**School District:DIERKS District School**

**High School: DIERKS High School**

**School LEA: # 00000000**

**CSL Coordinator: Stacey Southerland**

Students (grades 9-12) may receive 1 unit of academic career focus credit for completing 75 hours of certified CSL during a student’s 9-12th grade years. Evidence of preparation, action and reflection must be documented in order to receive the CSL academic credit. Completed plans must be submitted through the Course Approval System (CAS) with the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE).

Community Service Learning (CSL) is an approach to teaching and learning in which students use academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs. It is more than just volunteering. Act 648 of 1993 was written to develop a spirit of civic engagement and volunteerism. It allows students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) who have completed 75 hours of Community Service Learning (CSL) to earn one (1) academic career focus credit toward graduation with appropriate documentation. The course code used will be 496010. This is a credit, not a graded course, and the course WILL NOT be calculated in the student’s GPA or used for Class Rank in the Total Points System. No 1⁄2 units of career focus academic credit will be award for CSL, as only one full credit will be awarded for students documenting 75 hours of approved CSL. The DeQueen-Mena Education Service Cooperative (DMESC) School District may certify CSL projects if certified staff personnel is in attendance while students are completing the CSL activity. If the school does not provide a certified staff person to be in attendance, then the CSL sponsoring organization must be approved by the State Board of Education and local school board to certify and verify hours for CSL credit.

**1. Service Learning is more than completing the hours, but connecting the service to a learning experience based on preparation and reflection. Describe the school’s plan for implementing a CSL program including the following components of preparation, action and reflection.**

DMESC School district defines Community Service Learning as:

Service-Learning is a teaching and learning strategy in which students use academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs. DMESC believes that encouraging students to participate in CSL will benefit the students by gaining experiences and skills that will positively impact their academic achievements while benefiting the community/school relationship.

**PREPARATION**

DMESC School District provides students the opportunity to earn Community Service Learning credit through meaningful hands on experiences guided by the CSL school plan. This plan will positively impact the students by adding real world experience to scholarship applications, choosing career pathways, gaining skills for use on resumes, gaining entry level job experience and earning credits for graduation. DMESC School District will provide access for all students to participate in the CSL program by meeting with the CSL Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, School Counselor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Career Coach \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and CSL teachers who have embedded Service Learning within class curriculums. Forms will be made available on the school website, the Community Service Learning Classroom and will be visited at least annually and is a component of the individual Students Success Plan.

Students will be awarded 1 unit of career focus academic credit for completing 75 hours of community service learning (CSL) while in grades 9-12. Students will complete the Orientation to Service Learning Assignment located in *Google Classroom* to prepare for CSL. Students will be able to access all required forms from *Google Classroom* or from the CSL coordinator. Students will be required to complete the **Community Service Letter of Agreement** which contains parental consent and emergency contacts prior to beginning CSL. This form will be updated annually during Success Plan reviews. After the *CSL Orientation Assignment* is complete and the **CSL Letter of Agreement** containing parent/guardian permission is submitted, students are eligible to begin earning clock hours toward the CSL graduation credit. Each CSL activity will require pre-approval by the building administrators, CSL Coordinator, and the CSL teacher. The CSL learning activity may be supervised by a certified staff member or with an agency that has an approved contract with the district to provide CSL hours of service. High School Administrators, CSL Coordinator or CSL certified staff supervising the CSL activity may pre-approve and then certify the time sheets of CSL projects.

ADE State Board and DMESC School Board approved Community Service Learning Organizations, Agencies, or Sites will be available from the CSL Coordinator. Additional sites can be added after being approved by the DMESC and the State Board of Education. An application can be obtained from the CSL Coordinator or on the Community Service Learning page on the ADE website.

**ACTION**

The action phase is the actual participation in the CSL activity. Students will carry out tasks, collect evidence, analyze progress, make adjustments and develop critical thinking skills in problem-solving and decision making. If needed, this phase may contain a training period provided by the approved CSL site or the designated CSL certified staff member.

Students who participate in a school sponsored CSL learning activity will fill out a **CSL Pre-Planning Form** for each activity. This form will be approved by the CSL Coordinator/teacher and/or building administrators. The **CSL Pre-Planning Form** requires a short description of the activity and parent/guardian consent to participate in the activity. Students will document their service hours on the **CSL Student Log Sheet** and return to the CSL Coordinator and/or Building Administrators for verification of completion. Forms will be available in the CSL Google Classroom or from the CSL teacher/coordinator.

