

Advancement News

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Previous issues are available at www.scouting.org/scoutsource/BoyScouts/AdvancementandAwards/advancement_news.aspx

Opportunities for Advancement Administrators

Reports from July's Advancement Conferences at Philmont

Advancement Issues & Solutions at Philmont Training Center

This July nine, Scouters from unit, district, and council service backgrounds - both volunteer and professional - gathered at Philmont Training Center to participate in exploring advancement topics in the Advancement Issues & Solution course. This week-long course covers not only advancement policies and the philosophies behind them, but also a wide range of interactive case studies that challenge participants to apply their knowledge and judgment as an advancement committee.

Among the issues covered were Eagle appeals, extension requests, belated Eagle recognition, registration beyond the age of eligibility, merit badge issues and much more. This year's syllabus also featured a Cub Scout issues breakout with all new issues pertaining to questions volunteers are asking about the new program and requirements, and a Venturing case study around the Summit award. Participants also had the opportunity to raise their own questions or cases, and work through answers as the week progressed. These included a variety of local challenges, merit badge concerns, and a lively discussion with the Philmont Chaplain on encouraging BSA's Duty to God requirements that are now part of all ranks.

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Participant feedback was excellent, with the group enjoying the high level of interaction and small group breakouts unique to this course. Participants also had the opportunity to learn about upcoming advancement education materials. As one conference participant noted at the end of the week: "This class will motivate me to seek additional opportunities with my district advancement committee."



Continuing Education for Advancement Administrators

The latest in a series of Continuing Education for Advancement Administrators (CEAA) conferences was held at Philmont from July 24 through July 28.

This summer's conference presented an opportunity for advancement administrators from across the country to sharpen their skills and expand their knowledge through learning-by-doing. Conferees were not only challenged to identify new advancement topics, but were given the opportunity to start developing products to meet the educational needs they identified. Some of the exciting initiatives they began included development of a practical guide to accomplishing the requirements of the *Guide to Advancement*; and development of an annual program for educating council and district advancement administrators using the education materials published on the scouting.org/advancement website.

They also started work on two new parent advancement orientation programs. The first will focus on new Scouts and parents entering the Boy Scout or Varsity programs. The second will aim at ensuring Life Scouts and their parents realize the advancement activities associated with the Life-to-Eagle trail.

Needless to say, all of the participants rated the CEAA as having "exceeded their expectations." Better yet, all said that they planned to attend again in the future.

Next CEAA Scheduled for Florida Sea Base in January, 2018



Great news! The next Continuing Education for Advancement Administrators conference will be held from January 7 through January 13, 2018, at the Florida Sea Base. Information on how to register for this CEAA can be found at: bsasea-base.org/filestore/seabase/pdf/2018FSBFlyer.pdf. Registration link may be found at the information page. The registration deadline for this conference is December 15, so don't wait.



From the *Guide to Advancement*

Requirement Updates: How to Handle Them

Advancement requirements across all BSA youth programs change from time to time. The 2017 *Guide to Advancement* provides information on how to deal with such changes in a couple of places: “Changes to Requirements” (Topic 4.0.0.1) and “What to Do” (Topic 7.0.4.3). Here is a brief rundown of the practical advice these topics provide. (As always, it is recommended that you review the topics themselves in the *Guide to Advancement*.)

For Cub Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts, revisions to rank or award requirements are introduced in new editions of their respective handbooks, and unless that handbook says differently, the pack, crew, or ship member has until the next January 1 to decide which requirement—old or new—he or she prefers to use through completion of that rank or award.

For Boy Scout ranks, always check the most current annual edition of *Boy Scout Requirements* first. Once a new or revised requirement has appeared in that book, a Scout beginning his next rank or palm must meet the requirement stated therein. However, if a new or revised rank or palm requirement has been introduced by means of a new edition or reprinting of the *Boy Scout Handbook* after that “current” edition of the *Boy Scout Requirements* was published, the Scout will have until December 31 to decide whether (1) he would like to begin or continue using the “old” requirement(s), or (2) use the new one(s) in the *Handbook*. If he chooses to stay with the old, he can continue to do so until he has completed the rank or palm he was working on, even if his progress extends beyond December 31.

