

OTTAWA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

TALENTS AND TIME (TNT)

Volunteer Program

The primary purpose of the Talents and Time Program is to encourage participation in all school activities, ensure fundraising targets are met and reduce operation costs through increased participation. The TNT Program also serves to increase awareness/appreciation for the amount of effort required for various activities, dispel perception of inequity of involvement and promote a greater sense of school community while encouraging social interaction among OCS families.

Parental involvement keeps Ottawa Christian School a thriving and healthy school. It is a way for us to keep our operating costs down, work together to achieve common goals, and allows us all to take an active role in the education and spiritual development of our students. While there are many benefits to volunteering, the pressures that families face often make it difficult for them to offer their time to help out. In addition, families are not always aware of the many opportunities to volunteer at the school. Given these realities, the Board has approved a program aimed at encouraging and making people aware of volunteer opportunities. The program is called TNT – Talents and Time – two essential ingredients in keeping the school a strong and vibrant place.

TNT requires that each family contribute some degree of volunteer service throughout the year. We estimate that, on average, the school requires around 70 hours of volunteer time for each week. A fair distribution of these hours across families works out to:

Family Category	Annual TNT Hours ¹	Opt Out Equivalent ²
Families with full time students	25	\$500
Single-parent families with full time students	15	\$300
Families with one student in kindergarten	15	\$300

1. Parents are asked to accumulate hours between June 1 and May 31.

2. There is an opt-out provision available if you prefer (based on a \$20/hour rate). This amount is considered a charitable donation and will be added onto the family's contributions for the school year. For new families enrolling part way through the year, a pro-rated reduced hour expectation is based upon a reduction of 10% per month from September.

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The TNT program asks that each family commit to volunteering between 15-25 hours of volunteer time to the school each year. As a way of ensuring that each family participates in the program, OCS will keep track of volunteer hours throughout the year. ***For those activities that do not pre-qualify for the minimum required 15-25 hours, a post dated cheque in the amount of \$500 is required with the completed Volunteer Commitment Form.*** (Please see the Allocation Chart on the last page of this package to see which committees qualify). The cheque will be returned on completion of the required number of hours or a portion thereof if only a portion of the required hours have been completed.

How do I fulfill my TNT commitment?

Hours can be earned throughout the school year through various opportunities at OCS. Various fundraising activities, attending membership meetings, participating on the Board or Committees or driving on class trips are just a few examples. Check out the Volunteer Commitment Form (located on the website at www.ocschool.org) and the TNT Hours Allocation Chart for a more detailed list.

Parents will be updated on additional volunteer opportunities via the weekly Memo. Each person will be responsible to turn in their participation log to the Volunteer coordinator or via the OCS website. Grandparents, graduated children, friends and other family members are welcome to volunteer and accumulate hours for families. High school students can sign off on their service hours required for graduation as well as on family TNT hours!

How are my hours tracked?

Hours that have pre-designated values assigned to them will be recorded by the coordinator of that activity or the committee chairperson. You will need to record all other variable hours on the TNT Tracking Sheet and submit them to the School office or via the OCS website on a regular basis.

Statements will be provided to you during the year as follows:

- January 31 Mid Year Statement of hours earned thus far
- June 1 Year-End Statement

Families that have completed their volunteer requirements prior to the end of the year are of course encouraged to continue volunteering and submitting log sheets for the remainder of the year. This will allow us to see how many volunteer hours go into running the school every year.

What happens if I don't fulfill all my hours?

Volunteer efforts work to offset each family's tuition. If you have not fulfilled all your hours you receive the benefit of the tuition reduction but have not contributed fully to that reduction. You will be required to contribute for the unfulfilled hours (\$20/hour). If exceptional circumstances prevent you from fulfilling your commitment please contact the TNT Coordinator or the Chair of the Membership Committee.

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The payment will be refunded when the required hours have been fulfilled (or partially refunded if not all hours have been completed). For every volunteer hour that is not fulfilled we will reduce the refund by \$20. The following are examples of how **TNT** works:

By the first week of June,	
Volunteer hrs required:	25
Volunteer hrs completed	<u>15</u>
Hours outstanding	10
	10 hours @ \$20 = \$200

This family will be refunded \$300 of the \$500 provided.

By the first week of June,	
Volunteer hrs required:	25
Volunteer hrs completed	<u>25</u>
Hours outstanding:	0

This family will be refunded the full \$500 Volunteer Assessment

Policy Background

Establishing a program such as this does raise a few questions. Prior to approving this proposal, other options were considered such as a first step of assigning tasks to each family. We felt very strongly, however, that without the monetary incentive, there would be no real accountability on the part of the members. The requirement of an upfront payment is to *emphasize that volunteerism does come at a cost*. **It's also designed to make us aware that we are equally responsible for the running of the school, and that the tuition we pay does not cover all the costs of educating our child(ren)**. We would like to stress that it is our desire that **every Volunteer Assessment** be returned at the end of the volunteer year. This is not a money-making venture. However, we also understand that some people may find themselves in a situation where they simply cannot volunteer the required number of hours and would like to contribute monetarily to the volunteer program.

Obviously a program such as this will require organization. As in the past, a Time and Talents Commitment Form will be completed annually by each family. A database of the members' interests and skills will be compiled by the Volunteer Coordinator to facilitate matching volunteers to available tasks when necessary. However the responsibility of volunteering falls primarily to the family. Activity coordinators (i.e. Walkathon coordinator, Grandparents' Day coordinator, etc) will need to be organized as well, with detailed instructions available for the volunteer before the event so that their time can be used optimally (not sitting around waiting for instructions). The activity coordinator must submit a list of participants to the Volunteer Coordinator at the end of the event.

Other Christian schools have also established such a program with great success. Two in particular shared their experiences with us. John Knox Christian School in Oakville established one a number of years ago and has enjoyed a greater involvement and commitment from its membership. Calvin Christian School in Dundas began its program 2007 and has seen its membership participation rise from approximately 45% to over 90%. Both schools acknowledge that it has been a great way to introduce families to the school community.

TNT HOURS ALLOCATION CHART

Categories	Volunteer Opportunities	Hour Values
General Meetings	Membership Meetings	1
	Parent Information Meetings	1
Board Committees	All Board Members	25
	Committee Chairpersons	25
	Committee Secretaries	25
	Committee Members	25
Classroom	Read with or tutor students, assist teachers with preparation, displays, ESL etc, Room Parent	variable
Class Trips	Half Day/Whole Day Overnight/Extended Trips	3/6 variable
Sports	Coaching, Teaching, Refereeing, Running Club, Track & Field Day	variable
Technical Skills	Carpentry, electrical, plumbing, heating, landscaping, interior design	variable
Business Skills	Project Planning, Management, Legal consulting	variable
Audio Visual	Photography, videotaping, production etc	variable
Administration/Computer	Word Processing, newsletter, hardware software, web design, desktop publishing, Computer maintenance	variable
Property Management	Carpentry. Electrical, Plumbing, general repair, landscaping	variable
Other	Ad hoc committees, library aid, resource person, music, drama electives, other coordinators, canvassing, volunteer recruitment	variable
Transportation Committee	Coordinator Support	25 variable
Talent and Time (TNT)	Coordinator	25
Walkathon	Coordinator Support	25 variable
Plant Sale	Coordinator Support	25 variable
Funfest	Coordinator Support	25 variable
School Promotions	Open House volunteer, Event Support	variable
Home & School	Kitchen Coordinator, Pizza/Hot Dog Coordinator, milk program, grandparents day, Membership Meeting support	variable