EXPLORING ONTARIO'S COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

by

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A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Education

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO

April 2005

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Canada

ABSTRACT

The thesis examines the community service requirement in Ontario high schools. As part of the new curriculum, there has been very little research examining the nature of the community service hours. A case study of a small town in southern Ontario was used in order to gather information on the issue. Students, teachers, parents, community organizations and the principal of the high school were examined in order to gain an understanding of all aspects of the community service requirement and the interplay between each group.

The study found support for the new initiative. Over half of the students, both teachers, 20 of the 26 parents, four of the five community organizations and the principal all supported the policy and its continuance in the future. The literature dealing with mandated community service programs suggested that the students' intentions to volunteer after graduation would be decreased. However, this study found that 65% of students intended to volunteer after graduation. This is a significant discrepancy with the literature. Other findings include that a majority of students believe that their volunteer experience will help them gain employment and have a direct benefit on the community.

The study concludes by making recommendations for the future of the policy. It is recommended that a policy coordinator be assigned to increase the effectiveness of the policy. In order to increase the academic benefit to students, critical reflection activities need to be encouraged and organized. Students need to be given more assistance in finding valuable placements. Primarily, community organizations need to be screened and possible opportunities for student volunteers need to be advertised to students.

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Overall, there needs to be more communication established between the local high

schools and the community regarding the student volunteers.

      The community service requirement was found to have many benefits to students.

However, with the recommendations in this thesis, the policy could become more

effective and have a greater positive impact for all students.

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Chapter One

Rationale and Purpose

In September 1995 Education and Training Minister John Snobelen announced a new four-year high school program in Ontario. The new curriculum focused on increasing students' ability in math, language, science and promoting responsible citizenship (Ministry of Education News Release, 1995). In order to achieve this goal, all students were required to complete a minimum of forty hours of unpaid community service before graduating. The hours were expected to be completed outside of school hours with no teacher supervision. The students themselves within school guidelines chose the activities and a record of the compiled hours was completed by the students on a form supplied by the individual school. The Ministry of Education assured that the program was flexible enough to ensure that all students could participate. The Ministry said it would work with school boards in order to ensure that remote and rural communities provided enough opportunities for participation, and identified appropriate opportunities for students with special needs.

The purpose of the mandated community service was to encourage civic responsibility and promote community values (Ministry of Education Backgrounder, 1998). It is no longer acceptable for the school system to provide education in the same manner in which it has been delivered over the past several years. There was a new focus in secondary education to develop higher order thinking skills in order to educate students who can analyze and evaluate theories and apply them to solve social problems. Furthermore, developing students' awareness of social issues within the community and the responsibility they have to become actively engaged within that community was a

rationale for the new curriculum. In addition to the Grade 10 civics course, which teaches students about their rights and responsibilities as members of the community, the required community service was implemented to reinforce the ideas presented within that course and develop students' civic responsibility. The experience allowed students to witness social issues and the impact that a responsible citizen can have by volunteering. Both initiatives were designed with responsible citizenship as a goal in Ontario education.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the community service requirement. Its aim was to determine if the community service involvement developed civic responsibility and/or community values in students. Furthermore, the study examined other benefits of community involvement and identified whether they are present in students forced to engage in such activities.

The objective of the community service program was to create a system that will foster growth in knowledge, skills, competencies, attitudes, values, and behaviour that prepared students for informed citizenship, healthy lifestyles, and productive employment (Gomez, 1996). Some school boards have made mandatory community service a prerequisite to graduation and others have decided to incorporate it into regular lessons. Ontario is the first province in Canada to implement a community service requirement mandatory to graduate high school.

Educators are confident that linking the community into the classroom can improve the community and invigorate the classroom by providing rich educational experiences. Participation in the community has a positive effect on students' social and intellectual development. There is no clear evidence that the same will occur when the

service is mandated (Miller, 1994). As a result, there was a need to explore Ontario's program and try to evaluate its effectiveness.

As the literature review will illustrate, there are many benefits and deterrents to consider when implementing a community service requirement. The purpose of this study was to identify the successes of the program and any benefits that the students gained from their involvement in the community. Based on these findings, suggestions were made to increase its effectiveness. Since this requirement is relatively new in Ontario, the benefits from other programs were used for comparison and evaluation.

Since the community service requirement was new to Ontario high schools, there was a need to evaluate the new program. The new requirement needed to be examined to ensure that there were no detrimental effects to students. If there were any detrimental effects, the quicker they could be identified then the more effectively the problems could be addressed. A requirement as significant as a 40-hour commitment by students demands a cautious maturation stage. The longer the requirement was in place without an evaluation, the longer it would have taken to address issues and ensure an effective policy that develops students civic responsibility.

The sooner research can be done on Ontario's community service initiative, the sooner strengths can be identified and researched further. This will provide other Canadian provinces and elsewhere to use the Ontario's policy as a model in order to build on the strengths of the policy.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter will review the relevant literature on community service programs. A critical review of the literature can eliminate many of the studies because they are studies of service learning and not of community service programs.

Historical / Contextual Information

Service is defined as an act done for the public good in which an individual or group voluntarily helps another individual or group (Gorham, 1992). One of the first people to suggest the value of community service in an educational setting was John Dewey. He suggested that we learn through experience and need community based learning to understand how to practice citizen skills in democracy. John Dewey and Jean Piaget were the first philosophers to believe that learning occurs best when students are actively involved in their own learning and when it has a distinct purpose (Billig, 2000). However, as global interdependency increases, the definition of citizenship raises many questions. A recent study by Cogan (1997) identified citizenship as multidimensional and identified eight characteristics of the 21st century citizen:

- to approach problems as a member of society;
- the ability to work cooperatively and take responsibility for one's role in society;
- to understand, appreciate, and tolerate cultural differences;
- the ability to think critically and systematically;
- to resolve conflicts without violence;
- the willingness to change habits to protect the environment;
- to be sensitive and defend human rights;

- the willingness and ability to participate in politics at a local, national, and international level.

While Cogan has developed a very comprehensive global definition, others provide a simple definition for civic education. The goal is "the creation of a sense of membership in one's local community, knowledge of its institutions, a willingness to participate, and a passion to solve its problems" (Shumer, 1994, p.34).

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this thesis, the following terms are used in the light of Anderson's study.

Service Learning:

> In a service learning program, students first prepare for
> their experiences by studying the ecology and environment
> of the area and determining a 'real' community need.
> Teachers, other school administrators and the students
> develop the curriculum around the problem, determine the
> site and the work to be done to complete the work and develop
> a follow up action plan to maintain the area. Students
> are assessed on their knowledge of the issue and their participation.
> Teachers and students take part in reflection activities to
> understand the importance of their work, evaluate how well
> they worked together and met their obligations, and discuss
> the importance of their civic duty and how they grew as
> individuals (Anderson, 1999, p.4).

Community Service:

Anderson (1999) explains,

> The difference between service learning and community
> service is that the latter is not connected to the curriculum,
> and the school and the teachers are not involved in planning,
> organizing or supervising. Students might receive some credit
> for their involvement or be recognized by the school but there
> is no clear cut connection to   classroom activities or assessment.
> There is also no real follow up activity such as reflection or
> community action to maintain the clean neighbourhood   (p.4)

One of the main differences between the two programs is that the specific content of the service activity shapes the outcomes. For example, an environmentally related service activity will result in better grades in science, better understanding of ecology, increased care about the environment or a better understanding of environmental careers (Billig, 2000). Since the teacher can direct service learning, the teacher ultimately has control in determining what the student will learn. A community service requirement gives students the choice of volunteer activities and thus, what skills and knowledge will be learned. In addition, the more responsibility, autonomy and choice given to the students, the stronger the impact will be on the student (Billig, 2000).

Volunteerism:

In the context of this study, the term volunteerism refers to any work performed by the students without pay or tangible rewards. Any activities that students perform in order to complete their community service requirement are considered volunteer hours in the context of this study.

How Volunteers and Community Organizations Define Their Role

The two major groups of people involved with community service programs within schools are the volunteers and the community organizations. There are two distinct views of volunteers. The first is the philanthropic view. This "emphasizes service as an exercise in altruism: the nurturing of giving either in terms of 'paying back' or 'gratitude', or in terms of a kind of noblesse oblige of people lucky enough to be where they are" (Battistoni, 1997, p.150). In this view, the volunteers identify themselves as separate from the community.

The second view is the civic approach. This view "emphasizes mutual responsibility and the interdependence of rights and responsibilities, and it focuses not on altruism but on enlightened self-interest" (Battistoni, 1997, 151). The civic approach also "encourages an educational partnership between school and community" (Battistoni, 1997, 151). In this view, there is a focus by volunteers to understand the interdependence of communities. Within the civic view, "the community is actively involved in defining its own capabilities and needs as well as the role service will play in the education of students" (Bittistoni, 1997, 151). Brittistoni (1997) defines community organizations as partners in education rather than those being served. The idea of a partnership between the schools and community is supported in the literature. Kinsley (1997) states that, "Communities need to provide partnerships with the schools as sites for teaching and learning: schools and agencies need to understand their roles and relationships in forming partnerships" (p.7).

Brattistoni (1997) defines the relationship with the community in the same manner. He states that, "Partnership underscores mutual interdependence and helps create an understanding of community – not as those with problems but as the group to which we all belong. The town comes to be seen as a 'text', and neighbourhoods reciprocally gain the opportunity to reclaim their schools as centres in the community (Brattistoni, 1997, p.156).

LeSourd (1997) supports the civic view of volunteers. She states that the benefits of volunteering "cannot be assumed to be easily or automatically developed in people without serious, focused educational planning" (p.157)

Community Service Programs

Mandated community service is common throughout the United States and other parts of the world, but is new to Canada. It is a relatively low cost effort to enhance the educational experience (Anderson, 1999). Even colleges and universities have begun providing community service options for their students. A 1996 American survey revealed that 59% of 12-17 year old students reported volunteering in the previous year. Half of these students began volunteering through their high school classes (Anderson, 1999).

From 1984 to 1997 the number of K-12 students involved in some form of service program rose from 900 000 to 12 605 740. According to the National Centre for Educational Statistics (US), 64% of all public schools and 83% of all public high schools organize some form of community service for their students (Billig, 2000).

Robert Shumer's study of community-based learning concluded that students seek learning environments which support dynamic human activity. Furthermore, connections with the community in terms of people and experiences have a positive effect on school success (Shumer, 2000).

The number of high school students performing some sort of community service has increased seven-fold from 1984 to 1997. 6.1 million students did some form of community service and 96 per cent of school districts offered such programs. Sixteen to eighteen per cent of all school districts in the United States require community service in order to graduate (Loupe, 2000).

Community Service programs provide a broad range of services. A study in 1996 indicated that 40% of student service hours were focused on conservation and environmental projects and 22% on education and human needs (Kraft, 1996).

High School Programs

According to a 1979 national survey, 14 per cent of all American high schools offered some form of a community service program. An average of 119 students per school volunteered 4.5 hours (Newmann, 1983). A survey in 1998 revealed that 21 of the 50 largest school boards in the U.S. offered academic credit for volunteer work (Anderson, 1999).

In Corpus Christi, Texas, Independent School District, community service is a required element of the social studies curriculum from grade one through eight. One class, which read about the oldest house in the city falling apart, decided to collect oyster shells and mortar in order to raise money to send to the local heritage society (Loupe, 2000). The District of Columbia requires students to complete 100 hours of community service before they earn their high school diploma (Loupe, 2000). One group of geometry students decided to hone their graphing skills by inventorying the number of liquor stores and advertisements near churches, recreation centres and health facilities. They graphed and analyzed the data, then wrote to the mayor indicating the heavy concentration in certain areas and suggested ways to improve certain neighbourhoods (Loupe, 2000).

Maryland is the only state that requires all students to perform 75 hours of community service to graduate (Shumer, 2000). The specific details of the program are left up to the individual local systems. At Eastern Tech High School in Baltimore, after

the completion of the 75 hours, students must write an essay on their service, making it a thoughtful and conscious act of citizenship (Shumer, 2000). In San Diego, California, high school students volunteer as literacy tutors in feeder schools. The students are able to reinforce their own reading skills and monitor the progress of the child with whom they are working.

Ashland Unified School District started a community service program in 1995. Groups of three to four students are responsible for initiating, planning, implementing, staffing and funding a project during their senior year. Students are expected to volunteer a minimum of 20 hours to each plan. Teachers oversee each step of the project through progress reports, written reports and presentations. In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the Northwest Side Community Development Corporation teamed up with several schools in the community to improve security and attract business into the area. At the same time, students gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to contribute to the workforce (Gomez, 1996). Many of the students learned valuable construction skills that led to full time employment after graduation.

A different approach was taken in Pittsburgh. Project OASES was designed to motivate "at risk" grade eight students who showed a lack of self esteem, poor attitude, and a disinterest in school and school work. The selected students would spend three out of seven periods at an OASES occupational training workshop. Following the training, students engaged in service throughout the community in order to meet the needs of the area. Many of the projects involved construction and restoration of buildings. The results of this program included students making it onto the honour roll and fewer behavioural and discipline problems (Gomez, 1996).

In 1986, Vermont initiated the only state-wide student community service program involving all 66 secondary schools. The actual participation requirements were left up to the individual boards but funding was granted to each based on their involvement. The state-wide initiative was federally funded. California school districts requiring students to complete a community service requirement increased from 47 in 1997 to 60 in 1998. A 1995 study by the American Alliance for Rights and Responsibilities showed that 25% of students in the 130 largest public school districts must complete some form of compulsory community service in order to graduate. The number of service hours in these school districts ranges from 40 to 100. Many students can begin counting their hours during middle school in order to complete the necessary hours before graduation.

Starting in 2002, students in Philadelphia must complete a service learning project in order to advance to the 4th, 8th and 12th grades. The school districts are providing professional development for teachers and other staff as well as other resources (Anderson, 1999). The Board of Education in Waterford, Connecticut requires each student to complete 80 hours of community service as a requirement for graduation (Anderson, 1999). Ohio passed an Opportunities Mandate in 1992 that required school districts to provide opportunities for students to enter into the community and volunteer their time.

University Programs

At Queens College, a service program paired students up with homeless children in an effort to establish a Big Buddy Mentoring Program (Salz and Turbowitz, 1992). One day a week for an entire year, the pairs would explore educational, recreational and

cultural experiences. The goal of the program was to develop greater academic success and an improved self-esteem. The report also indicates that the college students gained a sense of fulfillment and meaning from their personal commitment.

Canada has seen very little community service incorporated into the education system. Ontario is the only province that mandates a community service requirement before high school graduation. However, there has been a recent trend for Canadian universities to incorporate community involvement into their studies. The first university to explore the possibilities of this realm was St. Francis Xavier University (StFX) in 1996. Students volunteered at local schools, nursing homes, group homes, food banks and women shelters. StFX has partnered with Celtic Community Homes in order to provide support and housing to adults with mental health issues. The university also offers small groups of students the opportunity to provide service in another culture. These destinations have included Guatemala, Grenada, Cuba, Mexico and Romania (Charbonneau, 2004).

The University of Guelph has begun to use community service in their third year Bachelor of Arts and Science program. Each student devotes an hour and a half each week to providing assistance in reading at a local vocational high school. Similar to StFX, Guelph also offers the opportunity to provide service in one of many choices for the duration of a week (Charbonneau, 2004). The University of British Columbia (UBC) currently has 300 students and 30 organizations working in the Trek Volunteer Program started in 1999. The goal of this program is to have 10% of the student population participating by 2010 (Charbonneau, 2004).

As noted, the phenomenon of incorporating community service into the university curriculum is very new in Canada. As a result, there is little literature or evaluation of these initiatives. The Universities of Alberta, Toronto, British Columbia, Western Ontario, McMaster, Guelph, Queen's, St. Francis Xavier, Simon Fraser and Memorial University all have community service requirements in place (Charbonneau, 2004). However, the effects on the students have yet to be examined.

Community Service in Britain

Britain, like the United States, has begun to re-examine the role of youth in community service. Only one in 30 schools did not have an initiative for 15-16 year olds to get involved within the community. National organizations, local groups, individual school and colleges currently provide young people access to voluntary work and community activities in Britain (Roker, 1994). The National Curriculum now officially includes citizenship education to be taught in all British schools.

Structures and Interaction Between Volunteers and Organizations

There are many structures and interactions between volunteers and organizations outside of the school structure. Youth Health Advocates (YHA) empowers teenagers to improve their physical and mental health, awareness of health issues and the isolation felt by young people who are HIV positive (Carver, 1997). This program accomplishes its goal through service learning independent of the school. Similarly, a Female Youth Initiative (FYI) was designed to empower young women through education and opportunities to offer information and education to young women in the community. These women were able to make a contribution to their communities and gain valuable self worth (Carver, 1997).

Hepburn (1997) believes, "that participation in community life begins at school" (p.136). Although tradition instruction used in civic education, through lectures, books ad other print material, could convey a heavier concept load, it was only successful for those students who had well developed verbal skills. However, she states that experimental learning held promise for every student. Hepburn (1997) believed that structures needed to be in place between the school and community in order to generate a better environment for civic education.

In order to make student volunteers' experience more effective, the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) has developed strategies and materials for implementing civic participation in middle schools throughout the United States (Clark, 1997). The materials include a teacher's handbook detailing lessons, a field guide, and a manual for students to help them navigate the developed framework.

A similar group exists in Maryland. The Baltimore Alliance for Student Service (BASS) was designed to provide technical assistance to secondary schools. The BASS team is composed of teachers from all disciplines, members of the teachers union and community based organizations (Finney, 1997). BASS organized four workshops/meetings for each middle and high school's leading coordinator. They also organized a community service fair to introduce agencies that volunteered to provide service placement for schools. BASS worked in schools daily. They modeled instruction, replicated activities, held clinics, and ran summer programs (Finney, 1997). As a result of this commitment, "The Baltimore City Public Schools system is confident that every possible opportunity has been given to every student and there will not be any student not graduating because of service learning hours" (Finney, 1997, p.44).

Communication is another important interaction that needs to be in place between volunteers and organizations. Brandell (1997) states that communication with the community should be the first thing accomplished before beginning a new community service program at any school. The school needs to talk with the community regarding the needs of the community as a whole and identify specific neighbourhood needs.

The Argument Against Required Community Service

Weaver (2001) identified that Ontario students would like more guidance and structure from their individual schools. Many students in her study stated that they had difficulty finding volunteer opportunities. If one mandates community service you are destroying the very spirit of community service. The idea of mandatory community service is an oxymoron.

Loupe (2000) identified that students earn service credits for things not done outside the classroom. In Maryland, students can earn community service credits for performing in the marching band, managing a sports team or completing a course in photography (Loupe, 2000). One of the largest problems with mandatory service, which causes problems or weak results, is the lack of preparation on the part of the staff (Loupe, 2000).

The U.S. Department of Education's National Center on Educational Statistics states that rates of voluntary service in schools that arrange, but do not require, community service activities for their students are almost as high as those that arrange and require volunteer activities. In schools where community service has been mandated, the only other options for those students who chose not to participate are to enrol in a

private school, leave school and continue their education at home, or remain in school and earn a high school equivalency diploma (Underwood, 1998).

An article by Michael Ferraraccio (1998) cited numerous students' thoughts about mandatory community service. Among other things, the students stated that, "I don't think it's volunteering if it's mandatory" and "Many kids treat it as a joke. They do the minimum to get the credit. That's not what volunteering is about" and "When people are forced to serve . . . it takes the fun out of it . . . if it is required, you don't feel like giving anything" (p.145).

Competing with Academics

In Jefferson Parish, La. 60 hours of community service was required of students before graduation. However, the policy was revoked in 1999-2000 before a single class had graduated with the requirement. The policy was revoked under pressure from educators who viewed the hours as competing with students' academics (Loupe, 2000). Since the students were not allowed to complete hours during class time, it detracted from students' ability to study at home. The school board decided to offer diploma stickers to those students who completed the sixty hours.

