



# GUIDE TO ADVANCEMENT

## 2011



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®





# BSA Mission Statement

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 Scout Law.

*“Every Scouting activity moves boys toward three basic aims: character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness.”*

—Scoutmaster Handbook

*“Advancement is one of the eight methods used by Scout leaders to help boys fulfill the aims of the BSA.”*

—Scoutmaster Handbook

# GUIDE TO ADVANCEMENT

## 2011



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### New in This Edition

- *Reorganized for easy reference*
- *Frequently Asked Questions indexed*
- *New approach to “active participation” and positions of responsibility*
- *Internet advancement highlights*
- *Helpful appendix*
- *Searchable online version available*

*And more—see inside.*

The *Guide to Advancement* replaces the publication *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures* and is the official Boy Scouts of America source on advancement procedures.



## ***Policy on Unauthorized Changes to Advancement Program***

No council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add to, or subtract from, advancement requirements. There are limited exceptions relating only to youth members with disabilities. For details see section 10, "Advancement for Members With Special Needs."

## ***Mandated Procedures and Recommended Practices***

This publication clearly identifies mandated procedures with words such as "must" and "shall." Where such language is used, no council, committee, district, unit, or individual has the authority to deviate from the procedures covered, without the written permission of the national Advancement Team.

Recommended best practices are offered using words like "should," while other options and guidelines are indicated with terms such as "may" or "can." Refer questions on these to your local district or council advancement chairs or staff advisors. They, in turn, may request interpretations and assistance from the national Advancement Team.

## ***The Guide to Safe Scouting Applies***

Policies and procedures outlined in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*, No. 610138, apply to all BSA activities, including those related to advancement and Eagle Scout service projects.

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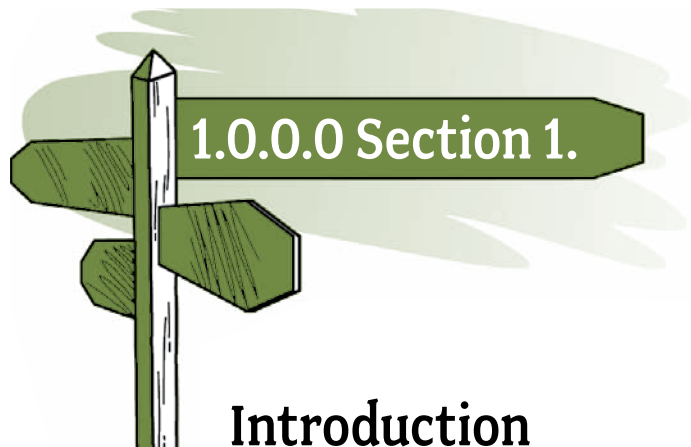
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## Online Version

*The online version for the Guide to Advancement will be made available shortly after the publishing of the printed version, and will be updated more frequently than the printed manual.*

volunteer and professional—we recognize this, we can expect success. To see it otherwise is to indicate we have forgotten our purpose.

The *Guide to Advancement* is the official source for administering advancement in all Boy Scouts of America programs: Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts. It replaces the *Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures* and *Advancement and Recognition Policies and Procedures*, which are no longer valid.

Be aware that statements or interpretations offered from unofficial websites and other such sources may be out of date or incorrect. They will not be considered in resolving advancement questions and issues. In situations not specifically covered in this guide, advancement chairs, coordinators, or other administrators should make decisions based on the aims and mission of the Boy Scouts of America, as well as the Scout Oath and Scout Law—and common sense.

Regardless the program—Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, or Sea Scouts—where advancement takes place, it is nothing more and nothing less than a *method*. It is a means toward accomplishing the Boy Scouts of America mission. It is not an end in itself. When as advancement administrators—both

### 1.0.1.0 Questions and Suggestions

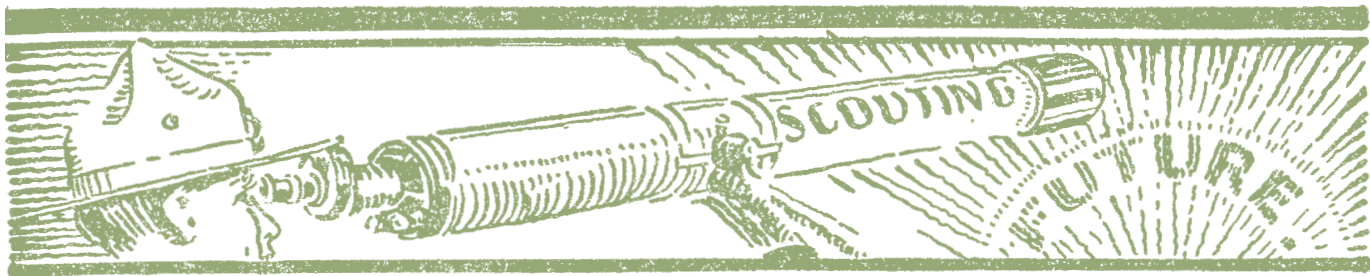
Every effort has been made to provide clear procedures and guidelines for a mission-oriented delivery of advancement. Administration of it, however, largely takes place locally. Therefore, volunteer advancement administrators should always consult first with the district and council—the district advancement chair, district executive, council advancement chair, or the council's professional staff advisor for advancement. These officials can provide many answers and a certain level of interpretation.

The national Advancement Team is available for recommendations or for questions that cannot be handled locally. Suggested corrections to this publication are also gratefully accepted. Send questions and comments to [advancement.team@scouting.org](mailto:advancement.team@scouting.org), or mail them to *National Advancement Team, Program Impact Department, S209, Boy Scouts of America, 1325 West Walnut Hill Lane, P.O. Box 152079, Irving, Texas 75015-2079*.

Suggestions for new merit badges should be directed to the BSA Innovation Team at [merit.badge@scouting.org](mailto:merit.badge@scouting.org).



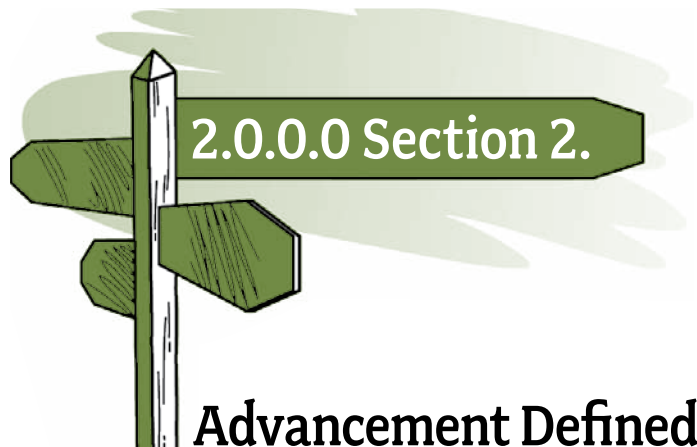




### 1.0.2.0 Significant Changes

Producing the *Guide to Advancement* involved many members of the Boy Scouts of America's national staff and many volunteer advancement administrators at all levels from across the country. The result is an all-new resource intended to more efficiently meet the needs of those who would most often consult it. Because this resource is completely different from its predecessors, it is difficult to cite specific differences. However, a number of sections merit close review.

1. Council, district, and unit advancement committee responsibilities detailed and listed ("Guidelines for Advancement and Recognition Committees," 3.0.0.1–3.0.0.3)
2. Section on awards and recognitions eliminated for integration into a new publication, the *Guide to Awards and Insignia*, No. 33066 ("Awards and Recognitions," 3.0.0.4)
3. Cub Scouting material updated ("Mechanics of Advancement: In Cub Scouting," 4.1.0.0)
4. "Active participation" and "position of responsibility" requirements approached from unit's established reasonable expectations ("Active Participation," 4.2.3.1; and "Positions of Responsibility," 4.2.3.4)
5. Venturing and Sea Scouts coverage added ("Mechanics of Advancement: In Venturing," 4.3.0.0; and "In Sea Scouts," 4.4.0.0)
6. Merit badge section reorganized and expanded ("The Merit Badge Program," 7.0.0.0)
7. Board of review practices clarified, including wearing the uniform ("Boards of Review: An Overview for All Ranks," 8.0.0.0)
8. Rank advancement appeals limited to board of review rejections ("Boards of Review: Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0); and new process added ("Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2)
9. Eagle Scout rank application process clarified and updated ("The Eagle Scout Rank: Application Process," 9.0.1.0)
10. Eagle Scout service project requirement changed, detailed, and clarified ("The Eagle Scout Rank: Service Project," 9.0.2.0; see also "Proposal Must Be Approved ... Before You Start," 9.0.2.7)
11. New process for requesting time extensions for earning Eagle Scout rank ("The Eagle Scout Rank: Time Extensions," 9.0.4.0)
12. Advancement for special-needs youth clarified ("Advancement for Members With Special Needs," 10.0.0.0)
13. In applying for alternative requirements a qualifying disability need not be permanent ("Advancement for Members With Special Needs: Using Alternative Requirements," 10.2.2.1; "Alternative Merit Badges for Eagle Scout Rank," 10.2.2.3; "Working Toward Venturing Awards," 10.2.3.2; and "Working Toward Sea Scout Ranks," 10.2.3.3)



## Advancement Defined

Advancement is the process by which youth members of the Boy Scouts of America progress from rank to rank.

### 2.0.0.1 It Is a Method—Not an End in Itself

Advancement is simply a means to an end, not an end in itself. It is one of several methods designed to help unit leadership carry out the aims and mission of the Boy Scouts of America.

### 2.0.0.2 Experiential Learning Is the Foundation

Everything done to advance—to earn ranks and other awards and recognition—is designed to educate or to otherwise expand horizons. Members learn and develop according to a standard. This is the case from the time a member joins and then moves through the programs of Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, and Venturing or Sea Scouts. *Experiential learning* is the key: Exciting and meaningful activities are offered, and education *happens*. Learning comes from doing. For example, youth may read about first aid, hear it discussed, and watch others administer it, but they will not learn it until they practice it.