For merit badges, here too the most current annual *Boy Scout Requirements* edition provides all current official requirements. However, as is the case with rank requirements, MB requirements may not always match the *Boy Scout Handbook*, the most recently published merit badge pamphlet, or even [Merit Badges](#). Such mismatches can happen because *Boy Scout Requirements* is updated annually, whereas updating of the *Handbook*, pamphlets, and the website is an on-going process. Here are some tips for Scoutmasters, Advancement Coordinators, Merit Badge Counselors, and others on how to handle these situations:

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About *Advancement News*

Follow the National Advancement Program Team on Twitter!

(BSA Advancement Team, @AdvBSA)

Advancement News is the official e-letter of the Boy Scouts of America National Advancement Program Team. Its intent is to provide and clarify procedures found in the *Guide to Advancement*, announce various changes and updates in advancement, and to assist advancement committees in making decisions that can help increase the rate of advancement. Therefore, districts and councils may reprint articles from this publication. Our plan is to distribute six issues of *Advancement News* annually, but special editions may go out whenever there is important information to share. Feedback, suggestions, and letters to the editor are welcome at

advancement.team@scouting.org.

- When a merit badge's new or revised requirements are published in a new edition of *Boy Scout Requirements*, a Scout beginning work on that merit badge must use the new, most current requirements.
- If new or revised requirements are published for a given merit badge in a revised pamphlet or online at [Merit Badges](#) during the same year—but after the current Boy Scout Requirements is published, then a Scout has until December 31 of that year to choose which set of requirements he would prefer to use to start working on the MB: old or new. (Keep in mind that no one is authorized to “dictate” this to the Scout: It's entirely his choice.) And, what if a Scout has already started on a MB when its requirements change? The answer again is that it is the Scout's choice: He can choose to continue using the requirements he started with, or he can switch to the revised requirements.

Occasionally, the BSA National Council may need to stipulate different procedures or deadlines from those described here. If so, these changes will be broadly published and communicated. (For more on changing requirements, see the articles in **The Cub Scout Angle**, **The Boy Scout Angle**, and **Eagle Issues** sections later in this edition.)

On Increasing Advancement

Parent Signatures: Every Requirement is There for a Reason

Occasionally a troop may find itself facing a question about how to handle a Youth Protection parent/guardian sign-off requirement when Scout comes from single-parent family and troop seldom, if ever, sees the parent. However, the parent or legal guardian are the only ones who may agree to and sign off on this requirement and the Youth Membership Application.

Everyone agrees that Scouting will be good for the youth, but who can do what to make that happen? Is it the responsibility of the Scouters in the troop to talk with the parent or guardian, or is it solely that of the boy himself? To answer these questions, it is best to start by reviewing the situation, while always keeping in mind that we are not authorized to change any advancement requirements.

Requirement #6

With your parent or guardian, complete the exercises in the pamphlet *How to Protect Your Children From Child Abuse: A Parent's Guide* and earn the Cyber Chip Award for your grade”

First, what is advancement? Advancement is a tool we use to fulfill our mission in Scouting. It is one of the methods we use to foster the personal growth and safety of our Scout. So why do we have Scout requirement #6. What are we trying to accomplish? The purpose is twofold: (1) to be sure the Scout's parent or guardian is aware of what we are trying to do to protect the Scout; and (2) to be sure the Scout is protected from online dangers.