Sociological Development

The need for critical reflection

Students must be given the opportunity to critically reflect on the politics of their service activity as well as the larger political environment in which the service organization functions. Moreover, the students need to examine the conditions that create a need for service and the social policies that address these needs (Shumer, 2000). The quality of the reflective activities that students use in order to make sense of their service

makes a difference (Billig, 2000). If the reflection causes the students to make meaning of their experiences, then a greater understanding and more empathy for others will be developed. If teachers help students to connect and analyze the deeper social issues or political trends, students will understand the context of the community need and the factors that have led to the need. For example, connecting why certain populations are less likely to vote with a voter registration drive would result in an increased likelihood of students to vote (Billig, 2000). Finally, career related outcomes of community service tend to be maximized when there is an intentional connection through the reflection process (Billig, 2000).

Billig makes an interesting comment concerning what does not happen in Ontario. She states that the reflection that takes place after the community involvement is just as important as the involvement itself. Billig (2000) contends that "when teachers facilitate discussions that help students to see deeper meaning, such as understanding and valuing cultural backgrounds, students are more apt to identify these outcomes and retain the outcomes for a longer period of time" (p 3).

Future Intentions to Volunteer

A study at the University of St. Thomas, Minnesota in 1993 examined a new graduation requirement in their undergraduate business program. All students were forced to complete forty hours of community service. There were 371 participants (192 male and 179 female) between 1993 and 1995 who completed initial and follow-up surveys. The initial results of this study showed that those students who had intentions to volunteer before the requirement were more likely to volunteer in the future (Stukas, 1999). The study also found and supported past claims that external constraints to act, in

the form of requirements or rewards, may reduce interest in an activity (Stukas, 1999). Weaver (2001) also found that Ontario students who had previous volunteer experience were more inclined to continue to volunteer after graduation. However, this study was based on students' perceptions when the requirement was implemented while the students had not yet completed the forty hours.

Sixty-three psychology undergraduates from the University of Minnesota participated in a study to determine the effects of mandated community service on their intentions to volunteer in the future. This study supported the findings in the St. Thomas study "that required volunteerism is more likely to reduce the intentions of those who perceive that they are being controlled than those who perceive themselves as volunteering freely" (Stukas, 1999). There is little evidence to support the claim that participation in community service programs will lead to an increased commitment to service. However three studies by Giles and Eyler, Kendall in 1990, and Sagawa and Halperin in 1993 indicated that students had increased commitment and future intentions to continue their community service (Giles and Eyler 1994, p. 328). Students forced to volunteer may resent the experience because it was imposed upon them. Consequently, they may feel that after completing the required community service that they have 'served their time' and will not volunteer in the future (Ferraraccio, 1998).

Gender Differences

In light of the community service requirements being implemented around the United States, Miller (1994) conducted a study that took adolescents' views into consideration. Ninety-one grade 9-12 students (41 male and 50 female) from the New England area took part in the study. Each student was paid $5 for his or her participation

in the study. After entering the research room, each student read a brief community service script about a fictitious proposal. Participants were divided and given two separate proposals, moderate and high involvement. After completing the reading, students were to answer a series of questions. The results of this study stated, "females are more likely to support a mandatory community service requirement than males" (Miller, 1994, p. 389). Tyler and Dube (1986) state that the reason for the discrepancy is that females identify the underlying reason behind the requirement and males focus on the method to encourage community service. Females focus on the problem or issue at hand and males focus on the procedural justice of the method (Tyler and Dube, 1986). Miller suggests, "the findings of this study suggest that community service programs that are integrated into an existing curriculum may have a greater effect on enhancing the overall development of students than a legislated high school graduation requirement" (p. 391). Miller (1994) goes on to state that "programs that recognize the different perceptions between males and females will be more effective in encouraging social involvement and positive growth than those who do not" (p.391-392). In a study of 2000 students, girls were significantly more positive in attitudes toward community involvement and related values than boys (Kraft, 1996). A recent Canadian study indicated that females were more inclined to have a positive attitude toward the mandatory community service requirement in Ontario (Weaver, 2001).

Adolescents with Disabilities

The literature suggests that adolescents with disabilities can benefit greatly from participation in the community. Brill (1994) conducted a study of thirteen teachers involved with special education in order to determine the impact of community

involvement on their students. The results of the study suggest that "the gains in socialization, attitudes and behaviour for all students are compelling. . . attendance and academic skills were positively affected for mildly involved students; attitudes and relationships with non-disabled peers were enhanced for the students with moderate to profound disabilities" (Brill, 1994, p. 378-379). Involving students with disabilities benefits all students. In July of 1991, the Maryland Student Service Alliance began a project to engage students with disabilities in service learning. By 1994, there were 2000 students with disabilities ranging from mild to profound, involved in the community through this Maryland program (Miller, 1994).

Student's Social Development

Community service programs can change peoples' minds about the educational value of service. Students have the opportunity to apply their skills to problems that require judgment and leadership (Garber, 2000). Community service programs offer much variation in their structure and evaluation. As a result, some programs are more effective than others. Those programs in which there is a greater intensity and duration make a positive difference on the outcomes (Conrad and Hedin, 1991). Those students who performed more than 35 hours of community service in a given school year scored higher on a qualitative survey identifying higher levels of civic development than those who participated less frequently (Conrad and Hedin, 1991). The characteristics of civic development used in the evaluation were political knowledge, greater confidence in speaking at public meetings, and a stronger understanding of political process.

Shumer (2000) used quantitative studies to identify that students involved in community service programs showed increased social and personal responsibility, more

favourable attitudes toward adults, growth in moral and ego development, and increased

self-esteem. Involving students into the community creates a caring and respectful

school community. It may be the best way to teach citizenship and give students critical

thinking skills (Berman, 2000). In 1952 Riecken studied college students involved in a

two-month intensive community service project. He found that students became less

prejudiced, more democratic, less authoritarian, and more service oriented, and they

developed greater ego strength (Kraft, 1996). Newman and Rutter (1983) found that the

social development evident in community service participants was greater than those

students who chose not to participate. A majority of the growth was in social competence

and social responsibility.

Billig (2000) and Kraft (1996) have conducted studies in California, Indiana and

other states examining students' interactions with the community as part of a school

requirement. The studies identified that youth who engage in service learning showed

increases of personal and social responsibility, sense of educational and social

competence and self-esteem or self efficacy (Billig 2000, p. 2, Kraft, p. 146, and Billig

2000, p. 5). An example of such improvement was noticed in students' trips to the office

for disciplinary measures. Students personal and social growth is maximized when their

involvement in the planning, decision making, problem solving and given the opportunity

to asses their own learning (Billig 2000, p. 3).

Kraft (1996) explained that Riecken's study in 1952 of college students during a

full time summer volunteer effort in an economically deprived community showed that

students "became less prejudice, more democratic, less authoritarian, and more service

oriented, and they developed greater ego strength" (p.144). In 1977, Corbett's study of

students involved in a year long community service program found that during the first year when the program was teacher centred, students' moral and psychosocial development was insignificant. However, during the second year, the program became student centred and reflective and there were gains found in personality measures and emotional and task competence (Kraft, 1996).

A study in 1976 revealed that students who participated in 20 hours of community service developed social responsibility, community responsibility, and altruism (Kraft, 1996; Woods, 2002). Participation in community activities through school encourages the development of important life skills, including leadership, self-confidence, critical thinking, group problem solving and conflict resolution (Woods, 2002). Community service programs increase students' sense of non-school social responsibility and their sense of personal competence (Newmann and Rutter, 1983).

Academic Achievement

Many studies have provided evidence that there is a link between community involvement and increased academic achievement (Kraft, 1996, Billig 2000, and Woods 2002). Community involvement examined in California, Indiana, Florida and Michigan showed that students scored better on achievement tests in language arts and or reading (California), standardized test scores in grade three and eight English and Mathematics (Indiana), increase in grade point average (Florida), and higher scores on tests that measure mathematics and the ability to read for information (Michigan). Other studies recognized that students demonstrated greater problem solving ability, increased interest in mathematics and improved attendance, including the completion of classroom tasks (Billig 2000). The most significant gains in intellectual development have been

identified during some form of tutoring. The school-based community service creates

positive intellectual outcomes (Kraft, 1996). Billig (2000) acknowledged that by

involving community activities within the school environment could motivate and engage

students to learn. Putting students into real world situation allows them to make

academic subjects relevant. A final factor that generates improved academic

achievement is the ability of the teacher to link the community service to the curriculum.

Teachers need to show students how to transfer their academic knowledge into 'real

world' experiences. As a result, students are more likely to learn and show

improvements on standardized tests (Billig 2000). Although Billig's study was that of a

service learning program and not of a community service requirement, it is worth noting

that 83% of schools with service learning programs reported that grade point averages

improved 76% of the time. Shumer (2000) states that a study (Shumer, 1996) concluded

that when students identify field experiences as important elements in the educational

system, there is improved attendance and grades.

Participation in service has a positive effect on academic development, including

grades, degrees sought, time devoted to academics, academic self-confidence and

students' self-assessments of knowledge gained (Woods, 2002). Students in community

service programs made significant improvements in attendance and grade averages, as

reported by quantitative data and interviews and observations (Shumer and Belbas,

1996).

Civic Responsibility

The Ontario government has implemented a civics course and required all

students to complete forty hours of community service before graduation in order to

enhance civic responsibility. There are no published results from these changes, however, studies of similar programs in California showed that students developed a greater sense of community needs and understood that they were able to make a difference (Billig 2000). A study by James Youniss (1999) identified that students developed comprehensive understandings of social historical trends, and were more likely to think about morality, politics and social change (Billig 2000). Students learn the values of good citizenship and develop a sense of pride through helping and working with others. They learn responsibility and make their communities better places to live. They begin to see the world outside their private concerns into an encompassing world (Ferraraccio, 1998).

Kraft (1996) has identified recent studies of contemporary society that reveal individualism has triumphed over commitment, citizenship demands, and civic responsibility. Community service, citizenship education and service learning are crucial to the survival of American society.

Career Exploration

Billig (2000) and Gomez (1996) have identified that those students who engage in community service gain career skills, communication skills and knowledge of more career than non-participants. Students acquired workplace literacy such as punctuality, following directions and the ability to work as a part of a team (Billig 2000). Many graduates of community involvement programs assert that their community service was the single most important factor in gaining employment after graduation (Woods, 2002). Weaver (2001) states that regardless of Ontario students' views on the mandatory volunteer requirement, they identified career benefits. They identified they could gain

valuable experience that could help them gain employment, or they could use it on their resumes in order to gain employment or acceptance to university or college.

In addition to career exploration, community service can prepare students to succeed in their future employment. It allows them to build cooperative and problem solving skills. It also teaches skills that many urban youth may not see modeled in their neighbourhoods such as punctuality, reliability, responsibility, completion, getting along with others and personal hygiene (Harrison, 1987).

Building Relationships

Billig (2000) indicates that when students are involved in the community as part of their schooling it builds school cohesiveness, and positive relationships between students, teachers and within peer groups. In 1982, Conrad and Hedin found that students involved in service programs developed more favourable attitudes toward adults, organizations and the people they worked with. In 1982, Luchs discovered that students in a community service program gained a more positive attitude toward others in need of assistance (Miller, 1994).

The greater the degree of direct contact that students have with the community, the greater the respect and caring that is developed. The more mutuality of the relationship allows students to value the skills and knowledge gained from those being served. Direct contact is recognized in terms of contact with elderly, youth, disabled or others being served.

Effects on the Community

The research done on the effects on those being served indicates results that are positive (Kraft, 1996; Billig, 2000). Therefore, the students involved within these

community service programs should not be the only ones expected to benefit. A study of 150 agencies across the United States that were host to students fulfilling service requirements revealed that ninety per cent stated that the students had helped them improve service to their clients. Moreover, seventy per cent of the agencies stated that students had allowed them to take on new projects (Melchoir, 2000). Among those who worked with the elderly, sixty five per cent reported that students improved the mood, morale and overall quality of life in elderly residents (Melchoir, 2000). Results from the same study indicated that the experience strengthened the relationship between school and community and eighty two per cent indicated an increased positive attitude toward youth in general (Loupe, 2000). A study by Kazunga in 1978 found that youths volunteering in the community promoted a more positive self-concept among youth and significantly helped to improve the community (Kraft, 1996).

As the connections to the community grow in schools, intermediary organizations are beginning to appear. Youth Trust in Minneapolis and the Private Industry Council in Boston are providing large numbers of students with structured opportunities for career exploration through job shadowing, work-based learning and community service. Most of these initiatives are during non-school hours and throughout the summer (Steinberg, 2000).

Political / Administrative Factors

Students' Safety

One of the biggest reasons that school boards hesitate to adopt a community service program is the safety of their students. Since the required hours need to be completed outside of school hours and unsupervised, administration becomes worried of

their students' safety. In Chicago, they alleviated such fears by pre-screening 200 partners in their community service program where students could choose to work. San Diego schools have a contract with the United Way Volunteer Centre to maintain a list of 150 agencies that have been screened and approved as a safe environment for students (Loupe, 2000).

First Amendment Considerations

Although many school boards throughout the United States and most recently Ontario have implemented community service programs, there are many legal arguments that oppose such programs. No legal battles have taken place in Ontario, but there have been several cases in the United States. This section will outline the three avenues taken in defence of student rights in order to understand both sides of this political issue. The first amendment of the United States Constitution provides "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech." This includes the idea that the "rights of individuals to hold a point of view different from the majority and refuse to foster . . . an idea they find morally objectionable" (Ferraraccio, 1998, p. 141). Furthermore, the freedom of speech also includes the freedom not to speak.

Some students believe that by forcing them to volunteer they are being forced to adopt beliefs of another and then express those beliefs to others. The word "speech", in the context of the constitution implies more than verbal communication. It includes any form of expressive conduct. The First Amendment defence has been supported in court. The first court to examine the issue dismissed the plaintiff's claim on the grounds that "there is no intent to convey a particularized message supporting altruism and there is no likelihood that those witnessing the community service will understand the service's

purpose to be promoting values of altruism" (Ferraraccio, 1998, p.142). The Court of

Appeals backed the decision and stated, "It is just as likely that students performing

community service under the auspices of a highly publicized required school program

will be viewed merely as students completing their high school graduation requirements"

(Ferraraccio, 1998, p. 143). The courts understand that in some cases a student being

forced to volunteer with a specific organization may infringe upon first amendment

rights; however students are able to chose from a wide variety of organizations

throughout the community.

Thirteenth Amendment Considerations

The Thirteenth Amendments prohibits slavery and involuntary servitude, except

as punishment for a crime (Underwood, p. 502). The problem lies within the definition

of involuntary servitude. There is no agreement. This law was passed near the end of the

Civil War in an effort to eradicate the slavery. The Thirteenth Amendment claim was

denied in Immediato v. Rye Neck School District and United States v. Mussry. The

Immediato decision was based on language taken from United States v. Kozminski,

which held that involuntary servitude referred to "those forms of compulsory labour akin

to African slavery which in practical operation would tend to produce like undesirable

results" (Underwood, 1998, p. 502).

This is no longer a valid argument in terms of civil law. The Mussry decision used

a definition of coercion that stated "conduct that is intended to cause, and does cause, the

other person to believe that he or she has no alternative but to perform the labour"

(Underwood, 1998, p. 502). The school board won the decision insisting that students

have alternatives to completing the requirement. The Thirteenth Amendment, like the First Amendment, has never held up in court.

Fourteenth Amendment Considerations

The Fourteenth Amendment guarantees the due process of law to citizens of the United States. Therefore, it has been argued that parents have the right to "direct and control the upbringing and education of their children" (Underwood, 1998, p. 503). Parents argue that their right to oversee the education of their children includes the right to exempt them from participating in requirements that the parents object to on secular grounds. The Supreme Court has consistently ruled that parents have a liberty interest under the Fourteenth Amendment in the rearing of their children. This includes how their children will be educated (Underwood, 1998, p. 503). However the courts have never ruled against the school board in such cases. They ruled that parents' rights in educating their children were not immune from government regulation. The court stated that a mandatory public service program is reasonably linked to the states function of educating students, and therefore does not infringe upon parents Fourteenth Amendment rights (Underwood, 1998, p. 503).

The American Support

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 and President Clinton's National Service Trust Act of 1993 are two recent examples of the support and faith that the American government has in linking the community with the classroom (In service of what?, 1996). Edward Kennedy, Bill Clinton, George Bush Sr., William F. Buckley, and Ralph Nader have all officially backed linking the community into the classroom.

The Canadian Legal Argument

Presently in Canada, it is not required that one graduates high school. Everyone must choose to complete the requirements in order to earn a secondary school diploma. Subsequently, if you chose to graduate high school, essentially you have agreed to fulfill all the requirements set out by the Ministry of Education. There have been no successful legal challenges to the community service requirement in Ontario high schools.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) allows the Government to justify a violation in an individual's rights. An individual's rights are subject to reasonable changes that can be justified in a free democratic society. The primary test used by the government to determine whether the purpose is justified is the Oakes Test. There are two requirements that must be fulfilled. Primarily, there must be a pressing and substantial objective. Secondly, the means must be proportional. This is measured in three ways: 1) the means must be rationally connected to the objective, 2) there must be minimal impairment of rights and 3) there must be proportionality between the infringement and objective.

Conclusion

This literature review has provided a definition of key terms and an overview of many community service requirements throughout the United States, Britain and Canada at the high school and post secondary level. It is evident that mandated community service requirements are much more prevalent in United States. As a result, the evaluation of these programs constitutes a large amount of literature on forced volunteerism. Both sides of the argument have been presented in this chapter. There are legal, safety, organizational, gender, and future considerations that implore mandated

community service to stop. However, there are many benefits to forcing students into the community. The literature suggests that students with disabilities can benefit greatly from involvement in the community. Moreover, all students develop socially, academically and civically. Students are able to explore and prepare for careers, build relationships between themselves and the community, and their school and the community by making a positive impact in their neighbourhoods through personal participation. The positive and negative elements have been identified in this chapter in order to evaluate the mandatory community service requirement and the success of the requirement.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This study was aimed to capture a comprehensive view of the community service requirement by collecting information from a selected sample of involved parties within a small community in Ontario. The study collected data from grade 12 students, parents, teachers, community organizations and the principal. A high school in a small town was used in the study to gain an understanding of the interplay between these 5 players as a result of the community service requirement. As a result, an understanding and appreciation for the policy as a whole was achieved. This study was able to focus on particular grade 12 students, their parents, their teachers, their principal and the organizations they tended to work with throughout the community. All issues were addressed fairly as each of the selected samples were given the opportunity to express their thoughts and concerns.

Research Questions

This study will investigate the community service requirement now mandated in all Ontario high schools. There has been very little research that has investigated the new policy. As a result, there was a need to explore the community service requirement to gain an understanding of the policy and make recommendations based on the findings.

The study's aim was to answer the following questions:

- What is the nature of the forty hours of required community service in Ontario high schools?

- To what degree is the policy of required community service achieving its purpose?

- To what degree are the genuine benefits of volunteering lost

  through forced participation?

- What are some recommendations for the future of the policy?

Research Design and Data Collection

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher used a qualitative

research design. Using a qualitative approach in this controlled environment allowed for

an examination into individual attitudes and approaches to the community service

requirement; subsequently, insights into students' experiences were gained (Bogdan and

Biklen, 1992). An open-ended questionnaire was administered to a sample of students,

parents, teachers, the principal and community organizations (See Appendices A through

J). The school was selected based on accessibility and willingness to participate in the

research. Open-ended questionnaires provided the opportunity for respondents to answer

in an unstructured environment. As a researcher, there must be no pre-coded answers.

Sudman and Bradburn (1982) state that open-ended questionnaires provide the researcher

with an opportunity to collect information and organize the findings in categories and

themes. The advantage of using open-ended questions was that respondents were forced

to use their own words and ideas to answer the question. There are no limitations

inherent in the questions and the ability to answer. Finally, open-ended questions

allowed the respondent to convey their feelings and thoughts exactly as they wished. For

this study, there was a written question and a space provided for a written response.

Using qualitative research in education research has been successfully achieved

by Brill (1994), who interviewed 13 teachers and gained valuable research into the

service learning of adolescents with disabilities. Her study was published in the Journal of Adolescence. Another study that successfully used qualitative data was Weaver (2001). She used an open-ended survey and obtained valuable data into the perceptions of high schools students into a community service requirement.

