

ADVANCING FROM LIFE TO EAGLE THE PROCESS AND THE FORMS

In order to help organize the Scout as he prepares to qualify for the Eagle Scout rank, it is recommended that the Eagle Award Application and Project Workbook be presented to each Scout upon completion of his Life Scout Board of Review, unless he is more than 17 years and six months of age at that time. The Service Project Workbook, No. 18-927, has explicit instructions for the Scout and Unit Leader to follow after all requirements are complete. The Unit Leader and/or Unit Advancement Chairman should assist the Scout in filling out the Eagle Scout Award Application.

Although the form is substantially self-explanatory, the following items should be carefully noted.

1. All Dates - Must include month, day and year. Make sure that the dates reflect at least 4 months as a First Class Scout before receiving the Star Award, 6 months or more as a Star Scout before receiving the Life Award, and currently a Life Scout for 6 months or more.

2. References - The Scout should obtain permission from those whom he lists as references but he must not solicit letters from them. Five references are required; a sixth (employer) is optional. One of the general references may be his Scoutmaster. Confidential reference letters are required by the Council to help in the certification process - to determine that a candidate lives by the principles of the Scout Oath and Law. If there is a question as to religious leader, the person shown should be the person best able to testify as to the applicant's adherence to the Duty to God portion of the Scout Oath and to the 12 points of the Scout Law.

If a boy says he is a member of a particular religious body, the standards by which he is evaluated are those of the group to which he belongs. This is why we ask for an Eagle reference letter from his religious leader to indicate whether in their estimation he has lived up to their expectations. In cases where the Scout, by conviction, does not feel that it is necessary to belong formally to an organized church and seeks to practice religion in accordance with their own personal convictions. Every effort should be made to counsel with the Scout and his parents to determine his religious convictions and practices as they relate to his advancement in Scouting.

The Unit Advancement Chairman should solicit reference letters and the references send their letters back to the Unit Advancement Chairman.

3. Merit Badges - Be sure that at least 4 Eagle required merit badges were earned prior to the Star Rank, and 3 more Eagle required (a total of 7) were

earned prior to Life Rank. If an error was made in the past, do not penalize the Scout but attach a letter from the Unit Advancement Chairman explaining any discrepancies.

4. Statements by Applicant - (Requirement 6)

Section 1: My Life Purpose - must contain a brief summary of the Scout's life purpose.

Section 2: Description of Honors and Leadership - must contain a brief summary of honors and leadership positions held.

5. The Scoutmaster Conference **MUST BE CONDUCTED BEFORE THE SCOUT'S 18TH BIRTHDAY.**

6. Certification: When the Unit Advancement Chairman receives all required references, the Eagle Application, Service Project Workbook, and reference letters are taken to the Council Service Center for certification. Do not schedule a Board of Review until certification is received.

Applicant: Sign and date, the day the Scout turns in the completed form to his Unit Leader.

Unit Leader: By his or her signature, the Unit Leader indicates approval and endorsement of the Eagle candidate.

Unit Committee Chairman: The unit committee certifies as to the accuracy of all information after verification with unit records.

BSA Council: The Eagle Scout Award Application, Service Project Workbook, and Reference Letters must be checked and certified by the Council before the Board of Review is scheduled by the Unit.

After receiving Council certification, the Unit Leader or Advancement Chairman notifies the District Advancement Chairman that an Eagle Board of Review is needed; it is courteous to give at least one-week lead-time. The District Advancement Chairman will then assign someone from the District Advancement Committee to represent the Council at the Board of Review.

The District Advancement Representative and the Unit Leader or Unit Advancement Chairman schedule a mutually agreeable time and place for the Board of Review. The board members meet at least 30 minutes prior to the arrival of the Scout to go over the application, project report, and reference letters.

After approval by the Board of Review, the Unit Chairman of the Review must sign the application and the District Advancement Representative must sign and indicate the date of the review. The Eagle Award Application, including reference

letters, completed Advancement form (#4403), and district approval card are then submitted by the Unit Advancement Chairman or his representative to the Council Service Center for review and transmittal to the National Council, Boy Scouts of America. Do not send the Service Project Workbook. The Unit should present the Workbook to the Scout at his Eagle Court of Honor. Only the National Council gives final approval of all Eagle awards, and awards may not be presented until such approval has been received. Four to six weeks should be allowed for this approval from the date the application is turned in to the Service Center.

