



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,  
YOUTH & INFORMATION**  
*Every Child Can Learn. Every Child Must Learn*



*Developing Competencies  
Recognizing Achievements*

# HANDBOOK FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Enrichment Through Service*



DRAFT

# National School Leaving Certificate Handbook for Community Service

ENRICHMENT THROUGH SERVICE

# NATIONAL SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE HANDBOOK FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ***Handbook for Community Service*** is a synthesis of procedures, activities and tools for successful implementation of the service-learning component of the National School Leaving Certificate programme.

It was specially designed to provide guidance and support for teachers, particularly the members of the NSLC Committee who will coordinate the programme. The intent of the Handbook is to provide a resource for teachers as they seek to create a culture of service in the mindset of students. This will subsequently produce good citizens, responsible persons and fully actualized individuals. While many of these ideas are not entirely new, secondary level institutions have effectively used them in our local and regional jurisdictions.

The principal contributors to the creation of this handbook are Mrs Allecia Lindsay –Senior Education Officer (Acting) and Mrs Dionne Sampson-Gaynor- Education Officer in the NSLC Unit.

Special mention must also be made of the invaluable contribution of the National Steering Committee and Working Groups for the guidance provided during the drafting and revision stages of the handbook.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information extends profound gratitude to all individuals who contributed significantly to making this handbook a reality.



## FOREWORD

The world has become a global village with unprecedented advancement in education. Notably, our country has been identified as one of the nations with rich human resource potential for competing globally in competency-based education. Competency-based education provides meaningful and positive learning experiences that include the application and creation of knowledge along with the development of important skills and attitudes. Experiences gained in the classroom and from community service, play a vital role in grooming young aspirants for the current and future economies. These experiences will foster self-advancement, improvement and the reduction of chronic and inter-generational poverty.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI) endeavours to mould professionals for the future. Above all, it aims to promote a shared understanding of the role competencies play in further education, personal and community growth and national development. With this in mind, the MoEYI has developed the National School Leaving Certificate (NSLC). This certificate aims to create a system in which every child has the opportunity to learn and be certified.

The NSLC serves as a capstone to the priority policies of the MoEYI, by identifying strategic drivers as the competencies that will guide the evaluation of students over the seven years of high school. Each of these drivers: personal development, community service and academic achievement directly supports the vision of the Ministry.

The Ministry believes that embracing community service for all students will lead to significant contributions nationally and globally. To ensure successful implementation, the onus is on each stakeholder to promote and embrace a culture of change in order to ensure that the education system is transformed efficiently and effectively. This NSLC, through each of its components, is a programme for transforming the education sector so as to increase the nation's outputs and outcomes.



## INTRODUCTION OF HANDBOOK

This **Handbook for Community Service** is designed to inform and assist school administrators in the promotion of a high standard of civic responsibility and personal growth of students. It answers questions concerning planning, number of hours, types of service, roles and responsibilities and implementation.

This handbook is a revision of the Community Service Handbook previously published by the Ministry. It has been revised to provide currency and relevance to the guidelines, which should direct the operations of the National School Leaving Certificate programme.

This publication includes three chapters. The first explains community service and the benefits of participating. The second describes the structure of the NSLC Committee and the major responsibilities of same for the community service component. The third describes the implementation process and contains resources that should prove useful for committee members. Following the third chapter are the appendices, including the introductory letters, time sheets, evaluation forms and tools for reflection.

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## VISION STATEMENT FOR NSLC COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Equipping learners to participate and succeed in a changing world.*

## MISSION STATEMENT FOR NSLC COMMUNITY SERVICE

*To assure the common good of citizens through services essential for a safe, sustainable, engaged and healthy local community and country.*

### LOGO



*Developing Competencies  
Recognizing Achievements*

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Community Service:** volunteer work done in a community or its institutions by a person or group of persons that benefits others.

**Volunteer:** a person who performs a service willingly and without pay.

**Policy:** a set of guidelines that give directions based on an individual's or organization's beliefs or position taken about something.

**Implementation Process:** sequence of activities that put a plan into effect.

**Community Service Coordinator:** the person who coordinates all matters and activities concerning the community service programme throughout the school or organization.

**Community Service Site:** a location or area within a community where one can volunteer one's services based on interests, skills or need.

**Civic responsibility:** an active participation in the public life of a community in an informed, committed, and constructive manner recognizing the value and human dignity of each person.

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SECTION 1

# PHILOSOPHY

## A PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE

The famous adage, there is no greater honour than service, there is no greater reward than service echoes in the vision and mission statements of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information. Community service is a powerful tool. It is a vehicle for collaboration, learning, knowledge sharing and creativity. Community service presents innumerable opportunities for students to develop and become leaders as it transforms a young person from a passive recipient to an active participant. It helps the young person, to focus not so much on self but on others as well, recognizing that the interdependence of the effort goes a far way in maintaining the equilibrium of a society.

It is based on these and other tenets that, community service is embedded in the National School Leaving Certificate (NSLC) developed for secondary level institutions. It is essential that all students recognize their roles and responsibilities as part of a larger world. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information believes that community service provides the opportunity for students to discover themselves, develop skills and gain experiences that will empower them in their quest to achieve their life goals as well as contribute positively to society. As we seek to foster a culture of strategic partnerships, community service is an opportunity to build robust relationships – both within the school and between the school and community.

Additionally, community service enables educators to emphasize student-centred, interactive teaching methods. It integrates curricular concepts with real-world situations in the community, thereby inviting students to analyse, evaluate, and integrate the concepts learned in the classroom in the context of service. The basic premise is that students can actively work to address the immediate and long-term community challenges. It provides them with meaningful work and promotes a sense of self within the community as it emphasizes active participation in the community as well as the values of good citizenship.



To conclude, community service should be looked at holistically – taking into account its various facets: curricular, institutional, communal and societal. The community service component will allow curricula to impact the environment as it provides a continuous opportunity to learn, share knowledge, build networks and relationships and enhances intrinsic motivation. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information hopes that all students and the society at large will reap the benefits of community service portrayed in the National School Leaving Certificate programme.





# THE COMMUNITY SERVICE COMPONENT OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE

## WHAT IS COMMUNITY SERVICE?

The National School Leaving Certificate programme describes community service as an educational method by which students in secondary level institutions carry out or participate in active service experiences that develop civic responsibility and meet actual community needs. The community service component is designed to foster the development of volunteerism, empathy, personal values, awareness, self – esteem, confidence, social responsibility, life skills and citizenship. It is integrated into and influences the lifelong learning of the student and includes structured time for the participants to reflect on the service experience.

Activities that are considered community service follow the idea that voluntary service is to be the direct giving of one's talents, time, and energy to those in need, or for the common good. This will eventually bring about a shared satisfaction of accomplishment that can be enjoyed by the school, community, and student. The service provided is not just for the student's personal gain or reward, but also for the personal satisfaction and welfare of others. Community service not only helps students learn the rewards of voluntary service but also helps prepare them to assume a meaningful role as an adult in society. Community service is not just about helping those who are disadvantaged; it is also about the learning, enjoyment, skills, and experiences gained from the process of volunteering.

