Rigdon srigdon@tcjackets.net	TBD At 3:30	Yes
Math Olympiad **7th/8th** Math Olympiad is a prestigious, competitive problem-solving contest for students. Rather than testing standard	803	Stacie Layne slayne@tcjackets.net	TBD	Yes

Club/Organization Brief Description	Sponsor Room #	Contact Email	Meeting Day/Time	Competitive
school curriculum, it features complex, puzzle-like problems—often proof-based—designed to challenge participants to develop logical thinking, creativity, and deep analytical skills	7-8			
National Junior Honor Society The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) elevates a school's commitment to the values of scholarship, service, leadership, character, and citizenship and helps middle-level students develop the knowledge and skills to become well-rounded student leaders in their school, community, and beyond.	804 613 8th only	Brenton Smith bsmith@tcjackets.net Mandy West awest@tcjackets.net	Monthly 3:30-4:30	Trip to Washington DC
Omega Mentorship Exposes young men to the benefits of planning, organizing, though collaboration, while simulating good leadership characteristics designed to raise their aspiration levels.	817 5-8	Matthew Moore mmoore@tchackets.net	Every other Wednesday	No
Reading Bowl Reading Bowl is a club that allows students who love to read to dive into books of all genres. Students will compete against other students across the state of Georgia to answer questions as a group about the books they enjoyed. Come join us starting in September!	615 611 5-8	Betsy Garbett jgarbett@tcjackets.net Nicole Boyd nboyd@tcjackets.net Jennifer Brinn jbrinn@tcjackets.net	Tuesdays 3-4	Yes
Rubik's Cube Club All skill levels are welcome—from beginners to advanced solvers! This club offers a fun and supportive environment to practice solving Rubik's Cubes and connect with fellow enthusiasts. Each student should bring their own standard 3x3 Rubik's Cube. Each week, we will focus on a new step in solving a Rubik's Cube. As students progress, we'll hold friendly in-club competitions to challenge and celebrate improvement.	510 5-8	Sarah Rigdon srigdon@tcjackets.net Katie Brewer kbrewer@tcjackets.net	Weekly for 6 weeks Day TBD	No
Science Academy Students will explore Space Science, Animal Science, and Roller Coaster Physics in an after-school program, followed by a 4-day field excursion to Kennedy Space Center, EPCOT,	603	Dana Studdard dstuddard@tcjackets.net Djuana Rinehart drinehart@tcjackets.net	Mondays 3:30 - 5:00 8th-December 7th - October 6th-	No

Club/Organization Brief Description	Sponsor Room #	Contact Email	Meeting Day/Time	Competitive
Wonderworks, Disney's Animal Kingdom, SeaWorld, and Universal Studios. A must-do for all Science Nerds!		Kim Simmons ksimmons@tcjackets.ne	February Overnight Field Trips Involved	
Spanish Club Students will study Spanish cultures, prepare dishes, and create Spanish arts and crafts. Students practice and prepare for a Spanish speaking competition where they use the language to have a conversation with a judge.	618 6-8	Dina Ortiz dortiz@tcjackets.net Ben McLain bmclain@tcjackets.net Amanda McConnell amcconnell@tcjackets.net	TBD 3:30-4:30	Yes
Student Council This club is for students who like to be involved in setting up school events, such as dances and the can drive. We also try to help MERIT students get their service learning hours.	513 5-8	Rachel Henderson rhenderson@tcjackets.net Sarah Rigdon srigdon@tcjackets.net	Every other Tuesday (subject to change)	No Service Learning Projects
TCMS Bass Fishing TCMS Bass Fishing will be the first of its kind at TCMS. Once a month we will meet at Tired Creek Lake in Cairo, GA. We will meet twice a month in my classroom to discuss tips and tricks for beginners all the way to experts.	608 5-8	Ben Huntzinger bhuntzinger@tcjackets.net	1st Wednesday of each Month	Yes
Young Local Historians Travel back in time to see how big events like the Civil War, World Wars, and the Great Depression impacted Thomas County! In this club, we'll explore our local history through museum visits, guest speakers, and real historical documents. If you're curious about how the past shaped our community, this is the club for you!	804 5-8	Brenton Smith bsmith@tcjackets.net Allyson Smallwood asmallwood@tcjackets.net Heather Ward hward@tcjackets.net	Thursdays 3:30-4:30	No



MERIT

MERIT students are REQUIRED to:

- Maintain an 85% cumulative academic average
- Accumulate twenty hours of service learning hours
- Participate in two academic competitions (all requirements for each competition must be met in order to receive competition credit)
- Become an active member of one academic club
- Maintain good attendance

Extracurricular Involvement Completion Form

Student Name:	Extracurricular Club/Activity:

What did you do to complete your requirement?

