



## CREATIVITY, ACTION, AND SERVICE (CAS) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8)

*Creativity, Action, Service (CAS)* engages students in reflective involvement beyond the classroom by fostering caring and socially responsible attitudes through participation in activities that reach beyond themselves and their books. Participation in CAS encourages students:

- to share their energies and special talents while developing awareness, concern and the ability to work cooperatively with others
- to develop a spirit of open-mindedness, lifelong learning, discovery, and self-reliance
- to learn new skills and develop attitudes and traits that will be respected by others, such as determination and commitment, initiative and empathy
- to open up the world of possibilities and grow in the knowledge of life, self, and others.

In preparation for this requirement and in keeping with the broader approach of fostering the development of the whole person, all **Grades 6-8 students are required to accumulate 30 CAS hours each year (30 in Grade 6, 30 in Grade 7, and 30 in Grade 8) in order to advance to the next grade level.** These hours may be completed in any combination but at least 5 hours must be completed for each category, with the balance of the 30 hours divided according to the projects in which the student decides to participate.

### ***Creativity***

**CREATIVE** activities engage the artistic and aesthetic development of the student. Creative activities must be actively participated in by the student, and not merely involve the student as a spectator. Creative hours may be satisfied (for example) by active involvement in dance, theater, music, and art activities outside the normal AIS curriculum. This aspect of CAS is interpreted as imaginatively as possible to cover a wide range of arts and other activities beyond the normal curriculum which include creative thinking in the design and carrying out of service projects. This could involve **doing** dance, theatre, music and art, for example. Students should be engaged in group activities, and especially in new roles, wherever possible. Nevertheless, individual commitment to learning an art form is allowed, where it respects the requirements for all CAS activities: that goals are set and the student reflects on progress.

### ***Action***

**ACTION**-based activities take place after school hours and are not included in the curriculum. Action hours may include physical activities such as playing on sport teams, participating in after school clubs, participating in civic organizations, etc. This aspect of CAS can include participation in expeditions, individual and team sports, and physical activities outside the normal curriculum; it also includes physical activity involved in carrying out creative and service projects. Action may involve participation in sport or other activities requiring physical exertion—such as expeditions and camping trips, or digging trenches to lay water pipes to bring fresh water to a village. Students should be encouraged toward group and team activities, and undertaking new roles,

but an individual commitment is acceptable where the general requirements of CAS are met: goals are set and the student reflects on progress. Both creativity and action can be enhanced by incorporating the service element. Students involved in the arts and in physical activities might consider coaching or teaching young children, seniors in residential homes, street children and so on.

### ***Service***

**SERVICE** encourages students to experience the rewards of helping others in their community and world. Service hours encompass meaningful interactions between students and those that they help, including such activities as volunteering for peer-tutoring, visiting residents of a retirement home, working at community food or furniture banks, fundraising for emergency disaster relief, etc. Service activities should lead students to "show respect for the dignity and self-respect of others." Service projects and activities are often the most transforming element for the individual student; they have the potential to nurture and mold the global citizen. Service involves interaction, such as the building of links with individuals or groups in the community. The community may be the school, the local district, or it may exist on national and international levels (such as undertaking projects of assistance in a developing country). Service activities should not only involve doing things for others but also doing things with others and developing a real commitment with them. The relationship should therefore show respect for the dignity and self-respect of others.

AIS provides many opportunities to get involved in all three types of activities. In general, students are also encouraged to follow their own interests and get involved in other activities not sponsored by the school. Students should make every attempt to participate in at least three diverse, different activities per academic year.

Any questions involving what constitutes a valid CAS activity should be referred to the CAS Coordinator. The student is responsible for obtaining verification of completion of the activity from the direct adult supervisor of the activity. All CAS activities require adult supervision—and please note that parents or other direct family members may NOT sign off on CAS activities. Advisors will then award and approve hours for CAS activities in which the student demonstrated personal growth and learning. The student will complete a brief summary/reflection of each activity, to be maintained in a portfolio by each advisor. This portfolio of reflections will be reviewed periodically and advisors will summarize involvement in CAS activities on student report cards. Students will also use their portfolios for personal annual review at the end of the academic year.

Students are expected to take the responsibility to be actively involved over the course of each year and complete the appropriate reflection in a timely manner. Hours may not be compiled retroactively. Once an activity is completed, it should be documented with the advisor, who will tally the hours. Ongoing, year-long, or summer activities are valid for CAS hours and documentation may be done quarterly, by the semester, or at the end of the activity. Students who have not completed their hours prior to the end of the school year will not receive a report card and their transcript will be held, until the required documented hours requirements are met.