The community service requirements of the NSLC allows students to provide at least sixty (60) hours of service on a voluntary basis to the schools, public, non-profit agencies, civic, charitable and governmental organizations.

## FEATURES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE COMPONENT

- Community service activities are a part of the National School Leaving Certificate programme carried on within or outside of the timetabled curriculum.
- The school coordinates the programme, which is compulsory for all students.
- Students' choice of activities is based on their interests; however, the school must approve sites or institutions selected as well as the activities to be carried out.
- Students are required to do a minimum of sixty (60) hours by Grade 11 and ninety (90) hours by Grade 13.
- Students engage in reflection on their service experiences.
- A senior teacher will co-ordinate the programme.
- Parental involvement is integral to the service learning experience of each student.



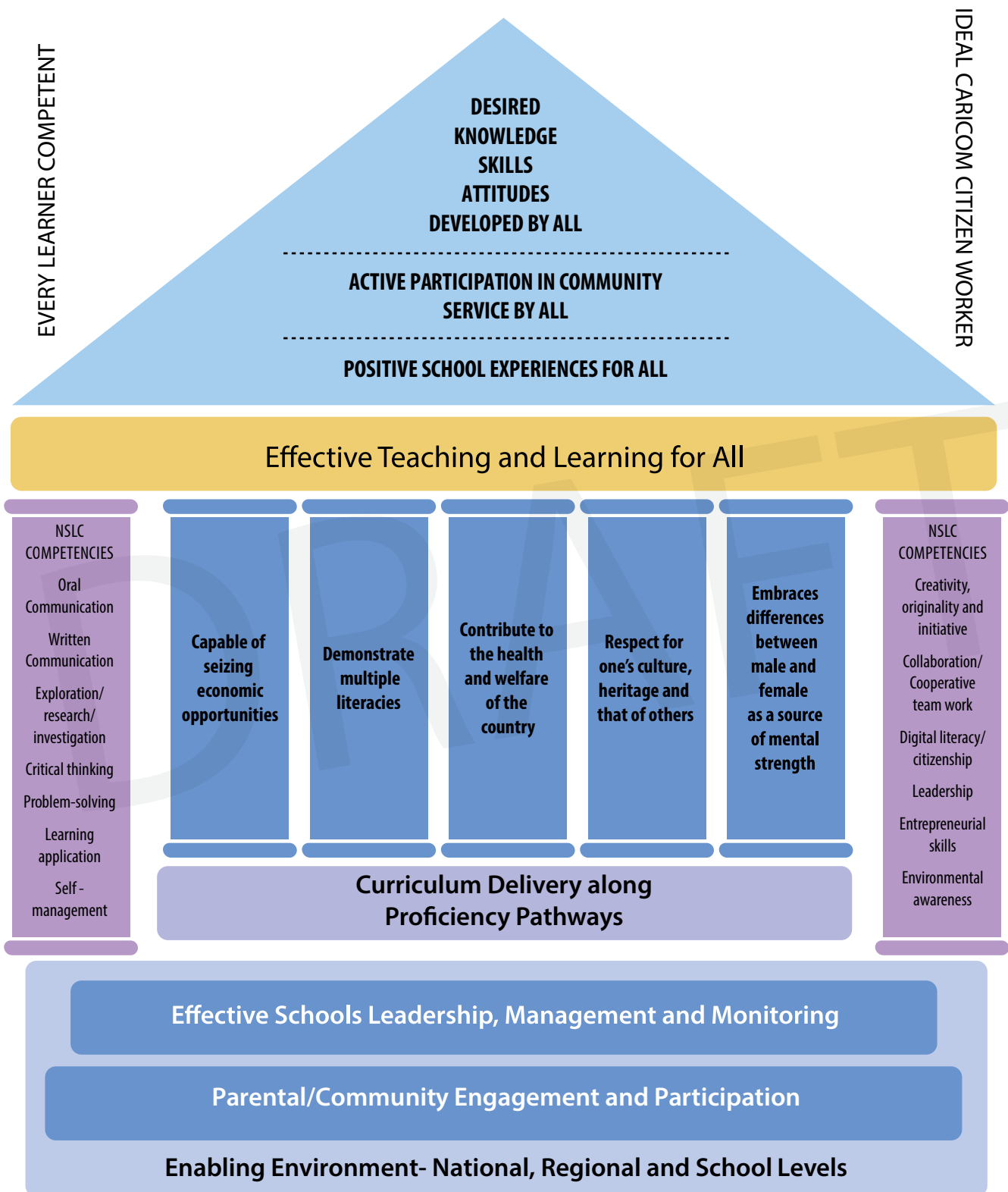
## COMMUNITY SERVICE AND THE IDEAL CARICOM WORKER

The profile of the ideal CARICOM Citizen worker has shifted dramatically over the last decade and will continue to change in response to the influences of the 4th Industrial Revolution. The ideal citizen will be required to make inter-disciplinary connections; develop global citizenship values, including empathy and character. Non-cognitive employability skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, negotiation and creativity are now essential. As Jamaica strives to take its place within a fiercely competitive and highly globalized marketplace, the persons who will be best equipped to provide leadership and drive innovation in many significant areas, are those whose reasoning, problem solving and critical thinking skills are best developed. These non-cognitive skills are best cultivated through practice and community service offers students that opportunity.

The purpose of the NSLC community service component is to acquaint secondary level students with the need to become participating agents of change by providing service to both their school and community. The expected outcomes of the community service component are in direct correlation with the Profile of the Ideal CARICOM Citizen Worker as documented in Fig 1.1. (page 17). It is expected that students who undertake this programme will demonstrate many of the competencies listed as the profile of the Ideal CARICOM Citizen Worker.



### Community Service and the Ideal Citizen Diagram



**Fig.1.1**

Adapted from the "Profile of the Ideal CARICOM Citizen Worker" Report at the 11th Meeting of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, 1997



## AIMS OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE COMPONENT

The National School Leaving Certificate community service aims to:

- 1) help students to develop an awareness and better understanding of the communities they live in.
- 2) develop a community of caring and committed individuals across the country in which they live.
- 3) enhance students' learning by enabling them to practice skills and test classroom knowledge through related service experiences in the local community.
- 4) enable students to provide needed assistance to community agencies and to the people served by these agencies.
- 5) expose students to people who may be disadvantaged socially, medically, economically, or otherwise.
- 6) bridge the gap between school and community through partnerships among students, educational institutions and community organizations.
- 7) assist teachers in their role as facilitators of service learning and in their engagement with the community.
- 8) provide leadership training and development opportunities for the NSLC School Level Committee.
- 9) promote positive values and attitudes in students.

## BENEFITS OF THE NSLC COMMUNITY SERVICE COMPONENT

All stakeholders are expected to benefit through the community service component in a myriad of ways. For students, it is intended that participation in this programme will foster their personal, intellectual and social development. Let us take a closer look at these areas.