### 2.0.0.3 Personal Growth Is Prime Consideration

Scouting skills—what a young person learns to do—are important, but not as important as the growth achieved through participating in a unit program. The concern is for total, well-rounded development. Age-appropriate surmountable hurdles are placed before members, and as they face them they learn about themselves and gain confidence. Success is achieved when we fulfill the BSA Mission Statement and when we accomplish the aims of Scouting: character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness. We know we are on the right track when we see youth accepting responsibility, demonstrating self-reliance, and caring for themselves and others; when they learn to weave Scouting ideals into their lives; and when we can see they will be positive contributors to our American society.



The aims of Scouting: character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness

Though certainly goal-oriented, advancement is not a competition. Rather, it is a joint effort involving the leaders, the members, other volunteers such as merit badge counselors or Venturing consultants, and the family. Though much is done individually at their own pace, youth often work together in groups to focus on achievements and electives at Cub Scout den meetings, for example, or participate in a Boy Scout campout or Sea Scout cruise. As they do this, we must recognize each young person's unique combination of strengths and weaknesses. As watchful leaders, either adult or youth, we lend assistance as called for and encourage members to help each other according to their abilities.



## 2.0.0.4 The Methods of Scouting

Though the methods vary somewhat from program to program, obvious and compelling similarities exist.

| Cub Scouting                       | Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting | Venturing  | Sea Scouts                                    |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Living the ideals                  | Ideals                            | The ideals   | Ideals  |
| Belonging to a den                 | Patrol method                     | Group activities   | Group activities                              |
| Using advancement                  | Advancement                       | Recognition (advancement)  | Advancement                                   |
| Involving family and home          | Association with adults           | Adult association  | Adult association                             |
| Participating in activities        | Outdoors                          | High adventure and sports  | High adventure, outdoors, nautical activities |
| Serving neighborhood and community | Leadership development            | Leadership   | Leadership                                    |
| Wearing the uniform                | Uniform                           | <i>Though not an expressed method, a uniform is available and often worn</i> | Uniform                                       |
| Character Connections®             | Personal growth                   | Teaching others  | Teaching others                               |

From Cub Scouting through Venturing and Sea Scouts, we put the methods to work. Together they lead to mission fulfillment. For example, Scouting ideals, put forth in the timeless instruments of the Scout Oath and Scout Law, represent the most basic method. Moving on, we know young people want to belong to groups. Throughout the Scouting program, we provide a place where the sense of belonging is an outcome of practicing skills, exploring interests, learning values, forming friendships, and enjoying adventure. Associations within families and with a variety of adults are critical methods too, especially in terms of providing support and recognition and in developing mutual respect.

Advancement is the method by which we promote and encourage the ongoing involvement and commitment that keeps members coming back for more. It works best when it is built into a unit's program so that simply participating leads to meaningful achievement and recognition—and to a continually improving readiness for more complex experiences.

**For more about these and the other methods of Scouting, see the leader manuals specific to each program.**



## 3.0.0.0 Section 3.

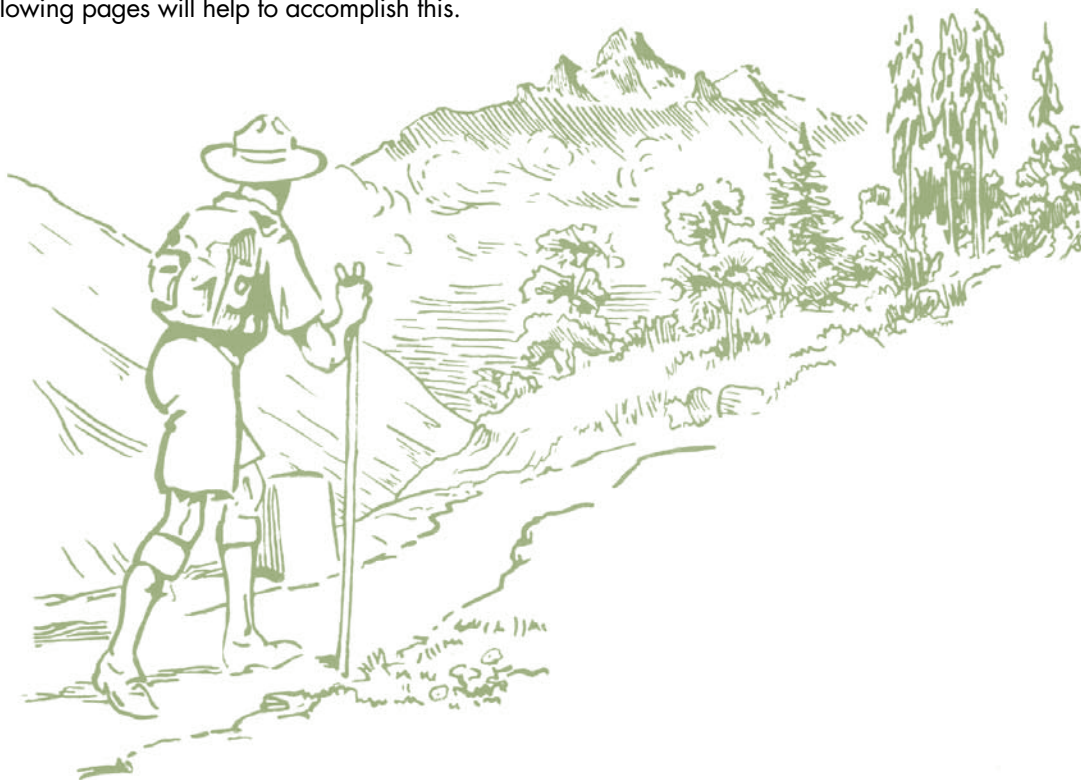
# Guidelines for Advancement and Recognition Committees

Council and district advancement and recognition committees (generally referred to in this guide simply as council or district advancement committees) are responsible for implementing and facilitating advancement and processing most special awards and recognitions. This is done according to national procedures and local practices under the direction of the council executive board. Advancement committees operate under the Boy Scouts of America program function. They should cooperate with the other program function elements—outdoor programs, activities and civic service, and training—and also with the membership, finance, and unit-service functions. Accepting the responsibilities outlined in the following pages will help to accomplish this.

*Advancement committees operate under the Boy Scouts of America program function. They should cooperate with the other program function elements—outdoor programs, activities and civic service, and training—and also with the membership, finance, and unit-service functions.*

### 3.0.0.1 Council Advancement Committee Responsibilities

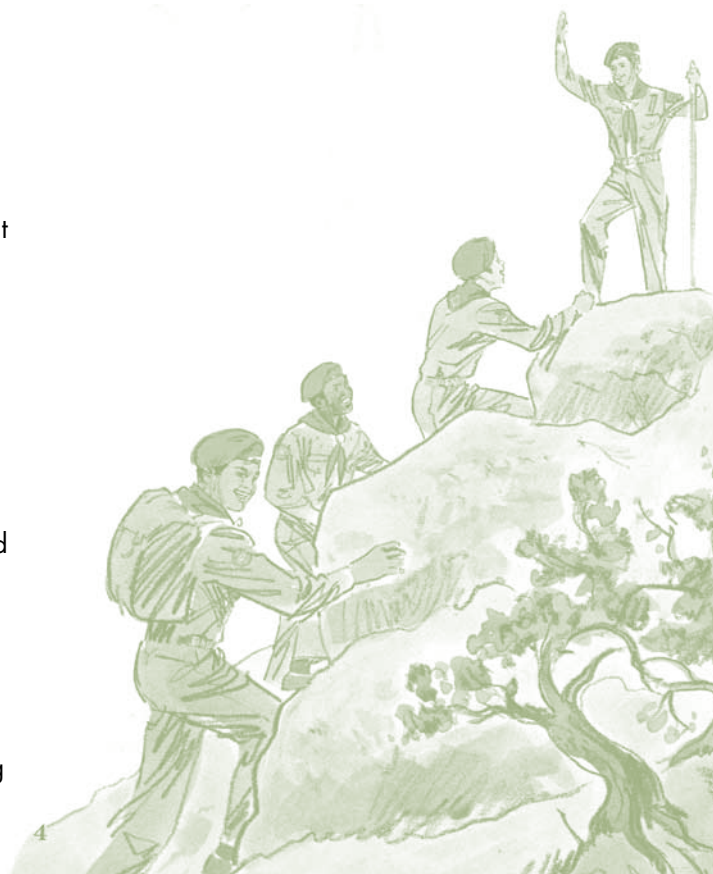
The council advancement committee often falls under a vice president for program. The committee's members should represent a breadth of experience in all Scouting programs. Normally, district advancement chairs are included. The council professional staff advisor for advancement provides coaching and guidance—especially as it relates to national policies and procedures. The advancement chair and the staff advisor work together closely, and in harmony with the other efforts and functions involved in delivering and supporting the Scouting program.





A full, functioning council advancement committee should be organized to accomplish the following.

1. Recruit enough committee members to fulfill the responsibilities described below and achieve council advancement objectives. Provide members with ongoing training to maintain awareness of updated procedures, best practices, and details related to all programs of the Boy Scouts of America—Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts.
2. Establish objectives and action plans that stimulate advancement and lead to maximum success in Scouting's Journey to Excellence.
3. Inspire a positive working relationship with district advancement committees, providing clear guidance and direction on their responsibilities and objectives.
4. Plan, present, and submit for the council calendar those advancement conferences and training experiences that will strengthen the performance of district and unit advancement volunteers.
5. As appropriate, support advancement elements involved in training, and in events and activities presented by other council committees.
6. Support outdoor programs where advancement may take place, such as day camps, Cub Scout resident camp, long-term camping experiences, and specialized activities featuring advancement.
7. Establish local practices for adhering to National Council advancement procedures at outdoor programs, summer camp, and events such as merit badge fairs or midways.
8. Support and promote the BSA's Internet Advancement reporting. Accurate advancement records are critical to program planning and analysis. Councils should work toward 100 percent electronic data entry.
9. Share advancement statistics for use in council fundraising materials and for supporting membership recruitment and retention efforts and commissioner service.
10. See to an effective merit badge program administered at either council or district level that recruits and trains sufficient approved counselors and functions according to national procedures.
11. Determine, according to national procedures, consistent and appropriate methods for approving Eagle Scout service project proposals and fundraising applications, providing Eagle Scout service project coaches, and conducting Eagle Scout boards of review and Quartermaster bridges of review.
12. Determine methods of collecting Eagle Scout or Quartermaster references.
13. Know and precisely follow official procedures for appeals and time-extension requests.
14. Know and follow proper procedures for considering special-needs cases involving alternative requirements and merit badges, and registration beyond the normal age of eligibility.
15. Participate in considering and presenting special awards and recognitions according to established council procedures. This responsibility may or may not include the Silver Beaver Award.
16. Support and promote the religious emblems program. A very small percentage of members earn a religious award. Committees should work to build on this important element of spiritual growth.
17. Process lifesaving and meritorious action awards according to council practices and national procedures.
18. Notify the media to recognize significant youth achievements, such as Eagle Scout rank, lifesaving and meritorious action awards, and other noteworthy accomplishments.