Research Site

The data collection took place in a small town in southern Ontario. The population of the town was estimated at 5 500. The town was situated 30 kilometres from an urban centre with an estimated population of 30 000. There was one high school located within the town and had an enrolment of over 600 students. It was a pubic high school. Anyone wishing to attend a Catholic high school had the opportunity to be transported to the large urban centre, 30 kilometres from town.

The Sample

The sample used to explore the community service requirement was selected from a small town in southern Ontario on account of its convenience and accessibility. The local public high school was approached about participating in this study. The principal granted access to speak with three grade twelve teachers about involving themselves and their senior classes in the study. The three teachers were selected and approved based on the grade and academic level. The three classes consisted of one university, one college, and one workplace level in order to generate a comprehensive understanding of all students' lived experiences with the community service requirement. It was important to select the three academic levels of classes to ensure a complete understanding. The students working toward university, college or a place in the workforce had their voices heard. In total, 48 students completed the open-ended questionnaire designed to probe

their experiences in the community. There were 27 academic, 16 applied and five workplace students. There were only five workplace students because of a school assembly scheduled on the same day as my visit to the class. However, the five students who attended the class agreed to participate in the study. The teacher has experience working with workplace classes, as all of her classes were at that level. Consequently, combining her experiences and the five students' experiences, this study was able to gain a depiction of the workplace level students' opinions and thoughts on the community service requirement.

In conjunction with the students, the teachers of the three classes were asked to complete the open-ended questionnaires. Two of the three teachers took the time to express their thoughts and ideas. Unfortunately, one teacher did not return his questionnaire. The teacher explained that time constraints were the reason for the incompletion. As a result, only the teachers from the academic and workplace teachers were used. It is important to note that although the applied teacher could not make time for the study, the academic teacher had experience with applied level students; as a result, their input was used to generate a sample from teachers at all levels of study.

In order to gain an understanding of how the policy was implemented and run from year to year, the principal of the school was asked about the administrative aspect of the policy. Moreover, he was asked for his opinion and thoughts on various elements of the policy and the effects that have been noticed in the students since the policy's implementation. The principal's answers were valuable in understanding how the program is run. Furthermore, any significant issues that have been raised about this policy would have been addressed at this position in the school. These issues included

concerns raised by students, parents, teachers or the community. The principal's perspective on the community service requirement was valuable in order to understand the administrative problems in order to address and increase the policy's effectiveness. The principal offered information necessary to better understand all aspects of the community service requirement.

Another essential procedure used to gain an understanding of this policy was that of the parent questionnaires. An open-ended questionnaire was sent home with all 48 students that participated in the study. There were 26 parent questionnaires that were returned. Parents' opinions were important because they had access to the personal lives of the students and offered a second hand account of the lived experiences of the students as they completed their community service. Parents were able to offer insights and thoughts about the requirement that students may not have recognized. Having the parents' thoughts on the required community service ensured the strength and validity that this study had captured a complete and comprehensive view.

The final piece needed in order to capture the complete understanding of the community service requirement was the opinions of the community organizations where students chose to volunteer. After completing the student questionnaires and reviewing their responses, it became evident that there were certain organizations that students chose more than others. Based on these findings, the organizations that were not only mentioned in the students' responses, but also accessible within the timeframe of the study were asked to express their experiences with the community service requirement in an open-ended questionnaire. These opinions allowed the study to understand the effects, both positive and negative, that student volunteers bring to the community and its

organizations. The community organizations' lived experiences with the student

volunteers allowed for a careful analysis of the policy from the community's perspective.

After gaining the community's input, this study had a profile that draws on everyone

affected by the community service requirement.

These five groups of individuals were chosen because they were the people that

interacted with this policy in a significant manner. Without gaining one of the

perspectives mentioned, a piece of the entire understanding would have been lost. All

five groups needed to be examined to ensure that all themes and interactions between the

groups were identified and evaluated.

Data Analysis

After administering the questionnaires, the researcher examined the responses.

Trends in student behaviours were identified and compared to that of other programs and

trends examined in the literature review. Devising these themes, "is largely an intuitive

process, but it is also systematic and informed by the study's purpose, the investigator's

orientation and knowledge, and the meanings made explicit by the participants

themselves" (Merriam, 1998, p.179). Merriam (1998) suggests that the data presented

should meet two criteria. Primarily, the data "should be heuristic-that is the unit should

reveal information relevant to the study and stimulate the reader to think beyond the

particular bit of information" (p.179"). Secondly, "the unit should be the smallest piece

of information about something that can stand by itself-that is, it must be interpretable in

the absence of any additional information other than a broad understanding of the context

in which the inquiry is carried out" (Merriam, 1998, p. 180).

This information or data was obtained by reading the first open-ended questionnaire in its entirety. The researcher made notes and emerged themes. After this step, the researcher moved to the next questionnaire. As this process continued, the notes and themes from the previous questionnaires were remembered (Merriam, 1998).

After developing the themes and categories for the data investigation, the next step in the process was to 'theorize' the data. This process can be described as "the cognitive process of discovering or manipulating abstract categories and the relationships among these categories" (Merriam, 1998, p.188).

The researcher to gauge the success of the program used the similarities and differences in these responses. If the students, after completing the mandatory community service were gaining the values and benefits that the government and literature suggested, then the program was a success. If the students did not display the qualities and traits that the government wished or the literature suggested, then the program was a failure.

After completing the analysis, recommendations for the future of the policy were generated. It may be that the policy is meeting expectations and all parties involved were satisfied or, the policy had flaws. If this was case, recommendations taken from the open-ended questionnaires were examined along side the recommendations of this study, after completing a comprehensive analysis.

Validity and Reliability

Understanding and appreciating the validity and reliability of any study is as important as results of the study. Merriam (1998) states that, "The applied nature of

educational inquiry thus makes it imperative that researchers and others have confidence in the conduct of the investigation and in the results of any particular study (p.199).

LeCompte and Preissle (1993) state that there are four factors that claim to support the vaklidity of a study: 1) collecting data for long periods of time, allowing for continual data analysis and comparison; 2) informative interviews; 3) observations from natural settings; and 4) incorporation of research reflection, introspection, and self-monitoring (Merriam, 1998).

Reliability comes from the assumption that if the study were repeated it would yield the same results. In order to claim reliability, there are three ways in which that claim can be supported. Primarily, if the researcher offers detailed descriptions in order to allow the reader to understand the situation and circumstances in order that they can identify similar situations. Secondly, "describing how typical the program, event, or individual is compared with others" (Merriam, 1998, p. 211) Similarly, these descriptions enhance users' ability to compare the study to their own situation. Finally, using a wide range of cases and diversity within the cases allows the results to be applied to a wider range of situations.

Limitations of the Study

Like any research involving qualitative data, the reliability and validity of the results were contingent on the degree of honesty that students involved in their responses. There was always a risk of artificial responses or unwillingness to offer comprehensive responses. The conclusions in this study are not generalizable for the entire province. The results from this study represent a small sample within one school, in one location, at one point in time.

Chapter Four

Results

This chapter reveals the results of the study (i.e., the student, parent, teacher, principal and community open-ended questionnaires that were used to explore the community service requirement).

The Students

There were 48 students used in this study. The students were selected from a high school in southern Ontario. There were 27 males and 21 females. As stated previously, all the students were selected from grade twelve level classes. As a result, 40 of the students who participated in the study were completing their fourth year of high school, whereas the remaining eight were completing their fifth year.

Are you in favour of the community service in order to graduate?

This all-encompassing question resulted in an even divide of the sample student population. 24 of the students responded 'yes', indicating that they were in favour of the 40 hour requirement and an equal number responded 'no' that they were not in favour. Table 1 identifies that more males did not support the community service requirement than the females. This finding supports the previous literature that males are more likely to not support a mandatory community service requirement. Moreover, 12 females approved of the policy, while only nine who disapproved.

Did you ever volunteer before being required in order to graduate high school?

One of the goals of the 40-hour requirement is to encourage a sustained involvement within the community as students grow older. As a result, it is important to discover how

Table 1

Male / Female Support of the Community Service Requirement

	Sex	Number of Students Who Supported the Policy	Number of Students Who Supported the Policy	Total
	Male	12	15	27
	Female	12	9	21
Total Number of Students		24	24	48

many students had volunteer experience prior to experiences in direct fulfillment of the new policy. Of the 48 students used in the study, 23 had reported previous volunteer experience. Conversely, just over 50% (25) of the students stated they had no previous volunteer experience. The volunteer activities that students were involved in before the completion of the requirement ranged from working with the church, to athletics throughout the community. Table 2 identifies all the activities that students identified in their open-ended questionnaires as being completed before fulfillment of the high school requirement.

Do you intend to volunteer within the community after graduation?

Given that 23 students volunteered before completing the mandated hours in high school, it is valuable to compare how many students indicated they would volunteer in the future. The number of students who indicated they would volunteer in the future after participating in the high school policy was 31 of the 48 students. It must be noted that one student chose not to answer this question. It appears that students recognized the

importance of volunteering. One student stated that "There is a wider range of volunteer activities at university. Volunteering will allow me to explore my interests more and see what types of things I really enjoy doing" (student 3). Other students revealed their desire to remain involved within the community by stating they "still want to be part

Table 2

Students' Volunteer Activities Before High School

Volunteer Activities Before Completion of the 40-Hour Requirement	Number of Students
Church	7
Athletics	7
Elderly	3
Sold Poppies	2
Santa Claus Carnival	1
Youth Eagles	1
Spring Festivals	1
Air Cadets	1
Hospital	1
Salvation Army	1
School	1
Veterinary Clinic	1
Scouts	1
Humane Society	1
Agricultural Society	1
Youth Programs	1
Children Carnival	1
Business Improvement Area	1
Face Painting	1
Lifeguard	1
St. John's Ambulance	1

of the community" (student 13). Other students explained that they would remain active volunteers because "I like helping people" (student 18) and "I like to help out" (student 19). Student 37 stated that, "I have become compelled to join some organizations in the

town and I will most likely remain involved with them." This is an example of how this policy may expose students to organizations in which they will become active members for an extended period of time. To reinforce this point, student 40 stated that "I volunteer with The Community Players now and community theatre is something I will continue helping with." Other students that identified a desire to continue to volunteer showed interest in coaching sports teams throughout the community.

There were 16 students from the sample that indicated that they would not volunteer after graduation. Of the 16, some offered very simple explanations justifying their choice. Student 38 stated that it was "not worth it" and other students noted that they "don't have the time" (student 42) or they "have more important things to do" (student 23). One student rationalized his decision by explaining, "I feel, although volunteering is a good cause, if I'm not making any money it's not worth the effort because I need to save up for college" (student 14). Most of the students who stated they would not volunteer after graduation stated their lack of free time as the primary cause, or stated no reason.

The literature suggests that those individuals who would have volunteered without the requirement in place may be adversely affected by a mandated community service requirement. Table 3 illustrates that five students who had previous volunteer experience would not continue to volunteer after graduation. Conversely, 14 students who did not have previous volunteer experience stated that they would volunteer after graduation.

Table 3

Students Who Volunteered Before High School vs. Students Who Will Volunteer After

Graduation

		Number of Students Will Volunteer After Graduation		Total
		Yes	No	
Number of Students with Previous Volunteer Experience	Yes	17	5	22
	No	14	11	25
Total		31	16	47

As a result, there is a positive difference between those who chose to volunteer before

high school and those who would volunteer following graduation after completing the 40

hours of mandatory community service. The five people that volunteered before and are

not expecting to continue after high school all offered limited reasons. These included

anything from limited time, to more important things to do, to leaving the explanation

blank on the questionnaire. None of the five students identified any negative experience

with volunteering or their forced participation as a reason for their failure to continue to

volunteer. As a result, the findings refute the literature that forced participation in

community service will result in negative feelings and ultimately a lower participation

rate after graduation.

It is interesting to note that the female students in the sample were more willing to volunteer in the future than the males. The literature suggests that female students are more accepting of a community service requirement. Table 4 illustrates these female students are also more willing to continue to volunteer after graduation. Only six female students stated that they would not continue to volunteer compared to 10 males.

Table 4

Male / Female Volunteer Participation After Graduation

		Number of Students who will Volunteer After Graduation		*Total*
		Yes	No	
Gender	Male	16	10	26
	Female	15	6	21
Total		31	16	47

The results of this question could be the most significant predictor of the success of the community service requirement. This question identified that 31 out of 48 students sampled or 65% of the students expect to volunteer in the future. One of the primary goals of this policy was to develop responsible citizens. By discovering that 65% of high school graduates plan to volunteer in the future, one of the primary goals of the policy could be deemed a success.

Have you completed your 40 hours of community service?

Since the sample for this study consisted of grade twelve classes only, it was expected that a large percentage of the students would have completed their hours. Overall, this assumption was proven. Fewer than 9% of the students (4 out of 48) had not completed their hours. Conversely, over 90% of the students (44 out of 48) had completed all 40 of their community service hours. At the time of the study, there was approximately two months left in the high school academic year. These students at first glance could be identified as those students who do not support the policy and, therefore, are in no hurry to complete the mandate. However, one of the four students indicated that they supported the community service policy. As a result, there can be no conclusive findings as to why students leave completing their mandatory hours so late into their final year of schooling. All four students who had not completed their volunteer hours were all enrolled in their fourth year of high school. All these students may have been returning for a fifth year in high school and would be able to complete their hours during that time. Unfortunately, there was no foresight for such an instance when developing the open-ended questionnaire. Consequently, no question was asked concerning the future plans of fourth year students to return to high school.

What is the goal of the required community service?

This question allows for an appreciation of students' awareness of the beliefs and reasoning behind the implementation of the policy. The more students are made aware of the goals and benefits of this program, the more likely they will support the 40-hour requirement. Table 5 illustrates that a majority of students identified a major goal of the program was to get students involved within the community (29 out of 48). This answer

identifies that these students have an appreciation for the program and what is trying to

achieve. Unfortunately, the second most common response was either the student

Table 5

Students' responses to the goal of the program

Goal of the Program	Number of Students
To Get Students Involved in the Community	29
Don't Know / No Answer	10
Learn the Value and/or Importance of Community Service	6
Gain out of School Experience	4
Introduce Them to Different Aspects of the Community	2
Explore Working Areas	2
Encourage Students to Continue to Volunteer After High School	1
Free Labour out of High School Students	1
Grow up Faster	1
Understand What it's Like to Work	1
It Looks Good on a College Application	1
To get 40 Hours	1
Interact with the Community so They Can get to Know the Students	1
Keep Students out of Trouble	1
Make Student Life Harder	1
To Punish us for Something We Haven't Done	1
Become Better People	1
Annoy Students	1
Benefit Communities	1
Enrich Sense of Community	1

did not know the goal of the program or they left the response area blank, suggesting that

the two responses indicate similar thoughts. Ten students recorded responses in this

class. In other words, over 20% of the students sampled had no idea what the goal was of

the community service requirement. In order to maximize the potential of students'

volunteer experiences, they need to be aware of the benefits and how the experience can

enrich their lives. Other common answers were to gain out of school experience, learn the value of community service, explore different aspects of the community and explore working areas. These responses all suggest positive awareness of the program and its goals.

The volunteer activities used to complete the 40 hours

The activities that students choose will significantly influence the impact the experience they can have. Table 6 illustrates the wonderful variety of volunteer opportunities even in a small town in southern Ontario. By sampling 48 students, this study was able to identify 106 volunteer opportunities. One of the proactive approaches that the Ontario government took was to identify that small rural towns may have difficulty placing students. It would appear that this may not a problem. There appears to be a willingness of the community to accept volunteers in a variety of organizations and events that will allow the students in this community to choose volunteer activities based on their interests and/or career aspirations.

Did you complete any of your volunteer hours during class time?

The literature that has explored community service programs in the United States identified a major problem with students fulfilling their requirement during school time. The problem being that a major goal of the program is to allow students the opportunity to explore the community. If these students are completing their volunteer hours during class time then their experience will have a significantly lower impact on their development of responsible citizenship. Of the 48 students used in this study, nine (18.8%) reported that they had completed volunteer hours during class time. Student 12 identified that she received credit for volunteer hours during "Remembrance Day" and

Student 20 "during lunch hours." One student confessed that "only once, when I was coaching basketball we had a tournament during school hours" (Student 21). Four other students identified getting volunteer credit for athletic endeavours during school hours. This proves to be problematic for two reasons. Primarily, as discussed before, it hinders the worth of the experience if the student does not travel into the community to search and explore volunteer opportunities. Secondly, any volunteer work completed during class time is not to be counted toward the completion of the 40 hours. Student 12 stated that, "You are not allowed to count [hours] during class time." As a result, these nine students are in direct violation of the regulations of the policy or at the least, there is confusion about the policy and its regulations as what this student has stated contradicts what the other nine students have revealed.

Do you have any other option(s) if you chose not to complete your 40 hours?

The only other options for students who wish not to complete the 40 hours of community service are distance education, private education or move to another province in Canada that does not require community service. One student in this sample size of 48 students indicated that they had alternative choices. However, when asked to identify these choices, they simply offered a reason why they should have to complete the hours,

Table6
Volunteer activities used to complete the 40 hours

Volunteer Activity	Number of Students
Athletics (coaching, scorekeeping, etc.)	21
Church	9
Youth Groups (young eagles, sparks, etc.)	8
Elderly	8
30 hour famine	7
MS Super Cities Walk	3
Baseball Hall of Fame	3
Salvation Army	3
Yard Work	3
Heart and Stroke	2
Sold Poppies	2
Garbage Clean Up	2
School Fundraisers	2
Veterinary Clinic	2
Blood Donor Clinic	2
Community Dinners	2
Peer Tutoring	2
Camps	1
Painted a Mural	1
Royal Canadian Legion	1
Odd Jobs for Neighbours	1
Hospital	1
Food Bank	1
Teen Esteem at Public Schools	1
Homeless in Toronto	1
School Chaperon	1
Riding for Disabled	1
Helped at Closet Exchange	1
Helped Children Read	1
Highway Clean-Up	1
Soup Kitchen	1
Youth Mentor	1
Museum	1
Bakery	1
River, Run and Walk	1
Community Players	1
St johns Ambulance	1
Babysitting Foster Children	1
Library	1
Canvassing (Alzheimer's society)	1
Running Local Horse Shows	1
Cheerios Walk	1

not a realistic alternative. The responses to this question could indicate two ideas. One, no student opposed this requirement enough to explore his or her option; or two, they were not educated about their choices and as a result, felt forced to complete the community service hours. Whichever is correct, it is apparent that students are not aware of their alternative options with regard to the community service requirement.

Do you feel that completing 40 hours of community service violates any of your rights guaranteed to you by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom?

There are numerous cases brought to the American court system involving students protesting a mandatory community service program. Although the community service policy is relatively new in Ontario, there have been no cases brought to the court involving a student wishing to be excluded from the requirement. However, this study shows that 25% of students believe that the community service requirement is in direct violation of the rights guaranteed to them by the Canadian Charter. 12 of the 47 students (one student chose not to answer) agreed that their rights were in violation. Three students mentioned the idea of feeling like a criminal. Student 41 stated that "We are being forced to do the work so therefore its not technically community service. Its more like we have been sentenced as criminals are to do free work." Another student wrote "Freedom of choice. I used to like volunteering but now that its mandatory I feel like a slave" (Student 38). Another student who mirrored these thoughts explained "should be our choice to volunteer unless we break the law and have to do community work because a judge said so" (Student 29). The remaining students indicated that they did not believe that the Canadian government had the right to force people to work for free.

Were you given any assistance in selecting your volunteer activities?

From the sample of students used, 31.3% (15) of the students revealed that they were offered some form of assistance in selecting their volunteer activities. Although this number may suggest that individual help was given as not every student identified being given assistance, one student offered, "The school guidance office often posted volunteer opportunities. There were also announcements at school to advertise volunteer activities" (Student 3). Students 13, 14, and 15, supported these ideas. Another recurring theme within the sample group was to receive assistance from parents. Five of the fifteen, who reported receiving assistance, stated that it was from their parents. Student 4 explained that "My parents assisted me by telling me about any opportunities which they heard about." The final theme that was identified was that the church was a valuable tool in assisting students in finding volunteer activities. One student told, "When we went to Toronto it was all organized by the church" (Student 22).

