



**BOY SCOUTS
OF AMERICA**
MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

**THE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP
COMMITTEE GUIDEBOOK**

2024 edition

Prepared. For Life.™



Council Membership Committee Guidebook

A guide for Council Membership Committee members and staff advisors on how to work together to grow the Scouting program.

“The main thing to remember is to keep the Main Thing the main thing. And the Main Thing is to serve more youth”

~Rex Tillerson, BSA President (2010-2012)

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Introduction

The Boy Scouts of America - A Membership Organization

The federal charter from Congress charges the Boy Scouts of America to make its program available to all who are eligible but recognizes that young people must become members to derive the benefits available from the Scouting program. Those who administer the program must, therefore, serve the membership and actively and purposefully recruit new members.

Since ours is a membership organization, we must seek opportunities to retain our current members and to increase our new membership. The inculcation of high values and the acceptance of the philosophy offered by the Boy Scouts of America through its program touch young people's lives after they become members.

Scouting – An Activity for the Entire Family

In 2018, the BSA decided to allow girls to join the Cub Scout program in all-girl dens in a family pack, or as members of an all-girl pack. Then, in 2019 girls were admitted to the Scouts BSA program, formerly known as Boy Scouts, with the possibility of earning the Eagle Scout rank alongside their male counterparts. The difference from Cub Scouting has been that the girls are in girl-only troops, but their program is identical to that in the boy troops. In this way, the Cub Scout and Scouts BSA programs join the rest of the BSA programs (Exploring, Venturing, and Sea Scouting) in their availability to male and female members.

Charters

The Boy Scouts of America does not operate Cub Scout packs, Scouts BSA troops, Sea Scout ships, or Venturing crews. The Boy Scouts of America forms relationships with existing organizations and provides programs for them to serve their youth. Because the program of the Boy Scouts of America is conducted only through chartered organizations, it is imperative that adequate attention be given to the support of organizations that are chartered to operate units. Our success can only be assured if the chartered organization considers itself successful in the delivery of the Scouting program to young people.

Following its incorporation in 1910 in Washington, D.C., the Boy Scouts of America became increasingly popular across the United States. Congress recognized Scouting's potential as an educational resource and, in 1916, granted a federal charter to the Boy Scouts of America to make the program available to boys through community organizations. Under the protection of its congressional mandate, the Boy Scouts of America, in turn, issues two kinds of charters:

- One charter is issued annually to a local Scouting council granting them the authority and responsibility to provide services to community organizations, enabling them to use the Scouting program for their young people. There are 248 local councils throughout the United States, as well as councils in the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Europe, and the Far East.

- The other charter is issued annually to a community organization granting it the use of the Scouting program, operated under its own leadership, to serve the children, youth, and families for which it has a concern.

The educational program of the Boy Scouts of America is designed to help develop ethical values in young people. In fact, the mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to “prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.”

The support service of the Boy Scouts of America to the community organizations that use Scouting is provided by the local council, through its districts. The membership/relationships committee is an important part of this support system.

The success of Scouting’s impact on young people can be assured only when both the chartered organization and the Boy Scouts of America cooperate and meet their respective obligations.

Membership

As a membership organization, building and sustaining our membership must be our highest priority. Membership means registration with the Boy Scouts of America. This entails the submission of an application by a young person (with parent or guardian approval) to a unit leader, payment of a membership fee, acceptance by the unit and council, and issuance of an official registration card.

The Benefits of Youth Membership

- Access to an active, exciting, fun-filled, and adventuresome program.
- Authorization to wear a distinctive uniform.
- Ability to participate in advancement and recognition programs and earn awards for performance. Use of local council long-term camps and Cub Scout day camp programs.
- Use of national high-adventure bases.
- Participation in international, national, and regional events, such as jamborees.
- Opportunities for training in leadership, outdoor skills, citizenship, career awareness, etc.
- Identification with a large national organization having international affiliations.
- Association with men and women of character who care about young people.

Obligations of Youth Membership

- Understand the Scout Oath and Scout Law and intend to live by the principles contained in them.
- Be an active participant in the program and meetings of the unit.
- Learn skills to become more self-sufficient and to be able to help others.

Five Sources of Membership Growth

1. Growth from new units (responsibility of the membership committee)
2. Growth from youth recruitment/additional enrollments (responsibility of the membership committee)
3. Growth from program transition (Webelos Scout to Scouts BSA, and Scouts BSA to Venturer) (joint responsibility of membership committee and unit service)
4. Growth from keeping units active and chartered (responsibility of the unit service team)
5. Growth from increasing tenure/more youth reregistered at unit charter renewal (responsibility of the unit service team)

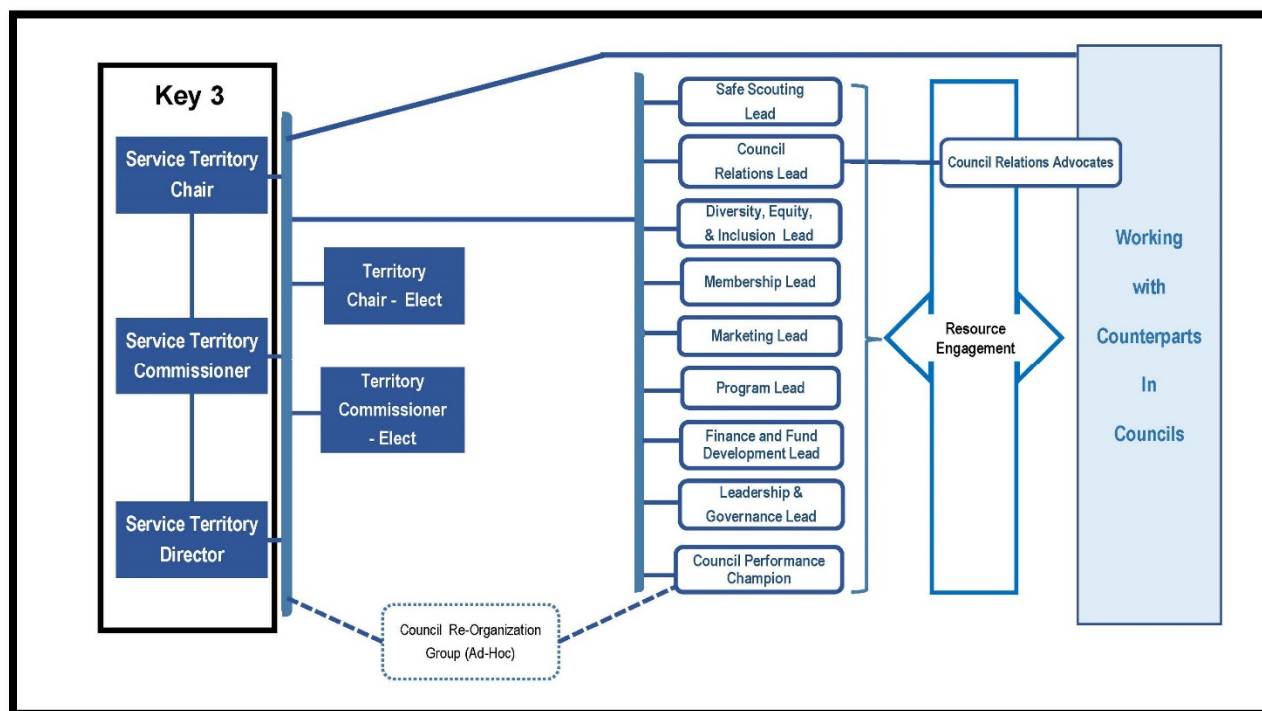
Membership Committee Operation

In 2021, the National Committee eliminated the four regions and twenty-seven areas in favor of a move to sixteen National Service Territories (NST). This was changed to Council Service Territories (CST) in 2024 to reflect the emphasis on council service. The number of CSTs was changed to fourteen as some CSTs were consolidated. The intent of this change was to streamline the interface between councils and the national council, as well as reducing operational costs at the national level. **Membership and Relationships** is one of ten support committees under the National Operations Leadership Committee.

The tasks of the membership and relationships committee fall into two broad categories, whether at the council service territory or the council level:

- **Membership.** Organize new units, reorganize inactive and dropped units, and recruit new members in a systematic way. Simply stated, the effective membership strategy focuses on both new unit organization and recruitment (“sales”) and retention (“service”).
- **Relationships.** Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with major community organizations and institutions, both those that have Scouting units and those that do not. These include religious bodies, educational bodies, civic service clubs, fraternal and veteran associations, labor unions, business and industry, professional societies, and other organizations with objectives compatible with the Boy Scouts of America.

The mission of the CST is to serve and help local councils achieve the purposes of Scouting and to maintain standards, policies, programs, and procedures established by the Boy Scouts of America. This includes establishing a culture of collaboration and inclusion in keeping with the BSA Mission, guiding council performance appraisals and making final decisions regarding council (re-)chartering. The relationship between the CST and the local councils is illustrated in the following diagram.

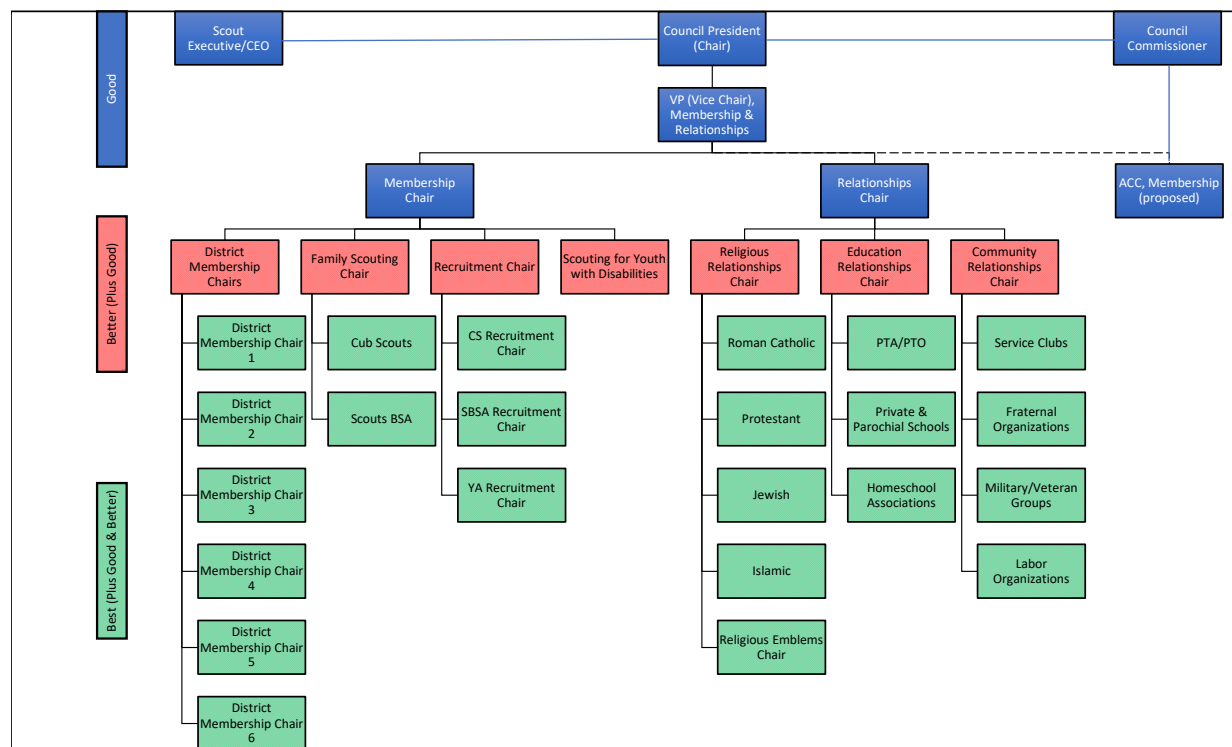


A volunteer skilled and experienced in building membership serves each CST as Membership Lead and is charged to help councils within the territory strengthen membership. The Membership Lead reports to, collaborates with, and is supported by the CST Key 3 (the CST Chair, the CST Commissioner, and the CST Director), the National Membership and Relationships Committee, and the Membership Leads in other territories. The Membership Lead supports territory councils through direct communication with council equivalents (membership chairs or vice presidents).

The responsibilities of the CST Membership Lead include:

1. Serve as part of the CST leadership team, engaging in general planning and routinely reporting territory membership trends, updates, and concerns.
2. Work with local councils to provide leadership to member recruitment and new unit development initiatives.
3. Promote and provide encouragement to inclusion and outreach initiatives to extend youth membership into under-served communities.
4. Share and promote national membership resources and initiatives.
5. Host regular meetings, conferences, and other gatherings to share information and best practices while fostering ongoing networking among council membership representatives in the CST.
6. Represent the CST on the National Membership Committee.
7. Monitor, analyze, and share membership data, communicating with council representatives on how to use the information.
8. Recommend and help to gather resources to implement CST membership initiatives and assist councils with identified membership needs.
9. Help maintain standards and policies of the BSA.

The Council Membership Committee



Council Membership Committee Organization

In addition to the chair and selected executive board members, other committee members who are interested in extending Scouting may participate as members at large. The committee is responsible for reaching a representative group of youth interested in the Scouting program. Members should come from diverse backgrounds and environments. The committee must reach into all areas within the council and district boundaries providing the extra effort required to expand the Scouting program in the underserved areas of the council. ***The makeup of your council should reflect the makeup of the community you serve.***

The council membership/relationships committee might include two interest groups of Scouters as follows:

Relationships Group. Since Scouting is a program made available to community organizations to achieve their own objectives as they reach out to the youth of the community, it is essential that all major organizational structures in the community maintain representatives on the committee. This will guarantee better understanding and better receptivity of Scouting by these community groups. Committee members should be determined as the need exists for representatives of Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Islamic, and other religious organizations; service clubs; veteran and fraternal groups; labor groups; rural and urban groups; businesses; industries; parochial, private, and public schools and home school associations; PTAs and PTOs; organizations serving people with disabilities; and others.

Membership Group. The district membership chairs are members of this group and bring the needs of their respective districts to the attention of the council committee and, in turn, cooperate in the execution of plans in each district. To facilitate effective communication and coordination with unit service, this group should include a liaison with the council commissioner's cabinet who may or may not be a commissioner. This group determines which of the membership events will be used to obtain membership objectives (roundup, together plan, new-unit campaign, recruit-of-the-month, Joining Night, open houses, etc.).

COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT OF MEMBERSHIP/RELATIONSHIPS

The vice president of membership/relationships should be a member of the executive board, and most often a council vice president. Other members of the board may serve on these various committees. In many councils, this position will be titled vice president—membership/relationships and is directly responsible to the council president.

Following is a model position description:

Position Concept

Gives leadership to the membership/relationships function in the council. Recruits, trains, and leads a committee. Develops and expands relationships between chartered organizations and the council. Develops cooperative relationships with key community organizations. Develops and executes plans that will result in increased youth membership and in greater support for chartered organizations.

