Rocky Mount High School
International Baccalaureate Diploma Program

Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)

Student Guide

Revised April 2026

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

The programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right. – IBO

We strive to be …

***Inquirers**: We nurture our curiosity, developing our skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.*

***Knowledgeable**: We develop conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues that have local and global significance.*

***Thinkers**: We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned and ethical decisions.*

***Communicators**: We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively and listen carefully to the perspective of other individuals and groups.*

***Principled**: We act with integrity and honesty, with a fair sense of justice, and with respect for the rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.*

***Open-minded**: We critically appreciate our own cultures and our history, as well as the values and traditions of other cultures. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.*

***Caring:** We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.*

***Risk Takers**: We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.*

***Balanced**: We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives – intellectual, physical and emotional – to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our independence with other people and with the world in which we live.*

***Reflective**: We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our own strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.*

Welcome to CAS at RMHS

CAS should be one of the most meaningful and memorable parts of your Diploma Program journey. Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) is one of the three essential elements of the IB Diploma Program. CAS provides students with meaningful opportunities to grow personally and interpersonally through experiential learning.

At Rocky Mount High School, CAS encourages students to challenge themselves, explore their interests, collaborate with others, and make a positive difference in their communities.

CAS is not about collecting hours or "checking boxes". It is about purposeful engagement, reflection, balance, and growth.

The Purpose of CAS

Through CAS, students develop the attributes of the IB Learner Profile while becoming more reflective, compassionate, and active members of society.

CAS helps students to:

- develop new skills and interests
- recognize strengths and areas for growth
- work collaboratively with others
- engage with local and global issues
- consider ethics and responsibility
- maintain balance and wellbeing
- take initiative and respond to authentic needs

RMHS Commitment to CAS

Rocky Mount High School believes CAS should be one of the most memorable and transformative parts of the Diploma Program experience.

Students are encouraged to explore, serve, create, lead, reflect, and grow.

What is CAS?

CAS is at the heart of the Diploma Program, being 1 of the 3 essential elements in every student's experience. CAS provides students with the opportunity to develop characteristics outlined in the **Learner Profile** specifically aiming to develop students who are:

- Reflective thinkers
- Willing to accept new challenges and new roles
- Aware of themselves as members of the community
- Active participants in sustained, collaborative projects
- Balanced

CAS experiences enable students to enhance their development through experiential learning. Rocky Mount High School aims for its CAS program to be both challenging and enjoyable. Since all students begin their CAS experience with different backgrounds and experiences it is imperative that the following CAS experience criteria be met:

- Real, purposeful activities, with significant outcomes
- Personal challenge – experiences must extend the student
- Thoughtful consideration
- Reflection on outcomes & personal learning

Questions to Ask Before Starting an Experience

- Is this meaningful to me?
- Will I grow or be challenged?
- Does it connect to Creativity, Activity, or Service?
- Can I reflect on what I learn?
- Is it ethical and respectful?
- Does it involve authentic participation?

The Three CAS Strands

Creativity

Exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance.

Activity

Physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle.

Service

Collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need.

Students are encouraged to maintain a balanced CAS program across all three strands over time.

CAS Learning Outcomes

Students work toward evidence of the seven CAS learning outcomes throughout their CAS journey:

1. Identify strengths and develop areas for growth
2. Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken and new skills developed
3. Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience
4. Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences
5. Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively
6. Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance
7. Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions

Students are not expected to complete outcomes one-by-one like a checklist. Instead, they demonstrate growth across these outcomes over time through meaningful experiences.

All seven outcomes must be present over an 18-month period (minimum of August of student's 11th grade year through April of student's 12th grade year) for a student to complete the CAS requirement. **CAS experiences should occur regularly, ideally weekly.**

CAS Portfolio

Students will maintain a CAS portfolio using the Toddle platform. The portfolio serves as a showcase to document experiences as well as student reflections of these experiences as connected to the learning outcomes described above. **Students are required to complete *a minimum* of 3 meaningful CAS experiences per year while completing the group project by the fall of senior year.** A meaningful CAS experience is rarely a "one and done" event. CAS experiences should ideally last over several weeks or, in some cases, several months. Your CAS advisor will assist you.

All CAS experiences require reflections. Students have complete freedom as to how they wish to conduct their reflections. Examples of possible reflection formats include, but are not limited to:

- Written entries
- Photo reflections
- Voice recordings
- Video journals

Reflection plays an important role in a student's IB education. Reflections should focus on meaning, rather than length. It is important to note that a reflection is not a summary of the experience. A reflection is an opportunity for the student to process the experience. A reflection should address questions such as: What challenges did you encounter? How did you overcome them? What motivated you to explore this experience? **Refer to the reflection guide located under the "guidance" tab in your CAS portfolio.** Students are encouraged to be creative in how they choose to do reflections.