**Personal development** covers activities that improve awareness and identity, develop talents and potential, facilitate employability and enhance the quality of life.

**Intellectual development** refers to the changes that occur as a result of growth and experience in a person's capacity for thinking, reasoning, evaluating and analysing. Intellectual development is how individuals organise their minds, ideas and thoughts to make sense of the world they live in.

**Social development** is the process by which an individual learns to interact with others around them. As they develop and perceive their own individuality within their community, they also gain skills to communicate with other people and process their actions.

In this regard, the students who participate in the community service programme will experience growth and development in definitive ways as indicated below.

### Benefits for Students

#### Personal development as demonstrated in:

- enhanced self-image, self-esteem and self-concept
- improved competence and confidence
- development in personal motivation
- increased autonomy and willingness to explore
- assertiveness
- more positive attitude toward education and lifelong learning

#### Intellectual development as demonstrated in:

- improved employability skills such as critical thinking, negotiation, analytic and problem-solving
- enhanced communication skills and tacit learning skills

- expanded focus, flexibility and adaptability

### **Social development as demonstrated in:**

- concern for the welfare of others
- respect for life and living
- appreciation of cultural identity and respect for people from diverse situations and cultures
- collaboration, citizenship, civil and social responsibilities

### **Benefits to the School**

- enriches school curriculum and learning facilities
- builds a sense of satisfaction, pride, purpose and accomplishment
- provides a positive impact on the lives of others
- develops new skills and expands volunteers' life and experiences
- enhances the ability to meet the needs of a diverse society
- improves cooperation and collaboration between community and school

### **Benefits to the Community**

- supports individuals' empowerment, by providing them with an influential role in the community
- provides a skilled and ready cadre of individuals to support the valuable work of non-profit organisations
- ensures the ongoing delivery of a range of important services to the community
- improves volunteers' health, well-being and emotional resilience
- helps build social networks, connectedness and community resilience
- reduces the number of youth who present a level of concern to the community and society
- improves cooperation and collaboration between community and school





## SECTION 2

# THE COMMITTEE

## STRUCTURE OF THE NSLC COMMITTEE

Fundamental to an institution are operating systems that clearly delineate structure and management which are critical for the institution to achieve its projected goals. Committees, in effect, are the operating systems of an institution. For this reason, the development of school level NSLC committees and their effectiveness are critical to the offering of the National School Leaving Certificate and in particular, the execution of the community service component.

The National School Leaving Certificate committee should be a sub-committee of the Curriculum Implementation Team (CIT) already established in many schools. The main purpose of the committee is to create a system that provides opportunities for recording evidence of achievement and learner's reflection on progress towards the Certificate. Furthermore, the committee will develop measures to quality assure the implementation of the community service component, in order to ensure that the offerings at the school level adhere to the national requirements.

### Development of the NSCL Committee

The work of the National School Leaving Certificate committee should represent a collaborative initiative that draws on the competencies of several stakeholders in coordinating the programme. Each school is therefore, required to carefully select a team of individuals that share a common vision of the programme and have a vested interest in students' welfare.

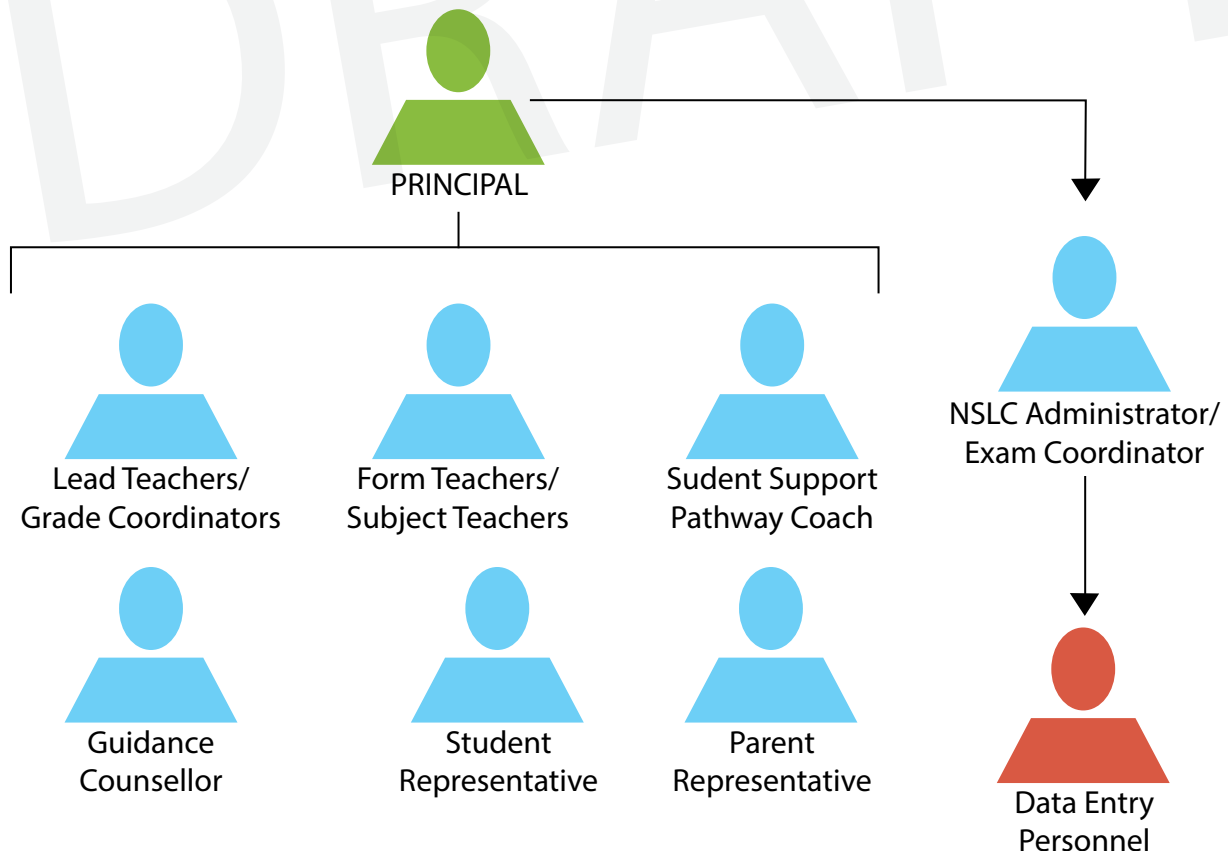
The following identifies the recommended composition of the NSLC school level team. However, the Ministry recognizes that there are existing structures in some secondary level institutions for the coordination of the community service programme. In instances, where these exist and are effective, then they may continue to coordinate the programme within the guidelines promulgated in this handbook. Appendix 10 outlines the overall operations of the NSLC school level committee in relation to the community service component.

