New Scout’s Path to First Class
A Troop Program

Purpose:
• Engage the individual in the Boy Scout Program
• Encourage Webelos to cross over into Boy Scouts
• Encourage advancement for 1st year Scouts
• Expose boys to all that Scouting has to offer

We do not want to lose a boy in the Scouting program before or during the transition from Cubs Scouts to Boy Scouts

We do not want to lose a boy in the first year of Boy Scouting!
Why was this document developed?

Retaining Scouts in the program is a challenge presented to every Troop. Why are some Troops successful in retaining members and others are just passing boys through in six to twelve months? Is your troop using the old “sink or swim” approach to introducing and working with younger Scouts, or do you have a plan for addressing the needs of these boys?

This plan will help to emphasize the need to focus on moving Scouts to First Class so they can feel confident in their abilities and at the same time the Troop leadership can be satisfied that the Scout has learned the basic skills to prepare him for even more exciting adventures ahead.

With renewed emphasis on the transition from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts, it is not unusual for a pack to “graduate” ten or twelve Webelos/Arrow of Light recipients to a Troop at one time. As recommended in the BSA Webelos to Scout Transition Plan, the crossover ceremony should be held in February or March. This sudden increase in membership during the middle of the Scout year presents a challenge to the Troop Leaders. Assimilating this many new scouts at one time requires some careful planning and preparation.

We must remember there are significant differences between the Cub Scout and the Boy Scout programs and be in a position to assist these new Boy Scouts in a number of ways. One way is to ensure that the new Boy Scout becomes comfortable in his new Troop environment and he is made aware that the Troop, particularly the Youth Leadership, is very concerned about him and his adjustment to the new program. Parental understanding of these differences should be addressed early. For example, many parents do not recognize the emphasis on boy leadership in a Troop as opposed to the close parent and adult hands on leadership provided in Cub Scouts.

The highlight of any Troop year should be attendance at summer camp with all the excitement of living in the woods and the opportunity to try many new activities. Summer camp presents a formidable challenge to the new Boy Scout. But how do we get him to want to go to summer camp and how do we put him in a position to enjoy and participate in the many challenges offered? One way is to have him feel that he is truly a valuable member of the Troop and the leadership wants him to succeed.

A method for encouraging this development is included in the enclosed material. The goal is to have the new Scout complete his Tenderfoot requirements before he attends his first summer camp. The idea is to have him become familiar with the patrol method, obtain a good degree of self-confidence and complete several basic Scout skills. All before he attends his first summer camp experience. Your chances of having that Scout return to the Troop in September are far better when he has a positive experience in his first few months.

Implementation

Address the transition from the Cub Scout program to the Boy Scout program.
Enhance Troop-Pack relationships.

Roll out an advancement program/plan for Troops to utilize giving new Scouts the opportunity to achieve the rank of First Class Scout in the first 12-18 months within the Troop program of meetings, events, and summer camp.

Advancement is not a race; this is not designed to fast track or cut corners, rather to layout the organization to allow a motivated scout the opportunity to advance to First Class in approximately 12-18 months. Advancement is not a group function it occurs at the Scout’s individual pace. A motivated scout who satisfactorily meets the requirements should be supported and not be held back by a unit.
Build Relationship between Troops & Packs

**Troops** to build relationship with Packs

Assign an Assistant Scout Master (ASM) as Pack liaison *working with the Packs all year long!*

Provide Troop contact information to the Pack Leadership

The Troop offers assistance to the Packs via the following:

- Den programs - Den Chiefs (this does not have to be a year long commitment but at least 6 months to meet Position of Responsibility (POR) requirements)
- Pack programs - Offer use of Troop equipment
- Scout assistance at Pack Outings and Pack Events (e.g. Boy Scouts assist running a Webelos overnight teaching outdoor skills and assist at the Pinewood Derby, etc.)

Schedule a time at a Pack meeting for Scouts to demonstrate Troop activities to the entire Cub Pack especially Webelos - **a WOW opportunity**

Invite Webelos (1st & 2nd year) to attend Troop meetings - purpose is to meet/greet & allow Webelos to earn an activity badge (e.g. Readyman) while becoming exposed to a Troop in action.

Have a few Scouts attend a Den meeting to assist the Webelos Den in earning an Activity Badge. (may be less intimidating for the Webelos)

Publish & distribute the Troop Calendar of events; especially point out the advance notice of the Troop’s Summer Camp dates (for family vacation/summer planning)-highlight the Dan Beard program and the huge benefit this program offers for new Scout advancement! This information needs to be distributed to all Webelos II families with an explanation to the Webelos Den Leader the information provided.

**Strongly encourage Summer Camp 1st year**

**Recruit Webelos** - Sell the Scouting program & the Troop Scouts present to Webelos (I&II) and Adult Troop Leaders to parents- each session is separate but with similar material presented. Examples of Troop meetings, activities and events - another WOW opportunity.