### 3.0.0.2 District Advancement Committee Responsibilities

Although the council advancement committee or executive board determines specific responsibilities for district advancement committees, district advancement chairs report to their respective district chairs. The following is a guide to the responsibilities that might be established.

1. Recruit enough members to fulfill the responsibilities and accomplish any objectives established by the council advancement committee or executive board. Provide members with ongoing training to maintain awareness of updated procedures, best practices, and details related to Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts.
2. Establish objectives and implement action plans that stimulate advancement and lead to maximum success in the Journey to Excellence.
3. Maintain advancement records and share them with commissioners, trainers, and other district volunteers who serve units. Point out units with little or no advancement.
4. Plan, present, and submit for the district and council calendars those advancement conferences and training experiences that will improve the results of unit advancement volunteers.
5. As appropriate, support advancement elements involved in training, and in events and activities presented by other committees of the district.
6. Support outdoor programs where advancement may take place, such as district day camps, camporees, etc.
7. Support and promote the BSA's Internet Advancement. Accurate advancement records are critical to program planning and analysis. Districts should work toward 100 percent electronic data entry.
8. Follow national and local council procedures in administering the merit badge program and in recruiting and training a sufficient number of approved merit badge counselors.
9. Follow national and local council procedures as prescribed regarding appeals, Eagle Scout and Quartermaster references, service project proposal approvals, boards and bridges of review support, and time extensions.
10. Support and promote the religious emblems program. A very small percentage of members earn a religious award. Committees should work to build on this important element of spiritual growth.
11. Recommend, according to council and district practices, recipients for the Award of Merit or other recognitions.
12. Notify the media to recognize significant youth achievements such as Eagle Scout or Quartermaster rank, lifesaving and meritorious action awards, and other noteworthy accomplishments.
13. To strengthen units through strong advancement programs, consider the following:
  - a. Assist unit commissioners and others who serve units.
  - b. Serve as a resource for roundtables.
  - c. Develop relationships with unit advancement volunteers.
  - d. Provide units with advancement reports, summarizing and explaining what they mean.
  - e. Assist unit leadership with advancement planning and promotion.
  - f. Visit pack, troop, team, crew, and ship committee meetings, as warranted.
  - g. Visit boards of review, as warranted.
  - h. Help troops, teams, crews, and ships avoid pitfalls as qualified youth strive for Eagle Scout rank, the Silver Award, or the Quartermaster Award.
  - i. Encourage prompt and proper recognition, ceremonies, and courts of honor.
  - j. Recognize units excelling in advancement.
  - k. According to local council practices, assemble lists of consultants and other resources important to Venturing advancement.



### 3.0.0.3 Unit Advancement Responsibilities

Unit advancement coordinators (or chairs) and those who assist them have the basic responsibility to support the unit leader's advancement program, to maximize rank achievement, and otherwise facilitate a smooth implementation of the process. Specific responsibilities are outlined in the leader literature for each program. The following responsibilities are not all-inclusive, but typical.

1. Work with the unit leader and help to support and facilitate his or her vision for advancement.
2. Educate parents, guardians, unit leadership, and committee members in ways to stimulate and encourage advancement. For example, help build unit programming around advancement opportunities, encourage members who are advancing slowly, and post advancement charts.
3. Help plan, facilitate, and conduct advancement ceremonies. In troops and teams, schedule and conduct regular courts of honor—quarterly is generally sufficient. Ships will want regular bridges of honor, and packs should make recognition a key part of every pack meeting.
4. Obtain necessary badges and certificates, etc., and arrange for timely presentation of ranks, Arrow Points, merit badges, awards, and other recognitions. It is best to obtain and present these as soon as possible after they are earned. They can then be re-presented in more formal settings.
5. Ensure Cub Scouts advance in rank annually by the blue and gold dinner or the school year's end.
6. Know and understand the advancement procedures for the program served, especially those applicable to Eagle Scout and Quartermaster candidates.
7. Establish practices that will bring each new Boy Scout to First Class rank within a year of joining, and then to Star rank the following year.
8. Arrange for timely (or monthly) boards of review, and see that Scouts ready for them are invited.
9. Maintain advancement records and submit reports to the unit committee. It is appropriate in Boy Scouting, Varsity Scouting, Venturing, and Sea Scouts to involve youth leaders in this process.
10. Use the BSA's Internet Advancement to report advancement to the local council.

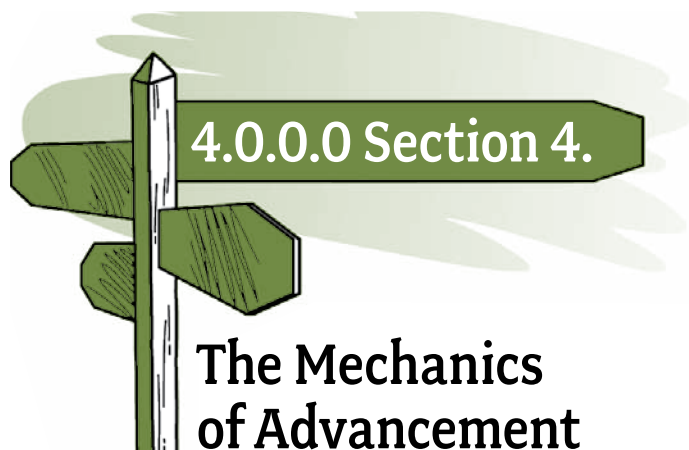
11. Keep a current and accessible copy of the district or council merit badge counselor list. As needed to fill in, develop and maintain a list of unit merit badge counselors. Note that *all* merit badge counselors must be registered as such, annually, and also approved through the council advancement committee.
12. Maintain a library of advancement literature, such as merit badge pamphlets and the annual *Boy Scout Requirements* book, No. 34765. It is appropriate to involve related youth leaders in this effort.

### 3.0.0.4 Awards and Recognitions

"Awards and recognitions" by definition is not part of the advancement plan. But it supplements advancement in many ways and can lead to increased retention. In all, there are more than 100 awards and recognitions. Some are for youth members, some are for adults, and some are for both. Some are earned, while others are presented in honor of service rendered. Awards and recognitions are often promoted and administered by council or district advancement committees and by other committees or task forces as determined by a council executive board.

Many of the forms for making application or submitting nominations can be found at [http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/Awards\\_Central.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/Awards_Central.aspx). In most cases these indicate how and where to send the form and what sort of information is required. Questions concerning them, for either young people or adults, should be directed to the National Youth Development Team. A separate publication, the *Guide to Awards and Insignia*, scheduled for release in winter 2012, will be a central source for building a deeper understanding of the opportunities available.





## 4.0.0.0 Section 4.

# The Mechanics of Advancement

Advancement in each Scouting program is designed as age-appropriate to the youth eligible to participate in it. Ranks form the foundation for the experiences; they are established and authorized by the National Executive Board of the Boy Scouts of America and described in the various member handbooks. The advancement program is administered by a combination of adult and youth leaders, with young people taking more responsibility as the members progress. The role of parents also differs with member age and ability, but parents are encouraged to be engaged at all levels.

### 4.0.0.1 Changes to Requirements

Advancement requirements change from time to time. For Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting, check the latest annual edition of *Boy Scout Requirements*, No. 34765. Changes usually appear first in a revised handbook, and then become effective the next January 1 and are published in the requirements book. Unless otherwise stated there, or in the member handbook, the following options are allowed.

- If members have already started on a rank, Eagle Palm, or Venturing award when a revision is introduced, they may switch to the new requirements or continue with the old ones until it is completed.
- If members have not already started on a rank, they may use the new requirements; or, if work begins before the end of the current year, they may use the old requirements to complete the badge.

### 4.0.0.2 Reporting Advancement

All Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, and Sea Scout ranks, and all Venturing awards must be reported to local councils. The best and most accurate method is through the BSA's Internet Advancement (see Internet Advancement Highlights, 6.0.0.0). The paper form, Advancement Report, No. 34403, may also be submitted, as may electronic files generated by unit management software such as TroopMaster®.

*All badges of rank, merit badges, Eagle Palms, and Venturing awards are restricted items. Unit leadership may not purchase these insignia for presentation without having filed an advancement report with the local council.*

Units should report advancement monthly, but at least quarterly. This assures member records are complete. Missing reports are a serious issue, for example, when it comes to documenting advancement for boards of review, the Eagle Scout rank, and membership transfers or reinstatements. To reflect an accurate count in the Journey to Excellence performance recognition program, it is also important that all advancement for a calendar year be recorded during that year.



#### 4.0.0.3 Age Exception for Youth With Disabilities

Youth members with severe and permanent mental or physical disabilities may work toward ranks, Eagle Palms, or Venturing awards even after they have passed the chronological age of eligibility for a program. Registration with a disability code is required. For details, see “Advancement for Members With Special Needs,” 10.0.0.0.

### 4.1.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement: In Cub Scouting

#### 4.1.0.1 Delivering the Cub Scout Program

Den leaders and Cubmasters conduct meetings implementing the three steps in Cub Scout advancement: preparation, qualification, and recognition. The *Den & Pack Meeting Resource Guide*, No. 34409, explains the mechanics for doing so while helping to maximize advancement. It has four parts: Overview of Cub Scouting and Using the *Den & Pack Meeting Resource Guide*; Den Meeting Plans; Pack Meeting Plans; and Resources, Forms, and Applications. Den meetings—two monthly—support a traditional school year and are designed to result in advancement for all boys. Supplemental plans are provided for dens that meet more often, and adjusting for different school schedules is simple. To achieve a full experience and the greatest impact, regular “home assignments” challenge parents and sons to work together.