Because in the situation described above, there is an adult in the troop—one who may even have become an Assistant Scoutmaster—who already is working with the Scout, the troop might be tempted to have him or her complete requirement #6 with the Scout. However, while this would ensure the Scout gains an appreciation of the principles of Youth Protection, this does not fulfill the real purposes stated above—making sure

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the parent or guardian appreciates what Scouting is doing to keep his or her boy safe, and understands that, in the case of online matters, “safety begins at home” with the parent or guardian. Therefore, the Scout’s parent or guardian needs to be a cooperating participant in the BSA Youth Protection program. If the unit is not in contact with the parent or guardian of a new Scout or they are not coming to meetings, an alternative solution must be found to correct that situation.

A good place to start would be for the Scoutmaster to arrange a meeting with the parent or guardian, preferably in the home. This meeting should be as informal as possible, and should not be treated as something unusual because most units hold a new parents’ orientation to get to know the parents or guardians. The unit is simply reaching out to every parent or guardian who could not attend that orientation for some reason. An invitation to meet could say something like, “We’ve asked for this meeting to get to know you and to let you get to know us. While we’re here, we can help you and your son with Scout requirement #6.” This is a meeting that the Scoutmaster should not delegate.

It is important that the unit leadership establish a relationship with the parents or guardians of their Scouts before any problems develop. Hopefully, there will be none and the years that this young man will be involved with the troop will be positive ones for him and for his whole family. If we proceed in this way, we’ll be sure to keep our Scout in Scouting longer, giving us a better chance to influence his character. Now isn’t that what we’re all about?

The Cub Scout Angle

Program Updates: Easily Accessible Online

Some Cub Scout adventure requirements have been modified since the issuance of the currently available Cub Scout Handbook. While den leaders should continue using the resource materials in the Handbook, they should note that some associated advancement requirements may have changed. All current requirements are now easily available online on the Program Updates webpage at <http://www.scouting.org/Home/programupdates.aspx>



Managing Subscriptions to *Advancement News*

Advancement News is designed for council and district advancement committees, advancement staff advisors, and Eagle processors. However, any Scouting volunteer or professional may subscribe.

Subscribing. Send a message to advancement.team@scouting.org, with “SUBSCRIBE” in the subject line. Indicate your name, email address, and council in the message text.

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Address Change. If you want *Advancement News* sent to a different address, reply and enter “ADDRESS CHANGE” in the subject line. In your message, enter your council name and the email address you prefer.

The Boy Scout Angle

Revised Campout Requirements Became Effective August 1, 2017

Why the change?

With the January 2016 publication of the 13th Edition Boy Scout Handbook (BSHB) and the Boy Scout Requirements book, revised rank requirements were also introduced which doubled the number of overnight camping activities required to achieve the rank of First Class from three to six.

Does this change reflect a decreased focus on outdoors or on camping?

Definitely not. The new requirements maintain the increased focus on being outdoors, while recognizing that not all outdoor activities need to include overnight camping. Outdoor activities such as hikes, service projects, and geocaching, add to the adventure of being a first-year Scout. Further, the Camping merit badge requirements remain unchanged; therefore, the total number of camping nights required to attain the rank of Eagle Scout are unchanged.

When do the changes take effect?

The requirement changes took effect August 1, 2017.

Can I still use the old requirements?

Generally, yes. When there are requirement changes after the release of the Boy Scout Requirements publication or the Boy Scout Handbook, the Scout has until the following January 1 to decide what to do (please refer to the *Guide to Advancement* topic 4.0.0.1). However, in this case, any activities that would meet the old requirement also meets the new requirement.

What's the Change?

Rank	Previous Requirement	New Requirement
2nd Class	1a. Since joining, participate in five separate troop/patrol activities, three of which include overnight camping. These five activities do not include troop or patrol meetings. On at least two of the three campouts, spend the night in a tent that you pitch or other structure that you help erect (such as a lean-to, snow cave, or tepee).	1a. Since joining Boy Scouts, participate in five separate troop/patrol activities, at least three of which must be held outdoors. Of the outdoor activities, at least two must include overnight camping. These activities do not include troop or patrol meetings. On campouts, spend the night in a tent that you pitch or other structure that you help erect, such as a lean-to, snow cave, or tepee.
1st Class	1a. Since joining, participate in 10 separate troop/patrol activities, six of which include overnight camping. These 10 activities do not include troop or patrol meetings. On at least five of the six campouts, spend the night in a tent that you pitch or other structure that you help erect (such as a lean-to, snow cave, or	1a. Since joining Boy Scouts, participate in 10 separate troop/patrol activities, at least six of which must be held outdoors. Of the outdoor activities, at least three must include overnight camping. These activities do not include troop or patrol meetings. On campouts, spend the night in a tent that you pitch or other structure that you help erect, such as a lean-to, snow cave, or tepee.

