

# Northwest ISD “Green Cord” Challenge Community Service Award Program

## **What is the NISD “Green Cord” Community Service Award Program?**

The “Green Cord” Community Service Award Program is an initiative designed to help high school students gain a sense of community service, pride, and ownership. The program is a way to encourage 9-12 grade students to contribute at least 100 hours of approved community service per school year. Students meeting these requirements will be recognized as Green Cord award recipients in each high school year they complete 100 or more hours.

Students meeting and/or exceeding requirements for community service (100 hours per year):

- Will be awarded a Green Cord certificate each year.
- Will have the opportunity to purchase a Green Cord patch for their Letter Jacket. Additional Green Cord pins can be purchased for additional years.
- Students earning their 4<sup>th</sup> Green Cord will be recognized at the Board of Trustees Awards.
- Senior year, graduates will have the option to purchase a “Green Cord” for each year of achievement (100 hours/year) to wear during their high school graduation ceremony.
- A special mention will be made in the graduation program for students who complete the Green Cord program all four years of high school.

## **Who should participate in the program?**

All Northwest ISD 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students are encouraged to participate in this community service program for personal satisfaction, community service recognition, and to enhance their college admissions and scholarship opportunities. Our goal for all students in NISD is to serve our community and develop Global Good Citizens.

## **Why volunteer in your community?**

- Through volunteer service, people can strengthen and improve the quality of life within their communities and help themselves and others to live happier, healthier and more productive lives.
- Volunteering is beneficial because it builds self-esteem, passes on social values and instills the responsibility of a personal commitment by giving back to the community through service.
- Community service hours can be used for college and work applications.
- Volunteer work can introduce you to a future career and give you valuable experience and insight.
- To Be College and Career Ready.

## **What types of service will qualify as community service?**

Only those hours performed by a student without compensation will qualify for community service approval. Any community service hours performed as a part of a court order, or similar judgment, will not be counted toward the student’s Green Cord hours. There is an almost endless list of volunteer opportunities for students. For a suggested list of examples that could be approved community service activities, please refer to the chart on page 2 of this document.

## **Transfer Students**

A transfer student may participate in the “Green Cord” program. The 100 required community service hours may include approved hours earned while attending the previous high school. It is the student’s responsibility to provide adequate documentation of the approved hours.

## **National Honor Society, PALS, & STUCO Hours**

Students who earn community service hours in NHS, PALS, and STUCO can use those for Green Cord too. As long as the community service hours meet the Green Cord criteria.

**How does the process work? How do you submit hours?**

See you campus website page titled “Green Cord” for information and directions to submitting Green Cord hours. Students entering their Freshman (9<sup>th</sup> grade) year may begin accruing community service hours starting May 1<sup>st</sup> of their 8<sup>th</sup> grade school year.

**When do the 100 hours of community service need to be completed?**

To be counted toward the annual “Green Cord” award, hours must be turned in by April 12, 2019. Hours can be earned from May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 – April 12, 2019.

**Do activities/events/organizations need to be pre-approved?**

Established 501(c) 3 organizations need no pre-approval. However, if the student doesn’t know whether or not the intended organization has a 501(c) 3 status, he/she should check with the Green Cord sponsor prior to volunteering to guarantee approval. Questions can be addressed by e-mailing your Green Cord sponsor.

In any volunteer situation, it is important to adopt certain safety practices. Never allow yourself to be left alone or placed in compromising situations. If you feel your safety may be compromised at any time, excuse yourself from the volunteer activity and report the occurrence to your sponsor. If there is an immediate emergency, call 911.

Examples of Community Service (what is/not acceptable toward hours)

Acceptable	Unacceptable
All non-profit organizations, some church activities that do not involve worship or religious instruction, helping at a campus other than their own, local hospitals, etc.	Individual fund-raising, babysitting your neighbor’s child for free, working as an intern without pay, working at church that involves religious instruction.
Hours earned the summer after 8 <sup>th</sup> grade; and turned in on time	Hours turned in after the April 12, 2019 deadline.
Hour-for-hour volunteer time	Double hours promised by sponsor
Church support related activities – (mission trips, singing with choir at nursing homes, etc.). Max of 25 hours for trips.	Teaching religion, singing or playing an instrument in the church choir during worship, instruction, & VBS
Volunteering outside the student’s scheduled school day, hours done after senior release (seniors must attach copy of schedule to verify).	Helping a teacher during class; volunteer time that is part of the course requirement, work done during the school day that it not sponsored/approved.
Teen Court – youth volunteer, not serving as a resolution for a ticket and consequence.	Teen Court – time served for breaking the law.
Hours that are properly documented (that include the date, description of activity, organization name, contact name and information) submitted by the April 13 deadline.	Hours with incomplete information that cannot be verified, or that were submitted after the April 13 deadline.
Most school day events/activities that are sponsored & approved where students give of their own time.	Hours completed during time you receive compensation.

**School Events During the School Day**

Many school events/activities are approved for students to earn volunteer hours during the school day, if they serve as tutors during lunch, iNvest/PrimeTime/Eagle Time, or where they are giving up their own time to help others. A teacher needs to sponsor the event/activity and have approval from the Green Cord sponsor.

**What should you expect from the organization as a volunteer?**

- To be advised of the agency’s standards, guidelines, and expectations
- To be given meaningful assignments
- To be given a clear statement of tasks to be performed
- To be informed of organizational policies and procedures
- To be given effective supervision
- To be recognized for work performed

**What is expected of you as a volunteer by the organization?**

- To be reliable to your commitment
- To work within the guidelines and standards of the agency
- To accept and follow directions of the agency staff
- To make sure you understand the directions given to you and seek clarification, if needed.
- To actively perform tasks to the best of your ability
- To provide feedback to the agency staff
- To report any problems to the agency staff
- To represent the school and yourself in an exemplary manner
- **REMEMBER:** Volunteer work is just like a paid job. Dress appropriately and be on time.

**Green Cord Guidelines**

- Complete the Green Cord Challenge online form
- Do not turn in old hours (hours can only be accepted for current school year) May 1, 2018 – April 12, 2019
- Hours **MUST** be submitted within 30 days of the service. All hours completed by April 12, 2019 (no exceptions)
- Parents cannot sign as a sponsor for their child
- Hour for hour service (no double hours as promised by teacher or sponsor)
- Students are responsible to clear up questions
- If it is found that you have falsified any part of your form/service, you will be dismissed from the program
- Students are responsible to check their hours and report any problems at that time

**Suggested Timeline for Success – Make a Plan, Work the Plan!**

May - August	Complete & Submit 25 hours of community service during the summer.
Sept. – December	Complete & Submit 50 hours of community service during the fall.
Jan. – March	Complete & Submit 25 hours of community service during the winter.
April	Additional time if needed.
Before May 1 <sup>st</sup>	Submit all your hours before April 12, 2019.
Important	Do not wait until the end to submit hours. Submit your hours digitally throughout the year. You must submit your hours within 30 days of the community service. Do not submit your hours until you have completed the actual community service.