Principal Responsibilities

- Direct the work of the membership/relationships committee. Use monthly membership reports and Journey to Excellence council, district, and unit reports to identify priorities.
- Recruit, train, and motivate Scouters to serve on the committee and help it to carry out its functions effectively.
- Promote membership and unit growth in Cub Scouting, Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouting, and Exploring through the membership cycle, coordinating youth recruiting and new-unit organization. Plan and help districts carry out roundups, new-unit campaigns, and the other elements of the membership cycle.
- Develop more effective communication with chartered organizations.
- Cultivate community organizations, groups, and associations that might become chartered organizations or support the Scouting program in other ways.
- Support the religious emblems program of chartered organizations.
- Stimulate the use of the program by special youth populations (i.e., low-income, disabled, and ethnic young people, or those in sparsely populated rural areas).
- Prepare short-, intermediate-, and long-range membership and unit objectives.
- Give leadership to events such as relationships conferences or fireside chats with heads of chartered organizations.
- Work with the council professional advisor and council commissioner to establish a council growth plan for new-unit and membership growth and retention in the council for review and approval by all three members of the council Key 3 and the council executive board.
- Liaise and ensure effective communication with the council commissioner.
- Promote membership growth in all markets and in all programs (Cub Scouting, Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouts, and Exploring).

Possible Subcommittees - Membership

SCOUTING FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

A council advisory committee on youth with disabilities may report to either the council executive board or the council membership committee to help all council structures provide the most effective Scouting program for youth with disabilities and special needs.

Principal Responsibilities

- Help the council increase the percentage of youth with disabilities served.
- Help the council gain a better awareness of people with disabilities.
- Develop good council working relationships with organizations and individuals in the community that have special understanding about people with disabilities.
- Advise the council on plans, programs, and techniques to better serve youth with disabilities.

For more details, see the Council Advisory Committee section in the *Scouting for Youth With Disabilities* manual, No. 34059, available online at <http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/CubScouts/Leaders.aspx>.

FAMILY SCOUTING

A Family Scouting Committee can aid in the integration of female members into Cub Scouts and Scouts BSA, as well as monitoring their progress through the older youth programs.

Principal Responsibilities

- Designate areas in the council area with a low concentration of family packs and girl troops and recommend possible new areas in which to expand family scouting.
- Serve as resources to units and districts in ways to integrate female members in all activities, thereby creating new recruitment opportunities to females.
- Serve as mentors to leaders of girl-only units on integrating into the district and council activities.
- Devise new recruitment activities to increase the percentage of females in all programs.

RELIGIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

In addition to the religious relationships representatives on the council committee, councils may also wish to form Protestant, Jewish, Catholic, Islamic, or other advisory committees on Scouting. They can provide helpful liaison between the religious organizations and Scouting. This can be tailored or expanded to fit local needs.

Principal Responsibilities

- Provide religious support and worship services at council and district events such as camporees, Scouting shows, Cub Scout day camps, and other council and district events.
- Provide a chaplaincy program for all council long-term camps and contingents.
- Provide incentives, materials, and guidance for all Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, and Venturers interested in earning the religious emblems of their faith.
- Provide a monitoring service to the council to make sure Scouting activities do not conflict with designated religious holidays and major religious practices.
- Serve as a resource for religious groups to help them use the Scouting program as an effective ministry with youth, especially through the relationships conference. Provide

committee support to the council in searching out prospective religious organizations that could become chartered organizations using the Scouting program.

- Assist the membership committee with resource personnel as plans are developed for together plans, Joining Nights for Scouting, roundups, and membership promotion functions.
- Provide districts with a directory of all potential chartered organizations in the district tabulated by faith/denomination.
- Ensure Scouting successes in council are reported to institutional heads.

The subcommittee meets quarterly, with each denominational group gathering individually for a period of time and later reassembling for a discussion of total council needs and support. The respective religious groups may meet more often. These committees may *not* be formed on a district level.

EDUCATION RELATIONSHIPS

It is advisable to establish an education relationships subcommittee that meets quarterly or more often as needed.

Principal Responsibilities

- Act in close liaison with council leadership to maintain or regain Scouting access to schools.
- Constantly monitor developments and changes in local school systems concerning policies and procedures that could affect the operation of Scouting.
- Strengthen relationships with all community education systems to provide for their cooperation.
- Promote efforts with all parent-teacher groups to understand their purposes, goals, and objectives, and their current program emphases. Develop a working relationship with the local council in support of its purpose.
- Invite representatives from the private sector, public libraries, and youth correctional agencies to consider the use of the Scouting program and/or provide support services.
- Ensure that the successes of Scouting in the council are reported to local, regional, and state school boards, etc.

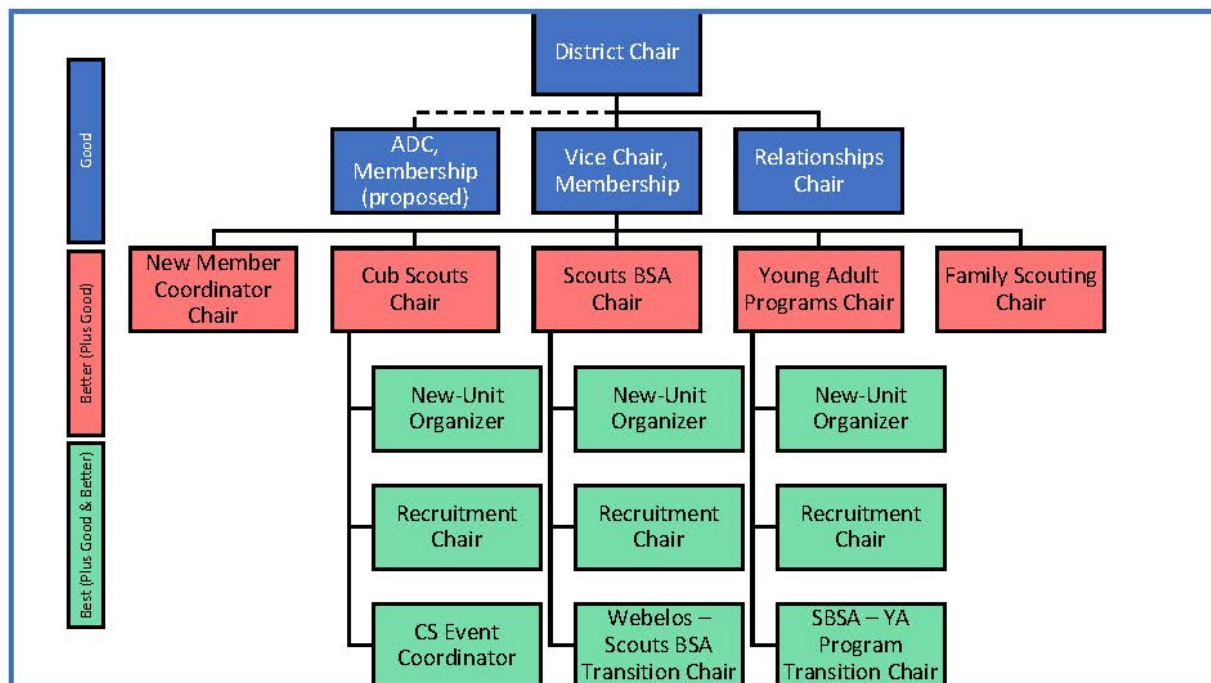
COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

A community relationships subcommittee also meets quarterly or more often as needed.

Principal Responsibilities

- Support service and fraternal groups.
- Relate to all central labor councils and labor unions.
- Coordinate efforts in underserved areas to help understand, relate to, and develop Scouting.
- Develop other areas of focus based on the specific needs of the council, especially related directly to key ethnic populations.
- Ensure successes of Scouting are reported to the organization heads within the council.

The District Membership Committee



The district membership committee is primarily responsible for the relationship with community organizations, the organization of new units in order to provide opportunity for youth membership growth, and youth recruitment.

Cultivation of present chartered organizations is extremely important. This is done through continuous expressions of appreciation, invitations to organizational heads to visit Scouting events, and recognitions for tenure and exemplary support from organizations. The relationship’s function at the district level is not as formalized as at the council level. It is mainly a “door opening” function that follows up efforts made by the council membership committee. A committee member for each of the three major categories of organization -- religious, educational, and community -- can be added on a district level if there is a need. The chart would be adapted for their situation.

New-unit organization and unit reorganization are major responsibilities of the membership committee. All new-unit organization originates with this committee, and unit reorganization is generally done in cooperation with the commissioner staff, which has the ongoing responsibility of renewing unit charters. Commissioners are accountable for keeping units alive and healthy, but they often need the support of the membership committee to help get units reorganized. Instead of a planning body, the district membership committee is an action group. It conducts the events and activities that will reach out to serve more youth.

District Membership Committee Tasks

1. Gather Information

- Work with the district executive to establish a district growth plan for new-unit and membership growth in the district.

- Use the district market analysis to find out how many youths there are of Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouting, and Exploring age.
- Analyze district membership figures on the number of Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturers, Sea Scouts, and Explorers for the past several years.
- Find out where units of each age level are located to help decide how many units of each type will be needed and where.
- Track membership growth throughout the current year.
- Develop a list of all potential chartered organizations in the district.
- Develop a plan to support unit new member coordinators.
- Gather information about various types of community organizations, as well as individual organizations within each type.
- Plan and conduct activity interest surveys with Venturing-age youth.

2. Cultivate Relationships with Community Organizations

- Encourage community organizations to use the Scouting program.
- Act in close liaison with council leadership to maintain or regain Scouting access to schools.
- Conduct district relationships conferences for heads of chartered organizations and chartered organization representatives.
- Promote the religious emblems program through your religious emblems coordinator.
- Share information with other district Scouting leaders about how to work more effectively with various types of organizations.
- Work closely with the marketing committee.

3. Organize Units

- Recruit and train organizers for new units as well as those needing reorganization.
- Organize new packs, troops, teams, crews, ships, and posts, using the *Unit Roadmap*.
- Conduct a together plan—a plan to bring Scouting to a number of organizations.
- Reorganize units that need a new start.
- Make sure that new or reorganized units are under the care of a member of the commissioner staff before you leave.
- Promote the whole Scouting family (the organization of packs, troops, and crews in the same chartered organization). Some councils have established a “Whole Family of Scouting” award, which stimulates chartered organizations to have the whole family of units.
- Communicate and coordinate plans to organize new units with the district commissioner to ensure commissioner engagement with unit volunteers before and when the unit is being formed.

4. Help Youth Join Existing Units

- Plan and carry out district Join Scouting events and other youth recruiting campaigns.
- Help existing units develop a plan of year-round recruiting and an interest in looking for new members.
- Keep a list of all Scouting units that have not added new members during the past six months. District Scouters help coach units that show no growth in members.

A variety of possibilities exists regarding structure and roles. Below are some position descriptions for each district to consider what is needed and will best help them grow their membership.

DISTRICT MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

The district membership chair (or Vice Chair for Membership) is responsible to the district chair and serves on the council membership/relationships committee. The person who fills this role must have leadership ability and the capacity to manage a team working on a variety of activities. The chair needs to be able to motivate committee members and to inspire them to meet district membership objectives. One of the roles of the district membership chair is to energize unit leaders in every unit in the district to grow and recruit new members. In addition to driving recruitment of new Cub Scouts, the chair should motivate and facilitate unit leaders in troops, crews, ships, and posts to actively recruit from units in a younger-youth program as well as the community. As part of this effort, the chair should share a Roundtable Membership Minute with unit leaders at every roundtable. The chair must be a good adult recruiter.

Use *Selecting District People*, No. 34512, to determine the number of people needed on this committee for your district.

NEW CUB SCOUT EVENT COORDINATOR

Principal Responsibilities (If done at a district level)

- Schedule activity for new Scouts.
- Welcome new parents and Scouts.
- Engage new parents in unit activities.

DISTRICT WEBELOS-TO-SCOUT TRANSITION CHAIR

Principal Responsibilities

- Contact all packs in early fall to update the list of all fifth grade Webelos Scouts.
- Coach Cubmasters, Webelos den leaders, and Scoutmasters in the transition process at roundtables, at training courses, and through personal contact.
- Report to the membership committee chair and keep the district committee informed.
- Track and maintain records of Webelos graduation by using a chart that lists the transition record of each pack.
- Work with unit commissioners to follow up on Webelos Scouts who have not joined a troop.
- Work toward 100 percent Webelos-to-Scout transition.

SCOUTS BSA – YOUNG ADULT TRANSITION CHAIR

Principal Responsibilities

- Contact all troops in the spring and encourage older boys to stay involved and join a Venturing crew, Exploring post, or Sea Scout ship.
- Coach Scoutmasters, Advisors, and chartered organizations to establish a Venturing crew.
- Track Venturing-age Boy Scouts who did not reregister and invite them to join a Venturing crew, Exploring post, or Sea Scout ship.
- Set a goal to increase the number of Explorer, Venturers and Sea Scouts in districts.

NEW-UNIT ORGANIZER

Principal Responsibilities

- Report to the district membership chair.

- As part of the new-unit organizing team, attend the new-unit organizer training. The new-unit organizing team consists of the new-unit organizer, new-unit commissioner, district training coordinator/chair, and district executive.
- Become familiar with the four pillars of high-quality units and the four phases of Exploring in order to ensure that the unit starts the right way.
- Introduce the actual or likely unit leader, unit committee chair, and chartered organization representative to the new-unit commissioner or district commissioner as early in the unit formation process as possible. Ideally, the new-unit organizer will introduce the commissioner before the unit is organized.
- Work with the chartered organization to introduce the Scouting program and promote all levels of Scouting.
- Work with the chartered organization to select and recruit leadership for the unit. Leadership should be in place before youth are actively recruited.
- Work with the training committee to ensure that newly recruited leadership is trained in Youth Protection and receive leader-specific training by position.
- Work with the leadership to create a detailed plan for the Scouting program, including tentative activity schedules, plans for weekly and monthly meetings, scheduled monthly committee meetings, and a budget introducing product sales.
- Work with the new leadership to help provide training on youth recruitment strategies. Using BSA resources such as recommended youth talks, high-adventure surveys, activity nights, and other best methods.
- Work with the unit to collect applications and fees for all Scouts and adult leaders, and aid in completing all necessary paperwork.
- Ensure that the paperwork for the new unit is submitted to the district executive or designee for submission to the local council service center.
- Present charter with the new-unit commissioner to the chartered organization.

Organizing Units

Cultivating Prospective Chartered Organizations

Prospective chartered organizations should be approached from their viewpoints and interests. Point out how Scouting can help the organizations achieve their objectives for the young people in their communities. It is important that the potential chartered organizations understand the cooperation that exists between the Boy Scouts of America and the religious, educational, civic, and/or community organization. For Venturing Crews, if possible, select a Chartered Organization that aligns with their specialty.

As soon as the facts and the need for a unit have been determined, organize a unit using the four pillars outlined in the *Unit Roadmap* to ensure a strong organization.

During the organizing process, establish a mutually beneficial relationship that will further the purposes of the community organization and Scouting. The *Unit Roadmap* would be helpful for this discussion.

The purpose of the Unit Roadmap is to help simplify the tasks for having successful units. BSA professionals, charter organizations and volunteers work together to foster the unit through different phases a Scout unit might be experiencing. The Unit Roadmap should be laid out to address the 3 phases of long-term unit success: starting, sustaining, and growing.