## NSLC School Level Committee

### Recommended Composition

- Principal
- Vice Principal
- NSLC Administrator /Exam Coordinator
- Lead Teachers/Grade Coordinators
- Form Teachers/Subject Teachers
- Guidance Counsellor
- Student Support Pathway Coach
- Student Representative
- Data Entry Personnel
- Parent/Community Representative

### Organisational Structure for the NSLC Committee



**Fig. 2.1**

## Roles and Responsibilities of Committee Members

### Principal

- participates in the planning, execution and evaluation of the community service annually
- facilitates seminars/workshops where necessary for staff development to maintain relevance and share best practices

### NSLC Administrator /Exam Coordinator

- chairs the NSLC committee
- develops a programme for introducing each new cohort of learners and their parents/caregivers to the National School Leaving Certificate
- sensitizes the key staff on procedures for identifying the knowledge, skills and attitudes that comprise the competencies and components of the programme
- coordinates the gathering of evidence for each learner in Grades 7, 8 and 9; agrees with senior staff about how and when the evidence gathering for Grades 10 -13 will take place; ensures that the materials needed are in place; plans the evidence gathering procedure
- ensures the standardization of procedures and obtains the agreement of all responsible personnel on arrangements for final assessments and documenting of competencies
- agrees on the system for obtaining and documenting the statement of community contribution with all involved; plans timetable for completion
- reviews cases where school assessments are not confirmed
- trains staff members in collecting, assessing and uploading evidence

### Lead Teachers/Grade Coordinators

- monitor the gathering and recording of evidence
- conduct and/or arrange site visits to establish contacts, gather information regarding community service activities and site suitability
- coordinate students' orientation to the NSLC

## Form Teachers

- support the learner in selecting appropriate activities for community service
- guide students in completing the statement of community contribution

## Guidance Counsellor

- counsels individual students and provides group education on the importance and value of volunteerism
- assists with student orientation to the community service component of the NSLC
- advises on site selection for the community service component
- serves as liaison between school and the communities
- assists students to conscientiously assess their personal characteristics and potentials
- monitors time cards, journals and evaluations received from institutions in which community service is undertaken



## Student Support Pathway Coach

- prepares and assists students with special needs with the undertaking of the community service programme
- liaises with site supervisors to encourage the welcome and support of students with special needs
- assists students in timely and effective completion of the community service component of the NSLC

### **Student Representative**

- presents matters for consideration regarding the implementation and operation of the community service component of the NSLC
- provides feedback and gives guidance to peers regarding their role in carrying out the community service

### **Data Entry Personnel**

- assist the NSLC team in the data collection and entry processes
- insert learner data from source documents within time limits
- compile, verify accuracy and sort information
- review data for errors; correct inconsistencies
- generate reports, store completed work in designated locations for easy retrieval and perform backup operations
- access, scan and print relevant files when needed
- keep information confidential
- comply with data integrity and security policies
- ensure proper use of office equipment and report any malfunction

### **Parent/Community Representative**

- assists with the identification of community service sites and activities
- makes contact with site representatives for the acceptance of students
- provides general supervision of students on site where applicable
- reports observations or areas of concern to the NSLC Administrator



## SECTION 3

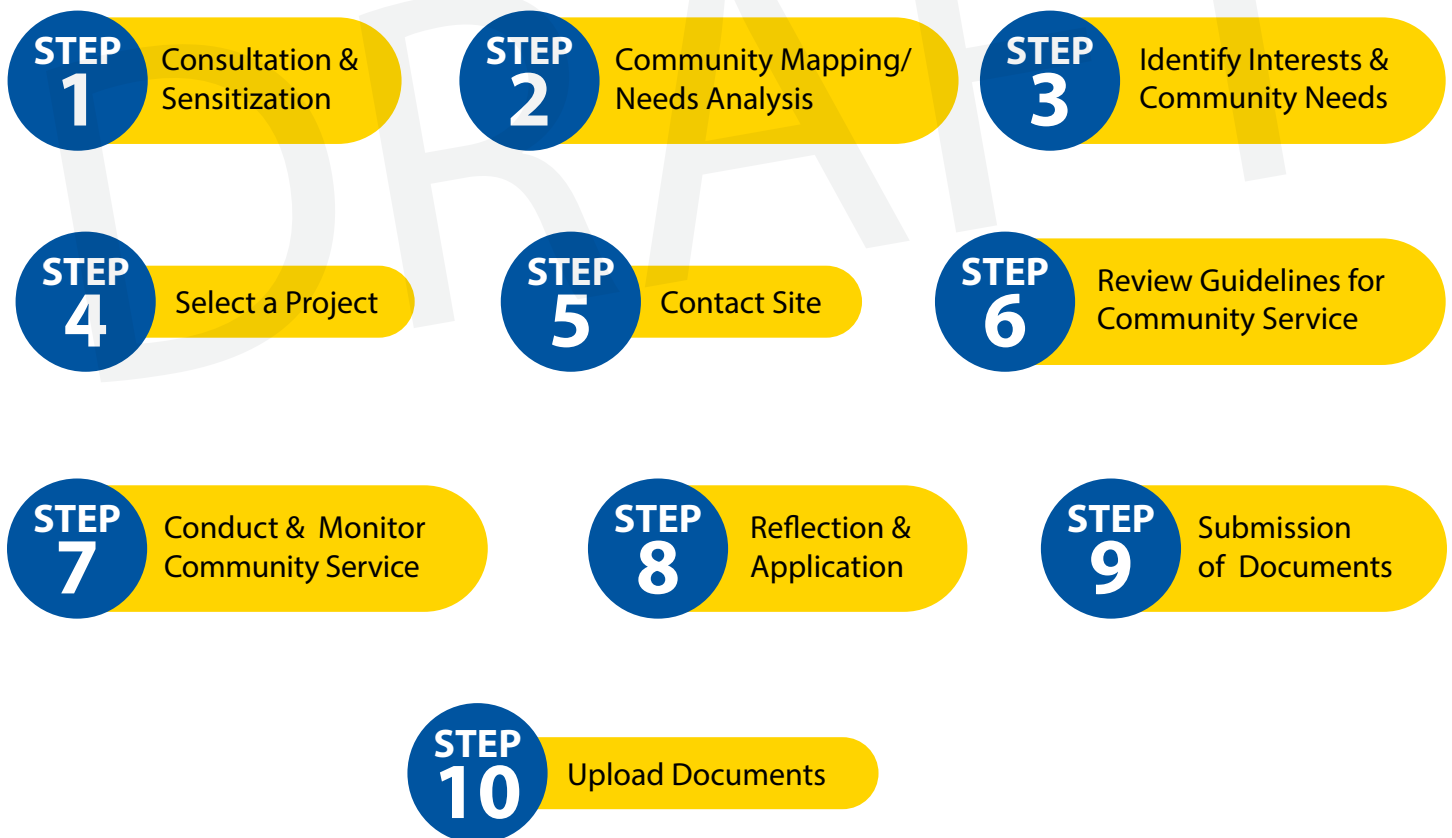
# IMPLEMENTATION



# THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS & OPERATION

## The Implementation Process

The implementation process for the community service component is critical for the survival of the programme. This process turns strategies and plans into actions in order to accomplish strategic goals and objectives. While there is no secret formula for success, there are a number of key steps and procedures that need to be undertaken in order to implement the idea of community service into meaningful practice. Figure 3.1 gives an overview of the proposed implementation process, followed by detailed annotation for each key activity.