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What about Star, Life and Eagle?

There aren't camping requirements for those ranks, because to become an Eagle Scout a young man must earn the Camping merit badge, which has its own camping requirements.

Requirement 9a for the Camping merit badge states:

Camp a total of at least 20 nights at designated Scouting activities or events. One long-term camping experience of up to six consecutive nights may be applied toward this requirement. Sleep each night under the sky or in a tent you have pitched. If the camp provides a tent that has already been pitched, you need not pitch your own tent.

All campouts since becoming a Boy Scout or Varsity Scout may count toward this requirement, including those used to fulfill the requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class and First Class.

Executive Board approves Limited Exceptions for Certain Swimming Requirements

Swimming has been an important part of the BSA program for more than 100 years. For many years, it was necessary for a Scout to complete certain swimming-related requirements or merit badges to advance in rank. Today, advancement to both Second Class and First Class ranks requires completion of several swimming related requirements without allowing for exceptions. Unfortunately, in a few limited cases those requirements have become barriers to advancement rather than the challenges they were meant to be.

Of all the individual requirements from Scout to First Class, only the swimming requirements have a resource requirement that can become a barrier to advancement and retention. To complete the swimming requirements a Scout needs access to a swimming pool or a safe outside body of water, which in some locations may not exist or be available within a reasonable travel distance.

Geography often makes it difficult for Scouts to get to a place for safe swimming instruction or to be tested for rank requirements. Consequently, those youths have been hindered from advancing and may drop out of the program. Early last year a volunteer task force was established to review the current requirements and make a recommendation to improve advancement opportunities for Scouts in remote locations.



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After a thorough review and approval by the volunteer program and membership committees, the BSA Executive Board has voted to allow council Scout executives and advancement committees to grant alternative requirements where appropriate. Effective August 1, 2017 the following was added to Second Class requirements 5b and 5c and First Class requirements 6a and 6e:

"Under certain exceptional conditions, where the climate keeps the outdoor water temperature below safe levels the year-round, or where there are no suitably safe and accessible places (outdoors or indoors) within a reasonable traveling distance to swim at any time during the year, the council Scout executive and advancement committee may, on an individual Scout basis, authorize an alternative requirement. The local council may establish appropriate procedures for submitting and processing these types of requests. All the other requirements, none of which necessitate entry in the water or entry in a watercraft on the water, must be completed as written."

This exception for alternative requirements is intended to only be used in those limited locations where indoor swimming facilities or safe outside venues are not available or within a reasonable travel distance. This exception must not be used as a convenience to avoid the swimming requirements. Nor does it apply to circumstances where a Scout is having difficulty learning to swim or meeting the swimming requirements when facilities are available.

1. **Who has authority to grant the alternative requirements?** The council Scout executive and advancement committee is responsible for granting the alternative requirements. They must not delegate this authority to any other group or individual.
2. **What alternative requirements are acceptable?** That decision is made by the council Scout executive and advancement committee. Local councils are best equipped to make this determination based on any unique characteristics they may face. However, any alternative should provide a similar challenge and learning experience.
3. **What is a reasonable travel distance?** That is up to the local council to decide. Some geographically large or predominately rural councils face unique travel situations which larger urban or suburban councils do not. For example, councils in Alaska may have several locations where the exception is applicable but metropolitan councils may never have a situation come up where this exception applies.
4. **Can the council grant alternatives for all or just some of the requirements?** The council may only grant alternatives for the requirements that actually require the Scout to be in or on the water. Those include Second Class requirement 5b and 5c and First Class requirements 6a and 6e. Even if alternatives are approved for these requirements, the Scout still must complete all the other out-of-water requirements as written.
5. **Must the Scout complete the out-of-water requirements first?** No, although it does make sense to complete Second Class requirement 5a and First Class requirement 6b before doing the other requirements.