#### 4.1.0.2 The Role of the Pack Committee

Den leaders, Cubmasters, and their assistants stimulate interest in advancement and present the program where it occurs. The responsibility for Cub Scout advancement *administration*, however, belongs to a pack committee (“Unit Advancement Responsibilities,” 3.0.0.3). The pack committee collects den advancement reports, compiles and maintains them in pack records, reports advancement to the council (see “Internet Advancement Highlights,” 6.0.0.0), purchases awards and ensures their presentation, and helps plan and facilitate various ceremonies. The committee may also recommend special pack activities that lead to greater levels of achievement.

Consult the *Cub Scout Leader Book*, No. 33221, to learn more about the responsibilities of the pack committee.



#### 4.1.0.3 Who Approves Cub Scout Advancement?

A key responsibility for den leaders is to implement the core den meeting plans as outlined in the *Den & Pack Meeting Resource Guide*, No. 34409. For Wolf, Bear, and Webelos advancement, den leaders take the lead in approving requirements, though their assistants, and also parents who help at meetings, may be asked to play the role of “Akela” and assist. Parents sign for requirements that, according to meeting plans and instructions in the handbooks, take place at home. For the Bobcat trail and Tiger Cub achievements, parents (or adult partners) should sign in the boy’s handbook; the den leader then approves as progress is recorded in the den’s advancement record.

**Akela (Ah-KAY-la) is a title of respect used in Cub Scouting—any good leader is Akela, which is also the leader and guide for Cub Scouts on the advancement trail.**

#### 4.1.0.4 “Do Your Best”

Advancement performance in Cub Scouting is centered on its motto: “Do Your Best.” When a boy has done this—his very best—then regardless of the requirements for any rank or award, it is enough; accomplishment is noted. This is why den leaders, assistants, and parents or guardians are involved in approvals. Generally they know if effort put forth is really the Cub Scout’s best.

#### 4.1.1.0 Cub Scout Ranks

The Cub Scout program is centered primarily in the den, the home and neighborhood, but often takes place in the outdoors. It leads to advancement through six ranks.

*After a new member earns his Bobcat badge, he begins on the Cub Scout rank appropriate to his age or grade. Once he has progressed past the Bobcat rank, he continues to move forward. In other words, he cannot go back and work on ranks that he missed due to his age. Upon earning the Webelos badge and the Arrow of Light Award, he will also have learned the requirements for the Scout badge and begins his journey through Boy Scouting.*



#### 4.1.1.1 Bobcat

The Bobcat badge is earned first, before all other ranks. The trail to Bobcat involves learning the Cub Scout Promise, Law of the Pack, and signs and symbols of Cub Scouting, with an introduction to Character Connections®. After earning the Bobcat rank, new members begin work on the rank appropriate to their age: Tiger Cub, Wolf, Bear, or Webelos.



*Before receiving the Bobcat badge, Tiger Cubs earn the Immediate Recognition emblem (see below). This recognition is not a rank.*

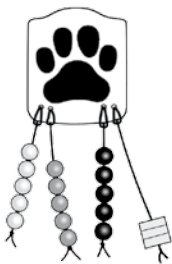
Tiger Cub rank is for boys who are in the first grade (or are 7 years old).

#### 4.1.1.2 Tiger Cub

After earning Bobcat rank, first-graders or boys at least 7 years old work on the Tiger Cub badge. Its 15 requirements are divided evenly among five achievements. Each of the five includes a family activity, a den activity, and a den outing called "Go See It."



*Before receiving his Bobcat badge, a Tiger Cub earns the Immediate Recognition emblem. Then he adds a bead upon completing each of the 15 parts of the achievements. White beads are for family activities, orange for den activities, and black for Go See It outings.*



Once a boy has earned his Tiger Cub badge, he can earn "Tiger Track" beads. These spark interest in new hobbies, activities, or skills. The flat, yellow beads are added to the Immediate Recognition emblem. One is awarded for every 10 electives finished. The elective activities appear in the youth handbook. There is no limit to the number of Tiger Track beads a boy can earn, and he can repeat electives at the discretion of the den leader and adult partner. A boy can work on them at the same time as achievements, but he cannot receive beads until he has earned the Tiger Cub badge.

The Wolf rank is for boys who have completed first grade or are 8 years old.

#### 4.1.1.3 Wolf

For the Wolf badge, work begins with 12 achievements involving simple physical and mental skills covering—for example—knowledge of the U.S. flag, a Cub Scout's religious duties, and other age-appropriate educational activities. When the 12 are completed, the Wolf badge is presented at a pack meeting.



The Bear rank is for boys who have completed second grade or are 9 years old.

#### 4.1.1.4 Bear

For the Bear rank, 12 achievements are required, just as for Wolf. However, boys have 24 from which to choose, organized into four categories: God, Country, Family, and Self. The requirements are more challenging than those for the Wolf rank.



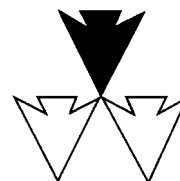
#### 4.1.1.5 Progress Toward Ranks Emblem

The Progress Toward Ranks emblem acknowledges advancement as Wolf and Bear Cub Scouts complete the achievements. Like the Tiger Cub Immediate Recognition emblem, it hangs at the right pocket of the uniform shirt. It features a lanyard divided in two: one for Wolf, one for Bear. When a boy completes three achievements, he earns a bead: yellow for Wolf, red for Bear.



#### 4.1.1.6 Arrow Points

A newly recognized Wolf or Bear Cub Scout then turns his attention to Arrow Points. Arrow Points develop interests and teach skills, many of which are useful in Boy Scouting. One is awarded for every 10 electives: a Gold Arrow for the first 10, and Silver for every 10 thereafter. There is no limit to the number of Silver Arrows that can be awarded, but they must be completed before boys move to the next rank's program. Boys can choose from a number of electives; each represents an opportunity for experiential



learning. Though designed to broaden horizons, those so designated may be earned multiple times; but when a boy repeats an elective, he should get credit only when his skills have improved over the previous experience. Boys may work on elective projects concurrently with achievements, but cannot receive Arrow Points until they earn the badge for their age or grade level.

Unused parts of achievements that were used for the Wolf or Bear badge may not be counted toward Arrow Points. For example, in Bear Achievement 9, "What's Cooking," four of seven parts listed are required for the achievement. The other three may not be used as electives toward Arrow Points. Since 12 achievements will have been used to earn the Bear badge, electives may be chosen from any of the remaining 12. Once a boy moves to the next rank level, he may not earn Arrow Points from the earlier level.

*Webelos, an acronym for "We'll Be LOyal Scouts," is the rank for boys who have completed third grade or are 10 years old. Webelos Scouts can choose between the diamond and oval patches for uniform wear.*

#### 4.1.1.7 Webelos Badge

The Webelos Scout advancement plan has two primary components: the Webelos badge and the Arrow of Light Award. Both are based on activity badges that range from Aquanaut and Sportsman to Geologist and Forester (see "More on Webelos Activity Badges," 4.1.2.3). The Webelos badge calls for earning three of them, along with several other requirements listed in the *Webelos Handbook*.



There are 20 activity badges in all. Webelos Scouts may earn as many as they like.



Sportsman



Artist



Scientist



Craftsman



Communicator

#### 4.1.1.8 Compass Points

Compass points recognize progress beyond the Webelos badge and offer intermediate recognition leading to the Arrow of Light Award. The compass points emblem is presented to each boy who earns seven activity badges—four in addition to those required for Webelos rank. For every four thereafter, a metal compass point is pinned to the emblem. It takes 19 activity badges to earn the emblem and all three points.



#### 4.1.1.9 The Arrow of Light Award



The Arrow of Light Award is Cub Scouting's highest rank. It is earned after fulfilling the requirements for the Webelos badge, usually during the second-year Webelos program. Much of the experience gives Webelos Scouts the chance to practice skills that prepare them to become Boy Scouts. Once completed, the award should be presented during an impressive pack ceremony involving Scouts from a local Scout troop. Their involvement may encourage eventual "bridging" recipients into the troop.

The Arrow of Light Award may be completed only while the following four conditions are met: (1) The Webelos Scout has been registered and active for at least six months since completing the fourth grade or since turning 10 years old; (2) he is still registered in a pack or as a Lone Cub Scout; (3) he has not yet joined a troop; and (4) he has either not yet graduated from the fifth grade or has not yet turned 11, whichever is the latter.

*Webelos Scouts who have earned the Arrow of Light Award have also completed most of the requirements for the Scout badge. This can be easily completed and then presented when the boy has joined a troop and his Scoutmaster has signed for accomplishment in his Boy Scout Handbook.*

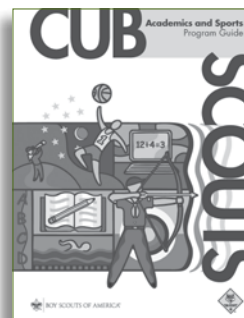
The minimum age for a Cub Scout who has earned the Arrow of Light Award to become a Boy Scout is 10 years old. The Boy Scout joining requirements as stated in the *Boy Scout Handbook*, read as follows: "Be a boy who is 11 years old, or one who has completed the fifth grade or earned the Arrow of Light Award and is at least 10 years old ..."

All achievements, electives, and other requirements for Cub Scout ranks are shown in the respective handbooks. The Webelos Handbook includes requirements for the Arrow of Light Award and all activity badges.



#### 4.1.2.2 Cub Scout Academics and Sports Program

More than just a recognition opportunity, this program develops new skills, improves those existing, and otherwise enriches Cub Scouting. Details can be found in the *Cub Scout Academics and Sports Program Guide*, No. 34299. Activities include subjects like science, video games, collecting, and chess; and sports such as baseball, skateboarding, and table tennis. Each has two levels—a belt loop and a pin. Belt loops, which can be earned more than once, are awarded when each of three requirements is met. Cub Scouts may then continue with additional requirements and earn the pin. Archery and BB gun shooting are included, but can only be conducted at a council-presented activity with certified supervisors.



