

Bay-Lakes Council

Guide for Leaders of Eagle Scout Candidates

November 2014

To: Unit Leaders

From: Bay-Lakes Council Advancement Committee

When a Scout in your unit attains the rank of Life Scout and sets out on the “Trail to Eagle,” the unit must support that Scout in his efforts; your guidance and assistance are essential to his success. This Guide sets out the specific responsibilities of leaders working with Eagle Scout candidates. It is a supplement to the *Guide for Eagle Scout Candidates* and is organized following the eleven steps identified in that document.

Adult leaders may be involved in a variety of roles. The BSA assigns certain responsibilities to specific leaders:

- **Unit Leader** (Scoutmaster, Venture Crew Advisor, Varsity Team Coach, or Ship Skipper): The Unit Leader reviews and approves the Scout’s progress (see Steps 3, 7, 8) and conducts the Unit Leader conference (Step 8).
- **Unit Committee Chair:** This person also has specific approval responsibilities (Steps 3, 8).
- **Eagle Scout Service Project Coach:** This role has been established by BSA to advise an Eagle Scout candidate on all phases of his Eagle Scout Service Project (Steps 3-7). It is someone who is knowledgeable about Eagle Scout requirements and service projects and someone who is proficient in the processes for planning and developing a project. Project Coaches must be approved by the Council Advancement Committee.

Every Eagle Scout candidate can benefit from an experienced advisor to assist with the entire Life Scout to Eagle Scout transition. The Council Advancement Committee recommends that units assign an advisor to each Eagle Scout candidate. This may be one of the persons listed above; it may also be the unit advancement chair, another unit committee member, or an assistant leader. The advisor is the primary source of information, advice, guidance and encouragement. The advisor helps the Scout understand all facets of the Eagle requirements, including planning his merit badge progress, serving in a position of responsibility, executing his service project, and completing the paperwork. The advisor monitors the Scout’s progress in all requirements and assures the execution of all tasks identified in this document.

The following is a list of all the forms and documents that are needed as a Scout progresses toward the Eagle Scout Award. You should be, or become, familiar with all of them. Items marked with a diamond (♦) are to be used by leaders, not by the Eagle Scout Candidate. All of these can be downloaded from the Bay-Lakes Council website at www.baylakesbsa.org; go to “Leader Resources,” then “Eagle Scout Information.”

- Eagle Candidate Guide
- Guide for Leaders of Eagle Scout Candidates ♦
- Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook
- Eagle Scout Rank Application
- Eagle Scout Data Sheet
- Eagle Letter of Recommendation ♦
- Eagle Scout Application Checklist
- Request for Delivery of Eagle Scout Certificate ♦

Step 1 – Meet with the Eagle Scout Candidate

Print out a copy of the Eagle Candidate Guide to present to the Eagle Scout Candidate. Meet with him to review this document and the Eagle Scout Rank requirements. Address any questions or concerns he may have, and encourage him to set goals for advancement to Eagle Scout. This should be done as soon as practicable following his Life Board of Review.

Step 2 – Ensure the satisfactory completion of Requirements 1 through 4

If you have any concerns about the Scout's "Scout Spirit" or level of activity in the troop (as prescribed in Requirements 1 & 2), address them right away to give the Scout an opportunity to make corrections or adjustments. Do not wait until it is too late to make corrections.

Ensure that the Scout has the opportunity to serve in one or more positions of responsibility as needed to meet Requirement 4. Encourage and expect him to produce results from his service; it is not sufficient to simply "wear the patch."

The *Guide to Advancement* (Topic 4.2.3.0, Rank Requirements Overview) provides guidelines for determining the satisfactory accomplishment of these requirements. This reference is available on the council website (under "Leader Resources," then "Tools for Leaders: Council Forms") and should be available in each unit.

Step 3 – Provide guidance in the preparation and approval of the Eagle Scout Service Project Proposal

Leaders with past experience must recognize that the new Project Workbook adopted in late 2011 and Steps 3-7 in the process as identified in this document, constitute a significant change from the past. All leaders must familiarize themselves with the new process and comply with it.