If club had a culminating competition, did student participate?

_____Yes

_____ No

Describe the competition and your role:

By signing this form, I agree that this student has fulfilled the requirements of the activity described above.

_____ _____

Adult Sponsor Signature **Date**

Middle school MERIT students are required to participate in at least one academic extracurricular activity. Meeting dates will vary. Club sponsors will provide information about specific clubs. Please see the TCMS Clubs list for all of the amazing club opportunities.

This form must be turned in to receive credit for participation.

Competition Completion Form

Student Name:	Competition:
What did you do to complete your requirement?	
Many competitions have different levels. Please identify the levels in which you competed. School _____ Date _____ Result _____ District_____ Date _____ Result_____ State _____ Date _____ Result_____ National _____ Date _____ Result_____	

_____

Adult Sponsor Signature

By signing this form, I agree that this student has fulfilled the requirements of the activity described above.

MERIT students are required to participate in at least two academic competitions each year. Possible activities might be Science Fair, National History Day, Young Authors writing contest, DAR contest, 4H competitions, and VSU Math Bowl, LEGO League, National History Bee. Many clubs also include a competition component which may count towards this requirement. Other competitions may be used with prior approval from MERIT teachers.

This form must be completed and turned in order to meet this requirement.



Community Service Learning For

Thomas County Middle School MERIT Program

Guidelines for Teachers, Parents, and Students

Community Service Learning For
Thomas County Middle School

Purpose of Community Service Learning (CSL)

To extend learning beyond the classroom and into the community, to promote civic responsibility through active participation in service experiences, to foster a sense of caring for others, and to develop a habit of volunteer service to those in need.

What is Community Service Learning?

Community Service Learning (CSL) is an educational process, which enhances the quality of life within the school and the community. Community Service Learning combines instruction, 21st Century Skills, and voluntary participation in supporting activities or obtaining contributions of goods.

What are the benefits of Community Service Learning for Middle School Students?

- Students receive an invaluable learning experience outside of the normal classroom setting.
- Service learning places curricular concepts in the context of real-world situations.
- Students analyze, evaluate, and synthesize these concepts using problem-solving skills, while at the same time helping their community.
- Students generate positive school-community relations and relations within the school.
- Students experience a good feeling of people helping people.

The key to determining whether or not the service meets the criteria is asking the question,
Who benefits from the service?

The answer should be:
Those organizations which are identified as an educational institution, those with non-profit status, Or an individual in need.

What types of activities constitute Community Service Learning?

- Activities which benefit the school or community provided that the community organizations benefiting from the services are non-profit, with the exception of hospitals, nursing homes, or educational activities.
- Activities which are not self-serving for a student or the student's family member.
- Activities which **are not tied to a grade** (i.e. - Musical performances with school groups to such places as nursing homes, will not count if the activity is tied to a grade in the music class.)
- Activities which render service to individuals who cannot otherwise provide for themselves.
- In order to receive the MERIT designation, a student **must earn a minimum of 20 service hours** each year.
- **Six** of those hours may be earned through donations or contributions to charitable organizations, during the pandemic. The remainder must be earned through service activities.
- **Up to ten (10) hours** may be earned each summer and applied to the first nine weeks hours.
- Students are encouraged to explore various opportunities. **No more than 10 hours should be earned at one location.** Exceptions may be allowed, but students should receive prior approval.

What types of activities MEET the criteria of Community Service Learning?

- Participating in service projects as a member of a service club or community organization.
- Students who leave school to participate in an elementary school, as a part of an **instructional program** approved by the principals in each school may receive service credit for the instructional time rendered.
- Reading to the blind.
- Volunteering one's services at a local hospital, nursing home, etc.
- Volunteering one's service to individuals, i.e. senior citizens or the disabled.
- Hosting outside groups for school festivals.
- Volunteering for the Board of Elections or political campaigns.
- ALL tutoring (not paid); including tutoring done before or after school, during lunch, or study hall.
- Outreach programs of religious organizations and other non-profit organizations, which provide service to the poor, sick, needy, etc.
- Participating in events, i.e., marathons, walks, races, which benefit **charitable organizations**. One hour of service credit will be awarded for each hour of service provided to the charity.
  Schools may establish criteria for school sponsored events as deemed appropriate.

