



TPS Honor Service Project

(revised May 12, 2022)

Since 1997, TPS – The Potter’s School has promoted “virtue” or “excellence” (2 Pet 1:5-7) in education. Decades of working with tens of thousands of TPS students have continually affirmed the relationship between virtues of character traits — like service, sacrifice, initiative, and diligence — and success in college and career. There are many reasons for this connection, some obvious and some subtle. The most basic is that all excellence, including excellence in school and other labor, is tied to these traits of character even more than it is to innate talent or ability.

We have also continually affirmed that students who develop maturity to focus on real needs other than their own and serve compassionate causes bigger than themselves tend to be healthier mentally, spiritually, and physically. Students whose labor (including school) is motivated by other-centered service and responsibility are also more successful (and experience more joy and peace) in high school, college, career, and civic life.

In support of the importance of compassionate other-focused service as a foundation for excellence, TPS offers the Honor Service Project opportunity as an optional part of the Diploma Partnership. The Honor Service Project is an annual project-based opportunity to plan, perform, and lead a compassionate service project while developing character and contributing to a college and career application resume.

Student projects must be submitted each academic year to the Student’s Diploma Partnership adviser for TPS review and approval prior to or at the start of the academic year. At the end of the year, TPS will issue a signed letter of recognition to each student who actively participated for that entire year. The letter will outline the criteria of the award and create an official record that goes beyond the grade report or transcript. For U.S. citizens, the service aspect of the recognition will be enhanced by the U.S. President’s Volunteer Service Award (PVSA).



Participation Criteria

Service. Students will plan and perform a significant service project during the academic year of the award. See below for details.

Academic

- Student must be in a Diploma Partnership with TPS in any grade 7-12.
- Student must maintain 80% or higher in each TPS course for the for the academic year of the award.

Service Requirements

Proposal

At the beginning of your service project, we want to see a proposal. This should include the activities you will be performing, the stated purpose of your project, the number of hours you intend to spend, and a plan to complete the hours and activities. This proposal can be written in an essay format, in bullet points, or in another way that best suits your style. You will submit your proposal to your TPS adviser for TPS approval prior to the start of the project.

Service and Leadership

Student must perform a minimum number of hours within the period June 1 through April 30. This amount depends on the age of the student:

- 50 hours/year minimum for teens 11-15 years old
- 100 hours/year minimum for teens 16 and up

These hours must be demonstrated with a written log maintained by the student and certified by a parent or local adult leader or mentor.

Reflection and Recognition

Each student must submit a short (approximately one and a half pages) essay at the end of each year discussing his or her growth in Christian faith and character through the service process.

Each student must have a local adult leader or mentor complete an evaluation and comment form to be submitted with the certifications and the essay. We facilitate this by providing a short questionnaire to be completed and discussed with the student and parents. This external feedback requirement should serve to encourage the student and parents in affirming the impact of the project and the development and display of character in the process.



President's Volunteer Service Award

TPS is a certifying organization for PVSA (the President's Volunteer Service Award). This is an organization that recognizes and celebrates active volunteers for their service on a national scale. You can read more about PVSA here:

<https://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/>

U.S. students who participate in JHS will also qualify for a PVSA certificate through TPS. The category of award will depend on the age of the student and number of hours served.