When the Scout is ready to begin working on his Eagle Scout Service Project, a Project Coach should be assigned to work with him. The type of project selected by the Scout should be considered in assigning a Project Coach. It is **highly recommended** that Eagle Scout candidates work with a Project Coach, but we cannot require them to do so.

Selecting a service project and planning for it is often the most difficult task for an Eagle Scout candidate, more than actually carrying out the project. Bear in mind that most teenagers have never planned a large project. The next three steps are often challenging, and sometimes frustrating, for the Scout. Your guidance, encouragement and patience are essential to his success at this stage.

As needed, provide guidance in finding and choosing a service project. The service project is meant to provide a demonstration of leadership skills that the candidate has learned in Scouting. It is expected that he will plan the work, organize the workers needed, and direct the project to its completion; the project chosen should be within his capability to do so.

The project should have substance sufficient to present an opportunity for planning, development and leadership. Projects involving routine labor or services normally rendered do not meet this test. There is no specified minimum number of hours required; however, as a point of comparison, projects typically involve more than 100 hours of involvement by all participants.

Guide the Scout through the process of preparing his Project Proposal. Discuss with him how he plans to do his project and how he will break it into phases. Talk through each of the items in the Project Proposal section of the Project Workbook and ask questions to help him expand on areas he has not addressed or thought through. Make sure his project objectives are clearly identified and that his development of the project is sufficient to meet the five tests listed at the beginning of the Project Proposal section. Only then should he complete the Project Proposal.

The Scout's Project Proposal must be reviewed and approved by the Unit Leader and Unit Committee Chair (or authorized committee representative), as well as by a representative of the beneficiary (i.e., the organization that will benefit from the project). The Beneficiary Representative should have received a copy of the "Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project" letter from the Scout.

This is not just a sign-off; it is your job to ensure that the project is worthy and the proposal meets the five tests noted above. If you are unsure of its acceptability, you are encouraged to contact your District Advancement Committee for guidance. Your approval signatures at the end of the Project Proposal confirm your approval and your support for the remaining phases of the project.

Submit three copies of the signed Project Proposal along with any pictures or attachments to the District Advancement Committee. (You may also contact the committee to determine whether electronic submission is acceptable.) If necessary, the committee may contact you for further information, or may request a review meeting with the Scout.

When the Project Proposal is approved, you will receive the original copy of the proposal to be returned to the Scout, plus a copy to be retained for your troop records. If it is not approved, the committee will provide reasons for the rejection. You should then work with the Scout to help him understand the deficiencies and what needs to be done to correct them.

Step 4 – Provide guidance in the preparation of the Eagle Scout Service Project Final Plan

The purpose of the Final Plan is to develop the details that will enable the Scout to be successful in leading his project to completion. The format set forth in this section of the Project Workbook is very detailed and complete, thus removing any uncertainty or mystery as to what should be included. Your role as a leader is to review and discuss specifics of the plan with the Scout. You may identify weaknesses and risks, and make suggestions for improvement.

You **may not** mandate changes to the Final Plan, and it is not subject to approval. The Final Plan is the candidate's plan, and he must make the final decisions as to the content of his plan.

Step 5 – Provide guidance in the preparation and approval of the Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising Application

If the Scout's project includes fundraising or donations to secure materials, a Fundraising Application may be required. You should review the "procedures and limitations" in the Fundraising Application section of the Project Workbook and counsel the Scout to ensure that any fundraising activities adhere to the policies as stated. You must ensure that a Fundraising Application is prepared and submitted in any case where it is required. It should be submitted to your District Advancement Committee at least 2 weeks in advance of any fundraising activity.

Step 6 – Monitor execution of the Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project

Monitor the service project as it is carried out. Make sure the Scout is exercising the expected leadership; provide counseling as may be needed. Ensure that the project as approved is completed in its entirety. It is normal that changes may occur in the course of the project, but changes in project scope could transform it into a different project which may not be acceptable.

BSA policy stipulates that an Eagle Scout Service Project is deemed to be a unit activity. Leaders are responsible to adhere to all applicable BSA policies, including two-deep leadership, Youth Protection Training, and safety policies. This applies even if none of the project workers are members of the unit.