#### 4.1.2.3 More on Webelos Activity Badges

Activity badges help Webelos Scouts develop interests in areas that may lead to hobbies or career choices. The projects involved help accomplish the purposes of Cub Scouting while providing the foundation for exciting and worthwhile den meetings. Some badges may occupy a den for a few weeks; others may take longer. Families are encouraged to work at home with their boys on projects begun at den meetings, but the Webelos den leader approves completed work.

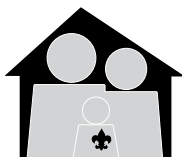
The Webelos den leader and assistant(s), and the den chief, may handle portions of instruction during meetings. But the badges will have more meaning when a qualified activity badge counselor teaches most of the requirements, provides resources, leads field trips, and gives other useful service. A parent or family member, pack leader, teacher, coach, or other adult with talents or skills related to the specific badges may serve in this capacity. A local Scoutmaster or the district advancement chair can help identify merit badge counselors who might also work with related activity badges.

#### 4.1.2.0 Cub Scouting Activity-Based Programs

Many activities and related awards are available for Cub Scouts, dens, and packs. A few are outlined here. Others are covered in the *Cub Scout Leader Book*, No. 33221, and featured in the new *Guide to Awards and Insignia* (available in winter 2012).

##### 4.1.2.1 Fun for the Family Program

Cub Scouting's Fun for the Family program is a series of activities designed to help strengthen families. All family members are encouraged to participate and earn the Fun for the Family Award. Details can be found in *Fun for the Family*, No. 33012. The award includes a patch along with Fun for the Family program pins in five categories.



#### 4.2.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement: In Boy Scouting and Varsity Scouting

Both adult and youth leaders approve Boy Scout and Varsity Scout advancement. This permits greater emphasis on standards and more consistency in measurement, but it also places another level of importance on teaching and testing. As Scouts work



with one another, learning takes place on both sides of the equation as they play teacher and student in turn. Parents are involved at home encouraging, mentoring, and supporting, but they do not sign for rank advancement requirements unless they serve as leaders or Lone Scout counselors (see “Lone Scouting,” 5.0.3.0).



Advancement at this level is subtle. It presents a Scout with a series of challenges in a fun and educational manner. As he completes the requirements he achieves the three aims of Scouting: to develop character, to train in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and to develop physical and mental fitness. It is important thus, to remember that in the end, a badge recognizes what a young man is *able* to do and how he has grown. It is not so much a reward for what he has done. It is instead, more about the journey: As a Scout advances, he is measured and he grows in confidence and self-reliance. The badge signifies a young man—through participation in a series of educational activities—has provided service to others, practiced personal responsibility, and set the examples critical to the development of leadership; all the while working to live by the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

The badge signifies a young man has provided service to others, practiced personal responsibility, and set the examples critical to the development of leadership.

#### 4.2.0.1 Scout Advancement Age Requirements

All Boy Scout awards, merit badges, badges of rank, and Eagle Palms are for registered Boy Scouts, Varsity Scouts, and Lone Scouts; and also for qualified Venturers or Sea Scouts who are not yet 18 years old. Venturers and Sea Scouts qualify by achieving First Class rank as a Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or Lone Scout. The only exceptions for those older than age 18 are related to Scouts registered beyond the age of eligibility (“Registering Qualified Members Beyond Age of Eligibility,” 10.1.0.0) and those who have been granted time extensions to complete the Eagle Scout rank (“Time Extensions,” 9.0.4.0).

### 4.2.1.0 Four Steps in Scout Advancement

A Scout advances from Tenderfoot to Eagle by doing things with his patrol and troop, with his leaders, and on his own. Well-delivered programming will take boys to First Class in their first year of membership. Advancement is a simple matter when the four steps or stages outlined below are observed and integrated into troop programming. The same steps apply to Varsity Scouting, or where members are qualified to continue with Boy Scout advancement in Venturing or Sea Scouts. In these cases, references to troops and various troop leaders would point to teams, crews, and ships, and their respective leaders.



#### 4.2.1.1 The Scout Learns

He learns by doing, and as he learns, he grows in his ability to do his part as a member of the patrol and troop. As he develops knowledge and skill, he is asked to teach others; and in this way he learns and develops leadership.

#### 4.2.1.2 The Scout Is Tested

The Scoutmaster authorizes those who may test and pass the Scout on rank requirements. They might include his patrol leader, senior patrol leader, an assistant unit leader, a troop committee member, another Scout, or the Scoutmaster himself. Merit badge counselors teach and test him on requirements for merit badges.

#### 4.2.1.3 The Scout Is Reviewed

After he has completed all requirements for a rank, the Scout meets with a board of review. For Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, and Life ranks, and Eagle Palms, members of the unit committee conduct it. See "Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks (or Palms)," 8.0.2.0.

The Eagle Scout board of review is held in accordance with National Council and local council procedures.

#### 4.2.1.4 The Scout Is Recognized

When the board of review has approved his advancement, the Scout deserves recognition as soon as possible. This should be done at a ceremony at the next unit meeting. The certificate for his new rank may be presented later, during a formal court of honor.

### 4.2.2.0 Varsity Scouting Particulars

Rank requirements for Varsity Scouts are the same as for Boy Scouts, except positions of responsibility are met in Varsity-specific roles that can be found in *Boy Scout Requirements*, No. 34765. Advancement is supervised not by adult leaders, but by a young man called an advancement program manager, with assistance from a team committee member. Methods for conducting boards of review are covered in "Boards of Review: An Overview for All Ranks," 8.0.0.0. Council and district advancement committees should consult the *Varsity Scout Guidebook*, No. 34827, for a full understanding of how the program works.

#### 4.2.2.1 Varsity Scout Letter

The Varsity Scout letter is available to Varsity Scouts and adult team leaders. Requirements include attendance at meetings and activities, active participation in high-adventure or sports programs, and living the Scout Oath and Scout Law. It can be worn on the Varsity Scout jacket or the merit badge sash. Gold bars may be added to signify additional letters earned. For more, see the *Varsity Scout Guidebook*, No. 34827.



#### 4.2.2.2 Varsity Scout Denali Award

The Denali Award is a Varsity Scouting pinnacle. It is available only to team members who have earned a Varsity letter, and requires advancement in rank, a position of leadership, service as a team captain or program manager leading and supporting activities, knowing and living the Varsity Scout Pledge, and a unit level board of review. The board of review is conducted according to the procedures outlined in section 8, "Boards of Review: An Overview for All Ranks." District or council representatives are not involved. Note the exception under 8.0.2.0, "Particulars for Tenderfoot Through Life Ranks or Palms," relating to the composition of the board.



### 4.2.3.0 Rank Requirements Overview

When people are asked what they did in Scouting, or what it is they think Scouts do or learn, they most often mention the outdoor activities, camping and hiking. A First Class Scout would surely add first aid or fire building or swimming or cooking or knot tying. And those who made at least Star or Life would doubtless talk about the merit badges they must have earned to achieve those ranks—especially those required for Eagle. But these hands-on experiences, as memorable as they are, make up only a portion of what must be done to advance. And the remaining requirements—those beyond the merit badges and skills activities—are generally the most difficult to administer and judge. This section concentrates on those. Consult the *Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009, for guidance on implementing the others.

*The concepts of "reasonable" and "within reason" will help unit leadership and boards of review gauge the fairness of expectations for considering whether a Scout is "active" or has fulfilled positions of responsibility. A unit is allowed of course, to establish expectations acceptable to its chartered organization and unit committee. But for advancement purposes, Scouts must not be held to those which are so demanding as to be impractical for today's youth (and families) to achieve.*

*Ultimately, a board of review shall decide what is reasonable and what is not. In doing so, the board members must use common sense and must take into account that youth should be allowed to balance their lives with positive activities outside of Scouting.*

Since we are preparing young people to make a positive difference in society, we judge that a member is “active” when his level of activity in Scouting has had a sufficiently positive influence toward this end.

#### 4.2.3.1 Active Participation

The purpose of Star, Life, and Eagle Scout requirements calling for Scouts to be active for a period of months involves *impact*. Since we prepare young people to go forth, and essentially, make a positive difference in our American society, we judge that a member is “active” when his level of activity in Scouting, whether high or minimal, has had a sufficiently positive influence toward this end.

Use the following three sequential tests to determine whether the requirement has been met. The first and second are required, along with either the third or *its alternative*.

1. **The Scout is registered.** The youth is registered in his unit for at least the time period indicated in the requirement, and he has indicated in some way, through word or action, that he considers himself a member. If a boy was supposed to have been registered, but for whatever reason was not, discuss with the local council registrar the possibility of back-registering him.
2. **The Scout is in good standing.** A Scout is considered in “good standing” with his unit as long as he has not been dismissed for disciplinary reasons. He must also be in good standing with the local council and the Boy Scouts of America. (In the rare case he is not, communications will have been delivered.)
3. **The Scout meets the unit’s reasonable expectations; or, if not, a lesser level of activity is explained.** If, for the time period required, a Scout or qualifying Venturer or Sea Scout meets those aspects of his unit’s pre-established expectations that refer to a level of activity, then he is considered active and the requirement is met. Time counted as “active” need not be consecutive. A boy may piece together any times he *has* been active and still qualify.

*Units are free to establish additional expectations on uniforming, supplies for outings, payment of dues, parental involvement, etc., but these and any other standards extraneous to a level of activity shall not be considered in evaluating this requirement.*

#### Alternative to the third test if expectations are not met:

If a young man has fallen below his unit’s activity-oriented expectations, then it must be due to other positive endeavors— in or out of Scouting—or to noteworthy circumstances that have prevented a higher level of participation (see below). In this case a Scout is considered “active” if a board of review can agree that Scouting values have already taken hold and been exhibited. This might be evidenced, for example, in how he lives his life and relates to others in his community, at school, in his religious life, or in Scouting. It is also acceptable to consider and “count” positive activities outside Scouting when they, too, contribute to his growth in character, citizenship, or personal fitness. Remember; it is not so much about what a Scout has done. It is about what he is *able* to do and how he has grown.