If the Eagle Award Application is not approved, (i.e., not unanimous approval), each member the board of review must submit in writing the specific reason(s) for his/her adverse or affirmative action. The reason(s) must be sent without delay to the Scout and the Chairman of the Council Advancement Committee with copies to the District Advancement Chairman and the Unit Advancement Chairman.

The Scoutmaster Conference

One of the most enjoyable experiences of being a Scoutmaster is the opportunity for a Scout and his leader to sit down and visit together.

In large troops, Scoutmasters occasionally assign this responsibility to assistant Scoutmasters or members of the troop committee; but this is unfortunate, because most Scoutmasters feel that this is truly the opportunity to get to know the Scout and help him chart his course of life.

A good conference should be unhurried. It helps the Scout evaluate his accomplishments and set new goals with his Scoutmaster. This can be accomplished at a troop meeting, camping trip, or in the Scout's home.

Goal setting by the Scout makes it possible for the Scoutmaster to help the Scout with his weaknesses and encourage him to use his strengths.

The Scout (joining) conference is probably one of the most important associations the Scout will have in his Scouting career. It is at this conference that the Scoutmaster illustrates to him the adult-youth relationship that is unique to Scouting.

All through the ranks, it is rewarding for the Scoutmaster to observe the Scout grow in responsibility and maturity. It is through this association and example that a young man grows and matures, and the Scoutmaster conference accomplishes

that aim. More information on Scoutmaster Conferences read Chapter 10 of the *Scoutmaster Handbook*.

Notes from the Advancement Chairman

I would like to clarify some points on the Cub Scout advancement processes.

The Cub Scout program in the den and pack is the basis for the Cub Scout's advancement. The steps in Cub Scout and Webelos Scout advancement procedures are **preparation, qualification, and recognition**. The requirements to each rank are authorized by the National Executive Board and are set forth in the *Wolf Cub Scout Book*, *Big Bear Cub Scout Book*, and the *Webelos Scout Book* and no one - no council, district, unit nor individual - has authority to add to or subtract from these advancement requirements.

The Cub Scout advancement process differs from the four-step process of the Boy Scout advancement procedure: **learning, testing, reviewing, and recognition**. In the Cub Scout advancement process, there is no review! **Cub Scouts and Webelos Scouts do not participate in boards of review**. Packs are not authorized to conduct boards of review. It is imperative that the adult leaders assure that **the** Cub Scout advancement process is used in their unit. The steps in the Cub Scout advancement process are described in the following sections.

Step One-The first step is **preparation**. In the Cub program, parents have a primary responsibility to help the scout learn the material needed to complete a requirement. In the Webelos program, the teaching is shared between the parents and the Webelos den leaders. Scouting is action-oriented and Cub Scout aged boys generally have limited attention spans so lessons need to be short and action packed. Lectures are out and demonstrations and games are the most effective teaching tools. Another important learning method is found in the example set by the adults in the Scout's life. This example teaches many lessons - the important ones about life - getting along with each other and always doing your best.

Step Two-The Cub Scout's knowledge and skill are **qualified**. This means that the Cub does the required activity. If it is building a car or making a collection, he does it to the best of his ability. He should be encouraged to use his projects to enhance his school classes. We do not do a boy a favor by letting him get by with less than his best. The testing in the Cub program is done by parents and guardians. When a parent signs the Scout's book, that signature is trusted to mean that the requirement has been fulfilled. The Cub Leaders do not question the Cub, if they have concerns about the quality of the knowledge demonstrated by the boy, they need to meet with the parents and discuss how the parents are

teaching and testing their Cub Scout. The Cub Leaders can then discuss how the parents are teaching and testing their Cub Scout. The Cub Leaders can then suggest ways to improve the testing and help the parent do a better job in their role to deliver the full Cub Scout program to their son. Unlike the Boy Scout program, the Cub Leaders do not conduct any type of formal review of the Cub Scout - either in the Wolf or Bear programs or the Webelos program. In the Webelos program, the Webelos Den Leader is responsible for testing the boy to assure that the Cub has mastered the required material; but there is no review like that used in the Boy Scout advancement program.

Step Three-The last step in the Cub Scout advancement program is recognition. In the Cub Scout advancement program the boy's achievements are recognized monthly at the pack meeting. Each boy and his parents should be given their moment of recognition in front of the rest of the pack. Advancement recognition needs to be fun and could involve other Cubs as well as the adult pack leaders. Don't let pack meetings become routine and boring.

Cub Scouting is home-and neighborhood-centered for the younger boy. Advancement involves parental approval of requirements. The administration of the Cub Scout advancement program is primarily the responsibility of the pack committee, with the support of the district advancement committee and the commissioner staff.