6. **How does the Scout request alternative requirements?** Each council may establish its own procedures similar to the procedures outlined in *Guide to Advancement* topic 10.2.2.2 covering alternative rank requirements for members with disabilities. Typically, a unit leader will submit a written request to the council advancement committee explaining their situation and why alternative requirements are necessary.
7. **What does the council advancement committee do?** The council advancement committee carefully reviews the request and provides a written response either approving, with the Scout executive's concurrence, or denying the request. If approved, the unit must maintain the approval letter in their files.
8. **Can the council advancement committee and Scout executive grant blanket authority to certain units in remote locations?** No, the council advancement committee and Scout executive must individually review every request. Sometimes conditions may improve and alternatives may no longer be warranted. However, a unit's request may contain the names of one or more Scouts.
9. **Do these alternative requirements apply to Scouts who have an aversion to water or other difficulties completing the swimming requirements?** No, the exception and alternatives only apply to those limited situations where a safe swimming resource is not available or within a reasonable travel distance. If an appropriate resource is available, then the Scout must complete the requirements in the normal fashion. Alternative requirements are not available for any of the aquatic merit badges. Merit badge requirements must be completed as written.

Hear It First on Twitter

If you want the news first, follow the National Advancement Program Team on Twitter. Topics cover the FAQs received at the national office, clarifications on policies and procedures, news on changes and new releases, and best practices in advancement.

If you already have a Twitter account, follow us at **@AdvBSA** or **"BSA Advancement Team."** If you don't have an account, it is a quick and easy process to set up an account at www.twitter.com. To limit incoming emails ('tweets'), you can select to have BSA National Advancement Team as the only account you want to follow.

Note: Advancement questions should be directed to advancement.team@scouting.org.

Did You Receive this Tweet?

June 5: The 2017 Guide to Advancement has been posted. It is a downloadable PDF and can be accessed from scouting.org/advancement.

Merit Badges

Mining Hall of Fame Presents Prazen Award to BSA

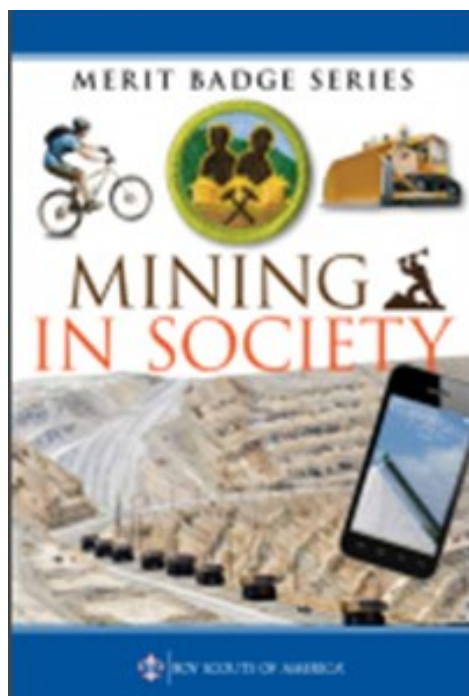
In 2014, the Boy Scouts of America recognized the important role the mining industry plays in our world by introducing the Mining in Society merit badge. As Scouts pursue the merit badge requirements, they gain an understanding of minerals in society, as well as become aware of career opportunities in the mining industry. In the course of completing this merit badge the youth learns:

- A smartphone requires 30 minerals that have to be mined to make it.
- It's the same with bikes, cars (34 minerals), soccer balls, furniture, etc. The world would be a very different place without the benefits mining gives us.