Activities that qualify for service credit MUST:

- demonstrate volunteer, non-paid service.
- benefit an educational or a non-profit.
- benefit hospitals, nursing homes, or an individual in need.

Activities that qualify for service credit MUST NOT:

- be self-serving for the student or the student's immediate family member.
- be tied to a grade in any way.
- be tied to a class requirement/assignment.

Individual projects not specified in these examples may be accepted. Students are responsible for identifying and establishing service activities. **Check with teacher if unsure.**

What procedures must be followed in order to receive CSL credit?

1. Since not all activities are approved, students and parents need to be aware of which services qualify or do not qualify. Teachers can guide students on the appropriate activities.
2. Each student will provide the designated teacher with a signed Service Learning form, certificate, or other means of valid documentation which indicates the type of project completed, the dates of the project, and the amount of hours spent to complete the project. Such documentation will require the signature of the adult responsible for coordinating the efforts of the project. A parent signature will not be accepted unless the parent was the responsible party. All forms for a student should not be signed only by a parent.
3. As each project is completed, the designated teacher will provide a signature confirming credit for service rendered.
4. The designated teacher will review forms at the end of each nine weeks. A running total of hours will be placed on report card envelope. Any questions or discrepancies must be addressed within one week. This allows students two weeks after the end of each grading period to resolve discrepancies and turn in any missing documents. **Students will not receive credit for previous service after this grace period.**

Quick Tips for receiving Community Service Learning Credit

1. Choose the appropriate Community Service Learning activity/activities.
2. Perform the service project(s).
3. Submit a completed ***Community Service Form*** to your teacher. It is best to do this as soon as possible. Make sure that all sections of form have been completed.
4. Verify totals on back of report card envelope. Any discrepancies or questions should be handled promptly.

Check your Community Service Form for the following:

1. date(s) of service,
2. number of service hours provided,
3. name of the person or organization benefiting from the service provided,
4. description of the service performed, and
5. name, signature, and contact information (phone or e-mail) of the adult supervisor of the service.

Service Learning Documentation Form

STUDENT SECTION

1. Name (LAST): _____ FIRST): _____

2. Email address: _____

3. Grade: _____

4. Agency/organization name: _____

5. What specific activity did you engage in (what did you actually do)?:
_____
_____
_____

6. Why did you choose this agency/organization?
_____
_____

7. Why was your service important and what "***need***" did it meet in the community?
_____
_____

8. Date(s) of service: From (m/d/y): _____ to (m/d/y): _____ Total Hours: _____

***I have read the Service Learning Policy and Guidelines. I certify the information above is correct.**

Student's signature: _____ Date: _____

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SUPERVISOR SECTION

The student's supervisor is a non-related adult who is associated with the sponsoring agency/organization. By signing, the supervisor verifies that the student identified above completed the activities described. **Note** - The supervisor's signature does not guarantee approval of the activity for SL credit.

Supervisor's signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor's name (please print): _____ Phone #: _____

Supervisor's Email: _____Supervisor's Title: _____

Club/Team Sponsor Signature (**suggested**): _____

Student Name: _____ School Year: _____ Grade: _____

All MERIT Requirements: _____ Total Number of Hours: _____ Yearly Academic Average: _____

Service Learning / Community Involvement Hours - 20 hours combined total required
Students should submit all hours completed even if above the 20 hour requirement.

Summer Service Learning / Community Involvement Location	**Total hours (10 maximum)**	**Service Learning or Community Involvement**	**Form turned in**
Donations / Contributions	**Total hours (6 maximum)**	**Service Learning or Community Involvement**	**Form turned in**
Service Learning / Community Involvement Location	**Total hours (20 required total)**	**Service Learning or Community Involvement**	**Form turned in**

Continue on opposite side

Academic Competitions (Must have <u>two</u> each academic year)

Academic Competitions	Advisor	Results / Requirements	Form turned in

Academic Club / TCMS Athletics (Must have <u>one</u> each academic year)

Academic Club / Athletics	Advisor / Coach	Results / Requirements	Form turned in

Continue on opposite side