



BOY SCOUTS
OF AMERICA®

School Access Challenges: A Tiered Response to Building Relationships

Training Module | March 2017 Draft

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Introduction

A tiered response is a term used frequently in the delivery of emergency medical services. It refers to handling an incident at the lowest level of jurisdiction to address the emergency or services needed. If the responders closest to the incident are not able to meet the need appropriately, they request help from those with a higher jurisdictional level. Additional capabilities available at higher levels are sought only when needed. This training module applies the concept of a tiered response toward access to schools for Scouts and Scouters.

This module is designed to be instructor led and takes 50 minutes. It can be done as a stand-alone session or as a part of a “day of training” course.

Objectives

Following participation in this module, participants will be able to demonstrate the following skills/competencies:

Knowledge

- Define tiered response in a Scouting context
- State the key findings of the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act (20 U.S.C. § 7905)
- Identify school access from the perspective of a unit leader, a district-level volunteer, and a council-level volunteer
- Identify school access issues from the perspective of a building-level administrator and a district-level administrator
- Explain the role of relationship building as the essential step in successful access to schools

Application

- Diagnose the nature of the conflict with respect to school-access issues

Notes for the Instructor

This syllabus is not designed to be read to the participants. Trainers should familiarize themselves with the content and be able to present it without reading. Experienced trainers can use their own words but *must be sure to cover the content and meet the objectives of the session*. One of the keys to success is that the trainers observe participants and ask questions during the sessions to be sure they learned the topic.

The majority of this module is conducted through case studies and discussion. Instructors should review and use the document *School Access Challenges: A Tiered Response to Building Relationships* (appendix).

Approach

- Presentation
- Case studies

Assessment

Knowledge: Determine the accuracy of knowledge gained through feedback noted during the presentation and discussion.

Access to Schools and a Tiered Response

Time: You have 5 minutes for this presentation.

Objectives: Participants will

- Define tiered response in a Scouting context

Method: Discussion and inquiry

Begin this session by welcoming participants and thanking them for wanting to learn more about this important aspect of serving youth and the community.

Ask: “What do we mean by school access?” Responses should include

- The ability to send home a message with boys who are prospective Cub Scouts
- The opportunity to present a “boy talk” to prospective Cub Scouts
- Requesting the use of a school facility for meetings or activities

Share that a tiered response is a term used frequently in the delivery of emergency medical services. It refers to handling an incident at the lowest level of jurisdiction to address the emergency or services needed. If the responders closest to the incident are unable to meet the need appropriately, they request help from those with a higher level. Additional capabilities available at higher levels are sought only when needed. It helps ensure resources are used appropriately and efficiently; not every call to EMS, for example, requires the arrival of a full fire station’s worth of resources.

Ask: “What is a ‘tiered response’ to school access?”

Hopefully, you will get a response such as: seeking to handle various school access issues as close to the incident as possible — first by unit leaders, then by district volunteers, professional staff, and, finally, through resources available at the council level.

It's All About Relationships!

Time: You have 10 minutes for this presentation.

Objectives: Participants will be able to

- Explain the role of relationship building as the essential step in successful access to schools

Method: Discussion and inquiry

Resources: Homemade poster with the quote, "It's All About Relationships"

School Access Challenges: A Tiered Response to Building Relationships

Building Relationships:

Say this in your own words: "Building a working relationship between school personnel and the local Scouting community is the first step in a tiered response to school access. A positive relationship, grounded in shared values and respectful of the role that school staff serve in the organization, is the first thing that Scouters need to appreciate and to act upon."

It is far better to think of ourselves in partnership with schools and how we can help them meet their youth-development goals by partnering with us, than to see us in competition with one another.

Ask: "What are some ways that we can build relationships with schools on a unit level?" Gather responses on a whiteboard or flip chart. They should include these and more:

- Adopt-a-school
- Parent-Teacher Association support
- Teacher and school staff relationships
- School staff pinewood derby
- Popcorn
- Teacher expertise
- Organization/club day

Ask: "What are some ways that we can build relationships with schools on a district and council level?"

- Board and district relationships
- Board of review service

Put up the "relationships" poster. Say something like: "It is often said that Scouting is all about relationships. Relationships with other Scouters, relationships with donors, relationships with chartered organizations, and more. Unit leaders building a positive relationship with school administrators and staff can often solve access issues."

Case Studies

Time: You have 25 minutes for this presentation.

Objectives: Participants will

- Identify school access from the perspective of a unit leader, a district-level volunteer, and a council-level volunteer
- Identify school access issues from the perspective of a building-level administrator and a district-level administrator

Method: Case studies

Resources: *School Access Challenges: A Tiered Response to Building Relationships (Case Studies from appendix)*

There are two options for this session depending upon the size of your group.