Now, with more than 12,000 Scouts having earned the badge during the first three years it has been offered, the Mining Hall of Fame has decided to honor the BSA by presenting it with the mining industry's Prazen Living Legend of Mining Award. This prestigious award, which will be presented at a banquet in Denver on September 23, recognizes the BSA for its "ongoing, innovative work educating others about the importance of the mineral and mining industry to our everyday lives."

In its April 2017 newsletter, the Mining Hall of Fame Museum specifically cited the merit badge pamphlet for explaining the role that mined products play in the quality of life "at a level that youth and the general public can understand and appreciate."

Congratulations to the BSA Merit Badge developers for their award-winning product, and most of all, hats off to the thousands of Scouts who already have earned the merit badge—and the thousands more who will in the future.





Eagle Issues

Revised Eagle Palm Requirements Became Effective August 1, 2017

Eagle Palms are bronze, gold, and silver awards presented to young men who earn 5, 10, 15, or more merit badges beyond the 21 required to become an Eagle Scout. The BSA has announced significant changes to the way Scouts earn these Palms, which took effect on August 1, that will bring Eagle Palm requirements in line with the needs of older Scouts.

The National Boy Scouting Subcommittee has expanded the definition of active participation and eliminated unnecessary obstacles, such as the Eagle Palm board of review, for Eagle Scouts pursuing Palms. For young men who have not yet completed their Eagle Scout requirements, beginning August 1, all of the Palms they already have earned may be awarded to them immediately at their Eagle courts of honor.

Here are some notes about these changes:

1. **A new Eagle Scout can simultaneously receive, alongside his Eagle medal, all Eagle Palms he has earned for merit badges completed before he became an Eagle Scout.** These Palms recognize additional merit badges earned before completing the Eagle board of review. Previously, an Eagle Scout needed to wait three months between each Palm — even if he earned the extra merit badges before becoming an Eagle. This meant that, under the old rules, a young man who became an Eagle Scout at 17 years and 10 months, was mathematically unable to earn any Eagle Palms.
 - For example, Glenn, a 16-year-old Life Scout, has 36 merit badges at the time of his Eagle Scout board of review — 15 more than required. Previously, he would have needed to wait three months after his board of review to receive his Bronze Palm, another three months for his Gold Palm, and another three for his Silver Palm. Now, he can get that Silver Palm (representing 15 additional merit badges) along with his Eagle medal at his Eagle Scout court of honor.

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- After becoming an Eagle Scout and receiving the Palms already earned, Glenn may earn additional Palms by completing the revised requirements, including the three-month tenure between awarding each Palm.
2. **The three-month tenure requirement has been expanded** to allow active participation in any BSA program — not just the troop and patrol. This change recognizes that as some Scouts get older, their Scouting participation may shift away from the troop to other activities, e.g., the Order of the Arrow, summer camp staff, etc.
 3. **The leadership requirement has been broadened** to include “accepting responsibility,” as well as “demonstrating leadership.”
 4. **The Eagle Palm board of review has been eliminated.** Eagle Palms are not ranks, so the Eagle Palm board of review was seen as an unnecessary step. A unit leader conference is deemed to be sufficient and may be conducted at any time during the tenure requirement.

“The current policy regarding Eagle Palms is any Eagle candidate having a board of review on or after August 1, 2017, is eligible to receive the appropriate number of Palms based on the total number of merit badges earned prior to his board of review. However, due to concerns from the Scouting family, this policy is currently under review. All points of view are being carefully, respectfully, and thoughtfully considered. However, that does not guarantee that any changes will be made to the policy. When the review is complete and a decision is made, a notice will be sent out to announce that decision.”



Venturing

The Summit Award: Focusing on the Leadership Component

There are four components relating to earning the Summit Award: Adventure, Leadership, Personal Growth, and Service. Each component looks to challenge the Venturer seeking the Summit Award.