There may be, of course, registered youth who appear to have zero level of activity. Maybe they are out of the country on an exchange program, or away at school. Or maybe we just haven’t seen them and wonder if they’ve quit. To pass the first test above, a Scout must be registered. But he must also have made it clear through outright participation or by communicating in some way that he still considers himself a member, even though—for now—he may not meet full expectations. A conscientious leader might make a call and discover the boy’s intentions.

If however, a Scout has been asked to leave his unit due to behavioral issues or the like, or if the council or the Boy Scouts of America has directed—for whatever reason—that he may not participate, then according to the second test he is not considered “active.”

In considering the third test, it is appropriate for units to set reasonable expectations for attendance and participation. Then it is simple: Those who meet them are “active.” But those who do not must be given the opportunity to qualify under the third-test alternative above. To do so, they must first offer an acceptable explanation. Certainly, there are medical, educational, family, and other issues that for practical purposes prevent higher levels of participation. These *must* be considered. Would the Scout have been more active if he *could* have been? If so, for purposes of advancement, he is deemed “active.”



We must also recognize the many worthwhile opportunities beyond Scouting. Taking advantage of these opportunities and participating in them may be used to explain why *unit* participation falls short. Examples might include involvement in religious activities, school, sports, or clubs that also develop character, citizenship, or personal fitness. The additional learning and growth experiences these provide can reinforce the lessons of Scouting and also give young men the opportunity to put them into practice in a different setting.

It is reasonable to accept that competition for a Scout's time will become intense, especially as he grows older and wants to take advantage of positive "outside" opportunities. This can make full-time dedication to his unit difficult to balance. A fair leader therefore, will seek ways to empower a young man to plan his growth opportunities both within and outside Scouting, and consider them part of the overall positive life experience for which the Boy Scouts of America is a driving force.

A board of review can accept an explanation if it can be reasonably sure there have been sufficient influences in the Scout's life that he is meeting our aims and can be awarded the rank regardless of his current or most recent level of activity *in Scouting*. The board members must satisfy themselves that he presents himself, and behaves, according to the expectations of the rank for which he is a candidate. Simply put: Is he the sort of person who, based on present behavior, will contribute to the Boy Scouts of America's mission? Note that it may be more difficult, though not impossible, for a younger member to pass through the third-test alternative than for one more experienced in our lessons.

#### 4.2.3.2 Demonstrate Scout Spirit

The ideals of the Boy Scouts of America are spelled out in the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout motto, and Scout slogan. Members incorporating these ideals into their daily lives at home, at school, in their religious life, and in their neighborhoods, for example, are said to have *Scout spirit*. In evaluating whether a member has fulfilled this requirement, it may be best to begin by asking him to explain what Scout spirit and living the Scout Oath and Scout Law mean to him. Young people know when they are being kind or helpful, or a good friend to others. They know when they are cheerful, or trustworthy, or reverent. All of us, young and old, know how we act when no one else is around.

A leader typically asks for examples of how a Scout has lived the Oath and Law. It might also be useful to invite examples of when he did not. This is not something to push, but it can help with the realization that sometimes we fail to live by our ideals, and that we *all* can do

better. This also sends a message that a Scout can admit he has done wrong, yet still advance. Or in a serious situation—such as alcohol or illegal drug use—understand why advancement might not be appropriate just now. This is a sensitive issue, and must be treated carefully. Most Scout leaders do their best to live by the Oath and Law, but any one of them may look back on years past and wish that, at times, they had acted differently. We learn from these experiences and improve and grow. We can look for the same in our youth.

*Evaluating Scout spirit will always be a judgment call, but through getting to know a young man and by asking probing questions, we can get a feel for it. We can say however, that we do not measure Scout spirit by counting meetings and outings attended. It is indicated, instead, by the way he lives his life.*

#### 4.2.3.3 Service Projects

Basic to the lessons in Scouting, especially regarding citizenship, service projects are a key element in the Journey to Excellence recognition program for councils, districts, and units. They should be a regular and critical part of the program in every pack, troop, team, crew, and ship.

Service projects required for Second Class, Star, and Life ranks may be conducted individually or through participation in patrol or troop efforts. They also may be approved for those assisting on Eagle Scout projects. Second Class requires a minimum of one hour on an approved project. An approval is important because it calls on a boy to think about what might be accepted, and to be prepared to discuss it. It is up to the unit to determine how this is done. In many troops, it is the Scoutmaster's prerogative.

Star and Life ranks require at least six hours of service on a Scoutmaster preapproved project. Time spent on Eagle Scout service projects should be allowed in meeting these requirements. Note that Eagle projects do not have a minimum time requirement, but call for planning and development, and leadership of others, and must be preapproved by the council or district. (See "The Eagle Scout Service Project," 9.0.2.0.)

#### 4.2.3.4 Positions of Responsibility

"Serve actively for a period of ... months in one or more ... positions of responsibility" is an accomplishment every candidate for Star, Life, or Eagle must achieve. The following will help to determine whether a Scout has fulfilled the requirement.

#### 4.2.3.4.1 Positions Must Be Chosen From Among Those Listed.

The position must be listed in the position of responsibility requirement shown in the most current edition of *Boy Scout Requirements*, No. 34765. Since more than one member may hold some positions—“instructor,” for example—it is expected that even very large units are able to provide sufficient opportunities within the list. The only exception involves Lone Scouts, who may use positions in school, their place of worship, in a club, or elsewhere in the community.

For Star and Life ranks only, a unit leader may assign a leadership project as a substitute for the position of responsibility. If this is done, he or she should consult the unit committee and unit advancement coordinator to arrive at suitable standards. The experience should provide lessons similar to those of the listed positions, but it must not be confused with, or compared to, the scope of an Eagle Scout service project.

#### 4.2.3.4.2 Meeting the Time Test May Involve Any Number of Positions.

The requirement calls for a period of months. Any number of positions may be held as long as total service time equals at least the number of months required. Holding simultaneous positions does not shorten the required number of months. Positions need not flow from one to the other; there may be gaps between them. This applies to all qualified members including Lone Scouts.

When a Scout assumes a position of responsibility, something related to the desired results must happen.

**4.2.3.4.3 Meeting Unit Expectations.** If a unit has established expectations for positions of responsibility, and if, *within reason* (see the note under “Rank Requirements Overview,” 4.2.3.0), based on his personal skill set, the Scout meets them, he fulfills the requirement. When a Scout assumes a position, *something* related to the desired results must happen. It is a disservice to the Scout and to the unit to reward work that has not been done. Holding a position and doing nothing, producing no results, is unacceptable. Some degree of responsibility must be practiced, taken, or accepted.

#### 4.2.3.4.4 Meeting the Requirement in the Absence of Unit Expectations.

It is best when a Scout’s leaders provide him position descriptions, and then direction, coaching, and support. Where this occurs, and is done well, the young man will likely succeed. When this support, for whatever reason, is unavailable or otherwise not provided—or when there are no clearly established expectations—then an adult leader or the Scout, or both, should work out the responsibilities to fulfill. In doing so, neither the position’s

purpose nor degree of difficulty may be altered significantly or diminished. BSA literature provides the basis for this effort: the *Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009, (“The Boy-Led Troop”); the *Patrol Leader Handbook*, No. 32502 (“Your Patrol and Your Troop”); the *Varsity Scout Guidebook*, No. 34827 (in explanations of team organization); the *Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655 (“Leadership in the Crew”); and the *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239 (“Officers’ Responsibilities”).

Under the above scenario, if it is left to the Scout to determine what should be done, and he makes a reasonable effort to perform accordingly for the time specified, then he fulfills this requirement. Even if his results are not necessarily what the Scoutmaster, members of a board of review, or others involved may want to see, he may not be held to unestablished expectations.

**4.2.3.4.5 When Responsibilities Are Not Met.** If a unit has *clearly* established expectations for position(s) held, then—*within reason*—a Scout must meet them through the prescribed time. If he is not meeting expectations, then this must be communicated early. Unit leadership may work toward a constructive result by asking him what he thinks he should be accomplishing. What is *his* concept of the position? What does he think his troop leaders—youth and adult—expect? What has he done well? What needs improvement? Often this questioning approach can lead a young man to the decision to measure up. *He* will tell the leaders how much of the service time should be recorded.

If it becomes clear nothing will improve his performance, then it is acceptable to remove the Scout from his position. Every effort should have been made while he was in the position to ensure he understood expectations and was regularly supported toward reasonably acceptable performance. It is unfair and inappropriate—after six months, for example—to surprise a boy who thinks he has been doing fine, with news that his performance is now considered unsatisfactory. In this case, he must be given credit for the time.

Only in rare cases—if ever—should troop leaders inform a Scout that time, once served, will not count.

If a Scout believes he has performed his duties satisfactorily, but his leaders disagree, then the possibility that expectations are unreasonable should be considered. If after discussions between the Scout and his leaders—and perhaps including his parents or guardians—he believes he is being held to unreasonable expectations, then upon completing the remaining requirements, he must be granted a board of review. If he is an Eagle

candidate, then he may request a board of review under disputed circumstances (see “Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances,” 8.0.3.2).

**4.2.3.4.6 “Responsibility” and “Leadership.”** Many suggest this requirement should call for a position of “leadership” rather than simply of “responsibility.” Taking and accepting responsibility, however, is a key foundation for leadership. One cannot lead effectively without it. The requirement as written recognizes the different personalities, talents, and skill sets in all of us. Some seem destined to be “the leader of the group.” Others provide quality support and strong examples behind the scenes. Without the latter, the leaders in charge have little chance for success. Thus, the work of the supporters becomes part of the overall leadership effort.

#### 4.2.3.5 Unit Leader (Scoutmaster) Conference

The unit leader (Scoutmaster) conference, regardless of the rank or program, is conducted according to the guidelines in the *Scoutmaster Handbook*, No. 33009. Note that a Scout must participate or take part in one; it is not a “test.” Requirements do *not* say he must “pass” a conference. While it makes sense to hold one after other requirements for a rank are met, it is not required that it be the last step before the board of review. This is an important consideration for Scouts on a tight schedule to meet the requirements before age 18. Last-minute work can sometimes make it impossible to fit the conference in before then, so scheduling it earlier can avoid unnecessary extension requests.