Students who participate in a CSL activity from an approved site will be required to complete the **CSL Pre-Planning Form** which will require a signature from the responsible party at the CSL site/provider. These forms can be obtained from the CSL Google Classroom or from CSL Coordinator. The responsible person from the approved site will verify the completion of hours earned by signing the **CSL Student Log Sheet.**

**REFLECTION**

Reflection of the CSL activity guides students in making connections between their service experiences and the learning they acquired. Reflection will be reinforced during all phases of service-learning. Reflection is a conscious examination of what was learned or experienced and involves observation, asking questions, and adding new meaning to the experience. This requires the student to recognize what was learned, not simply a review of what was accomplished.

Once the Community Service Learning (CSL) activity is completed, each student will be required to complete reflection questions that outline the CSL activity in which the student participated on the **CSL Reflection Form** . Students will also be asked to include a written reflection of their experiences during the CSL activity. The **CSL Reflection Form** will be available in the CSL Google Classroom and from the CSL teacher/coordinator.

Reflection questions will include:

* How did this experience help you to better understand your responsibilities as a community member?
* What skills and knowledge did you acquire through this experience?
* How did your service make an impact your school or community? How do you know?
* How did this experience help you better understand ideas or subjects you have been studying?
* Give an example of how participating in the Service Learning Activity changed you, include at least two character traits you developed during this CSL experience.

High-quality reflection encourages students to recognize activities that encourage analysis, problem solving, comprehension, evaluation, and inference. Reflection is a process that allows students to develop critical thinking skills, and provides an opportunity to discuss, explore and find a resolution to difficult or challenging circumstances. Reflection allows students to recognize that CSL provides learning experiences and provides practice as they learn to work collaboratively to solve problems, and build a sense of community.

Evaluation of the CS program will be a part of continual improvement of the DMESC CSL program. The CSL Coordinator, teachers who participate in the program, and administrators will evaluate the program effectiveness annually.

**2. Describe how participation in CSL will benefit students at the school (academic, personal competencies, career focused, etc.).**

Students who participate in CSL activities will benefit by being involved and developing personal and social skills. Students will gain self-confidence, self-efficacy and resilience. The intent is for students to cultivate a sense of service and leadership by participating in CSL activities. The goal of CSL is to increase students’ awareness of community needs and increase the ability for them to be motivated to accomplish tasks. Being involved in CSL activities benefit students in:

**ACADEMICS**

Students participating in CSL activities will benefit academically by:

* Increased Language Arts and Reading capabilities through real world research and comprehension practice.
* Greater engagement in school, from applying knowledge and skills learned in the classroom.
* Increased sense of educational accomplishment through the application of
* learned skills while benefiting the community where they live.
* Increase in political knowledge through interaction of community officials and organizations.

**PERSONAL COMPETENCIES**

Students participating in CSL activities will benefit in personal competencies by:

* Gaining self-confidence and efficacy from achieving shared goals.
* Feeling empowered to accept leadership positions.
* Acquiring greater acceptance of cultural diversity and awareness of community needs through meaningful CSL activities.
* Growth in skills for service project planning and implementation.
* Awareness and avoidance of high risk behaviors such as smoking, alcohol and drug use.

**CAREER AWARENESS**

Students participating in CSL activities will benefit in career awareness by:

* Greater knowledge of career options from working with community leader’s in CSL activities.
* Development of positive work skills and habits observed from CSL activity providers and interaction with other professionals during CSL activity.
* Stronger sets of transferable career skills, such as organization and planning activities, communication and interpersonal skills.

**3. Explain the school’s plan for managing CSL activities (coordinator, certifying programs, direct supervising, monitoring and tracking participation in CSL, awarding credit).**

**COORDINATOR**

DMESC School District will name a CSL Coordinator that will be located at the High School that serves students in grades (9-12). Information for the DMESC CSL Program will be located in the **Community Service Learning** Google Classroom. This classroom will be managed by the CSL Coordinator who will add or delete notifications and assignments. The class will include a required *Orientation to CSL* assignment that explains CSL and its benefits. All forms students need will be housed in the Google Classroom. Any student wishing to participate in the CSL program must complete the orientation activities and submit the **CSL Letter of Agreement** which contains parental consent and emergency contact information this form will be updated at least annually during the review of Student Success Plans. Students will have access to the classroom to obtain forms required for each CSL activity.