**Fig. 3.1**

### **Step 1: Consultation and Sensitization Sessions for Stakeholders**

The NSLC committee should conduct planned consultation and sensitization forums for students and parents/guardians to introduce the requirements of the community service component at the beginning of the school year. This should be supported by a letter of understanding outlining the process, along with handouts such as brochures with key information. Parents should sign the letter of understanding (Appendix 1), a copy of which should be placed on the student's community service file.

### **Step 2: Community Mapping/Needs Analysis**

The community service performed by students must be seen as relevant and timely for them. They will need to see or learn about the real needs in their community and develop an understanding of what they can do to help with those needs. To help with this element, students working with adults should conduct a survey (formal or informal) of community members, leaders, agencies or organizations to learn about the needs of the community and the resources that are available. In addition, students can create a contact list and physical maps of nearby institutions or associations. This will also help them build on existing community assets such as infrastructure and social partnerships. This survey should be conducted at the beginning of the first term so that plans can be put in place following the outcome.

### **Step 3: Identifying Interests and Community Needs**

Not all students in secondary level institutions are active participants in or have ever participated in community service. It is therefore, important to garner preliminary information from the students to ascertain their orientation to community service, i.e. whether or not they have participated. In this regard, it would deem beneficial as part of the school's orientation sessions to add a pre-service component to the programme. This could take the form of administering a pre-service questionnaire as shown in Appendix 2. Students should be encouraged to think honestly about the following before completing the questionnaire:

- The skills and talents they possess
- The number of persons they will realistically be able to help
- The number of hours per week/month they can devote to volunteering
- Commencement date

- Materials that may be useful for the project

The purpose of the pre-service questionnaire is to assist teachers in getting a snapshot of a student's prior community service experience; to gauge student's orientation toward community service and to guide the student towards the best selection in terms of the type of activity as well as the identification of a participatory site. An analysis of this data can provide feedback for planning or making adjustments to the programme for the following year.

#### Step 4: Select a Project

At this stage, students will list their activity ideas. With the help of parents, form teachers or members of the NSLC committee, they should narrow the list to two or three ideas. If the project will be completed as a group or class, rank the ideas from most to least important then vote on or decide which activity should be undertaken. Students should ensure it is reasonable, within their means, and that they can actually make an impact. Guide and encourage students to be realistic when assessing how to make the most impact.

*For example, if students decided to build or repair a home for a homeless family. Would the experience of building the home themselves add any value for the homeless family? On the other side of the coin, could it cause any harm? Would it be more efficient and beneficial for the family if students arranged and participated in a fundraiser for the building of the home and allow professionals to do the work?*

Always encourage students to be realistic with their expectations and honest about the best way to reach the end goal.

#### Step 5 : Approval of Site and Activity for Community Service

Based on the guidelines provided for site selection, students should identify the site in which they would like to carry out their service experience and report to the administrator or lead teacher for approval. Please note that parental consent or contract should be submitted at this stage (Appendix 3). Upon approval of site, a package should be given to the student with the following documents (See Appendices):

- Letter of Introduction
- Guidelines and Code of Conduct
- Student Agreement Form to be signed and returned to the coordinator

- Time Card
- Evaluation Sheet
- Operations of the NSLC Committee
- Letter of Indemnity
- Reflection Format Journal Entry Template
- Notice of Completion of Community Service



The parent/guardian should make contact with the site supervisor and finalize arrangement for placement of students.

### Step 6: Review Guidelines for Community Service

Prepare the students to engage in the community service experience by reviewing their rights and responsibilities, code of conduct and do's and don'ts for service learning.

## GUIDELINES AND CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS

All students are required to participate in the community service programme and complete sixty (60) hours by Grade 11 and ninety (90) hours by Grade 13. The following is a list of guidelines for ensuring that students have a productive and positive experience. Students should agree to follow and abide by these guidelines as their actions and attitude will reflect directly upon the programme and their schools.

- Students will prepare and present to the coordinator of the programme and their site supervisors, a timetable that reflects the dates and time when they will be on site.
- The students will notify the coordinator or form teacher and the site supervisor if they cannot be present at the site on days specified in the timetable, or if modifications have to be made to the timetable.
- Students will commit to conducting themselves with integrity at all times. They will use appropriate language and behave in a decent and courteous manner. They will dress modestly in a manner that befits the institutions and show respect for the institutions and all individuals that they encounter throughout the period.

- Students will not disclose to anyone, any confidential information about the sites where they are placed nor about the clients/personnel of these sites.
- If an institution or client is being discussed in group activities, diary/journal entries or portrayed in role play, the students should use general terms and descriptions to express situations.
- If a problem arises between students and supervisors, or if students are not satisfied, or are unhappy with the selected community service assignment, they should notify the coordinator of the programme.
- Please be advised that students are not allowed to accept payments from agencies at which service is being given. Students will be honest in reporting their attendance and recording their experiences in their diaries/journals.
- Working for pay and completing chores for family members are not acceptable activities for the community service component.

### **Step 7: Conduct and Monitor Community Service Activities**

The project should be hands-on. Students should complete the activity they committed to and feedback should be received from the site supervisor indicating their contribution and quality of same during the period. This should be recorded using the Evaluation Sheet for Site Supervisors (Appendix 7) and the notice of Completion of Community Service (Appendix 8). During the community service experience, students should document their efforts with photographs, videos and/or written articles.

### **Step 8: Reflection and Application**

#### **The Reflection**

Critical to the completion of the community service component of the NSLC is the student's reflection on the service learning experience. Reflection is a process of consciously exploring and examining one's self, perspectives, attributes, experiences, actions and interactions. It helps one to gain insight and see how to move forward. It is through this reflection that students will understand the impact of their service on self, the community and the school. In light of this, reflective activities should be so designed to help students understand their feelings, the setting in which they volunteered and how they resolved issues. It is important that reflection takes place before, during and after the service learning experience. Research suggests that reflection should

be “continuous, connected, challenging, and contextualized” (Eyler, Giles & Schmiede, 1996). This can be done as a discussion or debate, journal entry or portfolio compilation. Allow students to share their thoughts about their experiences. Teachers may need to ask questions to get students talking or sharing. Some sample questions might include:

### Reflect:

- How would you describe your volunteering experience?
- What did you like about this community service project?
- How did you feel about this project?
- What did you notice about the people who were helped by this project?
- What might you do differently if you were to do this project again?
- How else might we help in the future?
- How can you use what you learned from this project?

