

Webelos-to-Scout Transition Plan

- Learning Objectives** As a result of this learning experience, participants will be able to
- State the objective of the Webelos-to-Scout transition plan.
 - State the relationship between a Webelos den and a Boy Scout troop.
 - Itemize the steps needed to ensure a seamless transition from a Webelos den to a Boy Scout troop.
 - List those people involved in the transition process and state their roles.
 - Describe the need for good pack-troop relationships.
 - List several joint activities.
 - State several values of early spring (February) graduation.
 - State the role of the commissioner in the transition process.

Resources 33853A, *Webelos Leader Guide*
33009A, *Scoutmaster Handbook*
33452, *Webelos Handbook*

Handout Cub Scout Cycle (latest version)

Time 30 minutes

Introduction For most troops, getting new Scouts from graduating Webelos Scouts is the biggest source of new members. Several factors affect how many boys will make that transition. Many Webelos Scouts will go on to Boy Scouting with very little help, but a lot of them need to know more about their opportunities for fun and adventure in a troop. We also must let the boy know that he is wanted. We will explore some of the guidelines and thoughts on transition.

The Plan Make the following points.

- Every graduating Webelos Scout deserves the opportunity to continue his Scouting experience as a member of a Boy Scout troop.
- Bridging the gap between Webelos Scouting and Boy Scouting results in the following:
 - Better-prepared and more enthusiastic new members for the troop
 - A strong feeling of success for the pack
 - Most important, an outstanding new Scouting experience for the boys

The purposes of the Webelos-to-Scout transition plan are to

1. Give every Webelos Scout a sampling of troop program, troop leadership, advancement opportunities, and the fun and excitement of Boy Scouting.

2. Introduce him—through the Webelos badge and Arrow of Light Award—to the basic elements in Scouting skills and the advancement program.
3. Help him learn about the troop through joint den-troop activities.
4. Help him become more confident and enthusiastic about his Scouting future as he becomes familiar with the boys and adult leaders in the troop.

The Den-Troop Partnership

Explain that the key factor in the transition process is the establishment of a working **partnership** between the Webelos den and the Boy Scout troop that most of the Webelos Scouts will join.

1. Every Webelos den should be linked with a troop.
2. Upon graduation, the Webelos den can move right into the troop as a new-Scout patrol.
3. The partner troop may provide Webelos den chiefs for the pack, as well as assistance in planning and conducting outdoor activities.

Parent Orientation Conferences

(Refer to the *Webelos Leader Guide*, page 20, and the *Scoutmaster Handbook*, page 136.)

The Scoutmaster (or assistant Scoutmaster) and the Webelos den leader work together to plan a **parent orientation conference** for all new Webelos Scouts and their parents or guardians. The Cubmaster may also be a part of this conference. Unit commissioners should also attend.

This conference should be held **at the beginning of the Webelos Scout's fourth-grade year**. The conference could be an open house at a troop meeting or a separate meeting.

The goal of this conference is to inform parents or guardians how the Webelos Scout program prepares the boy for Boy Scouting. Orientation topics might include:

- How the Webelos Scout program works
- How Webelos dens work with Boy Scout troops
- Participation of family members
- Costs and dues
- The patrol method
- Outdoor and overnight events
- Troop programs
- Preparation for graduation
- Preparation for summer camp

A **second orientation conference** should be held in the fall of the fifth-grade year. This second conference:

- Reinforces the den-troop partnership
- Provides further information on upcoming troop programs, including summer camp
- Provides preparation for graduation

No Webelos Scout should start his fifth-grade year without a clear path ahead of him that leads to a Boy Scout troop.

Joint Activities

Joint activities can happen in many ways.

First, the troop should provide a **den chief** for every Webelos den. The den chief may probably become the patrol leader when the Webelos Scouts join the troop and form a new-Scout patrol. Selection of the den chief should become of primary importance to the troop, rather than selecting someone just because he may be available.

The fifth-grade Webelos den and the troop should hold **several activities together**, including one or two campouts. Joint activities might include:

- Den-troop campouts
- Court of honor (especially an Eagle Scout court of honor)
- Campfire program
- Day hikes
- Field trips
- Good Turn (service) projects
- Visiting a camporee or district/council Boy Scout event as **daytime** guests of the troop

Emphasize that the result of these joint activities is that the Webelos Scouts learn about the fun of Boy Scouting and get acquainted with **individual members** of the Boy Scout troop. When the boy joins the troop, he will step into an already familiar and friendly environment.

The Arrow of Light Award

Explain that Webelos Scouts can join a troop after earning the Arrow of Light Award. **Webelos Scouts should graduate in February**, perhaps as part of the pack's blue and gold banquet.

In earning the Arrow of Light Award, a Webelos Scout has learned everything he needs to know to join a troop and can be presented the Scout badge upon joining.

An important element of the Arrow of Light Award is requirement 6:

After you have completed all five of the above requirements, and after a talk with your Webelos den leader, arrange to visit, with your parent or guardian, a meeting of a Boy Scout troop you think you might like to join. Have a conference with the Scoutmaster.

Requirement 6 helps to provide a seamless transition to the Boy Scout troop. By holding the Scoutmaster conference before receiving the Arrow of Light Award, the Webelos Scout has one conference, not two. It gives him a better chance to learn what is expected as a troop member.

New-Scout Conference for Webelos Scouts

This conference should be held a month or two before the Webelos Scout graduates into the troop. The conference is conducted by the Scoutmaster (or assistant Scoutmaster assigned to the new-Scout patrol). It is unhurried and in view of at least one other adult. As with all Scoutmaster conferences, help the boy feel at ease.

The Webelos Scout should be encouraged to set both short- and long-term goals for himself.

Other discussion points might include:

- Review of the Tenderfoot requirements
- The meaning of the Scout Oath and Law
- The advancement program

- Troop camping
- The patrol method
- Summer camp

The second part of the new-Scout conference should include the parent or guardian. (Refer to page 139 of the *Scoutmaster Handbook*.)

- Discuss costs, equipment and uniforms needed, and time involvement.
- Provide a troop calendar. Highlight upcoming events.
- Ask what benefits parents/guardians hope their son will gain through Scouting.
- Describe the advancement program. Give an overview of the rank requirements.
- Discuss educational values of the program.
- Ask them to fill out the Troop Resource Survey sheet and find out ways they might be able to help.

Graduation

Planning for the graduation should begin in October. The Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, Webelos den leader, and unit commissioner all have important parts in the planning process.

Please note that the Arrow of Light Award ceremony is **not** a graduation ceremony. It is an advancement ceremony and should be given great thought and planning to make it meaningful. Don't allow people to lump the Arrow of Light Award ceremony with a graduation ceremony.

Also, remember that a boy doesn't need to have the Arrow of Light Award to graduate, nor to become a Boy Scout. A Webelos Scout can graduate when he earns the Arrow of Light Award, when he turns 11, or when he completes the fifth grade.

The graduation ceremony should be held in February, probably at the pack's blue and gold dinner. Scoutmasters, assistant Scoutmasters, unit commissioners, and den chiefs should all be encouraged to attend and participate in the ceremony.

Some troops present the new Scout with the *Boy Scout Handbook*. Others present a troop neckerchief or other token of the troop.

Summary

Webelos den leaders, Cubmasters, Scoutmasters, and commissioners are all responsible for carrying out the Webelos-to-Scout transition plan. Some councils even include articles for monthly guidelines on what to do in their newsletters.

Your leadership is what will make a seamless transition happen.