Another important idea to consider is that of the 33 students that identified they received no assistance in finding volunteer activities; only two had not completed the hours at the time of the study. As a result, it can be stated that students are able to find enough volunteer activities at their own discretion. Moreover, 2 of the 15 students that reported receiving assistance had not completed the 40 hours at the time of the study. The evidence gathered in this study suggests that providing students with assistance in finding volunteer activities has no significant impact on their ability to complete the hours.

Does your school provide a list of pre-screened organizations that are safe for students to work with?

Figure 1 summarizes students' responses to their awareness of a list of pre-screened organizations in which students are encouraged to volunteer. The literature identifies instances in the United States where schools would pre-screen organizations in order to alleviate any safety concerns on the part of the parents and/or students. Only considering the students' responses at this point, it is inconclusive whether or not this high school has a list of pre-screened organizations in which students can feel safe working. If there is indeed such a list of organizations, education about the list and its location is mandatory.

Why did you select your volunteer activities?

The reasons that students select the volunteer activities that they decide to participate in can significantly impact what they take from the experience. When a student decides to expand his or her resume with career related experience or volunteer activities, it will help him or her gain entry into university and their experiences will be more valuable than those students who chose to volunteer on account of convenience or the lack of work involved. Students have a primary role in deciding how beneficial their community service can be within their lives. Table 7 illustrates the reasons offered by the students as

Figure 1
Students' Awareness of Pre-screened Organizations

Is There a List of Pre-Screened Organization?
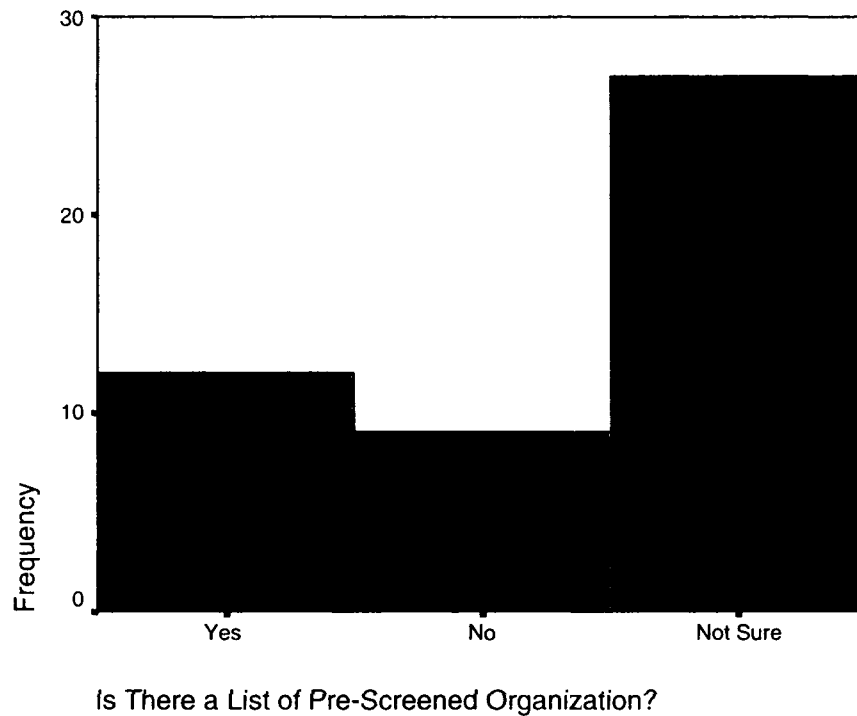
to why they selected their volunteer activities. The two most common motives were

personal interest and enjoyment. Two students identified a career related reason for

selecting their volunteer activity (gain experience working with children, gain future

career references). The evidence suggests that students either do not understand the

importance that related volunteer experience could make in determining a

Table 7

Students' Reasons for Choosing The Volunteer Activities

Reason for Choosing	Number of students
Personal Interests	12
Enjoyment	11
Convenience	8
Necessity	3
Done it Anyway	3
Able to do it with Friends	3
Easy	3
Work with Children	2
Grandmother	1
Family Asked	1
Wanted to Give Back to Something I Benefited From	1
Word of Mouth from Peers	1
Gain Experience Working with Children	1
Long Hours so I Could get Done Faster	1
Limited Physical Work	1
Asked to Help	1
Blue Jays Tickets	1
Help out in the Community	1
Real Eye Opener	1
Fast	1
Gain Future Career References	1
Got to go to Ottawa	1
Able to do it all at Once	1
Previous Experience	1

successful application to university, college or employment; or they would rather do the most convenient activity in order to complete the requirement. In response to the above question, Student 3 indicated, "most were just convenient." Overall, there isn't a major problem with students completing the requirement without considering the benefits of carefully selecting their activities. However, there is a problem if these students were never informed about the value of volunteering and wasted this opportunity. Students need to be aware of the power of certain volunteer opportunities in terms of their post secondary school aspirations or hopes of gaining their desired employment.

Did you reflect upon your experience?

It has been suggested in the literature that upon reflection of your volunteer activities, students are able to gain more insight into the causes and the need for volunteers with regards to a particular problem. Fourteen out of the 48 students identified that they personally reflected upon their experiences within the community. One student said, "I thought about how important it is to donate my time and I felt that volunteering is a very large part of students' high school career since they get involved with their community" (Student 2). Another student who chose an exciting activity explained "Everyone asked how the weekend was and I took lots of pictures so I showed pictures and explained what we did all weekend" (Student 22). Although this does not indicate critical reflection on the part of the student into the causes of the social problem, it may help them remember the need for volunteerism and the enjoyment that can result. If students enjoy their volunteer experience there will be a better chance of continued volunteerism in the future. Student 37 mirrored closely what may be expected from a student to critically reflect upon their experiences; he stated, "I started to think about things I researched and how they compared to History class." After examining those students who indicated that they had reflected upon their experience and understanding the value of critical reflection from the literature, it becomes apparent that there is a need for guided critical reflection after students' volunteer activities in order to allow the students' to maximize their experience.

Do you think that reflection will allow you to gain more from your experiences?

To reinforce the previous question, 50% of the students indicated that reflection would allow them to gain more from their experiences. Student 2 explained, "The reflection allowed me to gain more from my experiences because you realize that you're doing something positive and that makes the experience more positive" and Student 9 reinforced the thought by stating, "reflecting back on something gives you the opportunity to understand the importance of what you did." Other students commented, "The reflection allows you to view what you accomplished and how you had a direct impact on the lives of the people you were volunteering for" (Student 3) and "You realize who benefits from the experience and why the community is so important to your own and everyone else's lifestyle" (Student 5).

Some students who are confused about the importance and value of 40-hour requirement will understand the experience and the need for volunteering after an opportunity to critically reflect upon their experiences. One student echoed this thought by identifying that "it may help to explain why we were doing it all, and what kind of results we were supposed to be getting from the activities" (Student 4). Student 25 explained "You need time to think through and learn / analyze what you have learned to benefit from it." Student 47 offers a view of the importance of critical reflection; she wrote, "It would have helped me to expand on my initial thoughts to have further insight into what I helped with." Although introducing the community service was intended to create responsible citizens, providing students with the opportunity to critically reflect upon the experience would strengthen that opportunity.

Do you feel that your experience allowed you to apply skills acquired at school in a 'real world' setting?

One of the benefits of the community service programs reviewed in the literature was the potential for students to transfer knowledge and skills from the classroom into a real world setting. This study shows that 43.8% (21) of students believed they were able to apply skills taught to them in a school setting in their community service. There are two major factors that have the potential to generate a higher number of students able to transfer skills from a school to a work environment: 1) the classes in which the student is enrolled; and 2) the volunteer activity in which the student selects. These two factors are interwoven. For example, when a child is taking all science and math based courses selects a volunteer opportunity in a science lab, the application and transfer of skills would be profoundly greater than if that same student volunteered an art museum.

Have your marks increased since being involved within the community?

Only six students identified any improvement in grades as a result of their community involvement. Any academic improvement identified in the literature was in regard to service learning in the United States where the community involvement is incorporated into the curriculum. As a result, this study shows that there is very little evidence that without a connection to the curriculum, students receive little, if any academic benefit from their volunteer activities.

Have you received any academic benefit?

Although only five students identified obtaining any academic benefit, their descriptions explain the value of the experience. One student revealed, "I have learned more about hard work and paying attention to detail. I have also learned a good deal

about basic human psychology" (Student 37). Other students agreed that their volunteer commitment would be an advantage for acceptance into university as they have gained contacts and references throughout the community. Student 7 explained, "When applying to concurrent education programs I was able to use my experience volunteering with Sparks to better my chances of being accepted." Moreover, Student 12 identified, "letters of reference and contacts for the future" were his biggest academic benefit from the community service experience. The final two students who recognized an academic benefit cited the ability to graduate and the increased respect from parents and teachers. The responses to this question identify that grade improvement is not the only academic benefit to volunteering. The ability to include these activities on employment or post secondary applications is an invaluable asset. These five students have identified the value of volunteering and the possibilities of using your experiences as a self-propelling asset in life, in terms of respect, high school graduation and the creation of references and contacts to ensure future endeavours are fulfilled.

Do you feel that your volunteer experience will help you gain employment?

Roughly two thirds (32) of the students agreed that their community service might help them gain employment in the future. Therefore, although only 50% of the students supported the program itself, two thirds identified at least one benefit of the program. Student 7 rationalized "while volunteering you gain experience and learn new skills that could be valuable to have when applying to various jobs." Reinforcing the same point, Student 3 writes, "I now have more areas of experience to draw from. I have developed new skills that I may not have which makes me a more attractive prospect to employers" and Student 5 explains, "The employer will know that I'm good at interacting with

different groups of people and that I want to be involved within the community, which is an asset to many businesses in the new global economy." Two students identified the importance of networking and its ability to impact your success to obtain employment. Student 8 states that it will help you gain employment, "only if you are volunteering in the field that you want to go into because it gets you to meet people in the area that you want to be in" and Student 45 explains, "You learn skills about working with people and who to talk to get where you need to be." Another student recognized an important benefit in their individual case. She expressed that, "it has already helped, due to my lack of work experience" (Student 36). This example recognized the importance of expanding the resume, especially in cases where the work experience is limited. The community service requirement has allowed the student to apply for employment with work related experience and succeed in securing a position. Student 42 revealed that, "I got a job at the place that I volunteered." This response is evidence that volunteering can be a direct avenue from high school into the labour force.

Conversely, one third of the student sample did not believe that their community involvement would help them gain employment. Student 39 evaluated the situation by stating, "Everyone has to volunteer, so by saying you volunteered in high school isn't anything special, different, or unique to employers." This student raises an important concern. The potential of losing the ability to recognize those students who would have volunteered before is now lost. If every student has 40 hours of volunteer work, it will become more important where the student completed their hours, not just that they have volunteer experience. Student 47 who understood, "My volunteer experience has had very little relation to any career prospects I wish to pursue, and it is unlikely that they

would aid me in finding employment", mirrors this thought. Another example of a student believing that their volunteer experience is not valuable in gaining employment is explained by, "My chosen job field is horses and sport's, volunteering may not help the employer thinking about my animal care skills" (Student 34). This evidence suggests that students need to be informed about the importance of volunteering in applicable areas to their career aspirations if they have been chosen at the time of involvement.

Has your experience given you knowledge about any career you were not aware of or considering?

Another benefit identified in the literature about involving students within their communities is the exploration of careers. It has been shown that students are made aware of careers they were not aware of by volunteering and exposing themselves to different aspects of their communities. In this study, 12 of the 48 students gained knowledge about a career that they either, did not know about, or were not considering. One student described, "By volunteering at various activities I was able to see people who had real jobs in this area. Most activities were made up of all volunteers. I did discover that at camp someone is paid to hire, train and manage all the counsellors" (Student 3). Student 8 illustrated another important benefit of exploring different careers: she explained that, "It allowed me to work with children which helped me to decide whether or not I would want to do that for a living." Also, a career decision was made by Student 32 who explained, "I decided that I wanted to work in a vet clinic and would have to apply to college. I was undecided until I did my volunteer hours." Other students cited knowledge gained in nursing, the arts, medicine, veterinary clinic, gerontology, and the organization of a food bank. Over 77% (37) of the students did not

recognize any new careers as a result of their community service. The knowledge that students can gain about new careers is limited by the career opportunities located in each community.

Is there a better relationship between the school and the community?

Less than 50% of the students (22 of 48) believe that the introduction of the community service program has strengthened the relationship between the school and the community. The literature suggests that in communities where students volunteer within the community, a better relationship is formed between the two parties. One student describes that, "Some people do not try to make volunteer work a positive thing, so they do not try hard when volunteering; thus it creates a slightly bad image of our school" (Student 2). Another student explains why she doesn't believe that a better relationship has been created "because students who do not wish to do it complain and drag out whatever jobs they have" (Student 34). One student believes that, "Students go in with the wrong attitude of 'I have to' so they most likely aren't happy doing it" (Student 41). Finally, Student 42 echoes these students' disbelief that the school-community relationship has been strengthened by saying, "They [volunteer] sloppily without real work or mind for the work." A final point that was addressed by one of the students was that some of the students fulfill their 40-hour requirement outside of the community and therefore, have no impact on the local relationship. She wrote that, "Many of the volunteer activities which students complete are not in the local community and thus a relationship is not developed" (Student 47). These opinions represent 54% of the students sampled. They believe that the negative attitudes reflected by the students

negates the positive image that volunteering offers to the community about the local students.

However, 22 of the 48 (46%) students did recognize that a positive relationship was being formed between the school and community. One student identified that once students begin helping a particular organization, their willingness to help the school in return will be increased. She stated that, "If you help out an organization they may want to help you out at your school" (Student 15). Moreover, some students believed that the image of the local students would be helped. Student 9 suggests that, "When people see students volunteer in the community it will probably leave a better impression than if they see students cause trouble." Similarly, another student wrote, "The community has been able to see that high school students are helpful and give back to the community" (Student 8).

Naturally, there is a flux of new volunteers entering the community and providing additional assistance to the local organizations. A student explains that, "Places in and around town now have opportunities for some free help supplied by the school, and this would make them happy" (Student 4). Almost 46% of the students surveyed believe that a better relationship was being established. A final comment from student #3 exemplifies what the literature suggests. She wrote, "The community service gets the school out and involved in the community more. This means there is a better understanding and appreciation between the two" (Student 3). Although a majority of the students disagreed with this question, 45% remains a strong indication that a positive relation could have been formed. The final answer to this question will become clear after the examination

of the community questionnaires that probe community organizations' feelings and experiences with the 40-hour requirement.

Is there a better relationship between you and the community?

The responses to this question were distributed as evenly as possible, considering one response could not be used. 23 students identified a better relationship, whereas 24 students reported no signs of a better relationship. A common theme from those students who suggested there was a better relationship established was that they were able to meet people in the community while developing social skills in hopes of obtaining employment within the community. Student 45 explains by stating that, "You get to meet more people and you learn more about what's going on." Other students agreed rationalizing, "by volunteering at my church I got to know more people in the community" (Student 43) and "I feel I can talk to individuals in this community as I have gained better social skills" (Student 37). One student explained the benefit of performing volunteer hours within the community. He wrote that, "if you plan on working in your community you will be better known" (Student 32). Student 27 made the general statement that, "I feel like I am a lot more recognized around town." This statement reinforces the idea that volunteering is a great means to exposing yourself to the community and begins networking for future employment within the community.

Students identified they had the opportunity to explore the community on a social level and prepare themselves to succeed within the community in the future. Students are able to network and build social skills necessary to accomplish success in their future endeavours.

In total, there was one more student who believed there was not a better relationship established. Those students who saw no better relationship being developed cited the common reason that they were working with people they already were familiar with and had previous relationships. One student said, "I only volunteered at places that I was familiar with already, so I already had a relationship with these people" (Student 4). In addition, Student 35 states that, "very few know me [community organizations], most of the work I did was with people I already know." Other students identified other reasons why a better relationship was not created. One student suggested that, "40 hours of community involvement is not a lot. A relationship can not be based upon this amount of time especially if all involvement was not all in one place" (Student 1). Another student questioned the authenticity of the volunteer hours by stating, "no, because we are forced to do it." This student questions the community's ability to develop a relationship based on the forced participation of the students. The analysis of the community questionnaires will answer this question. Another point that was addressed that if a student completes their hours outside of the community in which they reside, it is obvious that a personal relationship with the community will not and could not be developed. Student 34 explains, "All of my volunteer work was done outside of [the city]." The remaining students who believed a better relationship was not developed offered criticism of the policy in general. They offered no insight into the reason a relationship was not developed, just that they didn't agree with completing 40-hours of community service.

There was virtually an even divide among students whether or not a better personal relationship was created as a direct result of the community service requirement. Ultimately, the most common theme was either the students worked with new and

exciting people and thus were able to generate new relationships; or students worked with people they already knew and thus, no new relationships were formed.

Do you believe that the community has benefited?

Over 80% of the students that responded (two missing) recognized a benefit to the community as a direct result of the community service requirement. Conversely, nine students suggested that there was no benefit to the community. One student identified a problem within the policy itself. Two students' remarks make it clear that the spirit of volunteering and the difference that can be made was not instilled. One stated that he did not believe the community had benefited from student volunteers and "If students didn't volunteer, some adults would" (Student 46). The other student commented that, "Volunteers don't really do much anyways" (Student 38).

A significant problem was identified by a student's rationale for not believing the community had benefited. Student 35 wrote, "Although many of us are doing it, most of the people I know only do half but the people they do it for sign for the whole 40-hours." This statement addresses the tracking system in which the school uses in order to monitor the students' volunteer hours. It is feasible for students to receive a manufactured statement describing volunteer activities that were not performed. This problem needs to be addressed and will be examined further in the principal and teacher questionnaires. The final theme that was identified from the students' responses was inadequacy. One student comments, "In general, I don't believe the community has benefited since many volunteers complain and don't do adequate work" (Student 2). If students have a negative attitude toward the mandated community service, they may not put their best effort into the activity in which they select. However, this may not mean that the student

and the community will not benefit at all. Student 1 suggests that, "Even if the involvement was 'half-assed' things were still achieved/completed that wouldn't have without the involvement." Although the students who did not believe the community benefited from this policy represented less than 20% of the sample student population, these 9 students raised very important points that need to be addressed.

What did you enjoy the most?

Twenty students identified the social aspect and helping others as the most enjoyable part of their community service experience. Fourteen students recognized having fun, making a difference, helping an important cause and learning new ideas as their most enjoyable. There are a few problematic areas within Table 8 that need to be addressed. Primarily, 3 students did not enjoy anything about their experience. These students need to be identified and an understanding needs to be reached on their experiences and why it was not enjoyable. Through a discussion and reflection into their activities, an understanding by the student could be reached that their experience was an isolated incident and that volunteering has enjoyment to offer. Another concern is that a few students recognized their rewards as the most enjoyable part of their volunteer activities. Traveling to Ottawa and going to a Blue Jays game are very exciting activities. The danger is that not every volunteer activity has these types of rewards. Consequently, if students are accustomed to receiving rewards for their volunteer activities, the value of

Table 8

What Students Enjoyed Most About Their Experiences

What Students Enjoyed	Number of Students
Social Aspect	13
Helping Others	7
Having Fun	4
Make a Difference with Youth Lives	4
Helping an Important Cause	3
Learning New Ideas and Tasks	3
Nothing	3
Feel Good About Yourself	2
Tickets to a Jays Game	2
Free Practice Time on Ice	1
Being Done	1
Pizza Party After 30 Hour Famine	1
Acting	1
Working with Children	1
The Class Trip in Grade 10	1
Did it with Friends	1
Coaching	1
See the Work Put into Events	1
Occasionally Missed School (no hours awarded though)	1
Being Away from Younger brothers	1
Felt Like I Made a Difference	1
Going to Ottawa	1
Food I was Given While I was Canvassing	1
Being Outside	1

volunteering may be lost. However, this may simply be pessimistic thinking. In an ideal world, every student would have a wonderful experience where they, "felt like I made a difference" (Student 43). However, Table 8 illustrates the breadth of experiences that students explored and the enjoyment that can be found from these experiences.