All CAS experiences must include evidence to support that the student is participating in the experience. Evidence will vary for each experience. For example, a student decides to teach themselves how to play guitar. Evidence for this experience could include video or audio recordings of the student practicing scales. Another example, a student volunteers at a local animal rescue. The student could ask for the supervisor to send an email that documents how many hours per week the student volunteers.

It is the expectation that all students will participate in CAS. By the end of senior year, a student's portfolio must demonstrate 18 months of continuous involvement in CAS experiences without any significant gaps. **Students who are diploma candidates and who do not complete CAS will be ineligible to earn the IB Diploma.**

What CAS is not?

- It is not a resume filler or builder.
- It is not any activity associated with an assignment in ANY course of study.

- It is not about accumulating and counting hours.
- It is not any activity for which you receive payment, compensation or grade.
- It is not an activity that is repetitive, tedious work that has no connection to the learning outcomes.
- It is not a passive pursuit (i.e. visiting a museum, concerts, vacation, or familial duties that have no connection to the learning outcomes).
- It is not fundraising with no clearly defined connection to a broader purpose.
- It does not work on a political or religious activity that causes division among people.

Student Responsibilities

Adviser Conference Expectations

Students will participate in regular conferences with the CAS adviser/coordinator to discuss progress, wellbeing, goals, challenges, and next steps.

Per the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program Creativity, Activity, and Service Guide For Students graduating in 2017 and thereafter:

> The relevant section of the IB Program standards and practices document states that students should have opportunities to choose their own CAS activities and to undertake activities in a local and international context as appropriate. This means that, as far as possible, students should "own" their personal CAS experiences. With guidance from their mentors/advisers/coordinator, students should choose activities for themselves, initiating new ones where appropriate.

RMHS CAS Success Checklist

Students are expected to:

- approach CAS with initiative and a positive mindset
- develop personal goals for growth while exploring personal values
- design and participate in a range of meaningful CAS experiences
- engage in experiences that are challenging and enjoyable
- complete at least one sustained collaborative CAS project
- maintain a current CAS portfolio in Toddle
- reflect regularly using varied formats
- provide evidence that supports the student's participation in the experience
- meet regularly with the CAS adviser/coordinator
- seek guidance and approval when appropriate
- act safely, ethically, and respectfully
- demonstrate balanced participation over time

The aforementioned requirements will be documented by the following actions:

- All CAS experiences must be documented in the Toddle platform
- All CAS experiences must indicate which learning outcomes are being developed
- All CAS experiences require evidence to support that the student actually participated in the experience
- All CAS experiences that are longer than 1 day require a final formal reflection following these prompts
- Monthly check in with the CAS advisor to discuss the experiences that the student has been working on.
- Student will complete a minimum of one 30-Day CAS Group Project that integrates two or more of the CAS strands and is completed collaboratively.
- Students should attempt to "Think globally, act locally" during their CAS planning

The CAS Stages

Many CAS experiences are strengthened through the five CAS stages:

1. Investigation – explore interests, skills, talents, and needs
2. Preparation – clarify goals, roles, resources, and timelines
3. Action – implement the plan
4. Reflection – consider learning, growth, impact, and next steps
5. Demonstration – share what was learned and accomplished

CAS Project Expectation

All students must complete at least one collaborative CAS project that is sustained over time.

A CAS project:

- involves collaboration with others
- uses one or more CAS strands
- includes student planning and initiative
- addresses an authentic goal or need
- includes reflection throughout the process
- demonstrates growth and learning

Examples:

- community wellness campaign
- student arts showcase
- youth tutoring initiative
- environmental improvement project
- charity sports tournament
- cultural celebration event

Refer to Appendix A for further guidance.

Examples of CAS Experiences

- Organizing a campus wellness week
- Teaching yourself how to play an instrument
- Producing a student art exhibition
- Tutoring middle school students

- Community clean-up campaign
- Creating bilingual resources for families
- Organizing donation drives tied to authentic community need
- Leading fitness sessions for peers

CAS Timeline at RMHS

Stage	Focus
Junior Year Fall	Orientation, goal setting, begin experiences
Junior Year Spring	Sustained engagement, reflections, adviser meetings
Senior Year Fall	CAS project completion, continued portfolio growth
Senior Year Spring	Final interview, portfolio review, completion

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Year 1

- Orientation to CAS
- Begin experiences and portfolio entries
- Goal setting conference
- Regular adviser check-ins
- Minimum of 3 CAS experiences

Year 2

- Continue sustained engagement
- Complete collaborative CAS project
- Final reflections and portfolio review
- Completion interview
- Minimum of 3 CAS experiences

Family Support

Families play an important role by encouraging students to:

- manage time effectively
- reflect on growth
- pursue meaningful interests
- follow through on commitments
- maintain balance and wellbeing

CAS ownership remains with the student.