**DMESC CSL Coordinator, Stacey Southerland**

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DMESC certified faculty may supervise students in CSL activities, however, they must be pre-approved by the CSL Coordinator/ and or building administrators prior to CSL hours being logged. These teachers will work with the CSL Coordinator to make sure that appropriate documentation and forms are being used and submitted.

**CERTIFYING PROGRAMS**

DMESC district will encourage staff who have relationships with non-profit entities interested in providing CSL opportunities to complete the ADE application and submit it to DMESC board for approval, who will then submit those request to the ADE for State Board approval. An information page will be placed on the school website explaining the DMESC CSL plan and will include information on how to become an approved site. Students who wish to complete a CSL activity at an approved site must complete the required forms and obtain pre-approval from the CSL coordinator. A student who completes a CSL activity at an unapproved site may not be allowed to log those hours.

Once an agency, organization, or site is approved by the ADE board and agrees to provide a CSL activity for students,the **CSL Pre-Planning Form** will be signed by the student, parent/guardian, CSL coordinator/building administrator and the volunteer site responsible party. The site supervisor will also sign the **CSL Student Log**. The site may be asked to complete an evaluation form which will help DMESC to continually improve the CSL program.

**MONITORING AND TRACKING**

Students who wish to participate in the CSL program will complete the orientation assignments in Google Classroom and fill out the **CSL Letter of Agreement** which will provide parental/guardian consent and emergency contact information. The **CSL Letter of Agreement** will be retained by the CSL Coordinator and copies provided to the approved agency, organization, or volunteer site. If a certified faculty member is the supervisor, then they will also receive a copy of this form. It is the responsibility of the student to document the hours and provide the 75-hour requirement to the CSL coordinator in order to receive one (1) academic credit.

Students who participate in will be required to keep a **CSL Student Log Sheet** that includes a description of the CSL activity and records the amount of volunteer time that is verified by a representative of the agency, organization or volunteer site. The student will return those logs to the CSL coordinator who will maintain those with the Students’ Success Plan. Reflection and evaluation forms will also be completed by students after each CSL activity. The CSL coordinator requires all forms be submitted at one time to ensure accurate record keeping practices. All documentation is maintained and housed as a component of the Student Success Plan.

**AWARDING CREDIT**

One (1) academic career focus credit toward graduation with appropriate documentation listed above will be awarded to students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) who have completed 75 hours of approved Community Service Learning (CSL). The course code used will be 496010. This is a credit, not a graded course, and the course WILL NOT be calculated in the student’s GPA or used for Class Rank in the Total Points System. No 1⁄2 units of career focus academic credit will be awarded for CSL, as only one full credit will be awarded for students documenting 75 hours of approved CSL. The DMESC School District may certify CSL projects if staff personnel are in attendance while students are completing the CSL activity. If the school does not provide a staff person to be in attendance, then the CSL sponsoring organization must be approved by the State Board of Education and local school board to certify and verify hours for CSL credit.

**4. What additional partner organizations does the district plan to assist in obtaining local and State Board approval to certify CSL?**

At this time DMESC School District does not have any agency, organization, or site partnerships outside those listed on the ADE page as already approved. The goal of CSL activities includes the development of positive work skills and attitudes along with students learning strong job and community skills including how to plan activities, interview skills, and the skills required in working with others to complete a task.

The partner organizations on the ADE Web site for Sevier County include:

* Sevier Co. 4H Extension
* Center of Arkansas Legal Services

Community-school partnerships are an essential element of service-learning experiences in which students, teachers and community partners design projects to address community needs as part of their academic studies. Community-school partnerships can help students to increase their understanding and commitment to civic responsibility, and can help community organizations meet their goals. These partnerships may include community or faith-based organizations, grassroots or advocacy organizations, other schools, colleges or businesses, or government agencies. DMESC School District is open to additional partnership opportunities based on local and state board approval with a signed letter of agreement from the following possible agencies, organizations, and volunteer sites:

* First Baptist Church, DeQueen, Arkansas
* Arkansas Trail of Tears
* Collin Raye Benefit Concert Corporation
* Cossatot Good Sams Chapter
* Horatio Community Food Depot
* Imagination Library of Southwest Arkansas

Students may also participate in service-learning through extracurricular clubs and groups which can be supervised by a certified DMESC Faculty Member. Some sample volunteer activities that occur in clubs include Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), National Honor Society (NHS), Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Beta Club, Future Farmers of America (FFA), EAST, DMESC Music Club/Band, Key Club, and Student Council.