The conference can provide a forum for discussing ambitions and life purpose and for establishing goals for future achievement, but work left to be completed may be discussed just as easily as that which is finished. If appropriate, an “object lesson” on delayed effort could prove valuable. Ultimately, conference timing is up to the unit. Some leaders hold more than one along the way, and any of them can count toward the requirement.

### 4.3.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement: In Venturing

Venturing is for young men and women who are 14 through 20 years old, or who are 13 and have completed the eighth grade. Its purpose is to build character, promote citizenship, and develop personal and mental fitness. Each Venturing crew is responsible for achieving these aims by designing a program that appeals to its members. Thus, Venturing is a catalyst: It brings together adults and young people, and incredible things happen. It is all about asking themselves and one another what is possible, and then setting out to plan and execute toward fulfillment.



*Sea Scouts is a specialized branch of Venturing with its own handbook, program, and system of advancement and recognition. Its members may work on and earn any of the Venturing awards and recognitions (see “Mechanics of Advancement: In Sea Scouts,” 4.4.0.0).*

#### 4.3.0.1 The Goals of Venturing

There are four goals for Venturers:

1. Gain practical experience from knowledgeable people.
2. Engage in activities centered on leadership, service, social activities, fitness, the outdoors, and citizenship. The idea is to develop balance, to take responsibility, and to become mentally, emotionally, and physically fit.
3. Experience and provide positive leadership, to set and follow examples, and to learn by doing.
4. Have a chance to learn and grow in a supportive, caring, and fun environment.

#### 4.3.1.0 Advancement in Venturing

The purpose of the Venturing awards program is to facilitate these four goals; provide a pathway for personal development; encourage learning, growth, and service; and recognize high levels of achievement. Advancement is accomplished when an active program emphasizes it and pays attention to the four steps of the process: preparation, learning, qualification, and recognition. Bronze, Gold, and Silver are the awards for the advancement track, but others also are described below. Venturers have until their 21st birthday to complete their awards.

For detailed requirements and more information on Venturing advancement or recognition, see the *Venturer/Ranger Handbook*, No. 33494; *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239; *Quest Handbook*, No. 33151; *TRUST Handbook*, No. 33154; and *Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655. Except in Sea Scouts, Venturers work on awards, not ranks, and they can choose to work along with others in a crew or go it alone. They may also work simultaneously on the Bronze, Gold, and Silver awards; there are time-oriented requirements, but not between the earning of one award to the next.



*The Gold and Silver awards require a crew review. There is no council or district involvement, except perhaps guidance on best practices. All work for the awards must be completed by the member's 21st birthday, but the review may be held after that.*

### 4.3.1.1 The Venturing Awards

**4.3.1.1.1 Bronze Award.** Venturers may choose to earn just one Bronze Award—perhaps the one best matching the crew's interest area—or more, or all five of them. They represent an introduction to skills and life experiences, and include Arts and Hobbies, Sports, Sea Scouts, Outdoor, and Religious Life. These entry-level awards encourage achievement of the Gold and Silver awards. Crew Advisors or specialty "consultants" approved by the crew Advisor, who are much like merit badge counselors, pass members on requirements. No committee review or board of review is involved.



Venturing is dynamic, with built-in flexibility at many levels. In some cases this carries over to Bronze Award requirements, where limited substitutions are allowed based on what is available in your area. For specifics, please refer to the *Venturer/Ranger Handbook*, No. 33494, and the *Venturing Leader Manual*, No. 34655.

**4.3.1.1.2 Gold Award.** One Bronze award is required for the Gold Award, and candidates must be active (regardless of award level) and registered for at least 12 months. They must serve in a leadership role (within or outside the crew); participate in a district, council, or national Venturing activity; accomplish personal goals; and plan and lead activities. Letters of recommendation are required, along with a written presentation for a crew review committee. This consists of four to six Venturers and adults appointed by the crew president in conjunction with the crew Advisor. Venturers may choose to deliver the presentation orally at the review meeting, but this is not required. The review committee provides final approval. There is no district or council review board, but the advancement must be reported to the council.



**4.3.1.1.3 Silver Award.** Silver is the highest award for Venturers. It says they are leaders who serve, who are fit and prepared, and who have honor. Candidates must earn the Bronze and Gold awards, be proficient in emergency preparedness, participate in Ethics in Action, and complete Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews. For the Silver Award, Venturers first establish a plan of action and then carry it out. When requirements are fulfilled, they go through a formal review with four to six Venturers and adults appointed by the crew president in conjunction with the crew Advisor. There is no district or council involvement in the review process.



Introduction to Leadership Skills for Crews (ILSC) replaces Venturing Leadership Skills Course (VLSC). Either course is acceptable for the Silver Award.

**4.3.1.1.4 Ranger Award.** High adventure and the outdoors have always been emphasized in the Boy Scouts of America, and Venturing is no different. The Ranger Award encourages a high level of achievement and proficiency in outdoor skills. It exemplifies challenge. Eight core requirements and at least four of 18 electives must be completed. If the Outdoor Bronze Award has been earned, the Venturer is already halfway there. Candidates may work on their own or with other crew members. Advisors and consultants must sign for requirements. No crew review or board of review is involved.



**4.3.1.1.5 Quest Award.** The Quest Award is about fitness and sports. Candidates learn about nutrition, exercise plans, and what is required for a healthy life. They may be introduced to an enjoyable sport helpful toward that end. As with other Venturing awards, members share with others what they have learned. This can be done through presentations or even sports clinics. Five core requirements and at least one of five electives must be completed. The Sports Bronze Award comes first. There is no review board.



**4.3.1.1.6 TRUST Award.** The TRUST (Tending, Respecting, Understanding, Serving, Transforming) Award helps Venturers learn about themselves, their communities, and religion and culture. It recognizes that trust is an essential part of relationships; that learning to trust is the challenge; and that learning to understand one another—especially those from different backgrounds and nationalities—represents a good start. The five core requirements are Tending Your Faith, Respecting the Beliefs of Others, Understanding Other Cultures, Serving Your Community, and Transforming Our Society. Candidates must work with a religious leader or with consultants in a related field of expertise. No board of review is involved.



#### 4.3.1.2 Past Credit for Venturers

The requirements for all Venturing awards require the work to be done as Venturers. For example, even though a young man earned the Backpacking merit badge as a Boy Scout, before he became a Venturer, he must pass the Ranger backpacking elective once registered as a Venturer. Some requirements may call for certification such as Scuba Open-Water Diver, American Red Cross Standard First Aid, or BSA Lifeguard. Current certifications such as these may be used regardless where they were earned.

#### 4.3.1.3 Multiple Credit for Venturers

Venturers may receive multiple credit for requirements. In the above example, if the Backpacking merit badge was earned while the member was also a Venturer, the effort could also count toward the Ranger elective. Further, experiences such as the Red Cross Emergency Response course could be used for the Ranger first aid requirement and the first aid and lifesaver electives, and also for the Silver Award's emergency preparedness requirement. Venturers may not receive multiple credit for something like a tabletop display or a presentation. These must be done separately and relate directly to each situation requiring them.

#### 4.3.1.4 Boy Scout Advancement in Venturing and Sea Scouts

Venturers and Sea Scouts who earned First Class rank as registered Boy Scouts or Varsity Scouts are qualified until their 18th birthday to continue with Boy Scout advancement. If desired, they can maintain multiple (dual) registration in a troop or team, and also in a crew or ship, and work



on ranks in either unit. Wherever the member is registered, the Scoutmaster and crew Advisor or Skipper decide with the young man which one will oversee his advancement. If the Advisor or Skipper does so, but is unfamiliar with Boy Scouting, the district advancement committee should identify an experienced Scouter to assist. It is important for Venturing and Sea Scout leaders to understand that Boy Scout advancement procedures must be followed.

Any work done *while a Venturer or Sea Scout* can count toward both Boy Scout and Venturing or Sea Scout advancement at the same time. For instance, a conservation project required in Boy Scouting can also count in Venturing. Position of responsibility requirements for Boy Scout ranks may be met by the Venturer or Sea Scout serving in crew or ship positions as outlined in the *Boy Scout Requirements* book, No. 34765. The Advisor or Skipper conducts the unit leader conference. The crew or ship committee conducts Star and Life boards of review, and Eagle Scout boards follow the local council's established procedure.

### 4.4.0.0 Mechanics of Advancement: In Sea Scouts



Although a special-interest program carried on as part of Venturing, Sea Scouts has its own distinct language, customs, and advancement track. It combines traditions of the past with technology of the future, and whether one looks to the sea as a career or lifelong hobby, it is worth exploring. Sea Scout units, called "ships," use a variety of power boats and sailing vessels of all sizes, and promote service to others and advancement that rewards individual pursuits of excellence. Each level marks progressive growth as a seaman and leader, culminating in the prestigious Quartermaster rank.

#### 4.4.1.0 Sea Scout Ranks and Awards

The 11th printing of the *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239, was published in fall 2010. At that time, Sea Scout advancement requirements were revised. Those working on a rank when this occurred had one year to complete it under the previous edition. Then the new requirements must be used. The ship committee should regularly update its library to reflect changes to Boy Scout requirements, and also other references not in the manual, such as U.S. Coast Guard navigation rules, International Sailing Federation Rules, and OSHA requirements, many of which change frequently.

The awards and four ranks in Sea Scouts are described below. All requirements must be completed before the 21st birthday, and the ranks are available to registered Sea Scouts only.

#### 4.4.1.1 Apprentice Rank

Striving for Apprentice rank, active Sea Scouts learn ideals, courtesies, procedures, and responsibilities, and how members of a ship are organized and uniformed. Basic swimming and beginning seamanship skills are required, as is knowledge of safety, emergency procedures, and Safe Swim Defense. Sixteen hours of service in ship projects, activities, or equipment maintenance fill out the requirements.



#### 4.4.1.2 Ordinary Rank

Active Sea Scouts attain Ordinary rank through additional service, knowledge of the Sea Scout emblem, U.S. flag etiquette, and land and sea protocols. Successful candidates will participate in strengthening ship membership, serve as an event chair, complete quarterdeck training, pass the Swimming merit badge requirements, and qualify on various safety and emergency procedures, drills, communication methods, and Safety Afloat. They learn about the galley, build on seamanship and boat-handling skills, and learn about anchoring, piloting and navigation, and related regulations. Overnight cruise planning and participation provides for skills application, and completing three electives broadens horizons.



