

**ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**THE ARKANSAS COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM**  
**GUIDANCE**  
**May 2018**

**1.00 REGULATORY AUTHORITY AND PARTICIPATION**

- 1.01** The Community Service Learning program is governed by Ark. Code Ann. § 6-16-120.
- 1.02** Participation in the Community Service Learning program is voluntary. A local school district board of directors may grant a waiver of participation in the community service learning program by submitting written notice to the State Board of Education.

**2.00 DEFINITIONS**

- 2.01** “Community Service” is a program or activity approved by the State Board of Education and the local school board which includes the components preparation, action, and reflection.
- 2.02** “Certify” means that a service agency or organization has submitted to the school appropriate documentation that a student has successfully completed sufficient community service to be eligible for academic credit.
- 2.03** “Hour(s)” means clock hours.

**3.00 ACADEMIC CREDIT**

- 3.01** A student who has completed a minimum of seventy-five (75) hours of documented community service, along with the required reflection component, in grades nine through twelve (9-12) is eligible to receive one (1) career focus academic credit that may be applied toward graduation.
  - 3.01.1** The community service hours must be completed at an approved community organization or as part of a service-learning school program.
  - 3.01.2** The maximum amount of credit per student is one (1) unit of credit.
  - 3.01.3** No half units of credit may be awarded.
  - 3.01.4** The community service learning project is not a graded course.
  - 3.01.5** The community service learning credit may not be calculated in the student’s GPA.

- 3.01.6** The academic credit awarded must be coded appropriately, as determined by the Department of Education.

#### **4.00 CERTIFYING STUDENT HOURS**

- 4.01** Local non-profits, agencies, and organizations may be approved to certify community service learning hours.

- 4.01.1** If a local non-profit, agency, or organization wishes to become certified, it must make an application to the local school board.

- 4.01.1.1** The local school board will develop an application and ensure that it is available to the community.

- 4.01.1.2** At a local school board meeting, the local school board may approve or reject the application.

- 4.01.1.2.1** If approved, the local school board must seek approval from the State Board of Education.

- 4.01.1.2.2** Requests for approval by the State Board of Education must be placed on the July or December board meeting agenda.

- 4.01.1.2.2** Upon approval by the State Board of Education, the non-profit, agency, or organization will be approved to certify community service learning hours to the local school district.

- 4.01.1.2.3** State Board of Education approval does not expire, but can be revoked.

- 4.02** Each public school and school district is approved to certify hours so long as the hours are under the supervision of a certified employee of the district.

#### **5.00 REQUIRED COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING PLAN**

- 5.01** Each school district must submit a district plan for community service learning using the online course approval system. The plan must:

- 5.01.1** Demonstrate the required components of community service learning;

- 5.01.2** Explain how community service learning will benefit students;

- 5.01.3** Describe the school's plan to implement and manage the community service learning program;
- 5.01.4** Detail the safety precautions, policies, and procedures in place to ensure student safety while volunteering at outside organizations; and
- 5.01.5** Identify partner organizations.