

Seal of Recognition for Service

The NYCDOE currently provides schools with several State- or locally-approved seals to recognize achievement in learning experiences beyond the minimum graduation requirements. This year, the NYCDOE has partnered with [NYC Service](#) to offer a new, locally-approved NYCDOE seal of recognition of youth service to support students’ college and career readiness. This document describes the requirements, documentation process, and distribution of this recognition. For additional information regarding high school graduation requirements and diploma seals, refer to the [High School Academic Policy Guide](#).

In order to receive the service seal, students must successfully complete all of the following requirements:

Requirements	<p>Students must complete the requirements for one of the following diplomas or commencement credentials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local diploma; Regents diploma; Advanced Regents diploma; Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commencement Credential (for eligible students with disabilities); or Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential (for eligible students with disabilities). <p>Students must meet a minimum of 100 hours of independent service, related service-learning, and/or a school-led service program over his or her high school years.</p>
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Schools must keep thorough documentation and input the designated codes when discharging students with a diploma or commencement credential. **Note: ATS and STARS codes for the seal of recognition for service will be updated in this document and provided in a future Principals’ Weekly announcement when they become available.**

Required Documentation	
ATS	In ATS, schools should use designated codes to indicate whether a student has completed the required number of service hours. This will determine if a student receives the service seal on his or her diploma. <i>This document will be updated with the appropriate codes when they become available. An announcement about this update will be shared within Principals’ Weekly.</i>
STARS	In STARS, schools should use designated course codes to document, on the transcript, the number of completed service hours. <i>This document will be updated with the appropriate codes when they become available. An announcement about this update will be shared within Principals’ Weekly.</i>
School records	Documentation must be recorded and kept in the students’ permanent records. Refer to this sample form for tracking a students’ completion of service hours.

Requirements

1. What “types” of service apply towards this seal?

Service hours may include community service completed independently (provided the service has been documented) or as part of service-learning and/or a school-led service program. For the purpose of the service seal, service-learning will be defined as, “a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with classroom curriculum, allowing students to connect academic studies with real-life solutions in order to strengthen communities” and school-led service will be defined as, “activities that are planned by school leaders, teachers, staff and/or students for students to engage in community service.” Schools offering credit-bearing service-learning must align their programs to the policies described in the [Off-Site Courses FAQ](#).

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2. Can a student receive the service seal in addition to other seals or awards?

Yes. The service seal may accompany other awards or recognition; for example, students may earn both an arts diploma endorsement and a service seal. All seals should be placed on the diploma for eligible students.

3. How can schools align this new distinction with existing service programs and requirements?

Although there are explicit requirements for the service seal, schools may maintain their own distinctions for high achievement in service. Schools should continue to encourage their students to complete as many service hours as desired. Schools may recognize students for service achievements in additional ways (i.e., award ceremonies, special certificates, etc.).

Note that service is not a New York State graduation requirement. Schools cannot withhold diplomas from students who do not complete a service requirement.

4. Are all schools required to award this seal?

No. The seals that schools award depend on the programs they offer. While schools are encouraged to incorporate service into their programs, they are not required to award this seal if they do not have eligible students.

5. Where can schools find information about service opportunities?

The [Service in Schools website](#) provides schools with service-learning resources (curriculum and toolkits) and opportunities, as well as community-based and nonprofit organizations to partner with to support them in developing a culture of service in their school. Additionally, [NYC Service](#) provides information about service opportunities citywide.

Documentation

6. Do the service hours need to be documented?

Yes. School principals or their designees are responsible for maintaining documentation demonstrating that students have completed the required service hours. Schools can use or adapt [this](#) form for documenting this information.

All documentation of service hours must be maintained in students' permanent records. The completion of the requirements for the service endorsement should also be documented in ATS and STARS; the appropriate codes will be updated in this document and provided in upcoming Principals' Weekly announcements when they become available.

7. What information must be documented in ATS and STARS?

Note: ATS and STARS codes for the seal of recognition for service will be updated in this document and provided in upcoming Principals' Weekly announcements when they become available. Schools must use designated codes in ATS and STARS when discharging students with a diploma or commencement credential. These codes will indicate whether the student has completed the required number of hours based on his or her year of graduation.

Distribution

8. When will schools receive the diploma seals?

Each school will receive a quantity of the seals with its normal June diploma shipment. The number of seals provided will be based on the size of the school's graduating class. The seals should be affixed to students' diplomas and distributed to students as part of their normal graduation procedures. For additional information regarding diploma distribution, refer to the [High School Academic Policy Guide](#).