

Redemptorist High School

2009-2010 S.I.G.N. Program Policies

“Service In God’s Name”

(Last updated 8-14-2009)

“Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you; or thirsty, and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger, and take you in; or naked, and clothe you? Or when did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you? And answering the king will say to them, “Amen I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me.”

- Matthew 25:37-40

Service Rational:

The most unique feature that separates Redemptorist High School from just being a private school is our Catholic identity. “*Service In God’s Name,*” our service program at Redemptorist, plays an integral part of that identity. This program is in place to create an opportunity for our students to step out of their comfort zone and respond to Jesus’ Gospel call of serving those in need in the Baton Rouge area and throughout the world. These real life experiences are often more powerful than any classroom lesson. The relationships built and the conversations that occur during the service experiences encourage young people to greater depths of self-reflection, and therefore, a greater understanding of themselves and their connectedness with all of God’s people. The *S.I.G.N.* program challenges our students to become aware of their responsibilities in a global world and challenges them to reflect on their life goals and choices.

Service Requirement:

For the 2009-2010 school year, all Redemptorist High School and Junior High School students (*except Career Ed students*) will be required to complete **15 service hours**. These hours will be divided between two categories: **Category A: Gospel Mission Hours** and **Category B: Community Building Hours**. Of the 15 total hours required, 10 hours must come from Category A and 5 hours from Category B. In order for hours to be counted towards the required hours, the agency **must be listed on the service directory** and the hours must be completed between **May 1, 2009** and the **last day of the third quarter for the 2009-2010 school year**.

The Difference Between A & B Hours:

Gospel Mission Hours or **A Hours** involve volunteer work that directly responds to the **corporal works of mercy** listed in Matthew 25:37-40. **Community Building** or **B hours** include good deeds that don’t directly respond to the corporal works of mercy, but still help build the Kingdom of God. This includes, but is not limited to, volunteering at Redemptorist, your local church, etc. If you are unsure whether hours qualifies as A or B, **do not assume; check with Ms. Maylon**. In order for an agency to be listed on either the A or B list, it must be a **non-profit organization**.

The Old Policy:

The following policy applies only to the class of 2009 and 2010: If a student completed the entire 50 hours under the old program, he or she is grandfathered in under the new policy for the rest of his or her time at RHS. In order to be grandfathered in, however, the student must show his or her completed hours

to the Theology teacher each year. If a student lost the original hours, he or she must follow this new service program described above.

Service Directory:

The **service directory** listing approved agencies is posted online at www.rhsbr.org under “**service hours.**” It will be updated periodically throughout the school year as new opportunities for service become available. If a student wants to volunteer with an organization not listed on the service directory, he or she must receive permission from the Campus Minister (Ms. Maylon) **before** performing service. **During the last three weeks before service hours are due approval for new agencies will not be given.** If you submit an agency for approval, **PLEASE DO NOT ASSUME** that your request will be approved.

If service hours are performed at agencies that are not listed in the directory, the hours will NOT be accepted. Only those approved agencies listed in the service directory will be accepted as valid hours. All approved agencies have been contacted and thoroughly reviewed before being listed in the service directory. These agencies are those that will keep the true meaning of service hours in mind and will hold true to the corporal works of mercy.

Please use this service directory when classifying your hours on your verification forms as well as when you are scheduling your hours. Please **do not “guess”** what category your performed hours fall under-reference your service directory.

Service Verification:

Service hours are due on **the last day of the third quarter.** The hours must be turned in **during the students Theology class.** Students will **not** be allowed to call home or check out to go get the hours. Hours not turned in during class will be considered late. No exceptions. If a student is absent on the day hours are due, the hours are due the first day the student returns to school. In order to receive credit for service hours, the following three items must be turned in:

1. **Completed Verification Form** – The Verification Form acts as a cover letter when turning in service hours. It can be **downloaded** at www.rhsbr.org under “service hours.”
2. **Letterheads Confirming Service** - All hours should be documented on an original **letterhead** from the service agency with the following information: **who** provided the service, **when** the service was performed, **how many** hours of service were performed, and **what** service was performed. The letterhead must be **signed** by the person who supervised the work. Letterheads may **not** be signed by family members or relatives. **Service hour letters will not be accepted unless they are printed on an official letterhead** from the appropriate agency. **Letterheads must also include the agency’s valid street address and phone number for verification.**
3. **Reflection Paper** - The processing of service experiences is a very integral part of the program. It is important to make the personal connection to the people served and the service performed. Our hope is that students will come to know themselves and God more deeply as they make a personal connection with those they serve. To facilitate the reflection process, students must **type a two-paged paper** meeting following criteria: 1” margins, 1.5-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, include at least one scripture verse, and proper spelling and grammar. The paper must answer the following questions:
 1. What did you do?
 - For **each** of the agencies you volunteered with, write a **paragraph** describing your service hours: where and when you volunteered, whom you served, and what you did. Do you have any interesting stories to share? (*optional*)

2. What did you learn?

- What did you learn about God, life, others, and yourself?
- How did the experience change your life? How did you grow from the service experiences? How might you live differently based on the experience and wisdom you gained from the experience?

Service Grade:

There will not be a specific grade assigned for the service hours. The service hours are a requirement for passing Theology class. The reflection paper, however, will be graded for **fifty points** and included as part of the student's fourth quarter grade.

In the event that a student does not complete service hours and/or the paper by the deadline, the student's third quarter grade will immediately be **lowered by one letter grade**. In order to pass Theology class for the current year, however, the student must still complete the required hours before **May 1**. If they do not complete the hours by May 1, they will **fail Theology class** for the 4th quarter and **will not be allowed to return to Redemptorist** for the following school year.

Because fulfilling service hours is a yearly requirement to pass Theology class, RHS will not save and file service hours each year. After the service hours are checked and the reflection papers are graded, the teachers will **not return them to the students**. **The verification forms, letterheads, and reflection papers will be shredded.**

Questions:

For any questions concerning the service program, please contact **Ms. Maylon** either by email at **nmaylon@rhsbr.org** or by phone at **357-0936**.