At this point it is important to know the characteristics of potential chartered partners and their members, as well as their place in the BSA plan. The Council VP of Membership and Relationships and the Relationships Chair should totally familiarize themselves with the *Chartered Organizations Resource Guide*, No. 522-925 WB, which is an excellent resource in the operation of a Council Relationships Committee.

There are numerous versions of the Chartered Organization Agreement currently available, dependent upon the organization sponsoring the BSA unit, as well as Facility Use Agreements for those organizations who are willing to let BSA units use their facilities but are not actively engaged

in sponsoring a BSA unit. This subject is constantly changing at the time of this writing, so the prudent action is to confer with your Scout Executive for the most current paperwork.

Starting a Unit

Starting a unit involves four phases:

1. Recruiting a chartered organization
 2. Recruiting unit leadership
 3. Planning the program
 4. Recruiting youth.
- Sometimes, these phases run consecutively and other times serially.
 - There could be several options to starting a new unit. (Youth-first or charter partner-first)
 - **If you have youth and some adult leadership already in place, a unit could be established as a “coming soon unit.” Your council can assist with getting this unit pin in the BeAScout set-up.**
 - **It is critical for the District Commissioner to appoint a new-unit commissioner to work with the unit key three in order to develop a plan for the units first year. This will provide for a high level of success.**
 - More detailed instructions on the four steps of Starting a Unit are contained in the *Unit Roadmap*.

Sustaining a Unit

The following tasks relate directly to success in Sustaining the Unit:

1. Meeting Success. The unit needs to have meetings that are productive and engaging. Successful meetings combine fun activities, learning (often linked to advancement) and opportunities for youth to engage in age-appropriate leadership. A new-unit commissioner can be an essential resource for unit leaders new to their roles. Unit assessments completed by a commissioner can provide feedback for unit leaders to improve meeting planning and execution.
2. Leader Training. Trained leaders know how to keep youth safe, deliver an exciting and youth-centered program and plan for advancement to be a natural outcome of fun activities. A New Member Coordinator can guide newly recruited adult leaders to appropriate training opportunities, both online or in-person as best fits the role and preference of the volunteer.
3. Unit Performance, Budget, and Program Planning. A unit’s program requires planning, family and youth buy-in and support, and proper budgeting. Additionally, for a unit to have a sustained lifetime, proper succession planning for adult leaders is essential to ensure continuity of programming and experiences for youth and their families. The Journey to Excellence recognition program can provide important benchmarks to assist in planning. The new-unit commissioner will work with the district commissioner in order to identify where the district can provide additional resources.
4. Communication Plan. A unit communication plan should be developed. This plan should include what social media tools will be used in order to communicate the units operations with the youth, adults, parents and prospective members. The unit can also share their plan for infusing the unit into the community.

5. Charter Renewal. Scouting units are owned by a chartered organization. It is imperative and required that this organization annually recommit to the principles found in a BSA unit charter. Additionally, this process ensures that all youth and adults are properly registered in their unit; this is an important link in providing youth protection and liability insurance.
6. Youth Advancement and Leader Recognition. Recognition has been a fundamental part of Scouting from its beginning and is most effective when done publicly. Done well, it is a powerful tool that can help leaders set goals, define accomplishments, encourage skill development, celebrate commitment and achievement, and inspire others to strive for similar success. Recognition is also a way to say, “thank you.” Effective leader recognition is essential to unit success. Formal awards from the BSA are available, but informal, locally provided recognition can also be important.

Grow the Unit

Sustaining the relationship with the chartering organization and key leaders is vital to keeping the unit growing. Some of the factors involved in Growing the Unit are the following:

- BSA Professional visits the chartered organization twice annually and assesses the health of the unit.
- Commissioner Team collaborates with unit leaders to assess the health of the unit and develop plans for continuous improvement.
- The unit should develop a Membership Plan that will guide them to grow and sustain their unit. Plan elements will include:
 - New Member Coordinator(s) need to be recruited and trained.
 - New youth members need to be recruited annually and
 - New adult leaders and members also need to be recruited on a regular basis.
- The unit needs to build a competitive program in order to retain its members.
- The unit needs to create a welcoming environment for prospective members and their families.

All of these tasks and concepts are explained in greater detail in the *Unit Roadmap*.

The Unit’s New Member Coordinators

(Note that a unit is encouraged to have co-coordinators or multiple holders of this position.)

Sustaining strong membership in a unit depends not only on having new members join the unit but also on engaging youth and their families in the unit experience so that they stay. The role of the new member coordinators is to ensure that both of these keys to success take place.



Appointment and Support

- The new member coordinators are appointed by and report to the unit committee chair.
- The new member coordinators work with and are supported by the district membership chair, as well as by unit leadership, the chartered organization, and commissioners.

Responsibilities

In general, all new member coordinators:

- Serve as welcoming ambassadors for the unit.
- Work with the unit committee in developing and implementing the Unit Membership Plan.
- Participate in new member coordinator training and collaborate with the district membership team.

Specific responsibilities for each new member coordinator should be determined by the unit's new member team depending on individual interests and the needs of the unit.

The tasks and opportunities listed below should help to guide the planning for individual and shared responsibilities.

Each of the three position elements listed should be included in the Unit Membership Plan developed with the leadership of new member coordinators:

1. Share the benefits of Scouting:
 - Develop and share your own Scouting story, showing the impact of Scouting on your family.
 - Identify and access research data and local examples confirming the fun and value of Scouting to youth, families, and the community.
 - Promote Scouting benefits through social media and other avenues of communication.
 - Showcase Scouting through engagement in local community events and service.
2. Coordinate unit recruitment:
 - Oversee unit recruitment efforts such as joining events, informational presentations, and peer-to-peer initiatives.
 - Appeal to potential youth members and their families through well-designed and widely distributed invitations shared through electronic media, handouts, and personal contacts.
 - Ensure that the unit's BeAScout pin is up to date and that prompt follow-through takes place.
 - Collaborate with local school representatives and community leaders, particularly in the chartered organization, to foster promotion of Scouting opportunities.
3. Guide the joining and welcoming process for youth and their families:
 - Help youth and adults greet newcomers warmly and to establish friendly, enjoyable relationships so that new members form a strong sense of belonging.
 - Develop a unit welcome packet, electronically and/or in print, to answer frequently asked questions and to provide resource and contact information.
 - Ensure that youth and adult applications, transfers, and payments are promptly submitted to the council service center.
 - Build fun and excitement about the unit program and encourage youth and their families to take pride in Scouting accomplishments.
 - Promote feedback and sharing of ideas through customer satisfaction surveys and other means.

Commissioners and Membership

Commissioners: Vital to Success

The purposes of councils and districts are to support the success of units. Council Membership Vice Presidents, and Council Commissioners, along with their professional partners, are strongly encouraged to form strong working bonds in order to ensure seamless membership management in a council. District Membership Committee Chairs, District Commissioners, and District Executives should also strive to work collaboratively on membership matters. Considering the membership-related functions of every Commissioner, regular dialog between the Commissioner Staff and the Membership team is vital to membership growth.

Therefore, council and district Membership VPs and chairs and their Council and District Commissioners should discuss the following questions when membership development plans are being prepared and periodically throughout the year:

1. How many and which units did not increase their membership by at least 5% in the previous year?
 - a. How many units did not increase their membership by at least 10% in the previous year?
 - b. What services are needed to support the growth and success of these units?
2. How many units have set a recruiting goal for the year? Which ones have not? What services are needed to support the growth and success of the units that have not set goals or have not attained their goals?
3. How can the Membership Committee and Commissioners work together to develop and retain more new units?
4. When and where will the next unit development contacts and events occur?

The rationale for these questions is as follows:

1. The Membership Committee and Commissioners should know whether and how well units are growing. Council Membership Tools, which is available to Membership Committee members and Commissioners through my.scouting.org, is an excellent resource for this information. Commissioners can support units with growth needs (whether the issue is program quality, membership focus, succession planning, etc.), and the Membership Committee can provide training, promotional material, and other support to units needing to grow.
2. Declining or low membership may be an indicator of a unit needing attention and support from commissioners, membership teams, or both.
3. Every unit needs to set a recruiting goal and keep recruiting until they reach or, preferably, exceed it. We can no longer be complacent with a Cub Scout pack that accepts the results of one recruitment event if it does not produce significant growth.

To be of assistance, Commissioners need to know about efforts to develop new units and the times and locations of upcoming meetings and events. The sooner Commissioners can build trusted relationships with the incoming unit leaders and active volunteers, the sooner they can help the unit develop an excellent program and grow. Commissioners should be ready and able to support new units as soon as they form, if not before.

To improve recruitment in a unit, the Membership Team needs to have the support of the Commissioner Staff, as they frequently work in tandem to build the program. Council and district membership leaders and commissioners should establish a year-round mechanism for ensuring

excellent communication, collaboration, and coordination so the two teams can work well together and separately to achieve their common goals in expanding the reach of Scouting. With a culture of “Be the Heart; Build Relationships; Change Lives,” the purpose of Unit Service, *i.e.*, Commissioners, is to help units deliver the Scouting program in a way that will make more adults and young people want to join and stay. The stated priorities to fulfill that purpose are:

1. Being the single, best resource. The role of the Commissioner is to be the one-stop for unit leaders and other adult volunteers needing or wanting information, training, etc. Although Commissioners often do not know the answer to a question, their charge is to find it or connect the unit leader to a subject matter expert, such as the membership chair.
2. Ensuring S.A.F.E.* programs. Great program is the heart of Scouting. Great, S.A.F.E. program will attract and retain youth and adults to Scouting.
3. Enabling significant, sustainable growth.

The Commissioner Staff is in a unique position to assist in building Scouting. For example, Roundtables should include Membership Minutes, presented (typically) by district membership chairs. Roundtables also offer excellent opportunities for membership leaders to converse with most units about their membership-growth needs.

Commissioners might have relationships with unit leaders that allow for conversations about growing their units. Commissioners might also provide a vital link between units and membership committees. Still, Membership committees should also seek to collaborate directly with units needing their specific knowledge, capabilities, experience, ideas, and strategies.

Involving Commissioners in new-unit development efforts, including attending sign-up events and visiting prospective new-Scout parents and new-unit organizers, is critical to the success of a new unit. Providing Commissioners a platform to develop trusted relationships will help ensure that the new unit will not only form but thrive for the long term. By building relationships early in the development of new units, Commissioners can successfully support the new units to provide great, S.A.F.E. program, which will, in turn, attract more adults and youth to join and stay in Scouting.

The New-Unit Commissioner

Unit service has a vital role to play in organizing and forming new units. Working alongside the membership committee and professional Scouters, commissioners need to be well-positioned to collaborate with the new units before and during formation and for at least three years after the unit forms. The key to success is relationships.

The commissioner or commissioners for a new unit will become the best resource for the new unit leaders and volunteers for coaching and obtaining other support. When a new unit is organized, the BSA, council, and district commit to parents and guardians that their children will have a high-quality, Scouting experience they cannot get anywhere else. It is a promise that needs to be kept! Once the unit forms, commissioners should take the lead to support the unit to have a great, S.A.F.E. program that will cause youth and adults to join and stay in the unit and Scouting. Every member of the district committee should also share this responsibility.

* S.A.F.E. stands for Supervision, Assessment, Fitness and Skill, and Equipment and Environment. For more information, go to [SAFE Checklist | Boy Scouts of America \(scouting.org\)](#).

For more information on the role of commissioners and unit service in developing and supporting new units, see the *Unit Roadmap* at <https://www.scouting.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/10/522-025-Unit-Roadmap-Final.pdf>.

Recognitions

Founder's Bar



The Founder's Bar may be worn above the unit numerals as soon as the completed charter and money are officially received by the Scout office. The bar may be worn for as long as the unit numbers are worn. It may not be worn with any other unit numerals or by anyone whose name was not affiliated with the first unit charter.

This recognition emphasizes both the importance and the pride of forming and nurturing a new Scout unit. Although it does not guarantee that the unit will become a Bronze, Silver, or Gold Journey to Excellence unit, it does encourage multiple-year charter renewal so that one may continue wearing the bar. The bar will stimulate conversation and emulation by others.

For more information, visit <https://www.scouting.org/awards/awards-central/founders-bar/>.

William D. Boyce New-Unit Organizer Award



The William D. Boyce New-Unit Organizer Award recognizes volunteers who organize one or more traditional Scouting units.

The award may be worn on the adult uniform. The award is a square knot placed over the three colors representing the three phases of our program—Cub Scouting, Scouts BSA, and Venturing. For more information, see: <https://www.scouting.org/awards/awards-central/william-boyce/>.

The Organizer pin, No. 97, is worn on non-uniform wear by a new-unit organizer.

Commissioner Award of Excellence in Unit Service



Any registered commissioner who provides direct meaningful unit service is eligible to earn the Commissioner Award of Excellence in Unit Service. Consistent delivery of unit service exemplifying the commissioner culture statement – Be the Heart-Build Relationships-Change Lives – as well as working collaboratively with the unit Key 3 to identify strengths and weaknesses of the unit; work to strengthen the unit in membership, program, volunteer leadership, planning, and budgeting; and link the unit to district and council resources and assistance as necessary are critical

elements of the award. Award requirements and progress record are available at <https://www.scouting.org/commissioners/recognition/commissioner-awd-of-excellence/>.

Gaining School Access - A Special Committee Task

What Is Access?

Access to schools takes many forms. It may be the ability to send home a message with boys who are prospective Cub Scouts. It may be the opportunity to present a “youth talk” to prospective Cub Scouts. It may be a matter of requesting the use of a school facility. In the following pages, you will learn about a tiered response, what you should know about schools to optimize access, what the law says about school access, three examples of responding to school access issues, and proven practices for building relationships with school personnel.

What Is a Tiered Response?

The process of using a tiered response is similar to the process followed by emergency responders. Not every emergency requires a full response by police and fire. Rather, the level of response is dependent upon the magnitude of the emergency. The tiered response for addressing school access challenges is similar to the tiered response of emergency services.

In terms of Scouting’s access to schools, the tiered response is applied by handling various school access issues as closely to the incident as possible: first by unit leaders, then by district volunteers and professional staff, and finally through resources available at the council level. But this must be coordinated at the council level to ensure there is consistency and no conflicts. A coordinated response is particularly important where two districts serve the same school district.

A tiered response is a sequenced and measured approach to dealing with a challenge. This kind of response involves understanding the needs of all stakeholders and beginning the relationship not by immediately pulling out the “big guns” but by building a relationship, grounded in mutual understanding and respect, among the stakeholders. The tiered response process offers a sequenced set of actions to take to address an access issue. The tiered response approach attempts to handle a problem at the level closest to the event—typically the unit level.

What Should I Know About Schools?

This question may seem silly but experiencing a school as a student for 13 years provides only one perspective on its operation. Schools are designed to educate children to prepare them for careers and to become members of society. The principal, as one of the key leaders in the school system, is concerned with several issues: first, providing for the safety of the children in the school; second, supporting his or her faculty; next, maintaining the school facility; and finally, serving as an agent of the community. The use of a school facility as a community resource is understood and recognized, but costs associated with operating those facilities are not often appreciated by the general public. Consistently, principals who were surveyed like Scouting. They recognize the good Scouting does for the children in a community. They also see that Scouting’s youth development goals are similar to those of the educational system.