The following are some examples of reflective activities:

### Discussion & Debate

Students discuss the placement, challenges faced, how they resolved conflicts, etc. Other students share their feedback

Students share anecdotes

Can take place in form time, formal or informal

### Journal

Students analyze events on a case-by case basis

They address situations objectively, subjectively and analytically

Entries should take place after each volunteering shift, with multiple entries analyzing the overall experience

Entries can later be used in writing analysis paper or crafting in-class presentations

### Portfolio

Students compile reflection material: journals, proposals, essays, presentation notes, photographs etc.

Has the potential for more creativity than other reflective activities (e.g. photo journal, scrapbook etc.)

**Note Carefully:**

Upon completion of the required number of community service hours, students **MUST** complete an individually written reflection using the journal entry template given in Appendix 9.

**Step 9: Submission of Documents**

A community service portfolio should be developed and kept up to date by each student. The file containing the following should be submitted upon completion of the required hours:

- A copy of the statement of agreement signed by the student.
- A copy of the timetable submitted by the student outlining intended time for carrying out community service exercise.
- Journal entry and supporting documents (photographs, video/audio files etc.)
- A copy of the completed time card.
- A copy of the completed evaluation sheet.
- Notice of completion of community service

**Step 10: Uploading Information to the Database**

The final step in the process is to upload information as per the community service requirement to the database for each student that participated in the service learning exercise.



## NSLC COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMME OPERATION

### Hours of Service

These are the minimum number of hours that each student should complete for community service. A student is required to complete sixty (60) hours by Grade 11 and ninety (90) hours by Grade 13. Evidence of the number of hours completed must be recorded on the NSLC Time Card (Appendix 6). The table below gives guidance to how the number of hours can be completed by grade levels.

GRADE LEVELS	MINIMUM NUMBER OF HOURS
Grade 7	10 hours
Grade 8	10 hours
Grade 9	10 hours
Grade 10	15 hours
Grade 11	15 hours
Grade 12	15 hours
Grade 13	15 hours

Total: 60 hours

Total: 90 hours

Please note that this is not prescriptive. **The focus MUST be on completing the number of hours stipulated by Grades 11 and 13.** Schools and students are therefore, given autonomy to decide the number of hours to be completed at each grade level.

## Recommended Sites

The following represents a list of non-profit organisations, government agencies, clubs and societies through which the community service can be undertaken. Please note that this list is not exhaustive as students may make their own choices, subject to the approval of the NSLC committee.

Community Service Sites	Examples
Service/School Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kiwanis Club</li> <li>• Lions Club</li> <li>• Optimist International</li> <li>• Rotary Club</li> <li>• Jamaica Junior Chamber</li> <li>• Octagon Club</li> <li>• Environmental Club</li> <li>• Key Club</li> <li>• 4-H Club</li> <li>• Builders Club</li> <li>• Pathfinder</li> </ul>
Non-Profit Organizations (NPO)/Charities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jamaica Red Cross Society</li> <li>• St. Patrick's Foundation</li> <li>• Scout Association</li> <li>• Association of Girl Guides</li> <li>• YOU – Youth Opportunities Unlimited</li> <li>• Abilities Foundation</li> <li>• Angels of Love</li> <li>• Read Across Jamaica Foundation</li> <li>• Jamaica Society for the Blind</li> <li>• Montego Bay Marine Park Trust</li> <li>• Mustard Seed Communities</li> <li>• Jamaica Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (JSPCA)</li> <li>• Voluntary Organisation for the Upliftment of Children (VOUCH)</li> <li>• The Salvation Army</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)</li> <li>• Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)</li> </ul>
Community Youth Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Youth Clubs</li> <li>• Clubs affiliated to religious groups</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's Homes</li> <li>• Community Centres</li> <li>• Health Centres</li> <li>• Infirmaries</li> <li>• Parks</li> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• Government Ministries and Agencies</li> </ul>



## TYPES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

The community service component of the NSLC can fall into one of three types of service learning. The three types of community service learning, **direct**, **indirect**, and **advocacy**, are defined in the table below and include several examples.

Direct Service	
Definition	Activities that directly involve interaction with a recipient of the service. Establishing personal contact with people in need.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve or deliver food for the shut-ins, persons in elderly care or the homeless</li> <li>• Tutor, mentor, or coach individuals</li> <li>• Visit and care for elders in a long term care facility</li> <li>• Volunteer at an orphanage/children's home</li> <li>• Organize a free health fair for members of the community</li> </ul>
Indirect Service	
Definition	Activities that do not involve the direct interaction with the recipient(s). Students may have little or no contact with the recipient(s). It meets a clear need but has benefits to the larger community rather than an individual.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean up a community recreational area</li> <li>• Plan drug, violence, or disease prevention programme</li> <li>• Assist with an environmental project</li> <li>• Participate in rural/urban renewal projects such as mural or house painting</li> <li>• Build low-income housing - Fundraise with direct interaction with a non-profit beneficiary</li> <li>• Create brochures, flyers, posters, or annual reports for non-profit organizations</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class performance to raise money for a charity</li> <li>• Science class do a stream clean up and learn to test water quality</li> <li>• Food drive to support the local infant school, infirmaries, children's homes etc.</li> <li>• Sort food/clothes at a social service agency</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	Using voice, writing ability and other talents toward an issue as a service to others.
<b>Examples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobby on behalf of a community issue</li> <li>• Conduct research for a community organization</li> <li>• Conduct research to protect endangered species or the environment</li> </ul>





## THE DO'S OF COMMUNITY SERVICE:

### Students must

- complete a minimum 60 hours of personal community service by Grade 11 and 90 hours by Grade 13. This is a requirement for the Level 1 and Level 2 NSLC respectively.
- receive approval for community service
- reflect authentically
- learn about whom they are serving and/or the organization with which they are serving
- be responsible for completing all community service forms
- find service opportunities which benefit the school and the wider communities
- turn in all forms on or before the stipulated due dates
- count only the time they serve
- serve in a way that is distinct from work experience

**Note Carefully:** If the community service is with a group of five (5) or more students, students should plan a presentation to the class.

## THE DON'TS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE:

### Students must not

- receive pay for service
- serve a family member at home or at work as part of the community service
- have a family member as a supervisor (signature of completed service)
- serve at a for-profit entity
- perform regular religious duties, services, or ceremonies for personal community service.

## STUDENT TIPS FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Go beyond the minimum.
- Spread it out! Universities want to see that you have a heart for service over time.
- Diversify your experiences but also be willing to commit to regular ongoing service opportunities.
- Focus service experience on a cause. Can it connect to a sustainable development goal?
- Ask questions along the way!
- Be willing to serve with a cheerful heart.
- Have a humble spirit with a learning posture.
- Get familiar with the idea of service learning.
- Avoid just fundraising. How does your service fit within one of the three categories?
- Join a volunteer group or team. There are some really amazing opportunities out there!
- Connect your service to explore possible future voluntary pursuits.
- Explore your gifts, talents, and preferences.
- Avoid missing school for service trips.
- Start early.
- Ideally the person who signs your forms should be your direct supervisor instead of the head of the organization.
- Keep a copy of your forms (digital or hard copy).