Parents of Cub Scouts should understand their role and responsibilities in their son's advancement. For the boy to receive maximum benefit and growth from his advancement, the adult's standard for completion of any requirement should be based on the Cub Scout motto, Do Your Best.

The Cub Scout advancement process is not the Boy Scout advancement process. It has been designed to fit the needs of Cub Scout age boys. If it is conducted properly, it will help each Cub Scout learn to live the Cub Scout Promise and to always do his best. The advancement program will also build enthusiasm for continuing the Boy Scout program and the process will provide many opportunities for parents to interact with the sons in situations that build communications, trust and love for each other.

Good Scouting-Greg Jungeblut

APPEALING A DECISION

Two sets of circumstances may lead to the appeal of a decision.

First, if the unit leader or unit committee does not recommend the Scout for a board of review, or if the unit leader or unit committee does not sign the Eagle

Scout application, the Scout or other interested party may appeal the decision at the next level (district or council).

Second, if the appropriate board of review does not recommend the applicant for the rank advancement, the decision may be appealed to the next higher level (district or council). The Scout, his leader, or his parents may appeal the decision.

With all appeal applications, the final decision rests with the National Boy Scout Committee. In ascending order, the levels are unit, district, council, and national Boy Scout Committee.

On receipt of an appeal, the district or council committee responsible for advancement will provide for a prompt review to determine the facts. A written report with all details must be prepared for the committee responsible for a decision. All appeals to the national Boy Scout Committee must be processed through the council.

BOARDS OF REVIEW

A periodic review of the progress of a Scout is vital in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Scouting program in the unit. The unit committee can judge how well the Scout being reviewed is benefiting from the program. The unit leader can measure the effectiveness of his or her leadership. The Scout can sense that he is, or is not, advancing properly and can be encouraged to make the most of his Scouting experience.

Not only is it important to review those Scouts who have learned and been tested for a rank, but also to review those Scouts who have shown no progress in their advancement over the past few months.

The members of the board of review should have the following objectives in mind when they conduct the review:

- To make sure the Scout has done what he was supposed to do for the rank.
- To see how good an experience the Scout is having in the unit.
- To encourage the Scout to progress further.

The review is not an examination; the board does not retest the candidate. Rather, the board should attempt to determine the Scout's attitude and his acceptance of Scouting's ideals. The board should make sure that good standards have been met in all phases of the Scout's life. A discussion of the Scout Oath and the Scout Law is in keeping with the purpose of the review, to

make sure that the candidate recognizes and understands the value of Scouting in his home, unit, school, and community.

The decision of all boards of review is arrived at through discussion and must be unanimous. A board of review should take approximately 15 minutes.

When a boy satisfactorily completes his board of review, tenure for his next rank or Eagle Palm begins immediately.

The *Troop Committee Guidebook* contains examples of questions that could be asked during a review.

If a board decides that the Scout is not ready to advance, the candidate should be informed and told what he has not done satisfactorily. The members of the board of review should specify what must be done to rework the candidate's weaknesses and schedule another board of review for him. A follow-up letter must be sent to the Scout who is turned down for rank advancement, confirming the agreements reached on the actions necessary for advancement. Should the Scout disagree with the decision, the appeal procedures should be explained to him.

EAGLE SCOUT BOARDS OF REVIEW

The Boy Scouts of America has placed the Eagle Scout board of review in the hands of either the troop, team, crew, or ship committee or the district or council committee for advancement. In the Sam Houston Area Council, we typically ask the unit to conduct the board of review provided at least one district or council advancement representative is present and serves as a member of the Eagle board of review. If requested by the unit that person may serve as chairman.

The board of review for an Eagle candidate is composed of a minimum of three members and a maximum of six members, 21 years of age or older. These members do not have to be registered in Scouting, but they must have an understanding of the importance and purpose of the Eagle board of review.

Because of the importance of the Eagle Scout Award, a unanimous decision must be reached as to the Scout's qualifications. If a unanimous decision is not reached, a new review may be convened at the request of the applicant, the unit leader, or the unit committee. **The review should take approximately 30 minutes.**

If a board decides that the Scout is not ready to advance, the candidate should be informed and told what he has not done satisfactorily. The members of the

board of review should specify what must be done to rework the candidate's weaknesses and schedule another board of review for him. A Scout beyond the age of eighteen may not have another board re-scheduled. Should the Scout disagree with the decision, the appeal procedures should be explained to him.