What did you enjoy least?

A positive theme was identified when examining the responses to this particular question. The students' responses are outlined in Table 9. The most common responses were

students either not answering or identifying nothing as least enjoyable. Another common theme was that of time consumption. Seven students felt that the demands on their time as a result of the policy created stress and made the experience not enjoyable. Students explained by stating, "it interferes with the work and school schedule" (Student 25) and "I don't have a lot of extra time and found myself putting aside studies to volunteer" (Student 32). When considering the argument of time consumption it is interesting to note Table 10. Table 10 illustrates the average time that needs to be spent by a student each week over their four years in high school in order to complete the 40-hour requirement. It is possible that students are busy enough to justify not having 11 minutes a week to volunteer. However, it definitely is not enough to warrant abandoning the policy. A person has to be very busy and very organized to be working and going to school without 11.4 minutes of free time throughout a week. The final common theme identified in this question was the idea of being forced to volunteer. This is a significant problem and has the potential to jeopardize students' experiences to the point where it becomes negative. Overall, Table 9 identifies a lot of independent least enjoyable experiences, which suggests that there are not a lot of common problems that need to be addressed at an administrative level concerning students' least enjoyable aspect of their community service.

What Suggestions would you offer about the community service requirement?
There is no better suggestion than from someone who has experienced the community service requirement. Table 11 summarizes all the suggestions made by the 48 students in this study. The most common suggestion was to either, lower the number

Table 9

What Students Enjoyed the Least About Their Experience

What Students Enjoyed Least	Number of Students
Didn't Answer / Nothing	9
Being Forced	7
Time Consumption	7
People I Worked With	3
Time Away from Studying	2
Feeling I was there for the Wrong Reason	1
Being Assigned Where I had no Knowledge or Experience	1
Getting Recorder Book Signed	1
Early Morning Practices	1
No Other Options	1
Pressure to do it	1
30 Hours of Starvation	1
Working	1
Cleaning up the Store	1
Working for Free	1
Hung Over Most of the Time	1
10 Hours for 30 Hour Famine	1
Waking up Early	1
Wouldn't do it in [this town]	1
Doing Unimportant Work	1
Not Being Able to do it More Often	1
Missing Paid Work	1
Hassle	1
The work	1
Cold	1
Rude People	1

Table 10
Mathematical Breakdown of Community Service Hours

40 Hours	10 Hours	11.4 Minutes
Total in Four Years	Total in One YEAR	Total in One Week

Table 11

Students' Suggestions About the Policy

Suggestion	Number of Students
Lower or Abandon Policy	12
For There to be an Option	8
More School Assistance	6
Encourage Them to Complete the hours Early	4
Keep it the Same	4
Connections to Career	2
Incorporate into Class Work (get a credit)	2
Minimum Number of Hours Per Year	1
I Hope to Never do it as Much for Free in the Future	1
More Organization	1
Not Sure Why We do it	1
Increase the Hours	1
Organization / Preparation on the Part of the Employers	1

of hours needed to fulfill the requirement, or abandon the policy all together. This, the most common response, still only accounts for 25% of the students. The second most common suggestion offered by students was to eliminate the mandatory nature of the policy. Eight students indicated they want an option of whether to volunteer or not. In other words, they want the policy abandoned as well. Before the community service requirement was implemented, each student had a choice whether or not to volunteer. By offering students a choice, it is in effect, eliminating the policy altogether.

Other students offered suggestions about the administration's role in the policy. Six students suggested more school assistance was needed in order to increase the policy's effectiveness. One student suggested, "more assistance in finding places to volunteer" (Student 33). Reinforcing this point, Student 48 suggested that a, "wider bank of information at the school for students to find info about local places to volunteer." As

the program stands, students are left to find volunteer placements. The issue of administration's role in assisting these placements will be looked at after the other questionnaires have been examined. One student's suggestion made it clear that not every student realized the benefit of volunteering after his experience. One student commented that, "I hope to never do it as much for free in the future." This student's knowledge about volunteering was not increased or expanded. A final comment made by a student was the only one of its kind. One student wished the requirement to be larger. Student 37 stated that, "more teens do more servicing, 40 hours isn't enough." Four students offered similar advice to future students of Ontario high school. They recommended that they finish their hours early in their stay at high school. They believed that this would eliminate the stress and problems associated with trying to complete all 40 hours within a limited time span during the fourth year. Finally, two groups in Table 11 illustrate an important suggestion.

Two students suggested that their community service be connected to their desired career, and two students suggested that the policy be incorporated into a class. The literature on service learning in the United States, where the community service is incorporated into the curriculum, is very positive. As a result, incorporating this requirement into the curriculum could allow these students to connect their experiences to their desired career and critically reflect upon their experiences, which has proven to increase the worth of the experience on numerous different levels. Overall, the students most common suggestion was to either, lower the amount of hours, or eliminate the policy altogether.

This section has explored the student's questionnaires in order to gain an appreciation for the students' lived experiences with the community service requirement. Themes were identified and will be used in conjunction with the other questionnaires to gain a comprehensive view of the policy.

The Parents

Each of the 48 students that were used in this study was given a parent/guardian questionnaire that they were asked to take home and return within a two-week period. 26 parent/guardian questionnaires were returned and will be used in this chapter in order to gain an appreciation for the parents' lived experiences with a student performing the community service requirement.

Do you support the community service requirement?

Figure 2 illustrates the overwhelming support of parents with regard to the community service requirement. Over 76% (20) of the parents indicated they were in full support of the policy. Conversely, only five parents stated that they were not in favour of the requirement and one parent selected both responses, indicating positive and negative feeling about the requirement. This support of the policy is far greater than the students (50%). It would appear that the parents see greater benefit to the students than students realize or are willing to admit.

Figure 2

Parents' Support of the Policy

Are You in Favour of the Requirement?
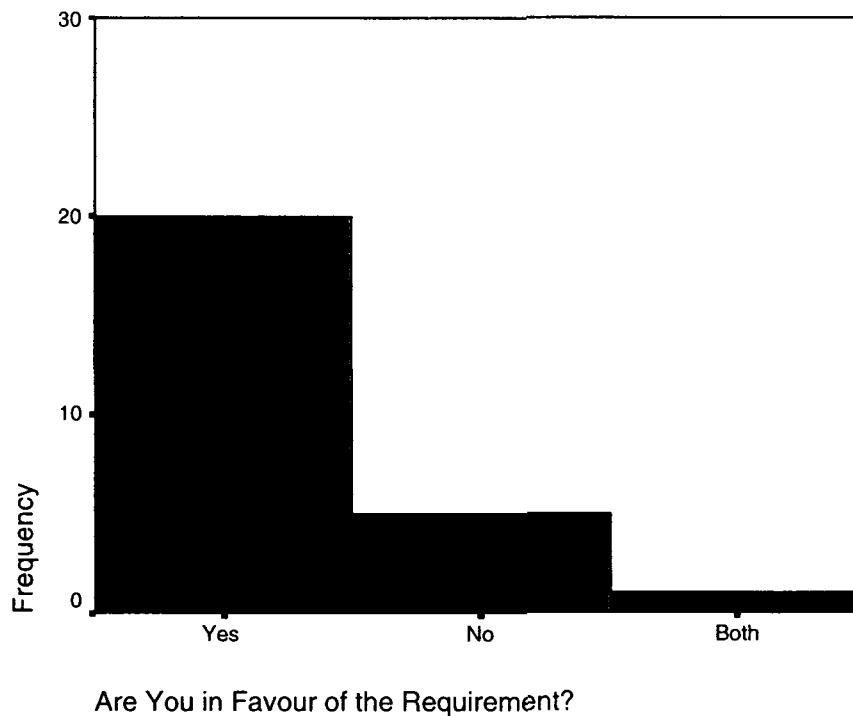
Please identify any benefits you have noticed in your son / daughter

Parents (a term that this study will use to incorporate both parents and guardians) were asked to identify any benefits they have noticed in their son or daughter as a direct result of their community service involvement. The results of this question are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12

Benefits Identified in Parents' / Guardians' Son or Daughter

Benefit	Number of Parents / Guardians
Nothing	8
Met People in the Community	4
Enjoyed Themselves	4
Willing to Help out in the Community	2
Realized the Need for Volunteerism	2
Aware of 'Another World' or 'Eye-Opener'	2
Exposed to People Who Volunteer Their Time	2
Felt Good About His / Her Tasks	1
Empathy Towards Elderly	1
Understands the Challenge of Working with Children	1
Interacted with Other Adults	1
Positive Self Esteem	1
Increased Confidence	1
Realized it Takes Time to Accomplish Goals	1
Importance of Planning	1
Feeling of Self Worth	1
Commitment	1
Communication	1
Accomplishment	1
Pride	1
Working Relationship at an Organization	1
Responsibility	1
Community Social Awareness	1

The most common response was to identify no benefits. Eight parents indicated that

they saw no benefit to their students as a result of the policy. This accounts for fewer

than 31% of the total parent population. The breadth of other benefits noticed by

individual parents offsets this common response. Four parents identified a benefit of

meeting various people within the community. One parent commented, "She has met

members of the community that she would not necessarily have met otherwise. She felt

good about some of her tasks and talked about them with us" (Parent 2). Taking this

point one step further, another parent noticed "developing a working relationship at an organization" (Parent 21) as a significant benefit of the policy to their son or daughter.

Other parents noticed their son or daughter was now concerned about the world outside of the high school. One parent explained that, "I noticed empathy towards various age groups particularly the elderly" (Parent 3). Parent 17 mirrored this idea by stating, "I believe that he is aware that there is 'another world' out there beyond what he normally encounters." A specific example that explores the power of volunteerism was identified as a benefit to a parent's son or daughter. Parent 5 states that, "My son enjoyed helping out with young children . He understands how challenging it can be to lead and coach a group of children."

Finally, parents noticed that their son or daughter was, "usually willing to help out in the community when asked" (Parent 4) and "She is more willing to volunteer at local community events" (Parent 26). As these quotes and Table 12 illustrate, there are benefits to students when they are involved in the community. Even though the most common response was that there was an absence of benefits, the total of all other benefits outnumber this response, 32 to 8, which is a better indication of the success of the policy.

***Please identify any harmful effects that the requirement has had on your son /
daughter***

Positively, the most common response to this question was the inability to identify any harmful effects on the students as a result of the requirement. Table 13 illustrates all the harmful effects noted on the parent / guardian questionnaires. Over 61% of the parents used in this study could not identify any deterrent for continuing the policy.

Table 13

Harmful Effects of the Policy as Noted by the Parents / Guardians

Harmful Effect	Number of Parents / Guardians
None	16
Time Considerations	4
Stress	2
Difficulty Finding a Place	2
Discouraged About How the Other Students Did, or Didn't Service Their Time	1
Adverse Effect in the Long Run	1
Frustration	1
Bad Experience	1

The most common harmful effect noticed by four parents was the time constrictions under which it put their child. One parent explains that, "trying to fit homework, sports and work + community service into a workable schedule. There are more demands put on our children educationally since the OAC was eliminated" (Parent 5).

Another parent identifies that, "My daughter has a lot of stress put on her. Along with having to complete 40-hours of community service, she has to work part-time, do homework, and go to school" (Parent 15). Finally, Parent 26 reinforces by stating, "It takes up a lot of her time because she works part-time and has homework to complete" (Parent 26). Another harmful effect that was noticed by a parent was their son / daughter's feelings concerning other students' volunteer experience. The parent explains that their son / daughter was, "discouraged about how other students served or didn't serve their time" (Parent 3). This parent is alluding to the fact that he or she believes that some students do not complete their requirement in full and forge a completed 40-hour requirement. Moreover, there is a concern that "some students took easy jobs" (Parent 3)

while other students performed more rigorous volunteer hours. There are two concerns with this statement. Ultimately, it is the students' decision as to which volunteer activity to select. Consequently, the fact that some students selected 'easy jobs' is irrelevant. Furthermore, the concern of forging hours has been brought up in the student questionnaires and will be examined further after all the questionnaires have been explored.

Another theme that was identified in the student questionnaires that appears again is the idea of assistance in selecting volunteer activities. Two parents indicated their child had difficulty in selecting an activity. A final idea that was raised by a parent is supported by the literature. A parent suggested that the future intent to volunteer might be adversely affected by the mandated community service. Overall, this question has shown positive results. The most common response was that there was an absence of harmful effects on the students involved within this policy. Furthermore, the second most common response was the time consideration which has already been discussed in the student section and, as Table 10 illustrated, the time demands are only 11.4 minutes a week. As a result, although there are concerns that need to be addressed, the harmful effects are significantly less than the benefits identified by the same parents used in this study.

What is the goal of the policy?

Table 14 summarizes the responses given by the parents identifying what they believe to be the goal of the policy. 73% (19) believe that the goal of the policy is get the students involved within the community. This is significantly the most common response

Table 14

The Goal of the Policy as Identified by the Parents

Goal of the Policy	Number of Parents / Guardians
Being Involved Within the Community	19
Instil the Value of Giving / Volunteering	5
Make Them Aware of Different Clubs and Services	3
Explore Career Options	3
Encourage them to Volunteer Later in Life	2
Meeting a Variety of People	2
Satisfaction From Helping Others	2
Not Sure / Unaware	1
Realizing the Need for Volunteers	1
Learn Responsibility and Caring	1
Instil a Sense of Belonging	1
Get Experience in a Variety of Areas	1
Sense of Accomplishment	1
Expand Horizons	1
Establish a relationship with the Community	1
Do it in Order to Graduate	1
Community / Social Awareness	1
Sense of Responsibility	1

to this question and indicates that the parents have an adequate understanding of the goals

of the policy. Even more positively, there was only one parent who was unaware of any

of the goals of the requirement. This, more than any of the other responses, reveals that

almost all the parents understand the policy and the rationale behind it. Not every parent

knows every benefit and goal of the policy, but that is neither expected nor necessary for

the success of the program.

Parents' suggestions or comments on the community service requirement

There were many parents who wished to express their suggestions or comments

on the requirement. These suggestions and comments have been summarized in Table

15. Only six of the twenty-six parents chose not to express any ideas or concerns about

the issue. The most common suggestion was a list of possible locations where the

students could volunteer. This is significant because the students also suggested a list of options. Another concern of parents was the lack of effective monitoring. Parents questioned the validity of particular students' hours and their activities. One parent questioned those students who did not support the requirement and their honesty with regard to their logged hours. The two problems with these statements are that they are not supported by any evidence, and the member of the community that is falsely signing for the hours. Undoubtedly, this issue needs to be addressed and identified to the principal of the school. Furthermore, steps should be considered in order to eliminate this from recurring again. An interesting suggestion was made by a parent to encourage the school to put an advertisement in the local newspaper to inform local organizations in need of volunteers to advertise at the local high school. It is unclear until the principal questionnaire is examined whether or not this step or similar steps have been taken. Similarly, another parent suggested that local groups make presentations in the local high school detailing their need for volunteers and the activities that students would be performing. The idea of recognizing students who go beyond the 40-hour requirement was also raised by a parent. This is an idea that could take many forms. A student who completes 'x' number of hours over the requirement could receive an additional credit, a statement on their diploma or some other type of reward. A final comment that will be highlighted in this chapter concerns other members of the community setting an example of volunteerism. A parent describes, "If this is 'role model' then everyone should be setting an example. Like police officers volunteering their time (not charging) to be in attendance at a grad dance for the local high school – which they all are part of

Table 15

Parents' Suggestions and Comments on the Requirement

Suggestion or Comment	Number of Parents / Guardians
None	6
List of Possible Volunteer Locations	4
Keep Program	3
Lack of Effective Monitoring	2
Abandon the Policy or Make it Optional	2
40 Hours is Very Attainable	1
Add for Community to Contact School for Volunteers	1
Validity of Students Who Don't Want to do it ?	1
Recognition for Students Who go Beyond 40 Hours	1
Volunteer Make up and Dresses for Grade 8 Graduation	1
Presentations Made in the School in Year (Volunteer Groups)	1
Minimum Requirement Each Year	1
Find a Way to Allow Students to "Look Forward' to It	1
Forcing Them to do Community Service , it is no Longer Community Service	1
It's a Way of Giving Back What Each Student has Been Given	1
Students Should be Placed Somewhere in Their Interests or Career Path	1
More Clearly Defined Goals of the Program	1
Limited Options in the Rural Area	1
Stress on Parents Working Shift Work	1
Driving Costs	1
Don't Use "Community Service"	1
Everyone Should be Volunteering and Setting the Example	1

the community" (Parent 23). Obviously the local high school has no control over the

local organizations and whether or not they chose to volunteer their time, but this is an

interesting point and will be considered in the subsequent chapters.

This section has illustrated the parents' views and concerns regarding the

community service requirement. These views and ideas will be considered when offering

a comprehensive view of the policy and ultimately, making suggestions for the future.

The Teachers

There are two teachers that will be used in this study. There were originally three classes that were approved to work with at the school of study, however, one teacher was given an open-ended questionnaire and decided that he would not return it within the designated time of the study. As a result, two female teachers with 25 and 17 years of experience respectively are being used to gain an appreciation for teachers' lived experiences through the community service requirement. Since there are only two teachers in this study, the information collected in this study is limited in terms of creating a complete view of teachers in Ontario. However, the information will be valuable in creating a comprehensive view of the community service requirement within the sample.

What is the goal of the program?

Both teachers were able to successfully identify several goals of the program. Teacher 1 listed them in the following manner:

- to provide volunteer services for individuals and organizations;
- to provide students with work experience;
- to encourage volunteer activities.

Similarly, Teacher 2 listed the following goals:

- to promote community values;
- to increase student awareness of community needs;
- to help develop a positive self image.

Although neither teacher identified the specific goal of developing responsible citizenship, both were able to convey similar ideas and values within their goals, which proved that teachers have a solid understanding of the goals that inspired the policy.

The Information that students are given before completing their community service

The results on the fourth question on the teacher questionnaire proved to be problematic. Teacher 2 did not know whether or not students received any assistance before completing the 40-hour community service requirement. If the teachers are not aware of the assistance, the quality and effectiveness of the assistance begins to be questioned. Teacher 1 identified that, "T.A.P. in grade 9 / 10 to explain it. After that, they are on their own." Therefore, it can be stated with little certainty that students receive assistance in their grade nine and 10 year. The principal questionnaire will be used to gain an understanding of the assistance that students are given before completing the required hours. However, these findings support the need for teacher education about the requirement.

A pre-screened list of organizations

Once again, there is a divide between only two teachers within the school. Teacher 2 identifies that there is a list of pre-screened organizations that students can work with, while Teacher 1 insists that there is not. As a result, there are no conclusive results as to whether or not students have the ability to consult with a list of pre-screened organizations.

Are students given any assistance in finding their placement?

One of the main concerns from students and parents was more school assistance in finding places to volunteer. When asked if the school provided students with assistance in selecting their volunteer activities Teacher 2 stated that, "I don't know" and Teacher 1 stated that the school does provide assistance. She explained that, "People and organizations ask for assistance and this information is directed to students in the school" (Teacher 1). It would appear that unless the community contacts the school and requests volunteers, the school does not actively seek out volunteer activities for its students. It should be noted that again, one teacher was unaware of the answer to a question pertaining directly to the community service requirement, reinforcing the idea that teacher education about the policy within the school needs to be addressed.

Are there any reflection practices for students?

Teacher 1 indicated that no reflection practices were in place, whereas Teacher 2 indicated that she did not know. It would appear that any reflection performed by the students is done on an individual basis with no teacher direction or assistance. It has been suggested in the literature that with critical reflection the experience becomes richer and more valuable to the student.

Are you in favour of the Community Service Requirement?

Both teachers supported the policy. Teacher 1 explained that, "Students applying to higher education often need an edge. This volunteer service can provide some of this. University / college applications often ask this type of information." Teacher 2 supported the policy and simply stated, "I agree with the goals, they are very worthwhile." It appears that the two teachers support the policy and the benefits it provides to students.

What role does administration play?