## RECOGNITION OF SERVICE

Recognition is very important as it helps students understand the value of their contribution and fosters the development of a lifelong commitment to community involvement. Recognition of community service helps to demonstrate to young people that others value their work and shows how important it is to say thank you to those involved.

When students feel good about what has been done, it is easier for them to stay motivated and involved. Additionally, when participants learn new skills, take on new responsibilities and offer their hearts and hands to others, it is appropriate to recognize those efforts. While the goal of recognition is not to overshadow the spirit of volunteerism, it helps to reaffirm partnerships and renews the commitment to service. Recognition of service should incorporate school staff, parents, community members and leaders of charities and non-profit organizations.

Here are a few ideas schools can use to recognize students' efforts.

- Encourage participants to develop a website, video, scrapbook, community display or newsletter documenting their community service experience.
- Offer leadership roles to students in other areas at the school.
- Nominate participants for local awards and scholarships.
- Award certificates or recognize students during devotional exercises or at school- leaving ceremonies.

## A Final Thought

A true learning experience should be multi-dimensional and ideally, include a developed sense of the value of giving back. Community service is the adhesive that connects academic study and real-life experiences so that each strengthens the other. Blending meaningful community service with course objectives and assignments, enhances the learning experience where students gain a deeper understanding of course content, promote their professional development and civic responsibility. It encourages lifelong civic engagement, and strengthens their communities. Gaining competencies through community service is consistent with the constructivist paradigm which echoes inclusivity, student-centredness, interactivity and strong partnerships among school, home and community in addressing significant societal and communal issues.

For many students, life after high school involves higher education, whether it is pursued through a college or a university. They seek a higher education because they want to achieve both personal and career goals. In determining admission, many tertiary institutions consider whether students have developed the competencies that will prepare them for more difficult coursework, participation in extracurricular activities and voluntary service. Voluntary participation is an indication that students have learned valuable life lessons, such as teamwork, leadership, and civic responsibility.

It is the vision of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information that this community service experience will create a more positive school atmosphere and a synergy between and among the students, school, community and other stakeholders; as it seeks to develop and acknowledge the competencies of our students. To this effect, the Ministry believes that the teachers' acceptance and enthusiasm is integral to the students achieving a fulfilling experience. The Ministry invites your ongoing reflection, assessment and evaluation of the programme annually.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information acknowledges that this **NSLC Community Service Handbook** is by no means exhaustive but serves its purpose as a guide. The Ministry therefore, implores all participants to utilise their creative energies, talents and skills as we all work in commonality to build competencies thereby creating a nation of certified Jamaicans who are globally competitive.

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SECTION 4

# APPENDICES



# APPENDIX 1

## Parents' Letter of Understanding



*Developing Competencies  
Recognizing Achievements*

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MoEYI) is committed to the goal of establishing a system where all students exiting the secondary level have the competencies needed to be successful in the current and future economies as well as in their personal lives. To complement the National Standards Curriculum and existing exit examinations, the MoEYI has decided to introduce the National School Leaving Certificate (NSLC).

The NSLC is an award to be earned by every learner as a result of his/her secondary school achievements. It will document learners' knowledge, skills and attitudes to provide a record of growth and achievement in personal attributes as well as participation in community service. Consequently, it will present a balanced profile of the qualities graduates possess when they leave secondary school at the end of Grade 11 and Grade 13.

Integral to the issuance of this Certificate is the completion of a minimum of sixty (60) hours of community service by Grade 11. The community service component is designed to foster the development of volunteerism, empathy, personal values, social responsibility and citizenship. It aims further to:

- help students to develop an awareness and better understanding of the communities they live in.
- develop a community of caring and committed individuals across the country.
- enhance students' learning by enabling them to practice skills and test classroom knowledge through related service experiences in the local community.
- enable students to provide needed assistance to community agencies and to the people served by these agencies.

- expose students to people who may be disadvantaged socially, medically, economically, or otherwise.
- bridge the gap between school and community through partnerships among students, educational institutions and community organizations.

With these in mind, the role of parents is vital to the successful completion of the community service component of the NSLC. In order to empower your child/ward to participate in the service learning experience, you should:

- discuss with him/her the points presented in this letter as well as additional information presented in the package
- assist with the selection of community service institutions/sites
- discuss the best possible fit for him/her
- keep abreast of and assist in the monitoring of his/her use of time in carrying out the service learning
- visit the institution/site with your child/ward to ensure appropriateness and adherence to proper procedures
- guide your child/ward in completing all the requirements for the award of the NSLC

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Information in collaboration with

\_\_\_\_\_ continues to partner with you as we invest in  
(School's Name)

the holistic development of your child/ward. The Ministry and the school acknowledge your active participation in this endeavour as we go forward in pursuit of national development. Kindly sign the statement of understanding below and return to your child's/ward's school.

Yours sincerely

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

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(School's Stamp)

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(Date)



## STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian) of  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ of Form/Grade \_\_\_\_\_ hereby acknowledges that I have  
 (Name of Student)

read and understood the information presented regarding my child's/ward's participation in the community service component of the National School Leaving Certificate programme. I hereby pledge my commitment to this endeavour for the benefit of my child/ward, the school and community.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent's/Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date (MM/DD/YY)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Community Service Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature



# APPENDIX 2

## Pre-Service Component Questionnaire

# NATIONAL SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE PRE-SERVICE COMPONENT

## Community Service Questionnaire

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade/Form: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer the following questions:

- Have you ever participated in community service? If so, in what kind of activities did you participate? How did you feel about your efforts in this activity?

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- Is there a special area or need that you have identified in the community to which you would like to offer your service? If yes, kindly indicate below.

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- Please list any special/specific skill set you have that can be beneficial to our community partners (e.g. *artistic, creative, computer, communication, team player, innovative, teaching*)

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- Are you currently affiliated with any charity organization? If so, please state the name of the organization and the nature of your affiliation (e.g. *Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, The Salvation Army*)

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- In what ways do you think community service can enhance your education? (e.g. *how can it broaden your knowledge of diversity, career choices, or social awareness?*)

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# APPENDIX 3

## Parental Consent/Contract

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Date

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Dear Parent/Guardian

As part of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information's community service requirement, a student has the option of performing meaningful service on or off the school compound. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that the student is being properly supervised when undertaking the volunteerism project.

The school must approve all service projects before they are started. This approval merely pertains to the content and purpose of the project, and does NOT imply any approval of the supervision arrangements for the activity. Transportation to, from, or during the activity is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

My signature indicates that I have read and understood this form.

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Name of Parent/Guardian

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Signature of Parent/Guardian

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Date (MM/DD/YY)



# APPENDIX 4

## Student Agreement Form



**NATIONAL SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE  
COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMME  
STUDENT AGREEMENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, clearly understand that I must complete a minimum of 60  
(Name of Student)  
hours of community service during my five years of high school in order to satisfy the National School Leaving Certificate requirements. I understand that incomplete documentation and/or unsatisfactory performance will result in failure to meet NSLC requirements.