Step 7 – Provide guidance in preparation of the Eagle Scout Service Project Report

Meet with the Scout to review his Project Report (final section of the Project Workbook). As needed, provide suggestions for improvement. The Project Report should be sufficient to provide a thorough overview of the project and to thoroughly explain the Scout's leadership in all phases of the project.

The Unit Leader must review and approve the Project Report. Your signature at the end of the Project Report confirms that the project is complete and meets the requirement.

The Project Report is part of the service project requirement. Accordingly, the report and the final approval signatures must be completed prior to the Scout's 18th birthday.

Step 8 – Conduct a Unit Leader Conference and review the Eagle Scout Rank Application

Schedule and conduct a Unit Leader Conference when all other Eagle Scout requirements have been completed. (This is not technically required if a conference has been held at any time since the candidate's Life Board of Review.)

Assist the Scout in completing the Eagle Scout Rank Application. If needed, provide the Scout with a copy of his advancement record from the troop's records. It is suggested that you use on-line access to ScoutNet to ensure that all dates, ranks and merit badges listed on the application agree with the record on ScoutNet. (NOTE: It is important that units maintain up-to-date advancement records for all Scouts, and that advancement reports are submitted to the council office for all advancement completed in your unit. Failure to do so may delay processing of the Eagle Scout application.)

The Unit Leader and Committee Chair sign the completed Eagle Scout application to express agreement that the Scout should be advanced to Eagle Scout. If for any reason you are not willing to sign, or have doubts whether to sign, contact your District Advancement Committee.

The Scout should provide you with a list of the persons listed as references on his Eagle Scout application. Send a request for a reference letter to each of these, using the form Eagle Letter of Recommendation. These letters should be returned to you (not to the Scout), and should not be opened by you.

Step 9 – Review and submit the Eagle Scout Board of Review Package

Review the completed Eagle Scout Board of Review Package when submitted to you by the Scout. The package shall consist of the following items:

- Eagle Scout Rank Application
- Statement of Ambitions and Life Purpose
- Listing of activities, leadership positions, honors and awards
- Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook (including all attachments plus any additional schedules, drawings, pictures, etc.)
- Eagle Scout Data Sheet

Review the package to insure that each item is complete and correct, using the Eagle Scout Application Checklist. When you are satisfied it is complete, submit the package plus the unopened recommendation letters and the Request for Delivery of Eagle Scout Certificate to the District Advancement Committee. The committee will review the application and all related documents. If anything is missing, incomplete or unclear, they will inform you; work with the Scout as needed to make the necessary corrections.

If a candidate has already reached age 18, his Board of Review must be held within three months after his 18th birthday. The completed package should be submitted as soon as possible to allow for District and Council processing prior to scheduling a Board of Review. Please note: even if the package is submitted after age 18, the Project Workbook must have been completed before age 18, as noted in Step 7 above.

Step 10 – Schedule the Eagle Scout Board of Review

After reviewing the Eagle Scout Board of Review Package, the District Advancement Committee will contact you to schedule the Eagle Scout Board of Review. Recruit 3-4 individuals to sit on the Board of Review. These persons can be committee members or other interested persons. They must be at least 21 years old and should be familiar with Boy Scout advancement and the Eagle Scout requirements. The Unit Leader, assistant unit leaders, and relatives of the candidate may not participate in the Board of Review.

Enter information regarding the service project into www.goodturnforamerica.org

Step 11 – Plan and conduct the Eagle Scout Court of Honor

Schedule the Eagle Court of Honor only after the Eagle Scout Certificate has been received from the Council Service Center.

The Eagle Scout Court of Honor is a very important event in the life of the Eagle Scout, his family and friends, and his troop. It should be a special event, recognizing the Eagle Scout's accomplishments in a solemn and celebratory manner. The booklet *Conducting a Successful Eagle Scout Court of Honor* has been published by the Council Advancement Committee to assist unit leaders and family members in planning an appropriate recognition ceremony; it is available on the council website.