But principals are human, and their role as gatekeepers to their schools’ facilities is often shaped by previous experiences with Scouts and Scouters, whether positive or negative. School administrators may recognize the value of Scouting, but their memories may be informed by less-than-positive experiences such as Cub Scout den members who left a classroom in a disorderly state after using it.

What Is the Law?

Text from current federal statutes governing schools may provide some context. Applicable statutes include the following:

The Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act (20 U.S.C. §7905) provides that “no public elementary school, public secondary school, local educational agency, or State educational agency that has a designated open forum or a limited public forum and that receives funds made available through the Department shall deny equal access or a fair opportunity to meet to, or discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society), that wishes to conduct a meeting within that designated open forum or limited public forum, including denying such access or opportunity or discriminating for reasons based on the membership or leadership criteria or oath of allegiance to God and country of the Boy Scouts of America or of the youth group listed in title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society).”

The secretary of Education enforces the statute through rules and orders. “If the public school or agency does not comply with the rules or orders, then . . . no funds made available through the Department shall be provided to a school that fails to comply with such rules or orders or to any agency or school served by an agency that fails to comply with such rules or orders.”

The Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act requires public schools to provide Boy Scouts equal access to benefits and services on pain of losing federal funding. The access must be “on terms that are no less favorable than the most favorable terms provided to one or more outside youth or community groups.” 34 C.F.R. § 108.6(b)(4). These benefits and services include “school-related means of communication, such as bulletin board notices and literature distribution, and recruitment.” 34 C.F.R. § 108.6(b)(2). No Child Left Behind Act.

Subpart 2

Sec. 9525. Equal Access to Public School Facilities.

(a) Short Title

This section may be cited as the “Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act.”

(b) In General

(1) Equal Access—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no public elementary school, public secondary school, local educational agency, or State educational agency that has a designated open forum or a limited public forum and that receives funds made available through the Department shall deny equal access or a fair opportunity to meet to, or discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society), that wishes to conduct a meeting within that designated open forum or limited public forum, including denying such access or opportunity or discriminating for reasons based on the membership or leadership criteria or oath of allegiance to God and country of the Boy Scouts of America or of the youth group listed in title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society).

(2) Voluntary Sponsorship—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any school, agency, or a school served by an agency to sponsor any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in title 36 of the United States Code (as a patriotic society).

(c) Termination of Assistance and Other Action

(1) Departmental Action—The Secretary is authorized and directed to effectuate subsection (b) by issuing and securing compliance with rules or orders with respect to a public

elementary school, public secondary school, local educational agency, or State educational agency that receives funds made available through the Department and that denies equal access, or a fair opportunity to meet, or discriminates, as described in subsection (b) of this section.

(2) Procedure—The Secretary shall issue and secure compliance with the rules or orders, under paragraph (1), through the Office for Civil Rights and in a manner consistent with the procedure used by a Federal department or agency under section 2000d–1 of title 42. If the public school or agency does not comply with the rules or orders, then notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds made available through the Department shall be provided to a school that fails to comply with such rules or orders or to any agency or school served by an agency that fails to comply with such rules or orders.

(3) Judicial Review—Any action taken by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall be subject to the judicial review described in section 2000d–2 of title 42. Any person aggrieved by the action may obtain that judicial review in the manner, and to the extent, provided in section 2000d–2 of title 42.

(d) Definition and Rule

(1) Definition—In this section, the term “youth group” means any group or organization intended to serve young people under the age of 21.

(2) Rule—For the purpose of this section, an elementary school or secondary school has a limited public forum whenever the school involved grants an offering to, or opportunity for, one or more outside youth or community groups to meet on school premises or in school facilities before or after the hours during which attendance at the school is compulsory.

In summary, the main point of this legislation is that any school receiving 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 provided the same right of access as any other community organization. If sports organizations use schools at no cost, then Scouting should be afforded the same opportunity. If a community organization uses school facilities and pays a rental fee, then a Scouting 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.

Responding to Access Issues

Many access issues are, at their core, essentially communications issues. Three common examples of access issues are presented and explored below. In addition, some tested approaches for building relationships at the unit level—where the challenges are real and ongoing—are presented for adoption and adaptation to local customs.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Larry F. is a new Cubmaster. He enters the office of the school principal at 1:15 p.m. on Monday. 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 first through fourth grades. The fliers are part of the pack’s fall recruitment drive. The “School Night for Scouting” meeting, planned 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.

Analysis of the Incident

Larry, as a parent, was familiar with materials coming home from school with his children. What he was not aware of is that the district has a policy that requires any information sent home through students to be submitted to the local district office two weeks before intended delivery. The

secretary's unwillingness to accept the documents was consistent with the responsibilities of her job and with the school district policy. Had Larry not stormed out angrily, the secretary would have explained the procedures and given Larry the contact information. Larry's anger and frustration upset the secretary, who asked her supervisor to handle any future interactions with Larry.

Unit-Level Response

Larry's good intentions—reaching out to prospective new members—ran into an obstacle: the school's secretary and her correct enforcement of a school district policy on distribution of materials through “backpack mail.” Another way of thinking about the obstacle is that it was the result of a lack of information. Larry had not been informed nor had he sought to inquire about whether there was a process required for distributing fliers, nor did he realize that planning ahead was required. Unit leaders who had worked with the school in prior years would have been valuable assets in helping Larry work effectively with the school and the secretary.

District-Level Response

The relationships committee in a local Scouting district needs to identify and communicate school district rules and protocols regarding distribution of materials. Providing this information in written form for new leaders as they begin work in Scouting can help avoid the misunderstanding and the frustrations that were evident in the vignette described above. Moreover, district personnel need to train Scouters regarding appropriate and inappropriate responses to school personnel. Scouters need to be informed that remaining cordial and polite while seeking understanding and information is essential as they interact with school officials.

Council-Level Response

The relationships subcommittee or team can ensure that each district supports unit leadership by ensuring that communications guidelines are understood and communicated to all leaders. In some cases, leadership at the council and board levels may have the opportunity to work with school districts to familiarize them with a policy that positively serves both schools and Scouting in their common mission of supporting young people in Scouting. The community-use policies in a number of school districts were formed in consultation with local council Scouting leadership to ensure that all parties understood rules and practices. Guidelines that are clearly communicated and clearly understood serve all parties well.

MEETING WITH YOUTH: BOY TALKS

Roger B., a new Scoutmaster with Scouts BSA Troop 11B, is looking to recruit new members for the troop. Troop 11 was fortunate to have a successful recruiting event; four new Scouts joined during a crossover ceremony held during 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.

Analysis of the Incident

Roger's frustration was the result of his expectations about school access and the reality of school access. Although laws and rules ensure access of Scout organizations to public schools and students, this access does not include disruption of the educational day. As described previously, the primary mission of schools is formal education guided by an approved curriculum. This is a mission the BSA supports and complements.

Unit-Level Response

It would have been ideal for Roger to consult with adults in the unit who were familiar with recruiting in the school. Further, the person who performed this function in the troop prior to Roger could have coached Roger, providing him the tools, expectations, and information he needed to succeed. In this case, that consultation before the fact did not occur. So, when Roger reported back to the previous Scoutmaster and the current committee chair about his frustration with

scheduling a meeting for fifth-grade boys, two things happened: First, the previous Scoutmaster apologized to Roger for not briefing him more thoroughly about ways to recruit in the elementary school and clarified what should have been communicated when Roger first took on this new responsibility. Second, the committee chair noted that this issue of training for school access should be on the agenda for the troop committee so the troop would have a system in place for educating new adult leaders about access to the local schools for recruiting.

District-Level Response

Upon hearing about Roger's frustrations, the district executive and the membership chair met and agreed to modify the district's required roundup training to include general information about school access issues and specific information about not requesting access to students during formal instructional periods of the school day. The district executive also briefed Troop 11's unit commissioner about the issue so he could support and assist Roger. The district executive also scheduled a meeting with the school principal to apologize for the request and for the lack of information provided to new Scoutmaster Roger. The district executive was clear that Roger was simply doing what he thought was appropriate and that the responsibility for the problem resided in inadequate training of the Scoutmaster about this issue.

Council-Level Response

The district executive reported this issue to his director of field services, who had heard of several similar incidents across the council. The council's vice president for membership tasked the training chair to address the limits of school access in subsequent training conducted throughout the council.

USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

Pack 108's annual pinewood derby was a growing success. 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 had grown to nearly 80 - 10 strong dens of active Cub Scouts. Running the pinewood derby on a school evening during a pack meeting was going to keep children up too late. The pack committee chair investigated options and found that the school was available on Saturdays - at a cost: \$200 for the building, and double overtime for the custodian who needed to open up the building, or a total of nearly \$500. The pack committee was furious: "How can they do that to us? Don't they realize that they are ruining things for the children?" The pack committee secretary began composing a letter of objection to the school district superintendent, ready to share a piece of her mind over the way the school is treating the Cub Scouts.

Analysis of the Incident

Unfortunately, there is a business element to operating schools, and there is a cost associated with opening a building on the weekend. Per the law, it would be expected that any non-school entity using the building outside of normal operating times would be required to pay for the use of the facility. Even local council camps require a user fee, so a school is not dissimilar in that regard.

Unit-Level Response

The question that needs to be considered at the unit level is whether or not investing pack funds for using the school's community room makes sense. There is a sense from the vignette above that the decision to move to a Saturday had been made previously, and that the additional costs were an unexpected consequence of the move—after the change to a Saturday had been confirmed.

As program plans are made in the future, knowing the costs associated with the weekend use of the school facility will help units make the most informed decisions possible. The response of the pack committee secretary, while understandable, is made without recognizing that any non-school organization that uses the facility must pay the same user fees. There is no persecution of the Cub Scouts—it is a charge that all users need to pay to help the school recover the costs of using the facility. While this issue does relate to access to facilities, Scouting is not being treated differently from other organizations. If Scouting were held to a different standard, action by local council leadership addressing this disparity would be warranted.

District-Level Response

One of the sessions during training for Cub Scout leaders involves planning and considering alternatives. While Cubmasters focus on making plans for pack meetings and den leaders concentrate on planning den meetings, there are opportunities during basic training sessions for new Cubmasters to address planning concerns for other pack events. A district trainer recounted her meeting with a new Cubmaster during a training session. The new Cubmaster stated that her pack of 80 members needed seven hours to carry out a pinewood derby event. The district trainer was able to introduce her to a parent who coordinated the pinewood derby in a pack of a similar size and was able to lead a fun, organized event that was completed in 90 minutes. The district-level response, then, is largely one of being aware of local best practices and helping leaders to find alternative resources picnic shelters, and even in malls. While tradition has often meant that we do the same thing the same way time after time, creative use of resources—and communicating those ideas through open forums at roundtable meetings—can help packs negotiate a perceived barrier to access or identify workable alternatives.

Council-Level Response

Council-level training events could be developed to help unit leaders find alternatives to using the local school for events such as the pinewood derby. Helping units run events with greater efficiency would be an excellent training course for a local council University of Scouting. If the access issue is present and is documented to be an instance of Scouting being treated differently from other community organizations, a thoughtful review of practices is in order before action. Contact your district professional and the Scout executive for guidance, recommendations, and action. The suggestions in the following section are grounded in developing relationships that focus on the shared desire to meet the needs of young people.

Building Relationships

Council and district relationship chairs can play an important role in building a working relationship between school personnel and the local Scouting community. A positive relationship, grounded in shared values and respectful of the role of the school staff, is the first thing Scouters need to appreciate and act on. As a counterpart to the appreciation for schools and school staff, helping school staff and leadership understand what Scouting does for young people is of value as well. Commitment to meeting the needs of youth is shared by both constituencies. A paradigm shift in how we think about schools is desirable as we consider access issues specifically and our relationship with schools generally. Rather than thinking of schools as service providers (i.e., a source of children and a meeting place), it is helpful to consider schools as clients who would gain much from supporting the services we provide. As stated previously, schools and Scouting have much in common and have a shared mission to offer programming that benefits children. In Scouting, we have a specific instructional methodology that serves the needs of children in a different way than schools do. 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, rather than seeing us in competition with one another.

PROVEN PRACTICES AT THE UNIT LEVEL

Adopt-a-School

The BSA's nationwide Adopt-a-School program offers a comprehensive undertaking that connects Scout packs, troops, and crews with schools in their communities. Participating Scouts then work, within clearly defined guidelines, with school administrations and offer the volunteer services that most efficiently meet their schools' needs. Each unit offers its partner school a minimum

commitment of one year, building a meaningful relationship and leading to significant changes in the school.

For information on the BSA's Adopt-a-School initiative, visit <http://adoptaschool.scouting.org/>.

Parent Teacher Association /Parent Teacher Organization Support

Reaching out directly to PTA/PTO-type organizations to provide volunteers for school fairs and carnivals has been helpful in building relationships between Scouting and school support and advocacy groups such as this one. In numerous cases, generous, freely provided service was instrumental in PTAs serving as chartered organizations for Cub Scout packs.

Teacher and School Staff Relationships

Scouting is often a mystery to school staff and personnel. Reaching out to these individuals is not only a courtesy to show appreciation for services rendered but also part of building positive, long-term relationships. Following are a few successful examples of ways relationships have been started and sustained:

- School staff pinewood derby. Cub Scout packs that meet at schools provide teachers and other staff members with pinewood derby kits. Teachers are invited to race their cars in a special heat reserved for school staff members.
- Popcorn. Cub Scout packs that meet at the school budget for gifts of popcorn for teachers to show their support and build connections.
- Teacher expertise. Den leaders reach out to teachers for their expertise as it pertains to Cub Scout and Webelos advancement opportunities. Art teachers and science teachers have knowledge about and passion for their disciplines, and they are usually happy to share what they know with an interested audience.

Organization or Club Day

Many PTAs/PTOs host a meeting before the start of the school year during which all school-related organizations are offered a forum to showcase their program to parents and children. Scouting units are a natural fit for an event such as this. If this type of event does not exist, pack leadership can take the lead in scheduling such an event and providing Scout service to support the endeavor.

PROVEN PRACTICES AT THE DISTRICT AND COUNCIL LEVELS

Board and District Relationships

To a great extent, the council's success is grounded in the quality of your executive board and district committee membership. An effective board influences the amount of money that is raised, the quality of the leadership that is hired, and the resources that can be harnessed. School district leadership already shares a variety of dispositions with Scouting leadership. Involving school district administrators and school board members helps to develop and sustain relationships. The use of the BSA's North Star Award provides tools to recognize those in the community who support Scouting's initiatives, and that recognition can be a helpful first step in recruiting for future board membership and leadership. For information about the North Star Award, see www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/North_Star_Award.pdf.

Elbert K. Fretwell Outstanding Educator Award

The Elbert K. Fretwell Outstanding Educator Award has been developed by the Educational Relationships Subcommittee (ERSC) of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Dr. Fretwell was a professor of education at Columbia University, an early thinker in the Scouting

movement, and the second Chief Scout Executive of the BSA (succeeding James E. West). The Fretwell Award is presented by local Scouters to teachers, educational support staff, and school administrators who stand out from their professional peers in instilling Scouting values in their students. Dr. Fretwell championed Scouting programs as extracurricular learning opportunities that promoted positive values and community service. Scouting benefits from easy access to schools for recruiting and from opportunities to serve schools. This program is designed to be implemented by the Scouting district committee, through the membership chair and district membership committee. It may be adapted for use at the council, area, regional, and national levels as well.