The teachers identified that administration has a very little role with regard to the community service requirement. Teacher 1 explains that, "they are responsible for collecting and recording data from students." Ultimately, the administration's only duty is to make sure that the students have completed the requirement. There is no obligation on behalf of the teachers to discuss, assist or help the students critically reflect upon their experiences. As it stands, the policy requires the student to seek out and select their own volunteer activities and report back to the administration that they have completed their hours. Neither teacher identified a protocol for a safety concern or any other problems that may arise. Overall, the administration's role as described by the teachers used in this study is very minimal.

Do you feel that students are able to use knowledge they have gained from school in a 'real world' setting?

The two teachers agreed that students are able to transfer knowledge they have gained in the classroom to a real world setting as a result of their volunteering. Teacher 2 describes that, "They may apply some of the skills learned; may see the relevance of subjects taught; be on time even! Show up daily . . .." Even though no specific examples were offered, this workplace level teacher believes that her students are able to use the knowledge from the classroom. These ideas are supported by the literature, which suggests that students learn good work place habits such as punctuality, regularity and dependability. Furthermore, students have been shown to understand and appreciate particular subjects after working within the community and identifying the subject's relevance. Overall, this teacher has supported the ideas identified in the literature.

Teacher 1 discusses an issue already identified in this chapter. She states, "Yes, if the type of volunteer activity and classroom activities complement each other e.g. 4U Physical Education – the bioscientific perspective and volunteering with a sports organization, but if there is little relation between the two activities there is little crossover" (Teacher 1). This issue was identified earlier in this chapter and remains a concern of teachers. If the students do not select volunteer activities that will allow them to use the knowledge they have gained inside the classroom then their experience will have a significantly lower impact on the students' lives.

Have you identified a better relationship between the school and the community?

Neither teacher could offer any support that a better relationship has been created as a result of the community service requirement. The two teachers indicated "no" (Teacher 1) and "I don't know" (Teacher 2) respectively. This contradicts what the students and parents thought about a better relationship being established.

Are there any academic improvements?

Similar to the preceding question, neither teacher identified any academic benefit from mandating students to complete 40-hours of community service. Teacher 2 even stated that, "I teach mainly essential / workplace courses – all I hear are complaints." One of the largest benefits to mandated community service programs in the United States is the academic benefit that the students receive.

Do you believe that the community has benefited?

The teachers agree with the parents and the students that the community as a whole, has benefited from the student volunteers. Although one teacher clarified her

agreement with, "in some cases" (Teacher 1), an overall feeling that the community has benefited is unanimous among the teachers.

Suggestions and other comments

Each of the teachers had a suggestion or comment that will be addressed. Teacher 1 had a suggestion for those students who are willing to go beyond the requirement. She suggested to, "allow the students to increase the hours to 120 and use it as a credit similar to co-op" (Teacher 1). This is an interesting suggestion that would allow students to separate themselves from other students who have 40 hours of community service. This could prove valuable when applying for employment or acceptance into university or college. Concerns with such a change in the policy would be the validity of the tracking system would become even more essential. If an academic credit is to be awarded, then a critical reflection element that has been proven to increase students' academic benefit from the experience should be incorporated. That being said, this suggestion will be considered further in the subsequent chapters after all the findings have been examined.

Teacher 2 made an interesting comment with regard to the essential student population. She states that, "Several of my students see community service as a punishment – they have experienced it already, thanks to the court system" (Teacher 2).

This section has examined the teachers' views, concerns and ideas about the community service requirement. These views will be considered when developing a comprehensive view of the policy and suggesting possible changes or alterations that could make the policy more effective.

The Principal

The principal at the school that was selected for this study is a male that has worked at the high school level in Ontario for 15 years. He was very supportive of this investigation into the community service requirement and offered any assistance that was required in order to gain a comprehensive view of the policy at his school. Since only one principal was used in this study, there is no ability to make generalizations about principals in Ontario. However, the information collected from his open-ended survey is essential to gain a comprehensive view of the community service requirement within the sample.

Goal of the program

He identified the goal of the program was "to create a community based secondary school." To create a relationship between the school and the surrounding community by having the students volunteer and support many of the community services. To create a body of students that is aware of the services that are provided within their communities and their sustained need for volunteers in order to maintain their services and the positive impact they have on the community.

Administration

The principal was able to explain the administrative aspect of the policy to generate an understanding of that side of this policy. He identified the main personnel that work with the community service requirement are "guidance (student services) [and the] secretary." The guidance office handles any community requests for volunteers and posts them on a notification board that is accessible to all students. The secretary is responsible for tracking all the hours. The principal identified that,

> tracking the hours is an issue. We encourage the students to only
> submit their hours once all 40 hours have been completed. As a
> result, secretarial time can be used more efficiently. However,
> that being said and kids being kids every spring we must remind
> grade 12 students to complete their hours to graduate with a letter
> home

Furthermore, when asked what the largest problem with the community service requirement was from an administrative perspective, he stated that, "those that do not treat the task appropriately will lie to indicate that they have completed the 40 hours." This problem was raised in the parents' views as well. It appears that the tracking of the hours should be evaluated and changed in order to make it a more valid process. Presently, in order to track the hours, "All students are given a "Passport" to track the hours, places of service, signatures. Each summer (August) we have a grade nine orientation day and discuss community service and take any questions at that time." He added that, "We certainly make the grade nine students aware and inform the student body about [the importance/benefits of volunteering] at the beginning of each school year. However, it is not a "sustained message" throughout the year." This orientation is the only formal discussion of the community service requirement before the students enter high school. There is an informal reminder at the beginning of each school year at an entire student body assembly, but nothing more. Another issue with that has arisen is the problem of students losing their Passport over their four years at high school and having to identify their hours on a separate sheet of paper. Overall, little is done to make the students aware of anything beyond the requirements of the policy. There is little effort to disclose the benefits of volunteering and its ability to provide advantages and forward momentum in students' lives.

Assistance provided by the school

Once the students are in high school and part of the community service requirement policy, the assistance and education they receive about volunteering and volunteer options throughout the community is minimal. The principal noted that, "We post opportunities outside student services as they become available." However, a major concern of parents and students was finding a volunteer activity and requesting more assistance from the school in doing so. As a result, either there are not enough options being provided through these means at the school, or the students are not educated about the information that is accessible to them.

How the school implements the policy

It would appear that a major problem with the community service requirement is that it's no one's first priority. To seek out volunteer opportunities for students would demand time away from lesson plans, marking and other administrative duties. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education provided high schools with little information about the policy and how it should be organized. The principal identified that he received notice that, "community service can begin the summer prior to entering grade 9" and that "we received some examples of what counts and what doesn't count towards community service." As a result, there is a large degree of freedom within each high school as to the manner in which this policy can be organized.

Moreover, since high schools received no additional funding as a result of this policy, few individuals appear to have devoted a considerable amount of their time on account of other responsibilities they are required to perform. An example of this can be identified with a lack of pre-screened organizations with which students can work. The

literature identified that by pre-screening organizations the school can create an overwhelming feeling of safety for the students and parents involved within the policy. However, the principal stated that there is no such list at the high school, and developing such a list would require time and money, two things that were not given to each high school when the policy was introduced. Fortunately, the principal also noted that there has never been a safety issue with students entering the community since the policy was implemented.

Another example of a lack of time and money was exemplified when the principal stated that there are no practices in place that require the students to critically reflect upon their experiences. The literature has proven that this exercise is the most profound method of enriching students' volunteer experiences. However, the time requirement for such an exercise becomes problematic. The questions of which teachers and in which classes would this reflection occur becomes essential and complex. Teachers have their own curriculum guidelines to follow. Furthermore, it may be difficult to select particular classes in such a way to provide each student with an ability to critically reflect upon their experiences. Overall, time, money and labour becomes problematic in providing the administrative role that has been proven in the literature to be most effective.

The principal supports the policy and believes that "This is a step in the right direction." He identified that, "One of the boards' goals is to promote good citizenship" and that the community service requirement will seek to accomplish that goal.

Academic benefit to students

The literature suggests that there are academic benefits to engaging students into the community. One such benefit to students is the ability to apply knowledge that they

have gained in the classroom in a real world setting. The principal believes that this does not occur within the current policy in Ontario. He argues that, "Most kids want to 'get the hours in'." This reinforces the fact that students are selecting volunteer activities on convenience without trying to select activities related to their studies. They just want to get the requirement done as quickly and as easily as possible, they do not want to have to think and apply skills they have learned in school.

When asked whether he thought the students have received any academic benefit as a direct result of the community service requirement, the principal make a very important statement. He indicated that it's "very hard to track this as the curriculum changed significantly when the 40 hour program was introduced." This is a very significant point.

Impact on the Community

The idea that the community has benefited from this policy is a common theme throughout this study. The principal had a negative experience with the policy that needs to be examined. When asked if the principal thought the community had benefited from student volunteers, he responded that, "I only hear or become aware when the community is frustrated." He continues that, "The community gets frustrated when opportunities are posted and no kids show up." Without providing examples, the principal made it clear that there have been problems with student volunteers within the community. However, this does not prove that the students have not made a positive effect on the community as a whole. It does indicate that there are, and will be individual situations that need to be addressed. If these situations are not common and recurring events, then the policy as a whole can still be deemed a success. Every policy within a school board dealing with the

students in social situations will have minor setbacks. As along as these setbacks are

dealt with in an appropriate fashion, the policy will remain effective.

The principal concludes his open-ended questionnaire with two suggestions for

the community service requirement. He writes,

> I think the town of X should have a coordinator to oversee
> this process. All requests for community service should be
> directed to this person. All students must fulfill their obligations
> by coordinating service through this person. If the process is
> coordinated in this fashion, the volunteer hours can be utilized
> hence reflected upon more effectively. Currently, the school has
> no manpower to coordinate the activities in this manner.

The principal is reinforcing the ideas stated earlier in this section that the lack of efficient

administration with regard to this policy stems from the lack of time and money available

to each individual school. The principal's final comments on the open-ended

questionnaire were that,

> The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSCT) is tracked
> at the Provincial Level in terms of who was successful and who
> was not. I think if the tracking of the 40 hours of community
> service was also posted to the Provincial Level along with clear
> cut off dates to complete your 40 hours, the process would be
> treated with more concern from the public.

The principal's views on the community service requirement are very important.

He is at the centre of the administrative aspect of the policy. He is in charge of how the

policy is organized and who is involved. He decides the degree of emphasis that should

be put on the policy throughout students' lives at his school. Being in charge of the

policy, his knowledge about problems that arise or his ability to make suggestions about

the future of the policy are unmatched. The principal's view has added an important

aspect to this study.

The Community

The final aspect of the community service requirement that needs to be explored

is the thoughts and opinions of those organizations where student volunteers have chosen

to work. Many organizations were selected to use in the study. However, due to

limitations of time or availability, not every organization approached could complete an

open-ended questionnaire. In total, five organizations agreed and completed an open-

ended questionnaire. The five organizations include a sports organization, a charity

organization, a retirement home, a public museum, and a public library. This section will

explore their responses in order to gain an appreciation for the community's lived

experiences through the high school's community service requirement. Since only 5

organizations were able to complete the open-ended survey, there can be no

generalizations made about all community organizations throughout the province.

However, the information collected in the five open-ended surveys is necessary in order

to gain a better understanding of all lived experiences with the community service

requirement within the research site.

Are you in favour of the community service requirement?

Figure 3 illustrates that a majority of the community organizations studies support

the community service requirement. This section will explore the particular

organization that did not support the policy and attempt to understand the reasons behind

their statement. It is be important to identify these reasons in order to understand these

negative experiences or isolate them as individual incidents that will not be repeated.

Overall, there is a general support of the program by the community, the principal, the

Figure 3

Community's Approval of the Community Service Requirement

Are You in Favour of the Requirement?
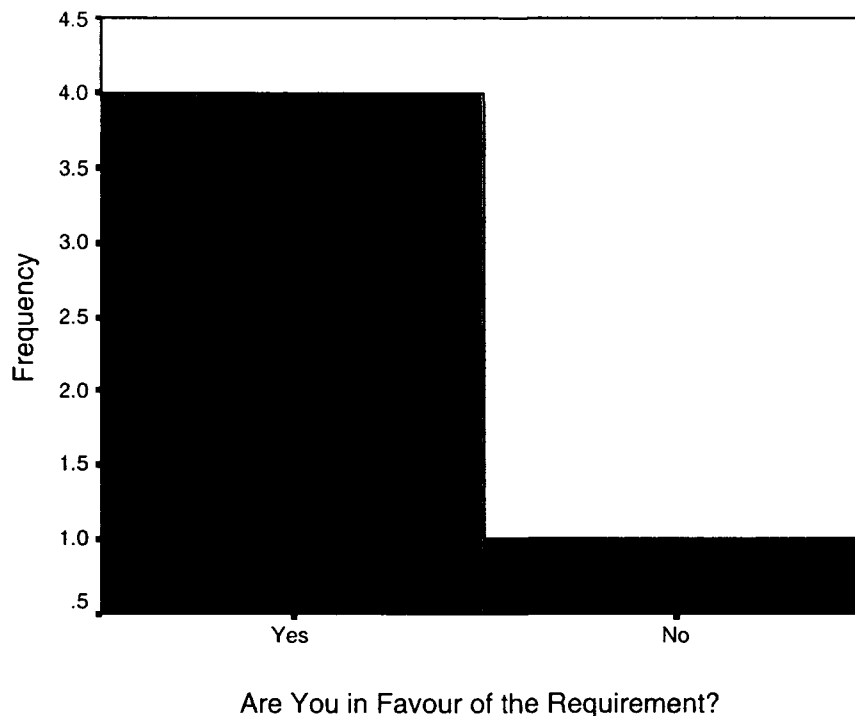
teachers and the parents. The students are evenly divided among the sample population

as to their support of the policy.

Have you taken any steps to encourage students to volunteer with you?

As identified in the previous section of this chapter, the administration of the

school makes no effort to contact community organizations, nor to advertise their student

volunteers. As a result, unless the community organizations contact the school, it will be

left up to the students to seek out their organization with which to volunteer. Out of the

five organizations examined, 4 of them identified having taken steps to encourage student

volunteers. The organizations identified many strategies from a very simplistic approach

of placing "Posters and announcements at school" (Organization 1). Another

organization identified that, "We have placed posters, brochures in the high school in our

community. We have integration programs with public school kids to encourage them to

volunteer once reaching high school" (Organization 3). This is a very intriguing program

that focuses on educating the students before high school. This is a suggestion that could

be incorporated into the entire community service program (i.e. an extension of the

August orientation for grade nine students identified by the principal). Community (4)

identified four steps that they have taken in order to encourage student volunteers:

a. took part in the [X] portion of a Volunteer Fair (I believe sponsored by the

   AMDSB) a couple of years ago;

b. word of mouth – are sometimes approached by parents;

c. to suggest the Museum as a volunteer possibility during high school class

   visits;

d. to have formally contacted the guidance office.

It is interesting to note that students most identified problem was finding a place to

volunteer when it appears many community organizations have taken steps to encourage

student volunteers. It would appear that in the sample community, the community

organizations have taken a proactive role in developing a line of communication and

information access between themselves and the high school. This is evidence of how

important volunteers are to some community organizations and the lengths they will go in

order to secure volunteers.

Do student volunteers allow you to provide better services?

One of the benefits to the community as identified in the literature review was that student volunteers allow their organizations to provide better services to their patrons. In this study, three out of the five organizations identified such benefits. Organization 1 identified that they were able to "serve more people efficiently." Another identified that, "We are a not for profit organization. Their help enables us to provide more for our community" (Organization 2). Finally, "The Museum is heavily dependent on volunteers from many different sectors and in many different areas. We could not operate effectively without volunteers from the community and student volunteers are another worthwhile source for us" (Organization 4). As a result, these organizations have identified that not only are they able to provide better services with student volunteers, they require them to operate more efficiently. However, one organization describes that, "I feel the students don't give better service but enable us the time to slow down and give each resident special time for them." Consequently, although this organization indicated that students do not allow them to provide better services, the students were also not a hindrance on the effectiveness of their organization.

Do you feel that the community as a whole has benefited?

All but one organization believed that the community has benefited from the influx of student volunteers. One organization stated simply that, "Volunteers are hard to find" (Organization 1), indicating that by providing a community with more volunteers, the effect is bound to be positive. Organization 2 stated that, "not only more services, as we are non-profit, but I feel students become more aware of the need to help less fortunate people. Also, they will become more involved with our community." This

statement is correct for the time that the students are in high school. However, there are

mixed findings as to whether a mandated community service program will encourage

students to engage in community service throughout their lives. A final positive

statement is laced with the realistic idea that no one person can answer this question.

However, by gaining a perspective from each party involved this study will make an

informed opinion as to the effect that the community service requirement has had on the

community as a whole. Organization 4 states that,

> I really can't say that I can always identify student volunteers
> at work in this community but when I see them in action, the
> results seem positive. If nothing else, if the experience gives
> at least some of the students an idea of why volunteering is
> important and this will have a long-term positive results for
> communities.

In opposition to this philosophy, organization 5 states that,

> I don't think the students are doing it for the right reason.
> They do a certain number of hours, then go to another
> volunteer job. I feel it would be better for students to
> volunteer where they really want to be, not where they can
> get the hours necessary to complete the 40 hours required.

This idea has been discussed earlier in this chapter. There is a benefit when students

select a volunteer activity that interests them and has advantages to them. Conversely,

when students select activities that do not interest them and are selected because of

convenience, then the students' efforts and diligence are questioned. Fortunately, this

problem appears to be in the minority of lived experiences of community organizations.

As a result, although this issue will be addressed in the subsequent chapter, the overall

impression of student volunteers within the community is positive.

Did the high school contact you?

All five community organizations that were used in this study agreed that the high school did not contact them and offer any information regarding the requirement of volunteer hours. These responses support the finding in the principal section that stated the high school does not contact any community organization about student volunteers. Having the high school contact community organizations opens a communication avenue that can be used in order to fill volunteer positions and address any problems that may arise with student volunteers. It may be better to begin communication before a problem exists that demands the communication.

Is there any communication between you and the high school?

Only two of the five organizations indicated any line of communication at all. One organization explained that, "We have signs up at the counsellors' office and they know we are always looking" (Organization 1). The only other organization to identify any communication stated, "only when we initiate it. However, if the high school is not aware of the museum as a possible place for volunteer service, that may be our fault for not promoting it more" (Organization 4). This quote exemplifies the situation. Unless a community organization initiates the communication with the high school, it will never be developed. For example, the final three made no attempt to contact the high school and indicated there is no communication between them.

Have student volunteers allowed you to take on new projects?

The literature suggests that with student volunteers entering the community, organizations will be able to take on new projects and expand their services. However, only one organization in this study was able to take on new projects. Organization 1

explained that they were able to have "50/50 draws at the Skydome" and "more bbq's outside." Two of the organizations indicated that although they weren't able to take on new projects, they were able to provide better service. Organization 2 explained, "Not really new projects, but student volunteers have allowed us to continue and provide better services for our community." Similarly, Organization 4 wrote, "probably not. But student volunteers have made it possible to expand and enhance several projects that would have taken place anyway." As a result, these two organizations were not able to take on new projects, but felt a positive impact from the volunteers nonetheless. Of the two organizations that indicated that they were not able to take on new projects, only one rationalized their response. Organization 5 described, "I spend too much time teaching the student to shelf read, and shelf books then checking their work. I am lucky to get my work done let alone work on new projects." It is interesting that this negative experience has more to do with the extra time it requires to handle any volunteers and not specific negative experiences with student volunteers. This particular problem may be due to the free acceptance of volunteers when there was a required knowledge base in order to justify the help. As a result, the community has an equal share in determining the success of student volunteers. Community organizations must realize when student volunteers are not qualified and refuse the help if it will become detrimental to the organization as a whole.

The benefits that student volunteers brought to the community

Only two of the five organizations used in this study identified the specific benefits that student volunteers had brought. Organization 4 stated that, "Students bring energy, enthusiasm and a fresh point of view. It is important for the Museum to try to be

in touch with all segments of the community and youth is an important voice within that community." This statement is offered from an organization that supports the community service requirement. Conversely, an organization that does not support the community service requirement offered that, "The Library does look neater. I ask them to dust, clean glass doors and sweep veranda and front walk" (Organization 5). As a result, even those community organizations that have had negative attitudes towards the requirement are able to identify benefits from the extra help.