The Leadership component focuses on enhancing the skills of having responsibility within a team and mentoring others to become great leaders. A Venturer will complete Mentoring training and then focus on mentoring another member of the crew in preparing, planning, and leading an adventure for a group. A post-event review should also occur to evaluate the event and help to improve any short comings for future events.

In the realm of leadership, the Venturer must also take on a crew leadership position for six months, participate or serve on staff at a BSA-approved leadership event or course, or conduct an Introduction to Leadership Skills Course. These roles are meant to put the Venturer into action by practicing and enhancing his or her leadership skills.

A full listing of the requirements for the Summit Award can be found in the *Venturing Handbook*.



Awards

New Whitewater Rafting Award

Many Scouting units participate in rafting trips conducted by outfitters or councils. A new aquatics award, *Whitewater Rafting BSA*, recognizes the challenge and adventure of such activities.

The award is available to BSA youth and adults who are members of Boy Scout, Varsity, Venturing, or Sea Scout units.

Requirements for the award focus on safety and basic paddling skills on whitewater up to Class III. All instruction and skill completions are directly supervised by a professionally trained or licensed rafting guide. A qualified raft captain must be in each raft during the required trip. Participants help power and control the raft with paddles – simply riding in a raft rowed by a guide is not sufficient.

The new award was featured at the 2017 National Jamboree. An application with requirements and notes to the counselor can be found on the aquatics page of [scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org).

<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/OutdoorProgram/Aquatics.aspx>

Patches and pocket cards are in production and will be available at scoutstuff.org and in local Scout Shops later this season. A support brochure is also planned.



Special Necessities

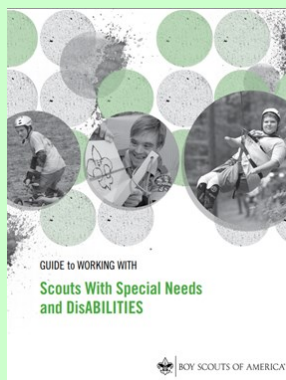
Communication and Creativity are the Keys to Helping Scouts with Special Needs Advance Along the Trail to Eagle

The advancement program is meant to be challenging for every Scout, and, those challenges can become even larger for Scouts with Special Needs. Since the *Guide to Advancement* clearly states in Section 10.2.2.0 that all requirements must be met, communication among the Scout, his parents, unit leaders, and even educators can lead to some real success stories.

Here are some tips to support Scouts:

- Work together as a team to develop a year-round advancement plan just like schools do with an IEP. Everyone works better when they have a plan to follow!
- Review rank requirements to determine the ones that can easily be met and those which will be more challenging.
- Use all of the resources available to assist a Scout complete the tougher and more challenging requirements. Often this will require thinking outside of the box.
- Allow other Scouts in the unit to help with this process too, as this can provide them with a unique learning opportunity.
- Recognize that there will be some requirements that won't be able to be completed by every Scout, so when you reach this point, be sure to apply for alternative rank requirement(s) (GTA Section 10.2.2.1) or alternative Eagle Scout rank required merit badge(s) (GTA Section 10.2.2.3).
- Don't wait until a Scout with Special Needs turns 17 to register him to continue advancing "beyond the age of eligibility." This option is explained in Section 10 of the *Guide to Advancement* and will take pressure off of the Scout, his unit, district and council if you do this earlier on.
- Lastly, seek help from other unit leaders who have had success in this area. There are great examples of a Scout who uses a wheelchair leading a hike, a Scout who uses a computer as a communication device making a "speech" or leading a meeting, or a Scout with visual impairments seeing the stars and constellations through cut out paper plates.

Recognize that these are opportunities and not roadblocks and feel confident knowing that a solution can often be found when everyone works together as a team.