More information on the Fretwell award is available at: https://scoutingwire.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/522-05918_EKFretwell_Guide.pdf.

Board of Review Service

The highest rank in Scouting, the Eagle Scout rank, requires a board of review. Inviting school district leadership to participate in these boards on a consistent basis provides an excellent opportunity to profile the good that Scouting provides for youth and the community. In one community, Scouting's access to schools was denied for a period, but eventually the administration reversed that decision and resumed its support for Scouting. A principal involved as a board of review participant was highly impressed by an Eagle candidate who had formerly attended her school. She invited the new Eagle Scout to come to her school and talk to all boys in the school about what he had accomplished in Scouting and the adventures he had experienced.

Youth Recruiting Where School Day Access to Youth Is Denied

If school access isn't a problem, good for you! But maintaining this relationship and cultivating it for the future is important. Don't take it for granted.

Simultaneous with efforts to regain school access, a council with an access challenge must develop a strategy of alternative methods for inviting youth and families to join without the use of schools. Even councils and districts without school access problems should be using additional recruiting methods. Use many possible methods to invite boys and girls to join. **Consider this: In a nationwide study, 88 percent of non-Scout parents reported that no one had talked to them about getting their children involved in Cub Scouts.** Also, most non-Scout parents know little about how or when their child can join. Most youth simply are not invited to join! Consider the following methods for a strong membership recruitment plan:

1. Recruit and convene a blue-ribbon task force of council, district, and unit Scouters to determine the council's recruiting options. Have the task force present a full report of ideas and recommendations to the council membership committee for refinement, approval, and implementation. In some councils, this task force may evolve into a steering committee to give council wide leadership to the fall roundup.
2. Use school access issues to "rally the troops." Use commissioners and others to obtain pack, troop, team, and crew buy-in for recruiting youth.
3. Obtain endorsements from mayors, popular community figures, and even the governor.
4. Involve local media personalities on your committee or task force.
5. Make recruiting a year-round effort. Don't just rely on a fall roundup in August and September.
6. Send direct mail invitations to join to youth prospects.
7. Identify alternate sign-up locations for a coordinated "night for joining Scouting."
8. Plan on having a booth at the school open house/meet the teacher night to talk with parents and briefly share information about Scouting.

9. Distribute yard signs and place them in the yard of every chartered organization in the council. (Available through Supply Group.)
10. Give every Cub Scout, Scout BSA, Varsity Scout, and Venturer several “buddy cards” for them to give their friends, inviting them to a Joining Night. Peer-to-peer influence is powerful.
11. Set up and publicize a 1-800 number that youth can be encouraged to call.
12. Consider renting schools for a coordinated, “Join Scouting” night.
13. Set up “Super Saturdays” at high-traffic shopping centers, supermarkets, and hardware stores. Use unit displays, distribute fliers, and have Scouts available to help carry packages to people’s cars.
14. Place how-to-join info on the homepage of the council website.
15. Place short articles in local community, company, subdivision, and city newspapers/newsletters on a regular basis and increase frequency during periods of organized recruiting.
16. Get joining info into church newsletters and bulletin inserts.
17. Place “Join Scouting” fliers, displays, and announcements at local community events and civic functions.
18. Distribute joining information at community Good Turn projects.
19. Have units make telephone calls or send text messages to prospects.
20. Contact all churches and church groups. Conduct Joining Nights in large congregations. Visit Sunday schools and Hebrew day schools. Promote the Whole Family of Scouting so that sisters and brothers can both benefit from Scouting.
21. Develop pack, troop, team, and crew information sheets for unit use.
22. Use display cases, bulletin boards, and business, church, and school marquees.
23. Develop Joining Night fliers.
24. Have all Cub Scouts wear their uniform to school the day of Joining Night and publicize on a peer-to-peer basis. Peer-to-peer relationships are powerful.
25. Use business window or counter displays.
26. Pursue opportunities to speak to conferences of churches and community organizations.
27. Mobilize parents and volunteers to hand out Joining Night fliers as children board school buses.
28. Promote and support troop and crew open houses. Train volunteers to conduct them.
29. Facilitate Webelos-to-Scout, Scout-to-Venturer, and Scout-to-Sea-Scout transition plans.
30. A Scouting event in highly visible public locations and a major outdoor event at fall or spring roundup time can excite new members as well as encourage new youth to join.
31. Develop a Cub Scout pack resource CD, flash drive, cloud storage, or website with sample contact letters, telephone protocols, a sample Joining Night agenda, text for marketing items, important forms, and other materials. Great resources can be found at <http://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/>.
32. Councils have the ability to print out names and addresses of Cub Scout, Scout BSA, Varsity Scout, and Venturer members who have dropped. Invite them to rejoin a pack, troop, team, or crew.
33. Find out about and use the latest membership resource materials of the BSA (recruiting tools, marketing resources, school relationship materials, etc.) by going to www.scoutingwire.org and clicking on Marketing and Membership.
34. Begin your recruiting campaign in the spring, with other recruiting events in early fall. This takes advantage of the warm weather to give new Scouts an early chance at outdoor programs. It gives new families a great experience immediately after joining (day camp, parent-child weekends, and Tiger Cub days). New unit leaders can get trained before the kickoff of fall programs, and units get off to a great start.
35. Ask Venturers and Sea Scouts to compile a list of all their friends and send them an invitation to join.

36. Many of your volunteers are a part of a social network. By creating a council/district social networking page, you will open new communication channels to your key internal audience. You can use your page to promote recruitment events and get your volunteers talking about Scouting. These conversations will then show on their page, which provides the viral sharing to their friends who may not know about Scouting. Also, the majority of your Scouts BSA, Venturers, and Sea Scouts probably are a part of a social network. Get them involved in promoting Scouting and their unit recruitment events on their pages—they can also send invitations for events such as their troop's or crew's open house.

37. A Web banner or banner ad is the digital equivalent of advertising in a newspaper or magazine. Work with your local media, as well as your council board members, to place a Scouting banner ad on their website that links to your council recruitment Web page. Visitors will then find more information about the benefits of Scouting as well as how to join. Web banners are available through scoutingwire.org/membership.

38. An email template is an easy way to share the message of your Scouting recruitment events with other parents in your community. Engage the parents of current Scouts to become ambassadors of Scouting. Suggest that they send the email to everyone on their contact list: sports team families, school/PTA families, etc. An engaged and enthusiastic Scouting parent is one of the keys to recruitment.

39. Many councils have used the services of an outside social-planning website for creating, sending, and managing online invitations (e-vites). Through an e-vite, prospective guests receive an email with information pertaining to the recruitment event. The e-vite differs from the email template in that you can track who will be attending, who is not attending, or who is thinking about it. This allows you to follow up accordingly after the event.

40. Texting is a great way to have our youth engaged in inviting their friends to join Scouting. We suggest that your council develop a competition within troops and crews to see how many youth can be recruited via text messaging—be sure to ask new youth how they heard about the event. The key is to have the text sent from a youth. Encourage your youth leaders to start the messages and see how viral they can become.

41. Consider Dynamic Recruitment. This one-on-one, family-based recruitment plan can be engaged all year round, with little to no cost to units. Read more about it at <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/>.

BE DILIGENT. Membership committees should be diligent in your school relationship plans. You should also be diligent in developing your member recruitment plan and following the plan with the same discipline as a finance campaign. Don't wait until you are about to be denied school access to begin good school relationships. *Begin now to treat them as one of your most important customers.*

Conclusion

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 in attempting to access schools to help build and sustain the Scouting program in your community, do not despair. Although legal protection is important, understanding, training, and forming enduring relationships with staff and school administrators are vital. School access issues often can be resolved at the unit, district, and council levels by understanding schools from the perspective of those who administer and teach in them. Moreover, training Scouters in effective methods of communicating with school personnel nearly always bears rich fruit regarding 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.

Year-Round Service to Chartered Organizations

Chartered organizations are the lifeblood of the Boy Scouts of America. Every Scouter should be familiar with this statement in our congressional charter: "... the purpose of this corporation shall be to promote, through organization, and cooperation with other agencies ..." (section 3 of the Charter and Bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America.).

This statement of purpose has enabled the Boy Scouts of America to succeed with one of Baden-Powell's original ideas. He offered the program to other youth organizations in England as a resource and method whereby they could fulfill their own missions of enabling boys to become useful citizens. But, in the end, he had to accept the responsibility for founding a worldwide movement that was self-sustaining, *i.e.*, not "owned and operated" by others.

The Boy Scouts of America is unique both in world Scouting and among all other youth organizations within the United States by virtue of this statement in its charter. **The Boy Scouts of America offers its program to any community-based organization whose purposes are compatible with its own if it agrees to fulfill the requirements as stated in the application for a charter.** These organizations can be houses of worship, businesses, or legally organized 501(c)(3) organizations. The word "charter" that is used so widely in the Boy Scouts of America is not always well understood. Informally, the term "franchise" helps to explain what is meant by "chartering" an organization. "Franchise" implies local ownership while still using the corporation name and resources. Scouters may find this analogy useful when explaining the charter concept. Because the chartered organization concept is so basic to the success of the Boy Scouts of America, every effort must be made to educate the leadership of chartered organizations. This is best achieved by working together with the council or district relationships chair and local Scouting professionals.

Consider using the New-Unit Development tools located on the Marketing and Membership Hub.

The [Marketing and Membership Hub](#) is a resource to help you serve more youth in your area. From recruiting ideas to social media best practices, the Hub provides a one-stop resource to discover, activate, and improve your marketing and recruiting strategy.

These are the items located under New-Unit Development:

- Chartered Organizations and The Annual Charter Agreement
- New Unit Sales Kits: Strengthening Youth Through Scouting
- *The Unit Roadmap: Starting, Sustaining, and Growing Units*

- Chartered Organizations Resource Guide: Commissioners
- Leadership Statements of Support
- Testimonial Videos: Families Like Mine
- Videos for Parents: Faith in Scouting
- Proof: How Scouting Does Work
- Recruiting and relationships resources

Registering or reregistering a unit is only the beginning of a year-round relationship between that organization and the Boy Scouts of America.

Marketing and Sales Skills

These are also important. The membership and/or relationships committee must be able to do the following:

- Analyze and describe the demographics of the community—economics, youth population, organizational structure.
- Know the institutional life of the community—who joins what.
- Be sensitive to the values of people and organizations.
- Know the purposes and priorities of chartered organizations and prospective chartered organizations.

The Boy Scouts of America has an extraordinary support system that should be brought to the attention of heads of organizations. **Registering or reregistering a unit is only the beginning of a year-round relationship between that organization and the Boy Scouts of America.** There should be regularly scheduled contact with heads of chartered organizations and chartered organization representatives by the professional.

- *Personal visits*—at least twice a year, once prior to charter renewal
- *Phone contacts*—at least four times a year
- *Mailings*—at least every other month (this includes postal mail and email)

Issues and subjects to be discussed might include:

- Needs and concerns of the chartered organization.
- Scout Sunday and Scout Sabbath information
- Unit leader training opportunities
- Participation of the chartered organization representative in district committee meetings, the council annual business meeting, and council and district events/dinners
- Youth Protection training for all adults and personal safety awareness for youth
- Unit Good Turns for the chartered organization

- Council and district activities

A wealth of community resources becomes available to the chartered organization through Scouters who serve as commissioners, trainers, merit badge counselors, and skill specialists, to name a few. As a result, a true sense of community support envelops the organization. The head of an organization wants success. Scouting must be presented as contributing to that success in a variety of ways, such as:

- Community outreach
- Service to youth and the community
- Fulfilling the organization's purposes and objectives

In short, by virtue of the support system, the chartered organization leaders know that others care about them.

The Boy Scouts of America is one of the greatest youth organizations in the world. If Scouters understand all its intricacies, especially the relationship with chartered organizations, and what Scouting has to offer in human terms, then growth in delivery of a quality program can and will be achieved.

The Charter Agreement

The Annual Charter Agreement is currently undergoing revisions based upon the needs of several of Scouting's chartered partners and their parent organizations. Specific information is being updated regularly and can be found at <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/new-unit-development/chartered-organizations/>.

The Membership Cycle

Membership growth is a year-round responsibility and must be approached in a systematic manner. Traditionally, a major membership recruitment effort has been held in the fall. Plans must also be made to recruit systematically in the spring months so that youth have the opportunity to participate in Cub Scout or Boy Scout camps or other summer trips.

New-unit organization must be carefully planned so that the program is readily available to those who are eligible. Enough units must be functioning to handle the influx of newly recruited members. The majority of new Cub Scout packs, Scouts BSA troops, Venturing crews, Sea Scout ships, and Exploring posts and clubs should be organized in the spring. *It is recommended that 70 percent of the new-unit business be completed prior to the end of June.*

JANUARY

- Staff growth planning conference
- Visit prospective chartered organizations for new units.
- Recruit district fall recruiting chairs
- Conduct winter recruiting efforts.

FEBRUARY

- Webelos-to-Scout transition
- Initiate a recovery plan for dropped youth
- Plan spring recruitment efforts
- Together plan kickoff for new units

MARCH

- Conduct career and hobby interest surveys for Venturing and Exploring

APRIL

- Together plan unit organization completed
- Conduct spring recruiting effort
- Superintendents' breakfast and principals' luncheons

MAY

- New-unit follow-up details
- Hold fall roundup planning conference
- Summer camp new-Scout recruiting plan

JUNE

- Complete new-unit organization
- June recognition for unit retention/new units

JULY

- Plan Joining Night for Scouting and open houses
- Complete new-unit organization

AUGUST

- Roundup training and kickoff with unit goals and report meetings
- Pack planning conferences
- Assemble shareholders, start membership growth plan planning sessions

SEPTEMBER

- School talks or other communication about Join Scouting events
- Hold Joining Nights for packs, troops, teams, crews, posts, and clubs
- District commitment to next year goals at council/district Key 3 meeting
- Assemble final draft of council growth plan for council executive board's approval
- Compile recruitment budget for next year

OCTOBER

- Follow up with interested families who were unable to attend the event.
- Follow up with units that need a second recruiting event to meet their membership goals and complete all Joining Night events. Send *thank you's* to all who helped support efforts.
- Begin charter renewal plan.

NOVEMBER

- New-unit emphasis plan committee recruited and activated
- Join Scouting event follow-up completed
- Conduct membership inventory as part of unit charter renewal
- Council growth plan presentation to the executive committee and a full board presentation at the next scheduled meeting.
- Train membership recruitment teams

DECEMBER

- Charter renewal completed
- Plan winter recruiting efforts

Membership Events

Youth-Fact Survey. This is a survey taken in the school system with the cooperation of the principals, teachers, and the superintendent of schools. Completed survey forms will indicate the interests of potential members.

Data can be used for the new-unit campaign.