The goal of CSL activities includes the development of positive work skills and attitudes along with students learning strong job and community skills including how to plan activities, interview skills, and the skills required in working with others to complete a task. As the CSL program grows, professional development will be provided to faculty members as they incorporate CSL learning into their curriculum. The program will also become a part of the Student Success Plan if the student wishes to participate.

**5. What safety policies and procedures does the school have in place to certify CSL for outside organizations?**

DMESC School District is committed to providing safe opportunities for students to participate in CSL activities. In order to meet this goal, several guidelines will be followed and will be provided to approved Community Service Learning Sites:

**SECURITY GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS (See CSL Orientation Assignment)**

Transportation WILL NOT be provided for students to participate in CSL activities, it will be the responsibility of the student, and or parent/guardian. If the CSL volunteer activity is supervised by a DMESC faculty member, then transportation may be arranged for the activity but will be the responsibility of the certified faculty member who will follow all DMESC Transportation and Field Trip guidelines and procedures. Permission forms and a contract of agreement will be signed by the student, parent/guardian, local school CSL Coordinator, and the volunteer site. The CSL teacher may elect to use the **CSL Pre-Planning Form** as the activity permission slip. If a student feels unsafe during a CSL activity, for any reason, they need to exit the activity and contact a parent/guardian and/or school representative. Students may be asked to specify the situation on the **CSL Student Reflection Form** in order to provide protection of that student and give the CSL Coordinator the opportunity to discontinue participation in that activity or site. A component of the CSL *Orientation Assignment* includes general safety practices such as:

* Make sure you know whom to contact at the approved volunteer CSL site in case of emergency.
* Make sure you know how to exit the approved CSL site in case of an emergency.
* Ask for help from your faculty advisor or staff member at your CSL site when in doubt.
* Be punctual and responsible in completing your commitment to the service site.
* Contact your site supervisor if you know you will be late or not able to come in at all.
* Keep all information about persons you may work with confidential.
* Show respect for your CSL site, its staff, and others in attendance.
* Be aware that you are representing yourself and DMESC School District in all activities, follow handbook guidelines where appropriate.
* Know that if you are having trouble or feel unsafe at your CSL site, you can notify those who are in responsible positions.
* Sign-in at your CSL site every time you are there, and record your service hours on your student service time log. This will ensure you receive credit for the hours you have served.
* Drug or alcohol use during CSL in not allowed.
* Don’t give personal information to anyone who is not in the responsible position at an approved site.
* Don’t allow someone you do not know in your personal vehicle.
* Any exchanges of a sexual nature are not to be tolerated and don’t engage in behavior that might be perceived as sexual with a client or community-based organization representative.
* Don’t tolerate verbal exchanges or engage in behavior that might be perceived as discriminating against an individual on the basis of his/her age, race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, or ethnicity.

**SECURITY GUIDELINES FOR APPROVED SITES**

Thoroughly review the **CSL Letter of Agreement** for Off-District CSL to understand the roles and responsibilities of all parties.

* Ensure that service learners comply with any legal requirements for background checks, if required for the activity.
* Assign a supervisor for service learners at your site if the student is not supervised by a DMESC Faculty member.
* Orient all community service learners (CSL) to the organization and its safety policies, procedures.
* Require that service learners complete **CSL Student Log Sheet** each time they serve, so that the CSL Site is aware of who is at the organization at all times.
* Communicate with school building administrators if the CSL organization is experiencing a difficult time with a student service learner.
* Ensure that you have contact information for a representative at the school district/faculty sponsor in case problems arise, or accidents happen.
* Ensure that each volunteer site has a copy of the student volunteer form that contains emergency contact information for community service learners and a simple medical release form.

**SECURITY GUIDELINES FOR DMESC SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Don’t request that service learners do tasks that are beyond their capabilities, or beyond their scope. Understand that faculty members can be individually named in lawsuits and should play an active role in ensuring safe and positive community service-learning experiences for their students.

* Know that faculty members will be indemnified and protected by the school district in the case of a lawsuit, so long as the faculty member was acting within the scope of his or her work/duties.
* Ensure all parties have required documents for emergency contact and keep those on record.
* Meet the special safety needs of any student should they be identified and listed on a safety plan or noted in the student’s **CSL Letter of Agreement**.
* Be aware that there are state and federal regulations regarding background checks for those students whose service-learning placements are at learning sites that work with children, the elderly, or persons with disabilities. The cost of the background checks will be incurred by the student wishing to participate in the CSL approved activity.