**Scouts BSA Overview**

**Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of the worldwide Scouting movement, called Scouting “a game with a purpose.” When something happens in Scouting, it’s generally done with deliberate intent, in support of our 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 Law.*

**SCOUTS BSA** is “Scout-Run”! Our scouts learn to take control of their scouting experience.

**SCOUTS** take the lead on planning and leading activities, getting requirements signed off and cards turned in. **PARENTS** will help with reminders and ask them for the latest news! The following synopsis outlines the objectives, procedures and expectations of our Troop organization.

**New Scout Patrol**

The Boy Scout program is very different from the Cub Scout program, mostly in the fact that it is **youth-led**. Scouts will be given responsibilities and decision-making opportunities and will work together to accomplish their goals.

**Youth Leader Program**

A key principle of the Scouting program is the emphasis on youth leadership. Scouts are put in patrols, which are groups of 8-10 Scouts. The patrol is led by a Patrol Leader. Patrol Leaders are elected by their fellow Scouts and the position rotates. The Senior Patrol Leader is the Scout who is responsible for planning and conducting the Troop activities.

**The Patrol Leaders’ Council (PLC)**

As a Patrol Leader, the Scout is a member of the Patrol Leaders’ Council (PLC), and the Patrol Leader serves as the voice of his patrol members. Patrol Leaders should present the ideas and concerns of their patrol, and in turn share the decisions of the PLC with his patrol members.

The PLC is made up of the Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), who presides over the meetings; the Assistant Senior Patrol Leader (ASPL), all Patrol Leaders, and the Troop Guide. The PLC plans the yearly Troop program at the annual Troop program planning conference. It then meets monthly to fine-tune the plans for the upcoming month.

**The Parent’s Role in a Successful Troop**

We want and need parents to support our program in a variety of ways. All of our meetings and camps are always open for parents to visit and observe. We do discourage parents from attending meetings and camps on a regular basis until your son becomes acclimated to the Troop. Experience has taught us that parents tend to be overly protective, and the boys tend to be more reluctant to join in, if their parents are present. It is important that your son begins to develop independence and that you also begin to learn to let go. We offer an excellent opportunity for both things to happen in a controlled, supervised atmosphere. Watching your son(s) grow and mature into fine young men is the reward that keeps leaders in Scouting.

**Parent Fun & Participation: How to support your son and the Troop**

* Attend and participate in the monthly Committee/Adult Meeting on the 2nd Thursday of the month.
* Attend the Troop’s Court of Honor ceremonies for Recognition of our Scout’s Achievements. It is important to the Scouts.
* Volunteer to assist at campouts and other activities but remember you are there only to guide, protect, and have fun. Let the boys learn new skills on their own. We usually need minimum 2 adults (1 Trained Leader), prefer at least 3 adults.
* Become a Merit Badge Counselor. There are so many different merit badges that you should be able to find one. No cost to register.
* Take on-line training, especially Safeguarding Youth, on-the web or in classes.
* Volunteer on a sub committee such as fundraising, Public Relations, Activities, Advancement, etc. The Committee Chair can find the perfect fit for you.

**Uniforms**

Class A: Scout Shirt, Scout Pants, Scout Belt, Scout Neckerchief

* At Scout meetings, traveling to/from activities (camping), Any Formal Event, Neckerchief not required for camping

Class B: Scout T-shirt from Troop or other Scouting activity

* During camping and for certain meetings or activities when notified.

**Merit Badges (MB)**

Scouts can learn about sports, crafts, science, trades, business, and future careers as they earn merit badges. There are more than 130 merit badges, and any Scout may earn any of these at any time. A total of 21 merit badges must be earned for Eagle Scout rank and include 13 required merit badges.

1. Scout requests BLUE CARD and a MB Counselor to work with from the Scoutmaster.
2. Scout meets with MB Counselor to agree on how to fulfill requirements.
3. Counselor signs off on completed requirements.
4. Scout obtains sign off from Scoutmaster.
5. Scout turns in signed card to the Advancement Chair.
6. Scout stores the signed blue card showing MB completion separately from Scout book.
7. Parent Hint: make a photocopy of the blue cards. Originals store perfectly in baseball card vinyl sheets in a 3-ring binder.

**Rank Requirements**

All requirements for the Scout rank must be completed as a member of a troop or as a Lone Scout. If a Scout has already completed these requirements as part of the Webelos Scouting Adventure, he should simply demonstrate his knowledge or skills to the Scoutmaster or other designated leader after joining the troop.

1. Scout completes requirements and obtains sign off from Senior Patrol Leader (SPL), his assistants (ASPL), Scoutmasters, or Assistant Scoutmasters.
2. Scout requests Scoutmaster Conference once all requirements met and signed off.
3. Upon Scoutmaster signs off, Scout notifies the Advancement Chair that he is ready for his Board of Review (BoR).
4. Advancement Chair schedules the BoR.
5. Scout presents his signed book and comes in uniform to his BoR.
6. Parent Hint: make a photocopy of the signed pages in the Scout Book and, when awarded, the Rank Advancement Card. Keep copies with Blue Card copies and originals with Blue Cards originals.

**Troop Court of Honor**

We have two Troop Courts of Honor each year, one in the fall and one in the spring. The fall Court of Honor generally awards all of the merit badges, camping awards, rank, and special awards that were earned at Summer Camp, and is our largest one. This is an important part of the Scout program and we need to have all of our Scouts and their parents in attendance. All of us like to receive recognition for our efforts and this is especially true for young people. You will find that if you show your son that advancement is important to you, he will usually find it is something important to him also.

**Discipline**

Should it be necessary, Scouts will be disciplined in constructive and non-corporal punishment means. The majority of the time discipline is handled by the Senior Patrol Leader or Patrol Leader under the guidance of the Scoutmaster or Assistant Scoutmasters. If a Scout is so unruly or causes serious mental or physical harm, the parents will be notified and the Scout will be sent home with the parents. If this occurs on a high adventure trip, appropriate one-way commercial transportation will be utilized and the cost covered by the Scout. Communication with the parents will be completed prior to the Scout’s return. The final decision rests with the Scoutmaster or trip leader.