Recruiting Stations. Set up recruiting stations at council shows and expositions, malls and shopping centers, county fairs, etc., to promote the following:

- **Bring-a-Friend Night** for unit meetings is a good event to build up your recruit-of-the-month plan.
- Use **Eagle Search** and NESAs and alumni lists to recruit adults who were previously involved in Scouting.

The Together Plan (formerly “New-Unit Campaign”).

The Together Plan



A Best Method for Organizing New Units in Large Groups to Develop the Full Family of Scouting



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

This is a method of organizing units on a group basis. The membership and relationships committee should spearhead the program. One of two approaches is used. The traditional campaign is one in which various community organizations are urged

to attend a special kickoff breakfast, luncheon, or dinner where the Scouting program and its benefits to the chartered organizations are explained. Representatives from each interested community group are present and decide if they can adopt Scouting as their youth program and commit to a schedule.

The other approach is similar, except only organizations with similar interests and functions are invited. For example, if all churches of one denomination in the district come together at one time to discuss organizing Scouting units, this, too, is a together plan, but with a more specific approach. The program here can be focused on

- Recognition for membership and unit growth

the needs of a particular type of community organization.

The together plan should be kicked off according to your council and/or district strategic plan schedule so that appropriate follow-up can be made on commitment cards.

Career/Hobby Survey. Conducted through the school system, this survey addresses the interests of young adults. The survey results give the district the facts needed to make approaches to potential participating organizations.

Surveys should be conducted in local high schools and middle schools to determine the needs of potential Venturers and Explorers.

Playground Roundup. At a local playground, have a fun-filled demonstration of Scouting skills and other activities. At the end of the program, invite the participating Scout-age youth to join.

Recruitment Toward Cub Scout and Scouts BSA Camp. These special emphases are aimed specifically at nonmember youth who are graduating from kindergarten and the fifth grade. Spring recruiting efforts should be conducted to enable new members to participate in summer activities, such as Cub Scout day camp, resident camp, and other summer events.

Resources for Recruitment Events. The [Marketing and Membership](#) tab at Scoutingwire.org is your one-stop shop for all of the recruiting resources for Cub Scouting.

Webelos Scout Den/Scouts BSA Joint Activities. Troops should be encouraged to invite Webelos Scouts to visit a troop meeting and to attend a troop campout in order to encourage them to join their troop.

Join-in-Camporee. Invite prospective Scouts BSA (especially youth who will complete the fifth grade) to visit as a day guest of the district camporee.

Webelos-to-Scouts BSA Transition. Cooperate with the commissioner staff to help every Cub Scout pack successfully graduate each Webelos Scout into an active Scouts BSA troop. Seek the cooperation of those responsible for the program function in the district. Continue this year-round program to make sure former Webelos Scouts attend summer camp.



Take a carload of Webelos Scouts and prospective Scouts BSA to summer camp for a look around at activities. Make prior arrangements with the camp management to see if some special activities can be planned for them while they are there.

The Venturing and Sea Scouting Together Plan Luncheon. If the activity interest survey indicates that a large number of young people are interested in certain areas, a luncheon may be held with community organizations that could organize Venturing crews or Sea Scout ships in these areas. Heads of various businesses, industries, and community organizations are invited to hear the story of Venturing and Sea Scouting. Afterward, they are encouraged to organize Venturing crews or Sea Scout ships.

Exploring Cultivation Event. This event is designed to identify and “sell” businesses, schools, industries, professions, institutions, and community groups on the Exploring program.



Get your council’s executive board

involved. At an executive board meeting, ask every board member to write the name and phone number of a local business leader on a card whose business would be a good location for an Exploring post.

Join Scouting Events. The program focuses the attention of the community on helping youth connect and join Scouting. Special incentives may be offered to youth and leaders for recruiting new members during these periods, which are in the spring (to recruit in time to participate

in summer activities) and the fall.

Conduct a community organization survey—list all the potential chartered organizations in the district, their leaders, their facilities, their leadership potential, and their apparent interest in young people and community-based activities. Use the New Unit Planning Resources Worksheet, No. 522-222.

“Sign-Up” Night. “Sign-up” nights have been a keystone for Scouts BSA recruiting for years, and for good reason: They work! Sign-up nights give parents and youth an opportunity to get to know Scouting at a personal level, face to face.

Questions are answered, interest is built, and parents see how Scouting is for families like theirs, no matter what that family may look like. What’s more, families often enroll their children right there on the spot. It’s a win-win situation. See the [Sign-Up Night Unit Playbook](#).



Troop Open House. A troop open house can be an effective way to recruit new Scouts into a troop, especially in the spring when outdoor activities are on the horizon. Select a date and set up a rally and troop camping display on the school grounds. Make a presentation to the fifth- and sixth-grade boys and girls to spark their interest and allow them to participate hands-on as much as possible. Give them an invitation to attend a troop open house with their parents, and have each child fill out an activity interest survey. Prior to the open house, make a follow-up phone call to the parent of each child.

The open house should be a short, lively program with an explanation of troop activities and a calendar of future troop events. Invite the parents, as well as the new Scout, to become a part of the troop. For more details on how to conduct a troop open house, see the Troop Open House brochure, No. 520-706.

Venturing Open House. This is a meeting of parents and Venturing-age youth with all members

and leaders of the crew. The open house is planned to invite new youth to join, as well as make existing members feel good about what they



do in the crew as they start a new program year. The meeting emphasizes the crew's program and specialty through visuals and hands-on activities. Visit www.venturing.org for details.

Exploring Open House. Posts and clubs hold an annual open house to invite youth to join.

Mini-Together Plans. In some areas, it will be possible to organize this on a like-organization basis, *i.e.*, just for Lutheran churches, Rotary clubs, or businesses. In other areas, it will be used to organize a small number of units (five–eight) with a variety of chartered organizations.

Hold a district relationships conference to continue the cultivation of present chartered organizations. Other community organizations can be invited to participate also. Discuss membership, leadership, religious emblems programs, and support available from the district.

Membership Inventory. Conduct a telephone survey to every unit to reveal unregistered youth. This may be an important November/December task.

School Classroom/Get-Acquainted-With-Scouting Meeting. Visit school classrooms to interest youth in Scouting. Follow up in the next night or two with a get-acquainted-with-Scouting meeting for a new unit.

In each classroom, give youth a colorful flier promoting the meeting and indicating that their “ticket of admission” is an adult. Tell each class that no youth will be admitted without at least one adult (parent, neighbor, older brother or sister, godparent, foster parent, other relative, or adult friend).

Youth influence adults to attend. You will have a group of people to work with at the get-acquainted meeting.

In high schools, use resources available at www.venturing.org and the [Marketing and](#)

[Membership Hub](#). Post fliers in libraries when possible.

Dynamic Recruitment

Dynamic Recruitment is an intentional and continual process of proactively seeking high quality [families] through a successful system built upon daily patterns of behavior that produce results. It is a system of peer-to-peer recruitment that utilizes Normal Friend Activities (NFAs) to welcome the family into the unit gradually while “selling” the value proposition of Scouting to the family, with the result of the child joining the unit. It can be used in any of the programs, but in Cub Scouting it is normally focused on the family, while in Scouts BSA and the Young Adult programs its focus is on the potential members themselves. It is not a stand-alone event, but rather, can be conducted year-round. More information on Dynamic Recruitment can be found on the Marketing and Membership Hub at <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/>.



Membership and Marketing

Recruiting new members is a critical skill that is needed in order to grow membership in a council. Marketing is a practice that goes hand-in-hand with recruiting. A successful council will have a comprehensive recruiting plan that is supported by an equally comprehensive marketing plan. Recruiting and Marketing occur at three levels: Council, District, and Unit.

Council

Recruiting and marketing approaches occur at a macro level when performed by the council. Recruitment at this level often consists of a presence at county fairs or other large gatherings where it is important to spread the scouting word and increase awareness of scouting in the council area, but recruitment at this level is difficult due to the widespread nature of most councils. Nevertheless, it is important to have council maps and applications available for those families who might ask for them, as well as a method of recording their contact information for follow-up. This is also an excellent medium for making new community contacts, and attendees representing the council should be prepared to act as a brand ambassador with the intent of fostering those relationships. Marketing at this level can consist of newspaper ads, billboards, color guards at sporting venues, *etc.*, but the council that utilizes these approaches should be prepared to have a system in place to track their effectiveness, such as specific QR codes or websites that will aid in identifying the source of the referral. Finally, the council should establish a recruitment strategy for the year and secure funding for it.

District

At the district level, recruitment and marketing activities can get easier and less complex, due to the alignment of the district with distinct communities. Recruitment activities hosted by the district can be scouting fairs, public service events such as bicycle registration days and area park clean-ups, community gatherings (Memorial Day, 4th of July, Night Out for America, etc.) and local scouting activities such as cub olympics and pinewood derbies that are open to the public. District events are also an excellent opportunity to meet and foster relationships with local community and business leaders, requiring some level of familiarity with the scouting program and its talking points, plus a mechanism for handing off new contacts to the appropriate level at the council. Recruitment at these events can consist of a larger scout area where all the district's units set up static displays and are prepared to discuss what their particular unit does, meeting nights and places, and interesting unit events coming up in the future. Marketing for these events can be as simple as social media entries and pictures in the local newspaper, or some press coverage can be arranged with prior planning and good contacts at local television stations. This format gives families several choices to consider when looking for a good unit for their child(ren).

Unit

It has been said that all scouting is local, and recruitment works best when it, too, is local. The bulk of recruitment in a council occurs at the unit level, be it by joining nights, open houses, or by the most efficient method, peer-to-peer recruiting. Units should be encouraged to make every activity a recruiting activity, and the council should support those activities administratively as well as financially. The concept of geofencing has caught on in recent years, citing a 14⁰% increase in recruited youth over years without geofence support. Units should be supported by the council in their selection of a recruiting (growth) goal for the year, and they should keep on recruiting until they reach (or exceed) that goal. Marketing at this level can be as simple as having an active public

social media account in addition to a private account for members and families only. Units should also be encouraged to submit press releases with photographs to their local print and online newspapers for every activity they perform, and their contact information should always be a part of the press release. The other useful tool for units is their page at www.BeAScout.org, where they can list information about the unit and even accept applications online.

Council Support of Marketing

Many methods of marketing are available on miniscule budgets, such as press releases and public appearances. However, there are areas where the council may choose to invest in some capital and other expenditures to support membership recruiting in the following ways:

- Purchase of traveling climbing walls, inflatable BB gun ranges, and other inflatable games
- Purchase of customized pop-up shelters with council and/or district information
- Council support of geofencing unit activities and recruitment events
- Council purchase of promotional materials
- Council purchase of materials to support recruitment events (fishing rods, rockets, etc.)
- Wrapping council-owned vehicles with promotional artwork
- Incentive programs for membership growth and high-performing units
- Technical support to establish private and public social media accounts for every unit.

The Council Membership Plan

Purpose

The purpose of a written membership growth plan is to give the members of the council at **all levels** information about the council's plan to grow membership and their role in that growth. If we truly believe that "membership growth is everyone's responsibility", we must show everyone in the council what their role in that growth will be. The Council Membership Plan is designed to be produced by a team of stakeholders (see below) led by the Council VP of Membership and guided by the professional Staff Advisor (Assistant Scout Executive, Director of Field Services, Field Director, *etc.*). Even though much membership growth planning is done at the councils' annual planning conferences generally held in January and February, we believe that the optimal time to plan for the next year's membership growth is in the late third and early fourth quarters, where plans can be made and budgets developed in order to be approved by the council executive board in December in order to be effective on January 1 of the next year.

The Council Membership Plan format that follows enables the council to tell a story. That story gives the reader a glimpse of the council's history, an analysis of current membership successes and failures, and a plan for the future that provides for uniform growth across all programs and addresses the council's initiatives for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

The Membership Plan is not something that is designed to be kept in a desk drawer. In addition to being a working plan that every member of the council should know, it can also be used outside the council as an instrument to show potential donors where the council is going, or to raise capital to fund a Scoutreach operation in underserved areas, and as a visible plan for how the council is dealing with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Potential board members should be very interested in what your plan says.

Why do we need a membership plan? Yogi Berra, NY Yankees star and BSA Silver Buffalo recipient, said it best:

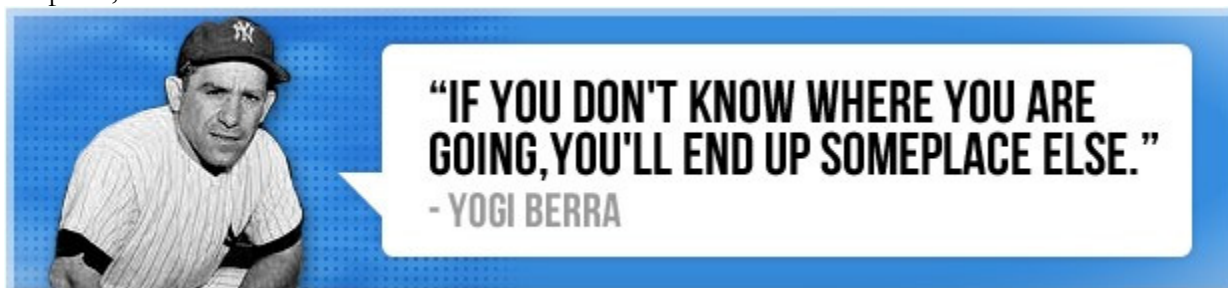


Figure 1: Yogi Berra on Planning

Process

What you need to get started:

- Membership statistics by program and by district for the last 5 years (Registrar)
- Most recent Council Market Analysis Report
- Wire diagram of Council Membership Committee

- Council map with districts
- Council Strategic Plan
- Membership goals for last year and plan year
- Membership Recruitment Plan
- Council Marketing Plan
- Calendar of Events for plan year
- Sample Council Membership Growth Plan

Who should be involved in the planning process (stakeholders)?

- Council VP, Membership & Relationships
- Council VP, Marketing
- Council VP, Program
- Director, Field Service
- Council Commissioner or designee
- Interested professional staff members.
- District Membership Chairs

Planning Cycle

Month	Task	Responsible
Oct-Nov	Assemble the membership team Identify stakeholders Communicate the timeline/schedule	VP, Membership Staff Advisor
Oct-Dec	Develop Council Membership Growth Plan	VP, Membership Staff Advisor
Nov-Dec	Develop Marketing Plan	VP, Marketing Staff Advisor
Nov-Dec	Develop Program Plan* <i>*to support Membership Growth Plan</i>	VP, Program
Dec	Council Membership Growth Plan review and approval by Executive Board	Council President/Chair
Dec. 31	Submit preliminary plan to CST Director	VP, Membership
Jan	Final review of last year’s plan; New plan starts	VP, Membership Staff Advisor
Jan	Add EoY results to plan	Staff Advisor
Jan 31	Submit final plan to CST Director	Staff Advisor
Feb	Submit monthly goals to National	Staff Advisor
Apr	Evaluate Council Membership Growth Plan progress for 1 st Qtr.	VP, Membership
Jul	Evaluate Council Membership Growth Plan progress for 2 nd Qtr.	VP, Membership
Aug	Assemble the membership team Identify stakeholders Communicate the timeline/schedule	VP, Membership Staff Advisor
Aug-Sep	Prepare next year Council Membership Growth Plan	VP, Membership Staff Advisor
Oct	Evaluate Council Membership Growth Plan progress for 3 rd Qtr.	VP, Membership

Month	Task	Responsible
Nov-Dec	Council Membership Growth Plan review and approval by Executive Board	Council President/Chair
Jan	Final review of last year’s plan; New plan starts	VP, Membership Staff Advisor

Steps

1. Analyze/set your goals. Your council’s strategic plan should have clear-cut membership goals by year for the term of the plan.