#### 4.4.1.3 Able Rank

To achieve Able rank, Sea Scouts master ceremony presentation and demonstrate knowledge of maritime history. They also teach others—perhaps Boy Scouts and Venturers—about the program and fulfill leadership responsibilities. They must pass the Lifesaving merit badge requirements and develop further expertise in safety and first aid. There is a continued progression in seamanship, boat-handling skills, anchoring, and piloting and navigation, as well as a deeper understanding of maritime environmental issues. The Sea Scout Long Cruise badge is required for Able, as is completion of three electives.



#### 4.4.1.4 Quartermaster Rank

The highest award for Sea Scouts presents a challenge that, when met, will affect a young person lifelong. The Quartermaster candidate must think analytically about how the program is delivered and supported, while developing a deeper understanding



of Scouting ideals. Most requirements represent intensification of what was learned for previous ranks, but with significant additions in the Quartermaster project, cruise, and study of weather and forecasting. The project requirement is nearly identical to the Eagle Scout service project, but does not call for a workbook. The cruise involves taking long-term command of a vessel and crew and conducting critical drills.

##### 4.4.1.4.1 Time Extensions for Earning Quartermaster Rank.

If a Sea Scout foresees that, due to no fault of his or her own, the requirements to complete the Quartermaster rank are not achievable before age 21, he or she may apply for a limited time extension. These are rarely granted, and reserved only for work on Quartermaster. The tests that apply and the procedures to follow are the same as those outlined for an extension to earn the Eagle Scout rank (see "Time Extensions," 9.0.4.0). Note that references to age 18 in the Eagle Scout procedure would relate to age 21 in Sea Scouts, and that extension requests are sent to, and approved by, the national Sea Scout director. Quartermaster time extensions are not granted through the national Advancement Team.

**The local council does not grant or deny Quartermaster time extensions. These are granted only by the national Sea Scout director after consideration of local council recommendations.**

##### 4.4.1.4.2 Submitting the Quartermaster Application.

Once approved by the Skipper, the ship committee, and the bridge of review, the Quartermaster application must be approved by the district or council advancement committee. It must then be sent to the national Sea Scout director. A certificate is returned to the local council service center.

##### 4.4.1.5 The Skipper Conference

Skippers hold a conference with youth who indicate they are ready to advance to the next Sea Scout rank. Once the conference has taken place and the other requirements for the rank are fulfilled, the application for rank is forwarded to the ship's bridge of review. Its members come from the ship quarterdeck and committee. The process is similar to that for a Scoutmaster conference. (See "Unit Leader [Scoutmaster] Conference," 4.2.3.5.)



Sea Scouts working on the Eagle Scout rank follow the procedures listed in “The Eagle Scout Rank,” 9.0.0.0.

#### 4.4.1.6 Sea Scout Bronze Award

**Any Venturer may earn the Sea Scout Bronze Award.**

Study materials and the requirements can be found in the *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239. They are the same as those for the Sea Scout Ordinary rank.

Sea Scouts are qualified to earn any of the Venturing awards. See “Advancement in Venturing,” 4.3.1.0.

#### 4.4.1.7 Other Sea Scout Awards

Other awards Sea Scouts may earn include the Small-Boat Handler bar, the Qualified Seaman bar, and the Long Cruise badge and arcs. The requirements are detailed in the *Sea Scout Manual*, No. 33239. All Venturing awards are also available, as are any BSA recognitions that are not limited to Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, or Varsity Scouts. Examples that may interest Sea Scouts include BSA Lifeguard, Boardsailing BSA, Snorkeling BSA, Paddlecraft Safety, Kayaking BSA, Mile Swim BSA, and many more.

#### 4.4.1.8 Bridges of Honor

A bridge of honor, like a court of honor in Boy Scouting, is the forum where awards are presented. It should be impressive and well planned. It is often held in connection with a social affair. As in any other BSA program, it is important Sea Scouts receive prompt recognition; thus it may be a good idea to present awards informally first at a ship meeting and then again (more formally) at the next bridge of honor.

#### 4.4.2.0 The Sea Scout Bridge of Review

Sections 4.4.2.1 through 4.4.2.3 below cover bridge of review procedures that apply to all Sea Scout ranks. These are followed by “Particulars for Apprentice Through Able Ranks,” 4.4.2.4; sections 4.4.2.5 through 4.4.2.8 pertain only to the Quartermaster rank.

#### 4.4.2.1 Purpose and Timeliness of Bridges of Review

After completing the requirements for any Sea Scout rank, the Sea Scout appears before a bridge of review. He or she cannot be denied this opportunity. The purpose

of the review is to determine the quality of the candidate’s experience and decide whether the youth is qualified to advance. The bridge of review date becomes the effective advancement date.

#### 4.4.2.2 Composition of the Bridge of Review

A bridge of review must consist of no fewer than three members and no more than six. For further specifications, see “Particulars for Apprentice Through Able Ranks,” 4.4.2.4, and “Particulars for the Quartermaster Rank,” 4.4.2.5. Skippers and mates may not serve on a bridge of review for a Sea Scout in their own ship. Parents or guardians may not serve on a bridge for their son or daughter. The candidate or his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall have no part in selecting any bridge of review members.

#### 4.4.2.3 Conducting the Bridge of Review

Procedures for conducting Sea Scout bridges of review are very similar to those for Boy Scout rank boards of review. The applicable references, with exceptions noted for Sea Scouts, are listed below. Where there are references to “unit leader” or “Scoutmaster,” to “troop” or “unit,” or to “Scout,” these can be read as “Skipper,” “ship,” and “Sea Scout.”

- **8.0.0.4 Wearing the Uniform—or Neat in Appearance.** The same limitations on requiring a uniform for a Boy Scout board of review apply to Sea Scouts, with the exception that the Sea Scout dress uniform is preferred for a bridge of review.
- **8.0.1.0 Conducting the Board of Review.** Note the same exception that parents who insist on being present at a board of review applies to bridges of review.
- **8.0.1.1 Not a Retest or “Examination.”** Identical for Sea Scouts.
- **8.0.1.2 What Should Be Discussed.** With the exception that the primary reference is the *Sea Scout Manual*, and that the Sea Scout must also keep the Sea Promise.
- **8.0.1.4 Board Members Must Agree Unanimously on Decisions to Approve.** Identical for Sea Scouts.
- **8.0.1.5 After the Review.** With the exception that if it is thought that a Sea Scout, before his or her 21st birthday, can benefit from an opportunity to properly complete the requirements, the bridge of review may adjourn and reconvene at a later date.

#### 4.4.2.4 Particulars for Apprentice Through Able Ranks

The preceding applies to bridges of review for all Sea Scout ranks, but there are a few differences for those leading up to Quartermaster. See "Particulars for the Quartermaster Rank," 4.4.2.5, below, to learn about the differences for Quartermaster.

1. After a Skipper conference, the youth advancing meets with the bridge of review made up of three to six members of the quarterdeck or ship committee.
2. The boatswain serves as bridge of review chair, conducts the review according to the BSA procedures, and reports results to the ship advancement coordinator.
3. The location should be comfortable, such as the unit meeting place or a leader's home.
4. The review should take approximately 15 minutes, but no longer than 30 minutes.
5. Ranks may not be presented until the advancement is reported to the local council through the BSA's Internet Advancement or on the official Advancement Report form.

#### 4.4.2.5 Particulars for the Quartermaster Rank

With the few exceptions listed below, the particulars for handling bridges of review for Quartermaster rank are identical to those for Eagle Scout boards of review. See "Particulars for the Eagle Scout Rank," 8.0.3.0.

#### 4.4.2.6 Quartermaster Bridge of Review Beyond the 21st Birthday

See "Eagle Scout Board of Review Beyond the 18th Birthday," 8.0.3.1; the procedures are the same, with a few exceptions:

- References to the 18th birthday are replaced with the 21st birthday for Sea Scouts.
- Where petitions, etc., are indicated to be sent to the national Advancement Team, for Sea Scouts they are sent to the national Sea Scout director.
- Procedures for awarding the Quartermaster rank to someone who completed the requirements as a youth but never received the recognition, are the same as outlined for those in the same circumstances who are seeking the Eagle Scout rank. The required documentation, however, would relate to proving Quartermaster requirements were met.

#### 4.4.2.7 Initiating Quartermaster Bridge of Review Under Disputed Circumstances

A Quartermaster bridge of review under disputed circumstances can be requested if:

- A Skipper or ship committee chair does not sign the Quartermaster application
- A Skipper conference is denied
- It is thought a ship will not provide a fair hearing
- If the Skipper or Quartermaster service project beneficiary refuses to sign final approval for what might be considered a satisfactory project

The procedures are the same as those outlined in "Initiating Eagle Scout Board of Review Under Disputed Circumstances," 8.0.3.2.

#### 4.4.2.8 Appealing a Quartermaster Bridge of Review Decision

If a bridge of review does not recommend a candidate for Quartermaster rank, only the Sea Scout or his or her parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the local council. The procedures are the same as those for advancement in Boy Scouting (see "Appealing a Decision," 8.0.4.0, "Filing and Processing an Appeal," 8.0.4.1, and "Appeal Board Must Research the Case," 8.0.4.2); simply replace the Boy Scouting references with those relating to Sea Scouts. Note that only Quartermaster rank may be appealed beyond the ship, and appeals to the national level are sent to the national Sea Scout director, not to the national Advancement Team.

### *The Organization of a Ship*

*Through the National Council, a council issues charters to organizations that organize Sea Scout ships. By accepting the charter, an organization agrees to provide a ship with a good Sea Scout program under the best available leadership.*

*The **ship committee**, appointed by the chartered organization, selects the **Skipper and mates**, and provides general program support. A ship should have at least five or six active adults.*

*Sea Scouts have a vast reservoir of **consultants** at their disposal for program support. They may come from inside the ship or from the community. They have special skills or knowledge and may have access to special resources.*

***Officers** such as boatswain, yeoman, purser, etc. are elected by the youth.*