I have read the Community Service Guidelines and Code of Conduct and agree to abide by the rules that are outlined. It is not my intention to violate any of these rules or behave in a manner that could be considered inappropriate. My signature indicates that I fully understand the NSLC expectations and guidelines regarding community service, and I shall conduct myself accordingly.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Year of Graduation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# APPENDIX 5

## Letter of Introduction



*Developing Competencies,  
Recognizing Achievements*

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Dear \_\_\_\_\_

This letter is to introduce \_\_\_\_\_ and  
(Name of School)

\_\_\_\_\_ to your organization. \_\_\_\_\_ is coming to you  
(Name of Student) (Name of Student)

to offer (his/her) time on a voluntary basis to meet the requirements of the community service component of the National School Leaving Certificate. Through volunteerism, our students have a unique opportunity to learn to serve others. The main aims of this voluntary service programme are to help students:

- develop a positive attitude to education as a result of linking academic knowledge to real life situation.
- gain self-confidence and competence through varying experiences.
- gain a sense of community with civil and social responsibilities.
- develop a concern for the welfare of others in society.
- learn problem-solving and life coping skills.
- learn that there is dignity and value in service irrespective of level or condition.

We thank you for agreeing to accept him/her to gain experience through voluntary service at your organization. We certainly appreciate your willingness to guide our students in navigating and negotiating differences as they volunteer their time and talents to your organization.

The period and time when the student will offer service should be by mutual agreement. Kindly assist us by making the relevant entries on the student's time card. At the end of the agreed period of service, we ask that you also assist us in evaluating the student's performance. An evaluation form will be provided for this purpose and a short interview may be conducted if necessary.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our students for volunteering their time to your organization. Your kind co-operation is valued as we continue to forge partnerships between school and community. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the programme coordinator or principal of the above named school.

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Principal

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Signature

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Community Service Coordinator

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Signature

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School Stamp



# APPENDIX 6

## Community Service Time Card

## NATIONAL SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE COMMUNITY SERVICE TIME CARD

Organization/Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone & Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE (MM/DD/YY)	TIME		# HOURS	ACTIVITY/TASK	SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE
	AM	PM			
	In				
	Out				
	In				
	Out				
	In				
	Out				
	In				
	Out				
	In				
	Out				

Name & Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Approval: \_\_\_\_\_



# APPENDIX 7

## Evaluation Sheet for Site Supervisor



## NATIONAL SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMME

### EVALUATION SHEET FOR SITE SUPERVISOR

Thank you for allowing our student to volunteer with your organization. We hope that this was a beneficial experience for you and the community you serve. We appreciate the way you have helped our student learn throughout this process. Please complete this evaluation of the student's participation. It also serves as an official confirmation of the student's service. We may contact you should we need to follow up on this opportunity. If you have any questions, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ (NSLC Administrator) by email \_\_\_\_\_ or telephone at 876\_\_\_\_\_.

Check the column that best describes the student's personality/behaviour.

<b>Personality / Characteristics</b>	<b>Not observed</b>	<b>Seldom</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Always</b>
<b>Initiative</b> Able to lead; plans well and executes plans to completion; self-motivated, shows creativity and problem-solving skills				
<b>Attitude</b> Maintains an even disposition and positive perspective; respects authority				
<b>Co-operative</b> Works as a member of a team, displays a positive work at- titude				
<b>Social Conduct</b> Accepts organizational regulations; is appropriately attired, relates well with/cares for the needs of others				
<b>Time management</b> Punctual, organizes and plans effectively				
<b>Integrity</b> Consistently trustworthy; upholds personal values; honesty				

Comments:

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Name of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# APPENDIX 8

## Notice of Completion of Community Service

## NOTICE OF COMPLETION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of student) has completed \_\_\_\_\_ hours  
of Community Service.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Site Supervisor)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student's Signature)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(NSLC Community Service Coordinator)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# APPENDIX 9

## Community Service Reflection Journal Entry Template

## COMMUNITY SERVICE REFLECTION SUGGESTED JOURNAL ENTRY TEMPLATE

The following is a suggestion of how students can make their journal entries:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade/Form: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Experience:** *(Describe what happened in terms of the specific task you did; was it easy or difficult, where it was done, who you interfaced with, any issues/incidents that arose)*

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**I felt that/I believe that** *(How did it make you feel; did you need to make any changes? (explain); did you achieve your goal? (explain))*

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**Personal Lesson(s) Learnt:** *(What specifically have you learnt?)*

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**Conclusion** *(How has your experience impacted /influenced others, how has this experience inspired you to continue serving others, what steps have you taken/plan to take the next time you engage in service learning?)*

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



# APPENDIX 10

Operations of the NSLC Committee  
Community Service Component



## NATIONAL SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE

### Community Service Component

#### The NSLC Committee will:

- be responsible for planning and executing orientation with students and parents to educate them about the community service exercise, prior to them being enlisted to start the project.
- monitor time cards and evaluations received from institutions in which community service is undertaken.
- represent the school at workshops, meetings and conferences in the co-ordination and execution of community service.
- be responsible for the proper recording of community service information on the files of each student.
- be responsible for organising sessions to facilitate reflection on the service experiences.
- ensure that all students complete the required number of hours.
- be available to respond to queries or requests from students/organizations and assist as may be deemed necessary.



# APPENDIX 11

## Letter of Indemnity



MINISTRY of EDUCATION  
YOUTH & INFORMATION

Reply or subsequent reference  
to this communication should  
be made to the Permanent  
Secretary and the following  
reference quoted:

2-4 National Heroes Circle  
Kingston 4, Jamaica  
Tel: 876-612-5872  
Fax: 876-948-7755  
[www.moe.gov.jm](http://www.moe.gov.jm)

**Re: National School Leaving Certificate Community Service Programme**

This serves to indemnify you against any claims which might arise through accidents to student(s)

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from the \_\_\_\_\_ School, while engaged in community  
service at your establishment for the period of time that has been agreed on by yourself and the  
student(s). The authority of this indemnity has been approved by the Government.

The Ministry of Education and the \_\_\_\_\_ School wish to thank you for  
permitting the student(s) to carry out this voluntary service for personal development and trust that  
the programme will prove beneficial to all concerned.

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Permanent Secretary,  
Ministry of Education Education,  
Youth and Information

VALIDATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's name    Principal's signature

*NOTE: This letter of indemnity is not valid unless it bears the stamp of the school and the name and signature of the principal.*

## Works Consulted

Eyler, J., Giles, D. E., Jr., Schmiede, A. (1996). A Practitioners Guide to Reflection in Service Learning: Student Voices and Reflections. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University.

"Profile of the Ideal Caricom Citizen Worker". Report at the 11th Meeting of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, 1997

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