- How have you met those goals so far?
- Do have to make up ground for past years’ losses?
- What goals do you have to set for the plan year to meet/exceed the strategic plan?
- How will you structure those goals? Equal every month, or adjusted for variations in membership drives and transitions?
- What is your retention rate, and how will it affect your ability to meet your goals?

2. Allocate your goals.

- By district. Don’t assign weak districts the same goals as stronger districts. Consult with your district Key 3 for agreement.
- By program. Cub Scouts are the better investment in terms of longevity in the program, but Scouts BSA can be a new growth area, especially considering girls’ troops. And don’t forget about the older youth programs.
- By gender. Girls are 50% of the population. Why not strive to have them represented equally in your membership?
- By ethnic group. Make sure you are addressing the groups that will have a higher concentration in your five-year demographic outlook.

Population by Race/Ethnicity

Description	2010 Count	%	Current Year Estimate	%	5yr Projection	%	% Change Current - 5yr Projection
African American	67,049	7.0	69,278	7.2	70,700	7.2	+2.1
Asian	88,908	9.3	109,729	11.4	120,568	12.3	+9.9
Caucasian	686,726	71.9	688,716	71.2	635,442	65.0	-2.1
Hispanic/Latino	94,507	9.9	116,729	12.1	126,855	13.0	+8.7
Native American	1,020	0.1	1,003	0.1	1,005	0.1	+0.2
Pacific Islander	231	0.0	290	0.0	294	0.0	+1.4
Some Other Race	2,883	0.3	3,034	0.3	3,026	0.3	-0.3
Two or More Races	13,857	1.5	16,462	1.7	19,173	2.0	+16.5

Figure 2, from Market Analysis Report

3. Search out your Cub Scout “targets of opportunity” (Opportunity ZIP Codes)

- Examine the Opportunity ZIP Codes for Cub Scouting in the Market Analysis Report
- Separate them by district.
- Pick the top 5-10 ZIP codes for each district.
- Repeat this process for specific race/ethnicity.

- These are where you may need to start new packs
- Search for potential new chartered partners in these areas. See <https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Chartered-Organizations-Toolkit.pdf>.
- Especially significant if the market share is 0.

ZIP CODE	Total Members	Total TAY	Total Market Share	Total Unservd Youth	Total Cub Scout Members	Total Cub Scout TAY	Cub Scout Market Share	Cub Scout Unservd Youth
07728	228	8,308	2.7%	8,080	119	3,812	3.1%	3,693
08831	260	7,285	3.6%	7,025	113	3,479	3.2%	3,366
08902	83	6,357	1.3%	6,274	38	3,332	1.1%	3,294
08816	193	7,269	2.7%	7,076	75	3,123	2.4%	3,048
07726	153	6,623	2.3%	6,470	53	2,953	1.8%	2,900
08857	116	5,845	2.0%	5,729	14	2,799	1.6%	2,755
07731	196	6,208	3.2%	6,012	104	2,777	3.7%	2,673
07712	79	5,342	1.5%	5,265	29	2,681	1.1%	2,652
07753	91	4,924	1.8%	4,733	32	2,373	1.3%	2,341
07740	39	4,150	0.9%	4,111	15	2,257	0.7%	2,242
07747	130	4,562	2.8%	4,432	63	2,236	2.8%	2,173
07748	244	4,190	5.8%	3,946	153	1,958	7.8%	1,805
08859	53	3,255	1.6%	3,202	22	1,671	1.3%	1,649
07701	150	3,333	4.5%	3,183	81	1,709	4.7%	1,628
08879	61	3,131	1.9%	3,070	28	1,537	1.8%	1,509
08852	123	3,305	3.7%	3,182	42	1,533	2.7%	1,491
07751	142	3,699	3.8%	3,557	31	1,470	2.1%	1,439
08872	58	2,829	2.1%	2,771	19	1,441	1.3%	1,422
07724	67	3,048	2.2%	2,981	39	1,458	2.7%	1,419
07735	80	2,639	3.0%	2,559	30	1,297	2.3%	1,267

Table 1: Opportunity ZIP Codes for Cub Scouting, from Market Analysis Report

- 4. Search out your Scouts BSA and Older Youth “targets of opportunity”**

 - Utilize the Target Age Maps from the Market Analysis Report
 - In many cases, the results may likely be similar for the other programs.
 - Find new chartered partners who might be open to the full family of scouting, agreeing to sponsor a pack, troop, and crew.

- 5. Analyze your council’s demographics**

 - Look at the Mosaic Profile in the Market Analysis Report
 - Read the Mosaic Segment details for the most prominent segments in your council and districts.
 - Some of the largest segments do not have Scouting-age children.
 - Pay attention to the segments with Scouting-age children and design your recruitment and marketing strategies around them.

6. Analyze your Council Membership Committee

- What is the structure?
- Do all the positions have a volunteer associated with them?
- Do you need more positions? Some ideas include:
 - Council Commissioner designee to Membership Committee
 - Family Scouting Chair
 - Recruitment Chair
 - Relationships Chair

- Add positions based upon your council’s size and your particular needs.

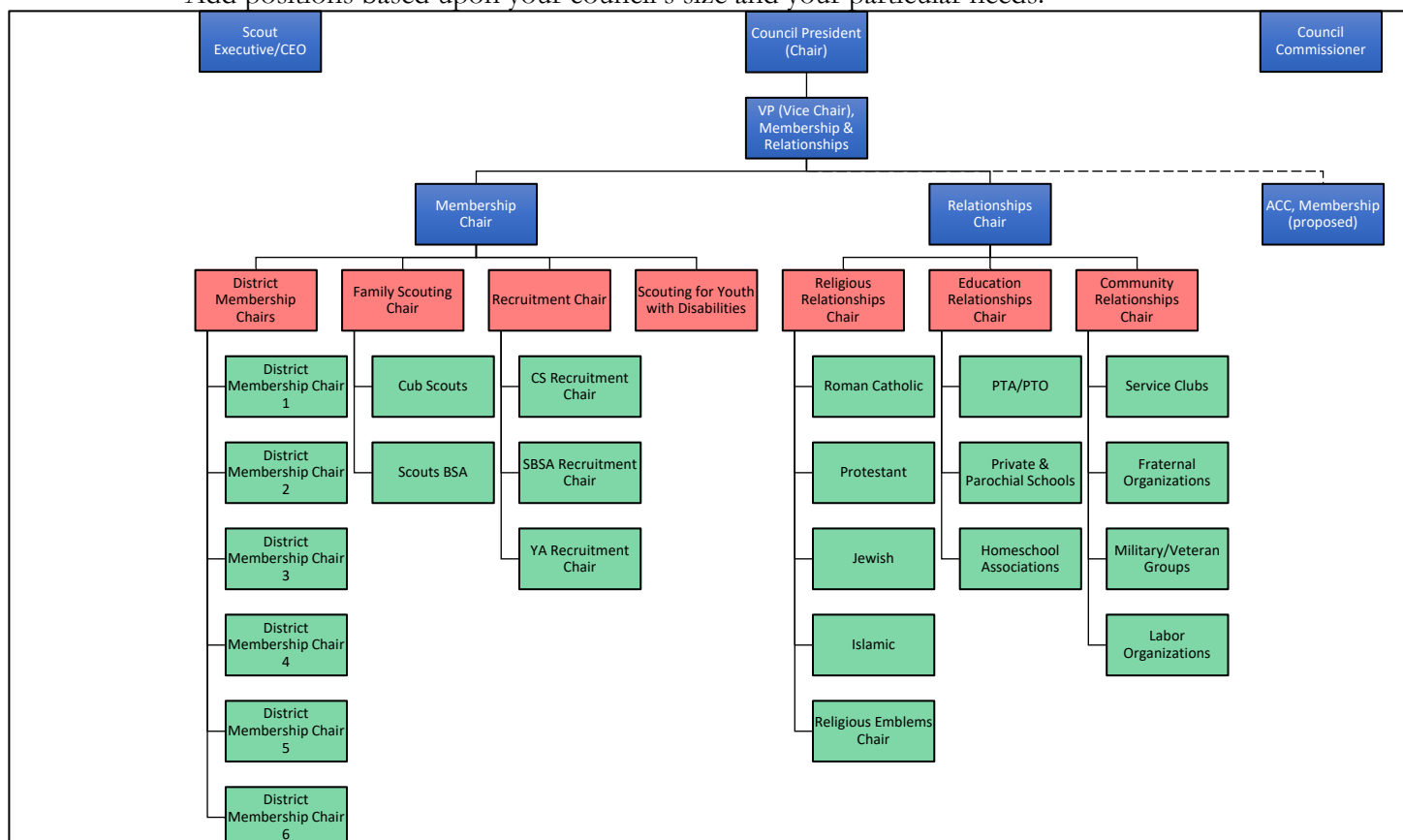


Figure 3: Sample Membership Committee Structure

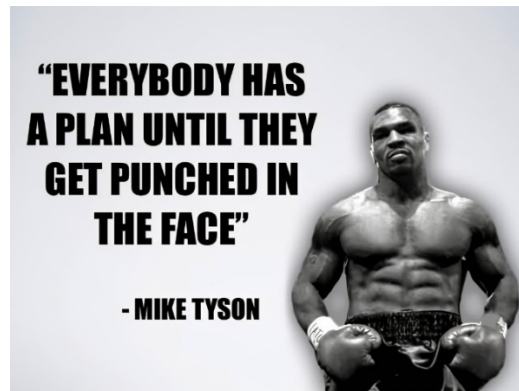
7. Develop your recruitment plan

- What will your council’s recruitment plan be in the plan year?
- How will you address your council’s needs for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?
- Will you use one of the national plans (<https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/councils/>)?
- What are the districts planning to do? How will the council support the districts in their efforts?
- What is expected of the units? How will the council support their efforts?
- Are there incentives offered to districts and/or units for exceptional membership growth?

8. **Develop a budget for your membership growth activities for the coming year.**
 - Does your council have a marketing plan?
 - Does it cover marketing support for membership growth in addition to other functions (fundraising)?
 - What activities will need marketing support in the plan year?
 - What giveaways and “SWAG” will be covered by the council, and what will their cost be?
 - What other expenses are expected to support recruitment, retention, and new unit growth?
 - Pop-up Shelter, tables, trailer, other capital expenses

9. **Write down your plan.**
 - Follow the format in the next section.
 - Once complete, review with council leadership and prepare to present to the Executive Board for approval.
 - Once approved, share the entire plan with the council, or publish a one-pager or infogram that outlines the important aspects of the plan.
 - Publish the plan to your council’s webpage.

10. **Follow Up.**
 - Set a schedule to check your progress.
 - Don’t be afraid to have to change the plan in mid-year. Better to change it than to go all year with a plan that’s not working as expected.
 - Remember:



Elements of the Council Membership Growth Plan

1. **Executive Summary.** The Executive Summary is a one-page summary of the findings and directives contained in the plan. It should summarize the reasoning behind some of the decisions made and contain a summary of the council’s short and long-term goals. Finally, it should contain implementation guidance for districts and units to ensure that every member of the council is aware of the plan and understands their part in it.

2. **Council Background.** This section should give a discussion of the council’s history, to include a discussion of mergers and territory transfers. The council’s mission statement and vision

should be listed as well as a history of the council's membership trends over the past five-to-ten years, by program. The Target Age Youth numbers should also be listed here, as well as the present year-end membership numbers and market share percentages by program (and by district, if desired).

3. **Membership Committee Structure.** The council membership committee structure and roster should be listed with plans for future positions. There is no required size for the committee, but it should be commensurate with the council size.
4. **Membership Analysis.** In this section, a discussion of the council's short- and long-term goals as stated in the current strategic plan should be listed. A status report on the short-term goals should be next, followed by a listing of the council's long-term goals.
5. **Demographics (Mosaic).** This is a good time to discuss the demographic makeup of the council, according to the Mosaic profile as discussed in the most recent council market analysis report. The mosaic groups can be tabulated for the council and/or districts, and many inferences can be drawn from a discussion of the predominant mosaics in a community. Many of the mosaic segments in a community may not have scout-age youth in their households, and this should be discussed here.
6. **Membership History.** An analysis of trends for the past five years by program for membership, market share, recruitment, and retention can shed light on areas where specific attention is warranted.
7. **Assumptions.** The Demographic and Income Profile found in the council market analysis can shed some light on anticipated trends in the council's territory that may affect membership, such as race and ethnicity changes, target age youth changes, and general population age changes. Also, general assumptions about the council and its programs should be discussed here.
8. **Plan – Recruitment.** It should have a discussion of the ZIP codes that are prime for recruitment because of a large negative cub scout gap, as well as areas with a low market share and a high negative cub scout gap.
9. **Plan – Retention.** ZIP codes with a high market share should be listed and examined to determine their best practices at recruitment and retention. Commissioners should have primary responsibility to monitor transition at the Lion to Tiger, tiger to Cub Scout, Cub to AOL, AOL to Scouts BSA, and Scouts BSA to Venturing levels.
10. **Plan - New Unit Formation.** A list of underserved ZIP codes can serve as a basis for investigation of new potential chartered partners to establish new units, and the plan to engage them in Scouting. Also, a list of chartered partners who might be contacted with relation to developing the “full family of scouting” in their institutions.
11. **Emerging Markets.** This is where a discussion of the typically underserved markets such as Hispanic, Asian, and female populations will outline the council's strategy to attract and recruit those populations in to new or existing units. Also, trial programs such as STEM will be discussed here.

12. **Young Adult Programs.** The council's strategy to crossover youth from Scouts BSA into these programs, as well as a plan to recruit new youth and re-connect former members will be discussed here.
13. **Other Initiatives.** This section can include a discussion of the various initiatives available to bolster membership growth, such as Adopt-a-School, Alumni Association, NESAs, etc.
14. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.** How will you address your council's needs to increase the diversity of your membership to meet the ethnic makeup of your council area? What steps do you need to take to address equity and inclusion? What geographic areas of the council do you need to target to attract new members of your emerging markets? How will you do it?
15. **Council Goals.** Even though they have been submitted elsewhere, the council's stated growth goals should be listed here in a language that every member is able to understand. (See attached for format)
16. **District Goals.** The goals for each district should be listed here, by program. It is also a good practice to state the mechanism for units to define their own goals and how they feed into the district goal.
17. **Instructions to Districts.** In this section, the council lists the individual ZIP codes that each district membership committee should investigate for recruitment, retention, and new unit formation. It should also instruct the district to formulate their own membership growth plans to support the council's goals.
18. **Instructions to Units.** The council can list its expectations of units regarding setting a membership goal for each unit, how many recruitment events they will hold until they reach their goal, how the council plans to support them (print media, giveaways, geofencing, etc.) in their efforts. Also, a list of positions each unit should have, *e.g.*, Unit Recruitment Chair and Unit Membership Coordinator.
19. **Membership Committee Vacancies.** The council membership committee can be discussed here, with a "wire diagram" of the committee structure, plus a discussion of the vacant positions and plans to expand the committee. The council's direction for districts can also be listed here, with a recommended structure for district membership committees. Finally, a list of unit-based positions should also be listed with instructions for implementation. Position descriptions can be added as an Annex to the plan.
20. **Membership Timeline.** A backdating schedule should be added that highlights the major steps and proposed their completion dates for Cub Recruitment, Webelos to Scouts BSA transition, Scouts BSA Open Houses, and Young Adult program recruitment activities.
21. **Board Approval.** The board approval should be noted in the document with signatures for all to see. This is evidence to scouters at all levels that the board approves of the plan and supports it.
22. **List of Changes.** If changes are made to the plan during the year, they should be referenced here.