The detriments that student volunteers brought to the community

All participants in this section of the study chose to answer this question. One organization simply wrote that, "We have not had any problems with student volunteers. They have been willing to help and follow instructions" (Organization 2). However, other organizations identified detriments. Two of them indicated that the extra time it takes to deal with the student volunteers detracts from their ability to provide effective service. One organization wrote that, "The only problem we find is that it takes three to four hours to properly train someone with regards to fire procedures, safety etc. that after we have completed training they only have five to six hours left and then they are gone" (Organization 3). The other wrote that, "The [X] Museum has only one full-time staff member, complimented by a series of volunteers and contract workers such as summer student employees. Sometimes high school volunteer projects require a bit of extra work to set up and to oversee and sometimes it is difficult to do this fully" (Organization 4). Consequently, some of the community organizations feel that they have to put in more time to train and oversee the student volunteers than they are getting back in services. The other participants in this study identified inappropriate student behaviour, tardiness

and their insistence on performing specific duties of their choice as opposed those selected by the employees. These detriments appear to be student specific and not reoccurring throughout all student volunteer experiences. However, these experiences should be reported to the high school and the proper action should be taken. This is further evidence that a communication network needs to be developed between the community and the high school.

Additional thoughts, ideas or suggestions

Three of the five open-ended questionnaires added thoughts about the community service requirement. Organization 1 stated that, "I think it's a great idea to do these hours it teaches students responsibilities." A more detailed comment said,

> The [X] Museum is not overwhelmed with requests to from students wanting to use it for their volunteer hours. And to be honest, we have not been very aggressive about recruiting them. We have used student volunteers selectively, waiting until they approach the Museum or recruiting them for specific projects or events. A few have earned all 40 hours with us. Others work for a few hours for some activity, such as children's programming. We use these short-term volunteers probably about half a dozen times a year.

This statement reinforces the idea that unless a student selects a specific organization or the organization itself recruits students, there will be no means for a student to become aware of that community service opportunity. The final comment is an expression of negative feelings toward the community service requirement. The organization explains that,

> I honestly can't see the benefit of community service hours.
> All students who graduate have to have 40 hours. On an
> application for college or university will it make a difference?
> If a student is a true volunteer that will be noticed. They would
> have spent quality time doing what they truly enjoy instead of

just putting in time because it is mandated (Organization 5).

There are two ideas addressed in this statement. Primarily, the ability for employees and post-secondary institutions' ability to separate those students who enjoy volunteering and will continue in the future from those students who just completed the mandated hours required of them to graduate high school. People's ability to separate these two groups of students has been sabotaged. The second idea recognized in this statement is the process by which students select their volunteer activities. It has been discussed in this chapter that a student can obtain significant benefits both academically and socially from selecting volunteer activities that they either enjoy, or will be useful to them in the future. This is further evidence that students need more education about the value of community service.

This section reviewed the final view of the community service requirement necessary to gain a comprehensive view of the policy. The opinion of the community allows for an insight into the impact that student volunteer can have on a community. Furthermore, the lived experiences of the community with this requirement introduced themes not discussed or identified by the other parties. Finally, their experiences and the comparisons thereof will improve the validity and understanding of the issue at hand.

Chapter Five

Summary of the Findings and Recommendations for the Future

This Chapter will summarize the findings, compare the views and lived experiences from the students, teachers, parents, community organizations and the principal with the policy. Subsequently, based on these results, make suggestions in order to improve the effectiveness of the policy in the future.

Summary of the Findings

The Support of the Policy

There is support to continue the community service requirement. Four of the five community organizations, the principal, both teachers, 20 of 26 parents and 50 % of the students indicated that they supported the mandated community service.

This evidence supports the idea that high schools in Ontario should continue to mandate 40 hours of community service in order to graduate. However, it should not be assumed that the policy is without flaws. This chapter will identify many improvements that can be made in order to increase the effectiveness of the policy and further increase the support by alleviating any issues or concerns.

Many students did not identify an element of the policy they enjoyed the least. This suggests that most students' had a very enjoyable experience or didn't care to identify any negative experience they had. Many students did not support the least enjoyable experiences indicated by a small percentage of students. This indicates that the least enjoyable experiences were isolated situations and the chances of repetition are rare.

Students' Future Intentions to Volunteer

Volunteer experiences can offer students incredible experiences that they will remember for the rest of their lives. Furthermore, the literature suggests that if the students enjoyed their experiences in high school with regards to volunteering, there will be a higher degree of success that they will volunteer in the future. However, there is also evidence in the literature that suggests students resent the fact that they were forced to volunteer in high school and therefore is a better chance that they will not volunteer in the future. As a result, the fact that these students are being forced needs to be addressed and clarified to each student before they begin high school.

The results from the student questionnaires indicate that a majority of the students involved in this study want to continue to volunteer in the future. Only 23 of the 48 students had previous volunteer experience. However, 31 of the 48 students indicated that they would volunteer in the future. This means that 65% of the sample students graduating high school intend to volunteer after graduation.

These results suggest the evidence in the literature that mandated community service programs adversely affected students' desire to volunteer after completion of such a program is inconsistent with other studies. This is further evidence that the policy should be continued.

Students' Ability to Complete the Policy

Forty hours of community service appears to be easily obtainable over a four-year period. Forty four of the forty eight students used in this study had completed their hours by May, the time of the study. The principal also noted that no student had been withheld

their diploma on account of an incomplete community service requirement at this school. He is also unaware of any incidents in Ontario of a diploma being withheld.

There were a small percentage of students that stated four years was inadequate time to complete the requirement. Seven students identified time consumption as their least enjoyable aspect of the community service requirement. This argument is supported by the literature, which identified a high school in Maryland, which abandoned their entire community service policy because it was believed that it was competing with academics.

However, most of the data suggests that the policy should continue to require each student to complete 40 hours of community service. There are no data to suggest that this policy is too difficult for a majority of students. There are suggestions that will be discussed later in this chapter that could make selecting or finding volunteer activities more accessible to students, but nothing to minimize or eliminate the requirement.

The Knowledge About the Goals of the Program

Most of the lived experiences that were explored in this study revealed that many of the people involved within this policy are aware, to some degree, of the goals of the community service requirement. Only ten of the 48 students could not recognize a single goal of the policy. Both the principal and the two teachers involved in this study were able to identify at least one of the goals of the policy and only one of the parents was not able to state a goal of the requirement. As a result, there appears to be an adequate knowledge base about the goals set out by the provincial government. People understand the goals of the program and in turn, support the initiative.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms

By 2004, there have been no cases brought to court concerning the mandated community service requirement in Ontario high schools. The defence being that no one is required to graduate high school, and if one chooses to do so, they are subsequently agreeing to the terms of that agreement. That being said, 25% of the students studied indicated that this policy violates their rights guaranteed to them by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Assistance Students Receive from the High School

It has been identified in the previous chapter that students receive minimal assistance with regards to their community service involvement. Fifteen of the forty-eight students indicated that they received some sort of assistance. However, six of these students received their assistance outside the school from their parents or their respective churches. Several parties within this study supported the fact that the guidance office was the only place where a student could receive assistance in selecting a volunteer activity. Even there, it was only when a community organization contacted the school and requested volunteers that the guidance office would post a notice of request. This minimal assistance appears to be a common issue raised by students and parents. The second most popular suggestion from both groups was the introduction of additional school assistance.

However, the school does provide assistance. There are announcements made and postings in front of the guidance office with regard to volunteer opportunities. However, these efforts are a direct result of the communities' effort to locate volunteers.

It would appear that not much of a personal effort is being put forth on behalf of the school and its decision is to allow its students to find their own volunteer activities.

The major problem with the school providing more school assistance is the need for additional funding. At the implementation of this policy, Ontario high schools received little information about the implementation process and no funding to support such an endeavour. As a result, the high school provides little assistance to students because it is using all available labour as efficiently as possible, tracking and ensuring each student completes the required hours. This lack of funding allows for no opportunity for high schools to provide pre-screened organizations that are safe for students to work with or activities that will allow them to critically reflect upon their experiences and create a more valuable experience.

Administration should also have a larger role in dealing with students' problems as they enter the community. Students need an avenue to seek help and assistance as they encounter problems completing their community service hours. Administrators also need to stop being so passive and engage themselves in this policy and increase its effectiveness.

Employment Opportunities

Although the academic benefits appear to be minimal, the volunteer hours that students have logged may be valuable to them in the future. While only twelve students discovered a new career as a result of their volunteer activity, 32 believe that it will help them gain employment in the future.

Career related experience is invaluable in obtaining employment whether or not it is gained through volunteering. Granted that this applies to only those 33% of the

students who did not recognize the importance of volunteering, but this portion of Ontario's high school population is a concern.

Allowing a student to discover what he or she wants to be first hand is a very rewarding experience for the student that will pay off in a lifetime of satisfaction. There needs to be more education about choices in order to allow these students to select a career path that will excite and challenge them.

Helping students gain employment in the future is a significant accomplishment for this policy. This point is supported by the literature where students indicated their community service involvement as the number one reason they gained employment after graduation. Allowing students the opportunity to succeed in life is not only a goal of the program but of the public school system. As a result, this evidence supports the continuation of the community service requirement.

The Relationship Between the High School and the Community

The literature review in preparation for this study revealed that a better relationship could be established between the community and the school offering the community service program. The data from this study do not support this finding. Only 22 of the 48 students believe that a better relationship between the community and the high school has been established. The two teachers and the principal who offered their thoughts did not believe that a better relationship was achieved. The results are similar when the students were asked if there was a better relationship between themselves and the community.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 showed that community organizations begin to give the students more respect and trust as they appreciate what they have done

throughout the community. However, many of these studies have been done in schools where the volunteer hours are in conjunction with a particular class and thus, ultimately still optional. The students in Ontario are being forced to volunteer.

Benefits to the Community

Although there is little evidence to support that a better relationship between the high school and the community has been established as a direct result of the community service initiative, there is overwhelming data that the community has benefited from the influx of student volunteers. Over 80% of the students agreed that the community has directly benefited from their volunteer activities throughout the community. Both teachers and four of the five community organizations used in this study believe that the community has benefited from the student volunteers. Moreover, three of the five also believe that they are now able to provide better services.

The literature suggests that not only are volunteers necessary in order to run many organizations, but it allows better and new services to be provided throughout the community. The evidence from this study indicated direct benefits from the student volunteers who are now mandated to complete 40 hours throughout high school. The extra volunteers throughout the community have had a positive impact on the services being provided. Thus, there is further support that the requirement be continued into the future.

Make the Requirement Optional

A common suggestion from the parents and the students is to make the requirement optional. A study identified in the literature that states the participation rate of volunteers is actually greater when the students have an option.

If the idea of making the community service requirement optional became a reality, then an extrinsic reward must be put into place. If the policy is abandoned without the added incentive for students to choose to complete the policy, then the education reform that occurred in 1998 will become obsolete. One suggestion by a teacher could be used in this context. The teacher suggested that if students complete more than 40 hours of community service, they should earn an academic credit. Similarly, if the requirement becomes optional, students could receive an academic credit in return for 40 hours of community service. This proposition would make the requirement optional but hopefully entice a large percentage of the students to complete the 40 hours.

Recommendations for the Future

Male / Female Support of the Policy

This study has found further data that females are more willing to support a community service program. Not only were the females in this study more willing to support the policy itself, but they were more willing to volunteer in the future as well.

This support of the literature suggests that a greater effort must be put forth to show males the benefits of this policy and the benefits of volunteering in general. This could be accomplished through more education for the entire student body. The male students do not have to be singled out and or coerced into supporting the policy. A more comprehensive and sustained effort throughout each school year to educate the students might dramatically increase the support from the male students.

Completed Hours During Class Time

One problem that was identified in this study was the presence of students completing volunteer hours during school time. This was identified in the literature as a problem that decreased the effectiveness of community service programs. The completion of hours during school hours is prohibited in Ontario. However, 9 of the 48 students completed at least a portion of their 40 hours during school time.

This evidence indicates that clear guidelines need to be in place that indicate to each staff member throughout the school that volunteer hours cannot be completed during school hours. If volunteer hours have been completed during this time, then a school staff member must have been aware. This suggests that staff members ignore the guidelines of the policy. Consequently, each school must enforce the guidelines set out by the government in order to ensure that each student is able to maximize their experience with volunteerism. Part of the requirement is directing the students into the community and allowing them to explore and discover volunteer opportunities. By allowing the students to complete the requirement during school time, the students are being deprived of this experience. As a result, each school must ensure that no student is able to complete hours during any school day. This will increase the overall effectiveness of the policy and allow each student to benefit from the policy.

Pre-screened Organizations

The fact is that there is not a list of pre-screened organizations with which students know are safe to volunteer. However, the confusion among the parties involved whether there is or isn't a list in this study is significant. Over two thirds of the students in this study stated there were unaware of a list of organizations. Only one of the two

teachers believed there was such a list. Only the principal could state with certainty that no such list was in existence.

There appears to be a significant flaw in the knowledge about the policy throughout the school. There needs to be greater care taken with regards to this policy. Students and teachers need to be informed about the assistance that is being offered to the students, and similarly those services that are not being provided to the students.

Critical Reflection

A problem with the lack of funding that the schools received is the school's ability to walk students through critical reflection practices that allow them to significantly benefit from their experiences. The importance of critical reflection has been documented in the literature and discussed in chapter four.

This suggests that time needs to be made for students to critically reflect upon their experiences. A policy needs to be in place that offers students this opportunity. An introduction to such a policy could be a final comprehensive reflection after a majority of the students had finished their volunteer hours. A possible scenario would see one day a year dedicated to all graduating seniors. Throughout this day, there would be a series of group discussions about the value of volunteering and students sharing their lived experiences in order to allow every student the opportunity to benefit from other student's volunteer opportunities. Finally, after hearing the speakers on the value of volunteerism and other students speak about their volunteering, each student would be required to write a one or two page reflection detailing their volunteer activities, why there is a need for such a service, who benefited from their time and what they gained from their experience. This experience would force students to critically think about their

experience and allow them to understand and appreciate the need and value of volunteerism. This would possibly increase the number of students that would continue to volunteer in the future, as students would be able to see beyond the mandated requirement and understand the social demand and need for volunteers.

Academic Benefit

The literature suggests that there can be academic benefit to students involved with a community service program when the program is connected to the curriculum or the students are allowed to critically reflect upon their experiences. The reviewed literature showed that grade point averages and standardized test scores have increased as a direct result of community service. However, the main discrepancy between those programs and the one in place in Ontario is the connection to the curriculum. More often than not, high schools in the United States use service learning (a community service program connected to the curriculum) where students have the opportunity to critically reflect and understand the volunteer activity and the social issues behind it. As a result, students are using higher order thinking skills and dissecting their experience in order to understand social issues within their community. Therefore, it would appear that if Ontario wants the students to receive academic benefit from their volunteer activity then a connection to the curriculum must be established or an exercise that will allow each student to critically reflect upon their experiences. Without either of these two options, the students will not maximize their community involvement experience.

Neither of these options are used in Ontario. As a result, the academic benefit to students is difficult to determine. Moreover, the curriculum was significantly changed at the same time the community service policy was implemented, which makes the

evaluation of any academic benefit difficult to address. With significant changes to the curriculum occurring at the same time as the community service requirement was implemented it is hard to separate the changes in order to distinguish which has affected the students, if either has affected them at all.

The evidence supports the literature that without reflection or a connection to the curriculum, academic benefits are minimal. Furthermore, neither teacher used in this study thought that there were any academic benefits to the students as a result of this policy.

If Ontario wishes to capitalize on students' experiences in the community and allow them to benefit academically, then there are two options. The first option would be to adopt the reflection policy outlined previously or a more ambitious route that would allow students to reflect after each experience they have within the community. The second option would be to incorporate the community service into the classroom. This would allow students to apply the knowledge they have gained in the classroom in a real world setting, creating an atmosphere that would benefit students academically. Ultimately, there is a wonderful chance to increase students' academic experience as a result of the community service requirement. It will require additional work on behalf of the administration, but the benefit to the students would be more valuable than the cost of additional administrational costs.

Without some guidelines or guidance in selecting their volunteer activities, students will decide if the environment they select will be conducive to the transfer of the skills they have been taught in school. Programs in the United States that have identified

a high transfer of skills are those which have combined the community service programs with the curriculum, otherwise known as service learning.

Communication Between the High School and the Community

Presently, there is very little communication between the high school and the community in which the students are volunteering. Each organization contacted about the community service requirement agreed that the high school did not make any effort to contact the community about the implementation of this policy. As a result, any communication between the two is as of a direct result of community initiatives. Four of the five community organizations indicated they had taken steps to encourage student volunteers to work with their organization. This lack of communication is not the cause of, but could be the solution to the two issues that were raised through the open-ended community questionnaires. Primarily, two organizations noted that training time was an issue. They spend more time training the students than the students spend providing services. As a result, if there was communication between the school and the organization they could either: 1) select and accept only those students who need little or no training with regard to the service they are providing; or, 2) set up a training time located at the school in which many students could be trained during the same period of time. By training many students at once, these organizations could maximize the time when the students are volunteering at their operation. Furthermore, the students, not having to be trained on site, would spend more time providing services and benefiting from their experience. The second issue that could be addressed with a line of communication between the school and the community is students' inappropriate behaviour, a problem that was identified after the analysis of the community

questionnaires. Community organizations could inform the school of the problem and the students would be disciplined. Community organizations should not have to deal with discipline issues because the school is mandating community service.

A better communication network would also address another problem identified within this study. The lack of effective monitoring has become an issue. Many examples of students not completing their hours or extending their hours in their "Passports" were identified in this study. With a communication network established, the verification of questionable volunteer activities could be addressed quickly and efficiently. Furthermore, community organizations could be made aware of procedures in place to ensure that students are not taking advantage of their experience. Organizations could be informed that, if the student was not dedicated to their work and offered minimal effort, than they are not obligated to sign and give the student credit for their experience. Consequently, establishing a communication network between the school and the community would be a proactive solution to students' inappropriate behaviour and more effective monitoring.

The final benefit to establishing a communication network could be an alternative means to allow students the opportunity to critically reflect upon their experiences. If, when after the students completed their volunteer hours with a particular organization, they could offer the student an open-ended response sheet that would give the student the opportunity to critically reflect upon their experiences. It would explore the service, the need for the service, who benefited from their experience, what the student was able to gain from his or her experience and offer possible improvements. The benefit to this approach is that the student's experiences would be very fresh and may still be impacting

the student. The problem with such an approach would not be developing the response sheet and making copious copies, but distributing it to each and every targeted organization. The solution would be that if the organization did not provide the response sheet, the student is responsible for obtaining a sheet, completing it and returning the completed responses to the office before receiving credit for the hours.

There are many benefits that have been identified in establishing a line of communication between the high school and the community. If the school is to receive no additional funding for the improvement of the community service requirement then perhaps involving the community will allow the school to maximize this opportunity for students and prepare students to make a positive impact on their communities.

Loosing the Volunteers

The application process that determines employment or acceptance to college or university usually incorporates a review into the applicants' volunteer experience. However, the issue at hand is that all students graduating high school in Ontario will have a detailed list of volunteer experience. The issue raised by a community organization is the trouble that employers and post-secondary recruiters will have deciphering between genuine volunteers and those who have just completed the requirement in order to graduate high school. If these students have completed the community service hours, no one could say whether or not they benefited less than someone who would have volunteered without the requirement. This study has indicated that more people are willing to volunteer after being exposed to the experience through a mandated requirement in high school. As a result, these volunteers are not being lost; the pool of

valuable students who have volunteer experience has been increased. Recruiters should embrace this burden, which is ultimately a significant positive.

There is a second area that needs to be addressed: if the Ontario government accepted the suggestion to offer extrinsic rewards to those students who went beyond the requirement. Those students who completed double or triple the requirement could receive an additional academic credit or even something as simple as a statement on their diploma. Either way, this would separate those students from every other graduating student who had 40 hours of community service.

