Community Experience Guidelines

The Community Experience is a 20-hour active, community-based learning or service experience for which students must apply identifiable classroom learning that demonstrates the skills necessary for transitioning from high school to post-high opportunities. Students will identify the pathway in which their experience relates and a community mentor.

Your Community Experience selection for the Culminating Project deserves a great deal of contemplation and discussion. Experience has shown that people who take great care in their decisions find the Culminating Project more relevant and make more meaningful connections with their community.

1. **Dare to dream.** Rather than making quick decisions regarding your Community Experience, make a list of the exciting possibilities. Seek advice and input from your parents, family members, and friends.

2. **Don’t get discouraged.** Allow faculty members and other interested adults to connect you with potential Community Mentors and resources.

3. **Approach potential Community Mentors personally.** Act as though you are doing a job interview; dress nicely, give them the facts about your plans, and sell yourself. A personal discussion will be far more effective than a phone call.

4. **Above all, don’t give up on your dream.** If you truly want to try something, there is a resource or organization willing to work/dream with you. Some students give up on ideas after a few rejections. Your Culminating Project Coordinator will be glad to help you find the right Community Experience and Community Mentor.

Once your project has been accepted by your building Culminating Project Coordinator, you may begin!

Community Experience Timeline – September 1 of sophomore year through January 31 of senior year; with the exception of the Varsity Letter in Community Service in partnership with United Way of Pierce County. Students may earn their letter in 9 – 12 grade, this will fulfill the community experience requirement.

**Note:** Timelines are intended to keep students on track for fulfilling this graduation requirement.

Community Experience Criteria

- Requires a minimum of 20 hours within a single agency, organization or business
- Relates to one of the Puyallup School District career pathways
- Meets at least two of the following criteria:
  - ≈ Academic - involves formal instruction from a professional, resulting in credit, certification, or licensure
  - ≈ Community Service - provides a needed and viable service to a community agency or organization
  - ≈ Career - provides extended learning experience or internship that may involve potential future employment
  - ≈ Personal Growth - represents a personal challenge that allows you to grow through experiences that are a stretch for you
- Requires active participation
- Must be completed outside of regular class requirements
- Must be unpaid
- Must be monitored by an approved adult community mentor. Mentors may not be an immediate family member or high school staff member.
- Overnight experiences shall count as follows:

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Community Experience Internship Criteria

1. Internships must be through an established organization that includes a specific learning component and field experience.
2. Internships shall be connected to the students’ established career pathway, having taken at least two courses in pathway program, if available in their school.

Updated 2015
During the school day, you may count up to 10 hours per day (i.e. Sixth Grade Camp); outside of school, you may count up to 15 hours per day (i.e. mission trips)

✓ Complete a one-to-two page typed reflection of your community experience project for inclusion in your portfolio

**Community Experience Approval Process**
1. Complete the Community Experience Plan online:
   - Go to [www.puyallup.k12.wa.us](http://www.puyallup.k12.wa.us)
   - Click on Parents
   - Click on Culminating Project
2. Scroll down to the Community Experience Documents
3. Type directly onto the Community Experience Plan
4. Provide all information using complete sentences
5. Sign and obtain parent/guardian and community mentor signatures.
6. When completed, submit your Community Experience Plan and Mentor Verification to the Project Coordinator for an approval signature.

**Community Experience Completion Process**
1. Fulfill 20+ hours
2. Community Mentor completes and signs Time Log & Mentor Evaluation
3. Type a one to two page multi-paragraph reflective essay of your experiences. You may include: who, what, where, when, why, responsibilities, specific experiences and memorable moments.
4. Turn in all completed forms to your Culminating Project Coordinator.

This book belongs to:

______________________________

Advisor: __________ Room: ________
Community Experience