Attachments to the Plan:

- **Recruitment Plan.** The council's entire recruitment plan for the year.
- **Marketing Plan:** The council's entire marketing plan for the year
- **One-Pager.** A one-page summary or infographic that outlines the major points of the plan is prepared for distribution throughout the council.
- **Position Descriptions.** For all positions on the council and district membership committee

A selection of sample documents is available annually from the Membership Growth department, as well as a plethora of reference documents that are available year-round on the Marketing and Membership Hub.

Membership Reports

Membership Vice Presidents and Chairs at the Council and District levels need to be aware of the various forms of information and data available to them in order to accomplish their duties. These sources of information are discussed below.

Membership Tools

In 2022, the BSA instituted the Membership Tools function, which is available through signing on to <https://my.scouting.org>. This functionality allows council executive board members, commissioners, and others the ability to view membership reports that are generally within a day of their posting. The ability to retrieve (almost) live data enhances your ability to perform your duties.

The reports that are available correspond to the tabs at the bottom of the page:

- Council Dashboard Summary. An overview of the current month membership and units compared to the same month last year.
- Dashboard. Membership Totals by District with Growth Rate.
- New registrants by Month. Number of new members by month.
- Dropped Registrants by Month. Number of dropped registrants by month.
- Analysis. A dashboard of units by program, members by program, members by gender, Scoutreach members, and ethnicity.
- Total Units. Number of units by district with recharter status.
- New Units by Month. Number of new units by month.
- Dropped Units by Month. Number of dropped units by month.
- LFL Dashboard. Summary of LFL groups.
- Program Dashboard Summary. Members by district with breakdown of ages in Cub Scouts.
- Council Comparison. Retention Rate and Market Share figures.
- Council Diversity Comparison. Gender and Ethnic Diversity figures.
- TAY vs. Ethnicity. Membership percentage and Market Share by ethnicity.
- 5-year Trend: Membership. Graphic representation of five-year membership for the council.
- 5-year Trend: Total Units. Graphic representation of five-year total units for the council.

Many of these tabs also offer drop-down menus that allow the user to apply filters to further refine the data.

The User Guide for Council Membership Tools is also available as a downloadable document on the Council Membership Tools landing page.

Stack Charts

The National Council also distributes a set of stack charts for the prior month on or about the 15th of every month to Council Key-3, CST Key 3+2 and Functional Leads and others. The charts contain data for the prior month and comparison data for the prior year. The charts are as follows:

- CST Membership
- Membership - % Ranking
- CST YPT
- YPT – Ranking*
- CST – Council Incidents Reported
- Council Incidents Reported
- CST Units
- Units - % Ranking
- CST Market Share*
- Market Share – Ranking*
- CST Retention*
- Retention – Ranking*
- CST Gender Diversity*
- CST Ethnic Diversity Differential
- Funding Performance – FOS
- Funding Performance – Direct Support
- Cash Reserve Future Budget
- Cash Reserve Factor Explained

**indicates comparison to established performance standards*

It should be noted that charts may be added or removed without notice due to operational priorities.

Online Recruiting Tools

In the last decade, Scouting has made great progress in moving from paper new member application toward a streamlined, online application system. There is no doubt that change will continue in this area and that it will become efficient and intuitive for our prospective families to join Scouting online. While the details of how this system will work will necessarily change, almost every year, there are some essential aspects of online recruiting that are likely to be constant.

- There needs to be a marketing funnel front end that matches prospective families to a well-fit unit. At present, this is BeAScout.org. Most best practices of councils and CSTs that have sought to broaden the marketing funnel have ultimately directed potential families to BeAScout.
- Prospective families will usually indicate interest and ask for a call or visit before they join. Presently we manage such requests as “leads” in the Invitation Manager tool in my.scouting.org.
- Prospective families must apply to join. There will need to be appropriate approvers for any applicant, usually the unit leadership. The Application Manager tool in my.scouting.org currently manages this process and solicits approvals online.

A convenient feature of our current Invitation Manager and Application Manager tools is that council membership volunteers and commissioners have the ability to view, redirect, and respond to leads and invitations within their service areas. This is a potentially powerful capability, because it gives the council a direct view of individual applicants and prospective members. With this level of detail about its prospective members, the council can market directly to these leads and follow up with units and districts to ensure that these leads are matriculated into a well-fit unit.

Units, districts, and councils need to be efficient in matriculating leads and applicants: each new lead or application will be directed to a unit or district for response or approval, and if no action is taken

within a reasonable time window, the lead or application will revert to the next broader area of responsibility to be answered or re-assigned. For example, if a parent sends a lead to Pack 1 asking if they can bring their child to visit a pack meeting and pack 1's leadership does not respond within two weeks, the district will be notified to respond to the parents or redirect the lead to Pack 2.

Interviews with high performers in this cluster study revealed some best practices that can be integrated into the council membership plan:

1. The best recruiting councils and districts have a clear definition of roles between professionals and volunteers in the membership plan, but there is no particular definition of roles that works better than any other.
2. The best recruiting councils, districts, and units have a clearly assigned lead person, either professional or volunteer, who is tasked with monitoring Invitation Manager and Application Manager, usually daily. This person ensures that all leads and applications are appropriately directed or closed.
3. Fast growing councils tended to do a unit pin campaign often, typically every 1-2 years. The weakest link in the online matriculation chain is usually the unit, particularly when a unit does not have current information in their BeAScout pin or does not check the invitation and application managers regularly. Successful councils tended to send messages to unit leaders every year asking them to update this information and including detailed instructions in how to do so. Some councils mail merged current pin information into the message, which inspired action from units that recognized that their pin was out of date.
4. Fast growing councils tended directly to recruit leads to participate in council events. The invitation manager enables councils to view a full roster of leads, with emails, from across their council. Some councils will directly email these leads and invite them to visit a council camp or open house event and learn more about Scouting or pair with a unit.
5. Fast growing districts (sometimes councils) tend to have a professional who has either secondary (sometimes primary) responsibility to ensure that all leads and applications are processed.
6. Councils with high lead matriculation tend to have a volunteer who is a technology expert who constantly surveils leads and applications to ensure that there are not technology hiccups in the online recruiting workflow.
7. Fast growing councils tend to have their membership team properly enrolled in my.scouting.org so that multiple people in the team can respond to leads and applications.
8. Some councils report invitation and application status to their boards. Fast growing councils tend to have both a senior executive and a senior volunteer who maintain awareness of the council's lead and matriculation status.
9. Most councils do not mention online lead management or application matriculation in their membership plans, although most have some sort of system.

The foregoing data support several models in which our national online recruiting tools can be used very effectively. Some that have worked in our cluster study are these:

1. Laptop computers or tablets are made available at new member events. Prospective members are invited to use BeAScout to generate a lead on site, thus creating a traceable online record on which the council membership team can follow up in the future.
2. QR codes are available for each unit in the leaders' my.scouting.org pages. These can be posted at recruiting events, thus enabling scouts and leaders to direct prospective members

to scan the code and proceed directly to the unit's page in BeAScout on their mobile device. Parents can fill out an online application on the spot.

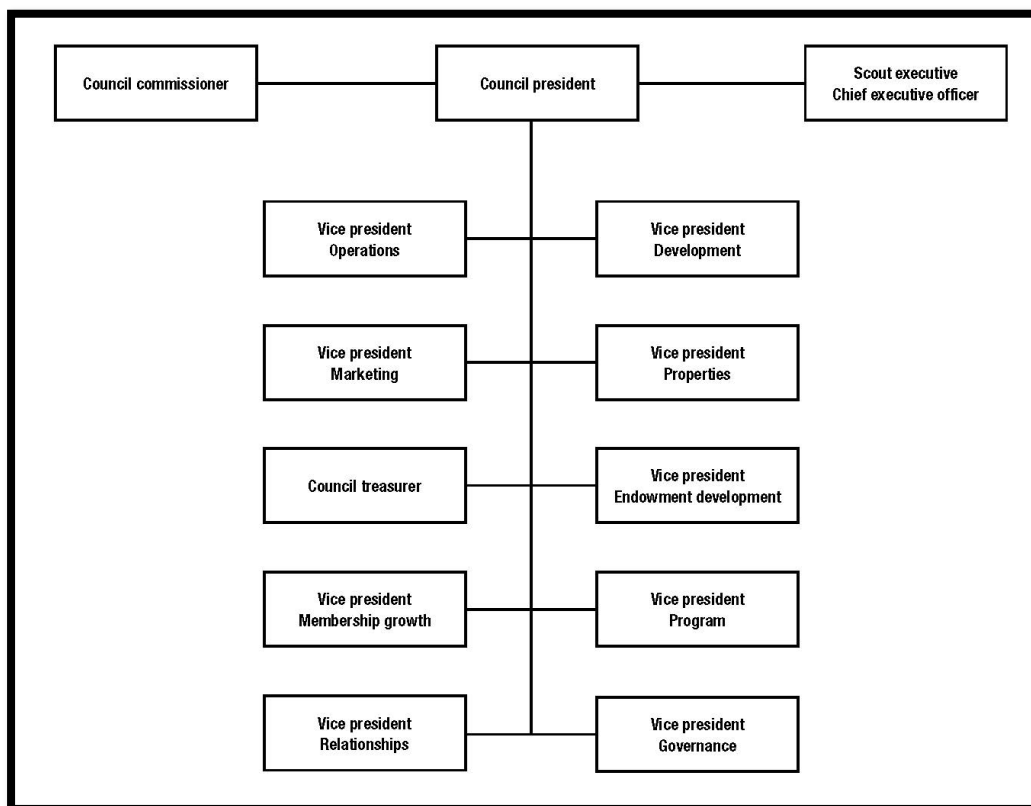
3. Councils with high matriculation yields in live recruiting events tend to offer a point-of-sale incentive for new members to join Scouting on the spot. For example, one such council will invite members to spin a Wheel-of-Fortune like incentive wheel after they join and pay. New members win discounts at the Scout Shop, free council programs, giveaway items, etc. when they spin the wheel.
4. Some councils, units, districts, and CSTs have created marketing funnel web sites that direct prospective members to BeAScout. Units typically direct prospective members to their unit page.

Interaction with Executive Board Committees

Mission

A BSA local council is a voluntary group of citizens, including representatives of organizations chartered by the Boy Scouts of America, to promote the Scouting program within a geographical area. It is the council's responsibility to provide leadership and supervision for all program activities within the geographic area covered by its charter in such a manner as to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Charter and Bylaws of the Boy Scouts of America and the Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America. The local council is an administrative organization charged with fulfilling the purpose and vision of the movement. Scouting is a volunteer movement that operates with professional guidance. This plan divides the administration of Scouting into workable segments in terms of geography, volunteer personnel, finances, and professional guidance. Four major functions help a council deliver the Scouting program: membership/relationships, finance, program, and unit service. These four functions and all other responsibilities are accomplished in each council in a manner that is influenced by local conditions and circumstances. How a council organizes to carry out and sustain this plan in the most efficient way is determined by its size, the resources available, its present structure, and other local factors.

Council Organization Chart (Basic)



Specific Duties of the Executive Board:

1. Set the mission of the council and review it annually.
2. Be committed to the mission, values, and goals of the Boy Scouts of America.
3. Hire or fire the Scout executive.
4. Fiduciary responsibilities.
5. Provide and assure a quality Scouting program.
6. Strategic planning.
7. Fundraising.
8. Board development (nominating committee).
9. Observe conflict-of-interest policies.
10. Attend, participate, and vote at council executive board meetings.
11. Manage council issues from a policy perspective.
12. **Work as a team.**

Interaction with Executive Board Committees

The Vice President of Membership is part of the Executive Board team, and as such is responsible for interacting with the other Vice Presidents and members of the Board. The following are examples of some of the interactions that occur between the parties:

<p>Executive Board (whole):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets long-term growth goals in Strategic Plan 	<p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop annual membership goals in accordance with strategic plan. • Reports membership status to Board regularly
<p>Operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominating committee assists in filling membership committee vacancies 	<p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps nominating committee aware of vacancies and possible volunteers to fill them
<p>Marketing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing plan supports membership growth activities = retention. • Assist with development of recruitment and geofencing materials 	<p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets annual recruitment activities with Marketing committee and develops plan and budget for them
<p>Treasurer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual budget supports membership recruitment activities 	<p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submits membership budget within published time frame for next year

<p>Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finds new potential chartered partners. • Assists with school access. 	<p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assembles new-unit team to visit potential new chartered partners. • Keeps Relationships committee aware of school access issues
<p>Camping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Day Camp program as a Cub Scout recruiting tool. • Provides a quality summer camp program for Scouts BSA. • Provides quality year-round camping opportunities for all Scouts. 	<p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops plans to recruit at Day Camp • Offers parent information session. • Works with camping and marketing to publicize camping programs to recruit and retain scouts and parent volunteers.
<p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct recruitment training. • Train new leaders for new units • Provides Youth Protection Training. 	<p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with training committee to develop new training programs for recruitment
<p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make civic activities recruitment activities 	<p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops recruitment materials with assist from Marketing committee
<p>Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides quality programs on the council and district level and encourages unit level programs. • Ensure that all district and council programs have a recruitment component 	<p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops a Membership Information area for recruitment and welcoming guests. “Information Central”. • Work with program committees to integrate recruitment into each activity
<p>Unit Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Council, District and Unit Service. • Be the Heart, Build Relationships, Change Lives. 	<p>Membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides Membership information for the Council, District and Units. • Works with the District and Unit Commissioner to provide tools for District and Unit success.

Resources

BSA Publications

- The Unit Roadmap: Starting, Sustaining, and Growing Units, No. 522-025
- The Together Plan, No. 522-990 WB
- Chartered Organizations Resource Guide, No. 522-925 WB

Websites

- Marketing and Membership Hub: <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/>
- New Unit Development: <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/new-unit-development/>
- BSA Brand Center: <https://scouting.webdamdb.com/bp/#/>
- Council and District Recruiting: <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/councils/>
- Fretwell Award: https://scoutingwire.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/522-05918_EKFretwell_Guide.pdf
- Chartered Partners: <https://scoutingwire.org/marketing-and-membership-hub/new-unit-development/chartered-organizations/>.
- BSA Membership Policy: <https://www.scouting.org/about/membership-policy/>
- BSA Membership Standards: <https://www.scouting.org/about/membership-standards/>