The Students Already Required to Volunteer

Teacher 2, an exclusively essential level teacher, raised an important point. She identified that most of her students had already been required to complete community service hours as a result of the judicial system and consequently had negative feelings about their experiences. The theme of criminal punishment raises an important stereotype that must be broken in order for students to understand the value of volunteering. If these students believe that they are doing work that is reserved for criminals than their mindset is not prepared to enter an experience that could benefit them in a number of areas of their lives inside and outside of high school.

The literature states that students entering a community service program with negative feelings will not experience the same benefits as other students. This issue needs to be addressed. Steps need to be taken to ensure that students have experienced community service as a result of the judicial system see the reasons and goals behind the requirement and appreciate the benefits that could develop as a result of productive volunteer activities.

Students should be able to use legally imposed community service requirements towards the fulfillment of their community service requirement. Presently, there are no restrictions or guidelines as to the manner in which, or why students select their activities. Consequently, as long as their community service was completed throughout their time at high school, it should be considered a valid fulfillment of the requirement. The policy intends to get students involved within the community and aware of social issues and services available to the community. In turn, the policy wishes to develop responsible citizens. There is no difference between the activities they complete as a result of an order from the judicial system and those chosen to complete the community service requirement. As a result, there is no reason any student who has had to complete community service hours for any other reason should not be allowed to use those hours in fulfillment of their requirement in high school. The experience doesn't change as a result of the purpose. If it did, perhaps no student should be forced to complete community service hours.

A Policy Coordinator

A suggestion introduced by the principal was to have a coordinator for the policy. His suggestion was at the municipal level, where all volunteer requests and student placements would be coordinated by the selected individual. This would take the burden off school administration that has other responsibilities. When the policy was introduced, no high school was given money or labour in order to deal with the extra administrative burden. Consequently, as this study has proven, there are many procedures that could be put into place that would increase the effectiveness of this policy. The ideas of pre-screened organizations, critical reflection activities, and creating a communication

network between the community and the school are ideas that could materialize if there was a paid position focusing on the effectiveness and success of the policy. Furthermore, the coordinator could organize a sustained effort throughout each school year to educate not only the students, but also the administration and parents about volunteerism and the policy itself. It became very apparent that there was a lack of comprehensive knowledge on behalf of the teachers about the policy and procedures in place. This effort would ensure that students were aware of volunteer opportunities and that everyone was aware of the administrative nuances of the policy. For example, this would eliminate any confusion on the presence of a pre-screened list of organizations, something that was discovered to be an issue with both teachers and students. Finally, with a coordinator in place, any troubles, issues or suggestions can be directed to a full-time employee who is dedicated to the success of the policy. All of the suggestions identified within this paper could be implemented more effectively with a policy coordinator in place.

The principal's opinion was not supported by any of the literature but offers a unique opportunity to pass some of the management of the policy onto the Provincial Government. This would allow each individual school to use that time on critical reflection activities, pre-screening organizations or other administrative duties that could increase the effectiveness of the policy. It must also be noted that there is no evidence that the public does not have concern for this policy. A significant majority of the parents and community organizations supported the policy. Overall, there are benefits to placing a degree of the administration of this policy onto the provincial government: it decreases the issue of not enough money and/or time on the part of individual schools.

The less that each school is required to perform with regard to this policy, the more that it can do.

Conclusion

Significant Discrepancies with the Literature

There were many findings in this study that were not supported by any previous research. Furthermore, there were findings from other studies that have not been identified in Ontario. The greatest discrepancy between the literature and the findings in Ontario concerns students' intentions to volunteer after being required to graduate high school. The literature suggests that students will have negative feelings and will choose not to volunteer after graduation. However, this study has shown that more students indicated they would volunteer after graduation than had previous volunteer experience.

Academic achievement as a direct result of community service involvement creates another discrepancy between the literature and this study. The literature suggests that students receive significant academic benefits from their experiences within the community. Unfortunately, this was not found in Ontario. There were very few academic benefits identified to any student involved within this study. The main cause for the lack of academic benefit can be attributed to the lack of connection to the curriculum, lack of critical reflection and the freedom students have in selecting their volunteer activities.

Future Research

The conclusions made in this study are important in determining the effectiveness of the policy and indicating the measures that need to be taken in order to increase that effectiveness. This study explored a comprehensive view of the community service

requirement from a small sized town in southern Ontario. In order to strengthen the research on Ontario's policy, more areas of the province need to be explored. This study has created a framework in which other areas of Ontario can be examined and in turn, a more detailed and accurate depiction of the community service requirement throughout the province will be established.

Once the government begins to increase the effectiveness of the policy, it will be important to monitor the changes and ensure that the changes that are being implemented as a result of this study and future research are creating the desired results. The need for more research can be justified by the benefits that have been identified in the literature but not in Ontario. The requirement is in place and with a few minor changes, the policy can transform into a more effective strategy that increases the academic and social benefits to students. The more research that is performed and that supports the results in this study, the more feasible it will be to rationalize the changes in the community service requirement.

The Final Word

This paper has shown that there is support for the community service policy. As it stands, the most dramatic impact of the policy was the positive effects on the community. However, this chapter has outlined several steps that could be taken in order to increase the value of the policy to students. There are academic and social benefits that are not being taken advantage of for the betterment of students. The government needs to implement changes to the policy in order to generate an academic benefit to all students. Overall, there needs to be more administrative involvement in this policy. It has been recommended in this Chapter that a coordinator for this policy be assigned.

This could be done at the provincial level or within each individual school. Although this commitment would increase costs, the positive impact and effectiveness of the policy would be increased. Without a greater commitment by the administration, the policy will remain with greater potential then is being realized. The Ontario government has taken a step in the right direction with the implementation of the community service requirement. With the few modifications suggested as a result of this study, students graduating from an Ontario high school would have academic and social advantages over any student graduating from outside the province. Hopefully, after the policy has reached maximum effectiveness, it can be implemented across Canada and generate an educational system that could be implemented internationally to produce generations of responsible citizens.

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Appendix A: Cover Letter to Students

Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement

Dear participant;

The study entitled "Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement" is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the forty hours of community service now required to graduate. In order to examine this issue we have developed an open-ended questionnaire. It consists of 28 questions that you are asked to answer. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, please do not hesitate to leave your answer incomplete. The information you provide will allow for a thorough evaluation of the community service requirement. All participants will have the opportunity to make recommendations concerning the program.

This study was designed by Steven Reid at Lakehead University's Faculty of Education under the supervision of Dr. Walter Epp. The study will be conducted in grade 12 classes throughout May 2004. The time required to complete the questionnaire should not exceed 40 minutes.

Your confidentiality throughout this study is guaranteed. Your name, the school you attend or any other identifying information will not be included on the questionnaire. If you agree to participate in this study, you must be informed that all data that is collected through these questionnaires will be held in storage at Lakehead University for seven (7) years. If at anytime you wish to view the results of your input into this study please contact Dr. Walter Epp, the research project supervisor.

Thank you for you cooperation.

Sincerely,

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Appendix B: Student Survey of the Community Service Requirement

Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement

Student Questionnaire:

1. Please chose the appropriate box:
    Male Ỉ Female Ỉ

2. How many years have you attended high school?
    One Ỉ   Two Ỉ   Three Ỉ   Four Ỉ   Five Ỉ   More than five Ỉ

3. Did you ever volunteer before being required in order to graduate high school?
    Yes Ỉ   No Ỉ

    If yes, please list your volunteer experience:

    _____

    _____

    _____

4. Do you intend to volunteer within the community after graduating high school?
    Yes Ỉ   No Ỉ

    Explain:

    _____

    _____

    _____

5. What role will the required community service play in your future intentions to volunteer?

    _____

    _____

    _____

6. Have you completed your 40 hours of community service required to graduate?
    Yes Ỉ   No Ỉ

7. Are you in favour of the required community service in order to graduate?
    Yes Ỉ   No Ỉ

8.   What is the goal of the required community service as developed by the Ministry of Education?

_____

_____

_____

9.   Please list your volunteer activities used to complete your 40 required hours

_____

_____

_____

10.   Did you complete any of your volunteer hours during regular school hours?
Yes   No

If yes, please indicate the specific volunteer activity(s):

_____

_____

11.   Do have any other option(s) to graduate if you chose not to complete 40 hours of community service?
Yes   No

If yes, please indicate your alternative choices:

_____

_____

_____

12.   Do you feel that completing 40 hours of community service violates any of your rights guaranteed to you by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom?
Yes   No

If yes, please indicate how:

_____

_____

_____

13. Were you given any assistance in selecting your volunteer activities?
Yes ⎸   No ⎸

If yes, please indicate the specific assistance that you received:

_____

_____

_____

14. Does your school provide a list of prescreened organizations that are safe for students to work with?
Yes ⎸   No ⎸   Not sure ⎸

15. Why did you select the volunteer activities that you did?

_____

_____

_____

16. After completing any of you volunteer activities, did you reflect upon your experience in or outside of class time?
Yes ⎸   No ⎸

If yes, provide a brief description of the reflection activity:

_____

_____

_____

17. Do you think reflection into your volunteer activities would allow you to gain more from your experiences?
Yes ⎸   No ⎸

If yes, please explain why:

_____

_____

_____

18. Do you feel that your volunteer experience in the community has allowed you to apply your skills that you have gained from school in a 'real world' setting?
Yes ⎸   No ⎸

19. Have your marks increased since you have been active in the community?
Yes Ì   No Ì

20. Have you experienced any academic benefit since volunteering in the community?
Yes Ì   No Ì

If yes, please indicate the specific benefit(s):

_____
_____
_____

21. Do you feel that your volunteer experience will help you gain employment in the future?
Yes Ì   No Ì

Explain:

_____
_____
_____

22. Has your volunteer experience given you knowledge about any career you didn't know about or considered before volunteering?
Yes Ì   No Ì

If yes, please indicate how and identify the specific career(s):

_____
_____
_____

23. Do you feel that having each student complete 40 hours of community service has created a better relationship between **your school** and the community?
Yes Ì   No Ì

Explain:

_____
_____
_____

24. Do you feel that having each student complete 40 hours of community service has created a better relationship between **you** and the community?

Yes Í   No Í

Explain:

_____

_____

_____

25. Do you believe that the community has benefited from student volunteers?

Yes Í   No Í

Explain:

_____

_____

_____

26. What did you enjoy the most about volunteering in the community?

_____

_____

_____

27. What did you enjoy the least about you volunteering in the community?

_____

_____

_____

28. What suggestions would you offer about the community service requirement?

_____

_____

_____

Please use the space provided to express any ideas that were not addressed in this questionnaire.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix C: Cover Letter for Parents

Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement

Dear participant;

The study entitled "Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement" is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the forty hours of community service now required to graduate. In order to examine this issue we have developed an open-ended questionnaire. It consists of 5 questions that you are asked to answer. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, please do not hesitate to leave your answer incomplete. The information you provide will allow for a thorough evaluation of the community service requirement. All participants will have the opportunity to make recommendations concerning the program.

This study was designed by Steven Reid at Lakehead University's Faculty of Education under the supervision of Dr. Walter Epp. The study will be conducted in grade 12 classes throughout May 2004. The time required to complete the questionnaire should not exceed 40 minutes.

Your confidentiality throughout this study is guaranteed. Your name, the school you attend or any other identifying information will not be included on the questionnaire. If you agree to participate in this study, you must be informed that all data that is collected through these questionnaires will be held in storage at Lakehead University for seven (7) years. If at anytime you wish to view the results of your input into this study please contact Dr. Walter Epp, the research project supervisor.

Thank you for you cooperation.

Sincerely,

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Appendix D: Parent Survey of the Community Service Requirement

Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement

Parent / Guardian Questionnaire:

1. Are you in support of the community service hours required to graduate high school in Ontario?
   Yes ف   No ف

2. What is the goal of requiring students to complete 40 hours of community service?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Please identify any benefits you have noticed in your son/daughter

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Please identify any harmful effects of the community service hours on your son/daughter

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Do you have any recommendations or further comments on the community service requirement?

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Appendix E: Cover Letter for Teachers

Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement

Dear participant;

The study entitled "Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement" is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the forty hours of community service now required to graduate. In order to examine this issue we have developed an open-ended questionnaire. It consists of 14 questions that you are asked to answer. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, please do not hesitate to leave your answer incomplete. The information you provide will allow for a thorough evaluation of the community service requirement. All participants will have the opportunity to make recommendations concerning the program.

This study was designed by Steven Reid at Lakehead University's Faculty of Education under the supervision of Dr. Walter Epp. The study will be conducted in grade 12 classes throughout May 2004. The time required to complete the questionnaire should not exceed 40 minutes.

Your confidentiality throughout this study is guaranteed. Your name, the school you attend or any other identifying information will not be included on the questionnaire. If you agree to participate in this study, you must be informed that all data that is collected through these questionnaires will be held in storage at Lakehead University for seven (7) years. If at anytime you wish to view the results of your input into this study please contact Dr. Walter Epp, the research project supervisor.

Thank you for you cooperation.

Sincerely,

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Appendix F: Teacher Survey for the Community Service Requirement

Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement

Teacher / Administrative Questionnaire:

1. Please choose the appropriate box:
    Male ف   Female ف

2. How many years have you taught high school in Ontario?
    _____years

3. What is the goal of the community service hours?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

4. What assistance are students given **before** completing their community service hours?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

5. Is there a list of prescreened organizations that students can work with?
    Yes ف   No ف

6. Are students given any assistance in finding their community service?
    Yes ف   No ف

    If yes, please elaborate

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

7.   Are there any reflection practices that allow students to critically reflect upon their experiences?
Yes ف   No ف

If yes, please elaborate

_____
_____
_____
_____

8.   Are you in favour of making students perform community service in order to graduate?
Yes ف   No ف

Please elaborate

_____
_____
_____
_____

9.   What role does administration at your school have concerning the community service requirement?

_____
_____
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_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

10. Do you feel that students are able to use the knowledge they have gained in the classroom in real world settings as a result of their community service?

   Yes ف   No ف

   Please elaborate

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

11. Have you noticed a better relationship between the school and the community as a result of the community service requirement?

   Yes ف   No ف

   Please elaborate

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

12. Have you noticed any academic improvements as a direct result from students' involvement in the community?

   Yes ف   No ف

   Please elaborate

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

13. Do you believe that the community has benefited from student volunteers?

   Yes ف   No ف

   Please elaborate

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

14. What suggestions would you make to the required community service hours?

_____
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Please use the space provided to express any thoughts about the community service requirement that wasn't addressed in the questionnaire.

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Appendix G: Cover Letter for Principal

Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement

Dear participant;

The study entitled "Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement" is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the forty hours of community service now required to graduate. In order to examine this issue we have developed an open-ended questionnaire. It consists of 18 questions that you are asked to answer. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, please do not hesitate to leave your answer incomplete. The information you provide will allow for a thorough evaluation of the community service requirement. All participants will have the opportunity to make recommendations concerning the program.

This study was designed by Steven Reid at Lakehead University's Faculty of Education under the supervision of Dr. Walter Epp. The study will be conducted in grade 12 classes throughout May 2004. The time required to complete the questionnaire should not exceed 40 minutes.

Your confidentiality throughout this study is guaranteed. Your name, the school you attend or any other identifying information will not be included on the questionnaire. If you agree to participate in this study, you must be informed that all data that is collected through these questionnaires will be held in storage at Lakehead University for seven (7) years. If at anytime you wish to view the results of your input into this study please contact Dr. Walter Epp, the research project supervisor.

Thank you for you cooperation.

Sincerely,

Steven Reid
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Appendix H: Principal Survey for the Community Service Requirement

Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement

Principal / Administrative Questionnaire:

1. How many years have you worked at the high school level in Ontario?
   _____years

2. What is the goal of the community service hours?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Who is in charge of (handles/tracks) the community service hours?

   (Employment position only)_____

4. What assistance are students given **before** completing their community service hours?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. Is there a list of prescreened organizations that students can work with?
   Yes ڤ   No ڤ

6. Has there ever been an issue with student safety within the community?
   Yes ڤ   No ڤ

   If yes, please elaborate

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

7.   Are students given any assistance in finding their community service?
     Yes ﻑ   No ﻑ

     If yes, please elaborate

     _____
     _____
     _____
     _____

8.   Are there any reflection practices that allow students to critically reflect upon
     their experiences?
     Yes ﻑ   No ﻑ

     If yes, please elaborate

     _____
     _____
     _____
     _____

9.   Are you in favour of making students perform community service in order to
     graduate?
     Yes ﻑ   No ﻑ

     Please elaborate

     _____
     _____
     _____
     _____

10. What role does administration at your school have concerning the community
     service requirement?

     _____
     _____
     _____
     _____
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11. What, if any guidelines did you receive from the Ministry of Education regarding the community service hours?

_____
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12. Do you feel that students are able to use the knowledge they have gained in the classroom in real world settings as a result of their community service?

Yes ﻒ   No ﻒ

Please elaborate

_____
_____
_____
_____

13. What is the biggest problem with the community service hours from an administrative perspective?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

14. Have you noticed a better relationship between the school and the community as a result of the community service requirement?

Yes ف   No ف

Please elaborate

_____
_____
_____
_____

15. Have you noticed any academic improvements as a direct result from students' involvement in the community?

Yes ف   No ف

Please elaborate

_____
_____
_____
_____

16. Are students made aware of the importance/benefits of volunteering within the community?

If yes, please explain. If no, please explain why not?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

17. Do you believe that the community has benefited from student volunteers?

Yes ف   No ف

Please elaborate

_____
_____
_____
_____

18. What suggestions would you make to the required community service hours?

_____

_____

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Please use the space provided to express any thoughts about the community service requirement that wasn't addressed in the questionnaire.

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Appendix I: Cover Letter for Community Organizations

Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement

Dear participant;

The study entitled "Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement" is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the forty hours of community service now required to graduate. In order to examine this issue we have developed an open-ended questionnaire. It consists of 11 questions that you are asked to answer. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, please do not hesitate to leave your answer incomplete. The information you provide will allow for a thorough evaluation of the community service requirement. All participants will have the opportunity to make recommendations concerning the program.

This study was designed by Steven Reid at Lakehead University's Faculty of Education under the supervision of Dr. Walter Epp. The study will be conducted in grade 12 classes throughout May 2004. The time required to complete the questionnaire should not exceed 40 minutes.

Your confidentiality throughout this study is guaranteed. Your name, the school you attend or any other identifying information will not be included on the questionnaire. If you agree to participate in this study, you must be informed that all data that is collected through these questionnaires will be held in storage at Lakehead University for seven (7) years. If at anytime you wish to view the results of your input into this study please contact Dr. Walter Epp, the research project supervisor.

Thank you for you cooperation.

Sincerely,

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Appendix J: Community Survey for the Community Service Requirement

Exploring Ontario's Community Service Requirement

Community Questionnaire:

1.   Please identify the function of your group/organization/company (name optional)

   _____

2.   Are you in favour of requiring high school students complete 40 hours of community service before graduating?

   Yes ﻑ   No ﻑ

3.   Have you taken any steps to encourage students to volunteer with you ?

   Yes ﻑ   No ﻑ

   If yes, please elaborate

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4.   Do student volunteers allow you to provide better services?

   Yes ﻑ   No ﻑ

   Please elaborate:

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5.   Do you believe that the community as a whole has benefited from student volunteers after the introduction of the mandatory 40 hours?

   Yes ﻑ   No ﻑ

   Please elaborate:

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6.   Did the high school contact you and offer any information regarding the new requirement of volunteer hours?

Yes ف   No ف

7.   Is there any communication between you and the high school about student volunteers?
Yes ف   No ف

Please elaborate:

_____
_____
_____
_____

8.   Has the presence of student volunteers allowed you to take on new projects?
Yes ف   No ف

Please elaborate:

_____
_____
_____
_____

9.   Please identify any benefits that student volunteers have brought to your group/organization/company that have not been previously identified in this questionnaire

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

10. Please identify any detriments that student volunteers have brought to your group/organization/company that have not been previously identified in this questionnaire

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Please be encouraged to express any thoughts / ideas or suggestions about the community service hours now required of all high school students

_____

_____

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