**WOW-a presentation of activities/events that will leave the target audience saying/thinking “WOW” I want to do that! I want to join now! e.g. White water rafting, kayaking, backpacking, repelling, camping, doing it on your own with the help of other Scouts!**

*The involvement of a Boy Scouts with Webelos, even for a short time, has a tangible positive impact.*
Packs to build relationships with Troops
An Assistant Cub Master (ACM)-liaison reaches out to Troops in September if the troops have not yet made contact with the Pack. Keep the lines of communication open. Provide Pack contact information to the Troops. Seek assistance from Troops working with the Troop liaison Invite Troop ASM to Pack Committee meetings when appropriate, especially early in year to set calendar of events & publish Troop events in the Pack Calendar that would impact graduating Webelos. Participate in Webelos Woods when offered Encourage Webelos Den Leaders to be trained in the Webelos program either from a Council training or a Pack training session. Give proper respect to the Arrow of Light requirements & the recognition this milestone deserves. Educate the parents of the Pack about what the Boy Scout program is all about by organizing a Boy Scout night where the local Troops come in and give presentations to the Webelos & parents. Push for 100% Webelos attendance. Make this a special event just for the Webelos with some fan fare & perhaps refreshments (can be during a Pack meeting as a break out event) Encourage the transition into Boy Scouts and recognize those that are moving on to this Program (the Troops the boys are joining should be helping here) Second year Webelos should turn in their Boy Scout Application to the troop they are joining 2 weeks prior to the Blue & Gold Dinner.

New Scouts in Troop

New Scout Patrols- if the Troop can support it break the new scouts into their own Patrol as soon after crossover as possible. An ASM(s) is assigned to over see New Scout Guides, Instructors & New Scouts Patrols (This job should not be handled by the Scout Master(SM)).

Troop Guides are assigned to a New Scout Patrol (Troop guides are member of the Senior Patrol/Leadership Corps, not another Patrol)-in role of Patrol Leader (PL). The Patrol will elect an Assistant Patrol Leader (APL)-this position is rotated evenly from March-Sept so everyone gets a chance to be APL (by election without repeating terms) During Troop events the APL will take charge under the tutelage of the Troop Guide who will assist the Patrol in all functions but may eat/sleep with the Senior Patrol. New Scout Patrols function from join date through summer camp into September when the Troop reorganizes they break “regular patrols”. New Scout Guides- to be trained ASM for New Scouts- to be trained Committee and Advancement committee training on the New Scout Program

Plan troop calendar/events to meet requirements and offer opportunity for tenderfoot to first class in 12-18 months (utilize advancement tracking form #34118 updated 2010). New Scout Guide(s) must attend Troop calendar planning Patrol Leaders Council (PLC) meeting to ensure calendar incorporates the needs of the New Scouts.

Get the message out to the new Scouts: We want you at Troop events & you need to participate to advance.

ASM works directly with Troop guides / Instructors / Assistant Senior Patrol Leaders (ASPLs) to monitor progress.
Use tracking method on requirement sheet (use advancement tracking #34118 updated 2010) kept in binder in Troop room or by ASM. The completed requirements are also signed off in the Scout’s Handbook at least every 2 weeks.

Or, complete in the Scout’s Handbook at each Troop meeting and at campouts.

Set goals for new Scouts
Introduction to Boy Scouting & History
Introduction to Troop & its history
Use EDGE training techniques

Goals
Scout…………………………..1 month (after turning in Boy Scout Application)
Tenderfoot………………..………..2-5 months (before attending Summer Camp)
2nd Class………………….……..8-12 months
1st Class………………………12-18 months

Advancement is:
- Not a race
- At the individuals pace
- Not a group function-instruction may be taught as a group allowing for individual growth and support. Each individual must demonstrate & explain as required.

Most important to recognize rank advancement at least three (3) times as soon as possible:
- In front of the Troop all who have passed a Board of Review (BOR)
- In front of the Troop (next meeting after BOR) award rank patch
- Next Court of Honor (COH) recognized for rank advancement & receive rank card

Resources for Troop Guides

Boy Scout Handbook
Patrol Leaders Handbook
National Youth Leader Training (NYLT) manual
Troop Leader Training (TLT) training packet (updated 2011 as Introduction to Leadership Skills for Troops (ILST))

Fieldbook

Resources for ASM in charge of New Scout Program

Boy Scout Handbook
Scoutmaster’s Handbook

February/March
- As new Scouts come into the Troop an advancement tracking sheet is set up and maintained by the Troop Guide reviewed by the ASM weekly.
- The Scout is given an introduction to Troop welcome packet
- The parents are given an introduction to Troop parent’s welcome packet
- The Scout is assigned to a new Scout patrol

September –Start up of the new Troop year
- 1st meeting –review Dan Beard skills done at summer camp (use summer camp accomplishment tracking sheet as a guide) as a round robin by groups
- 2nd meeting- Test/Demonstrate skills and Troop Guides sign off on tracking sheet & in Scout’s Handbooks.
- 3rd & 4th meeting of the month- the guide/instructors works with individual Scouts to reach their immediate advancement goals. Prepare for COH.