CAS Completion Checklist

- Portfolio is current in Toddle and demonstrates 18 months of continuous involvement in CAS experiences without any significant gaps
- Evidence of all seven learning outcomes over time
- At least one collaborative CAS project completed
- Reflections demonstrate growth and learning
- Evidence to support student participation in the CAS experience

- Final adviser interview completed
- CAS requirement approved by coordinator

Frequently Asked Questions

I am a musician, artist, dancer, actor … How can these activities meet the Creative area?

From the Creativity, Activity, Service Guide:

- A student may already be engaged in creativity as part of a school group or club, or through some form of sustained creativity. Students may continue in this as part of their creativity however, they should be able to set personal goals for how they can improve their creative skills in these endeavors. Ideally, students are also encouraged to branch out and explore new creative outlets.

I am an athlete. How can these activities meet the Activity area?

From the Creativity, Activity, Service Guide:

- A student may already be engaged in activity as part of a school team or club, or through some form of sustained physical activity. Students may continue in this as part of their activity; however, they should set personal goals in keeping with the principles of CAS. Students can also be encouraged to further extend and develop their participation if appropriate and extend these to service wherever possible.

What are some guidelines about Service?

From the Creativity, Activity, Service Guide:

- The aim of the "Service" strand is for students to understand their capacity to make a meaningful contribution to their community and society. Through service, students develop and apply personal and social skills in real-life situations involving decision-making, problem solving, initiative, responsibility, and accountability for their actions. Service is often seen as one of the most transforming elements of CAS by promoting students' self-awareness, offering diverse occasions for interactions and experiences and opportunities for international-mindedness. Use of CAS stages in developing a service experience is recommended for best practice.

  Service within CAS benefits all involved: students learn as they identify, and address authentic community needs, and the community benefits through reciprocal collaboration. Service fosters development of abilities, attitudes and values in accordance with the IB mission statement and the IB learner profile. As such, CAS service experiences are unpaid.

Are there limitations about political and religious experiences?

Rocky Mount High School honors all students' political and religious beliefs and their right to practice and participate in these activities. Students' personal engagement with faith-based, cultural, or political events can add great value to individual CAS programs. Some events, however, may contradict the values of the IB mission and/or the requirements of CAS.

To facilitate mutual agreement between school & student on suitability of a proposed CAS experience, candidates with the CAS coordinator/adviser should consider guiding questions.

- Does the experience meet the guidelines of CAS experience?
- What attributes of the learner profile can be emphasized in the proposed experience? What may be left out? Why?
- Does the event or organization respect the differences of other individuals and groups?
- Will the event or organization increase understanding of language, culture, other perspectives and/or international-mindedness?
- What are the state goals of the organization with which you would be undertaking the experience? How do these goals relate to the mission statement of the IB or the attributes of the IB Learner Profiles?
- Does the event have the potential to impact the environment?
- How have you considered the legal or health and safety implications of your CAS experience?

Appendix A

30 Day CAS Group Project

Students are expected to complete at least one project involving teamwork (minimum of 3 people) that is of significant length. Students are encouraged, but not required, to propose projects that incorporate 2 CAS strands to make the experience more robust. Larger scale activities of this sort may provide excellent opportunities for students to engage "with issues of global importance". The "team" can be anyone. It does **not** have to be other IB students. The "team" could also be the entire cohort, if appropriate to the project. **If the entire cohort is involved, it is essential that all team members have a role and responsibility in the project.**

A CAS project must be:

- **collaborative** (involves working with others)
- **sustained over time** (minimum 30 days)
- involve **student initiative**
- use one or more CAS strands (Creativity, Activity, Service)
- include planning, action, reflection, and review

30-Day Project must be approved BEFORE you begin. Please wait for approval BEFORE you begin. Submit your proposal in Toddle and discuss it with your advisor.

- The 30-Day Project must show evidence of 4 of the 7 Learning Outcomes.
- Digital Photographs and other artifacts of your project are required and should be uploaded to your CAS portfolio in Toddle.
- A project of this size deserves a thoughtful reflection. Your reflection should consist of at least 500 words and reference the 4 Learning Outcomes met through the experience.
- Deadline for the 30-day project is September of Year Two.

Student & Family Acknowledgment

We understand that CAS is a required and valuable component of the IB Diploma Program. We commit to supporting student growth through balanced, meaningful, and reflective engagement.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please sign this document and return it to the program coordinator