Eight or more participants: Divide the participants into patrols of five or six and give them one case study to discuss. Give each patrol 10 minutes to come up with unit, district, and council responses. Give each patrol time to share their responses.

Seven or fewer: Ask a participant to volunteer to read a case study out loud to the group and have the entire group discuss responses.

In both cases, be sure to use the responses in *School Access Challenges: A Tiered Response to Building Relationships* as a resource.

“The Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act”

Time: You have 5 minutes for this presentation.

Objectives: Participants will

- State the key findings of the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act (20 U.S.C. § 7905)

Method: Lecture

Resources: *School Access Challenges: A Tiered Response to Building Relationships*

Say this in your own words: “The last resort, at the top tier, like using the whole fire department — is the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act.”

Distribute *School Access Challenges: A Tiered Response to Building Relationships* and ask participants to turn to page 4.

Read the layman’s summary: “The main point of this legislation is that any school that receives federal support is required to provide Scouting the same access to school facilities as any other organization. This does not mean that Scouting gets the use of public facilities for free — simply that they are afforded the same right of access as any other community organization. If sports organizations use schools for no cost, then Scouting should be afforded the same opportunity. If a community organization uses school facilities and pays a rental fee then, likewise, a Scout unit should have the same expectation. The access law does not guarantee Scouting an absolute right to school access — unless other organizations enjoy that same right.”

Encourage them to read the handout closely when they get home.

Remind them that this is a “last resort” when relationship building has failed and that they should not threaten schools with this legislation. Also, it is best when district and/or council leadership are involved when this step becomes necessary.

Closing

Time: You have 5 minutes for this presentation.

Objectives: Inspire participants

- Thank Scouters for completing the training

Ask: “This was just a brief overview of the concept and the other resources will provide more in-depth answers, but are there any questions you have that did not get answered?”

Answer or direct them to an appropriate resource.

Conclude by saying: “Appropriate access to schools is among the most important elements of the BSA’s outreach to youth. If you are experiencing or have experienced frustration with access to schools to help build and sustain the Scouting program in your community, do not despair. The law is on your side!

“Just as important as having legal protection is having an understanding, receiving training, and building enduring relationships with staff and school administrators. School access issues often can be resolved at the unit, district, and council levels by understanding school policies and rules from the perspective of those who administer and teach in them. Moreover, training Scouters in effective methods of communication with school personnel nearly always bears rich fruit in regard to school access.

“Finally, building, maintaining, and sustaining relationships of mutual respect and appreciation with school administrators, staff, and educators (especially those in your local community) is perhaps the single most important key to school access.

“Thank you for all you do for our youth and communities.”

Appendix

Case Studies

Written Communications

Larry F. is a new Cubmaster. He enters the office of the school principal at 1:15 p.m. on a Monday afternoon. School is dismissed at 3:30 p.m. He asks one of the secretaries in the office to distribute copies of pack recruiting fliers to all the boys in grades 1 through 4. The fliers are part of the pack's fall recruitment drive. The "School Night for Scouting" meeting, scheduled to reach out to new prospective members takes place three days later, on Thursday. The secretary declines to accept the documents. Larry, angry and frustrated, storms out of the office with the fliers still in hand.

Meeting With Youth: "Boy Talks"

Roger B., a brand-new Scoutmaster with Boy Scout Troop 11, is looking to recruit new members for the troop. Troop 11 was fortunate enough to have a successful recruiting event with four new Boy Scouts having joined during a crossover ceremony at a local pack's blue and gold banquet. The Scoutmaster would like to have a meeting with all fifth-grade boys in the school for the last 30 minutes of the school day to tell them about Troop 11. Roger attempts to schedule this meeting directly with the school principal, who informs him that a meeting during the academic part of the day cannot be accommodated. Frustrated, Roger doesn't know where to turn.

Use of School Facilities

The success of Pack 108's annual pinewood derby was growing. Five years earlier, with a membership of 26 Cub Scouts, the derby could be easily set up and completed in a single evening. With a strong program in place, membership in the pack was creeping up to nearly 80 ten-strong dens of active Cub Scouts. Running the pinewood derby on a school evening during a pack meeting was going to keep the children up too late. The pack committee chair investigated options, and found that the school was available on Saturdays — but at a cost of \$200 for the building and double overtime for the custodian needed to open up the building — for a total cost of nearly \$500 to run the event on a Saturday. The pack committee chair was furious: "How can they do that to us? Don't they realize that they are ruining things for the boys?" The pack committee's secretary began composing a letter of objection to the school district superintendent, and was ready to share a piece of her mind over the way the school was treating the Cub Scouts.