

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

This letter is to advise you of temporary changes that the Ministry of Education has made to the community involvement graduation policy, to remove barriers for students who are facing challenges due to COVID-19.

Students graduating in the 2020-2021 school year will be required to have a minimum of 20 (reduced from 40) community involvement hours. Several policy restrictions have been waived, allowing principals discretion to: allow students to earn hours during the time allotted for the instructional program on a school day (for example, students with a spare, or on alternative programming); to earn hours through duties normally performed in the home; and to allow students aged 14 and older to count up to a maximum of 10 hours from paid employment to count towards their graduation requirement if they complete a reflection exercise on how their work provided service.

Students are encouraged to continue to seek out volunteer opportunities, keeping in mind public health unit recommendations.

Students may be able to fulfill the graduation requirement by volunteering virtually. There are many ways in which students can develop an awareness of civic responsibility while supporting and strengthening their communities. They might consider:

- mentoring younger people through online tutoring
- connecting and supporting seniors through a letter-writing campaign
- delivering groceries to elderly or immunocompromised neighbours
- helping in donation pick-ups for non-profit organizations
- sewing masks for donation to social agencies.

Students are encouraged to speak to their school administration about fulfilling these requirements.

Sincerely,
Near North District School Board