Review the *Guide to Working With Scouts With Special Needs and DisABILITIES* for additional information

<http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/510-071.pdf>

From the Archives

Eagle Issues: Time Aspects in Completing the Eagle Scout Rank Application

(April/May 2014)

“Section 9 of the *Guide to Advancement* [2013] describes the steps needed to complete and submit an Eagle Scout Rank Application. In topic 9.0.1.1, it says: “Confirm all requirements have been completed before the 18th birthday.” Then, later, in topic 9.0.1.4, it says to “Obtain Required Signatures” (referring to those of the unit leader and committee chair). Many interpret that these signatures must be obtained prior to the Scout’s 18th birthday. This is incorrect.

“The requirements that must be completed before the Scout’s 18th birthday are requirements 1 through 6, which cover merit badges, service project, active participation, Scout spirit, position of responsibility, and unit leader conference. Nothing else needs to be completed prior to the 18th birthday, including the signatures of the Scout, unit leader, and committee chair. Specifically, the *Guide to Advancement*, topic 9.0.1.4, states: “There is no requirement that [these] signatures ... must be dated before the Scout’s 18th birthday.” In fact, there is no BSA stipulation that the application itself must be submitted before his 18th birthday. Therefore, the same date-related “non-requirement” applies to the written responses from the Scout’s references (requirement 2). If any of these is received after his 18th birthday, there is no penalty to the Scout.

“Requirement 7, the board of review, may also be fulfilled after the 18th birthday. And now, as of January 1, 2014, (see 2014 edition, *Boy Scout Requirements*) the statement of ambitions and life purpose that Scouts attach to the application is part of requirement 7 and, thus, may be completed after the 18th birthday.

“Certainly, everyone involved in advancement realizes that the chronology of a Scout’s path to the rank of Eagle Scout must occur in the right sequence. Thus, it is important to recognize that the order of some dates—especially those around the 18th birthday—are critical, and that others are not. With more than half of all Eagle Scouts completing their requirements during the three months before turning 18, it is incumbent upon us, who serve to support their efforts, to remember that no one is permitted to add extra requirements for any rank advancement, including that of Eagle Scout.”

A Peek Ahead

Here is a glimpse at what we are working on for the next issue of *Advancement News*. As always, actual content may vary somewhat based on a number of considerations, and especially to accommodate “late-breaking” news of immediate importance to our subscribers.

November/December Highlights

From the *Guide to Advancement*: Highlights from the 2017 edition

On Increasing Advancement: Boy Scout Planning Worksheet

The Cub Scout Angle: Is Your Council Ready for the Lion Program?

Helpful Links

Here are some links to the most current materials of interest for Scouters who are involved in the administration of advancement. These and many more resources are available via the **Advancement Resources** web page at www.scouting.org/advancement.

[Merit Badge Group Instruction Guide](#)

[Advancement Educational Presentations:](#)

- Cub Scout Advancement: Delivering Adventure
- Getting the Most From Internet Advancement
- The Essentials of Merit Badge Counseling
- The Eagle Scout Service Project Coach
- Effective Troop Advancement
- Including Scouts With Disabilities
- Videocasts on *Guide to Advancement*, selected topics
 - ◊ Introduction to the Guide to Advancement
 - ◊ Judgment Calls
 - ◊ Boards of Review
 - ◊ Boards of Review Under Disputed Circumstances
 - ◊ Boards of Review Appeals
 - ◊ The Eagle Scout Application Process
 - ◊ Eagle Scout Boards of Review
- Videos
 - ◊ On Increasing Advancement
 - ◊ Why Advancement?
 - ◊ Guardian of the Gate



[Guide to Advancement 2017](#)

[Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook](#)

[Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project: Information for Project Beneficiaries](#)

[Eagle Scout Service Project Coach Application](#)

[Eagle Scout Rank Application](#)

[Merit Badge Counselor Information](#)

[Reporting Merit Badge Concerns](#)

[Venturing Summit Award Service Project Workbook](#)

[Venturing Board of Review Guide](#)

[Individual Scout Advancement Plan](#)

[Lone Scout Friend and Counselor Guidebook](#)