



WHAT SHOULD SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS KNOW ABOUT SCOUTING?

WHAT IS SCOUTING?

Scouting is an international program that supports positive youth development. Scouting programs, regardless of age level, seek desired outcomes in five areas: participatory citizenship, character development, personal fitness, outdoor skills and awareness, and leadership development. Scouting achieves these outcomes through programs that are driven by the interest and involvement of youth with assistance from adult volunteers.

WHAT ARE THE PROGRAMS OF THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA?

Scouting delivers a continuous program of fun and adventure, but the delivery approach varies based on the age of the participants. The Boy Scouts of America offers three main Scouting programs: Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, and Venturing, with additional program opportunities offered through Varsity Scouting and Sea Scouting.

Cub Scouting (for boys ages 7 through 10) is focused on home- and family-centered activities, with a program led by adult leaders. Participants are members of *dens* that make up a *pack*.

Boy Scouting (for young men ages 11 through 17) emphasizes outdoor programming led by youth leaders in consultation with adults. Participants are members of *patrols* that make up a *troop*.

Varsity Scouting is a specialized program for older Boy Scouts (ages 14 through 18) that provides an emphasis on high adventure, sports, and fitness.

Venturing—for young men and women ages 14 through 20, or 13 and having completed the eighth grade—features diverse program content based on the interests of the participants. The program is designed and led by youth, mentored by adult Advisors. Participants, called *Venturers*, are part of a *crew*.

Sea Scouting is a specialized program for young adults in the same age range as Venturers, using seamanship and watercraft skills as a vehicle for leadership development. *Sea Scouts* meet in groups called *ships* and are advised by an adult *Skipper*.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF CHARTERING A SCOUTING PROGRAM?

Scouting activities contribute to the academic development of youth who participate, beyond the standards in the core curriculum. In addition to the outdoor program and adventure, Scouting participants can explore other interests such as STEM investigations, the arts, and outings within the community. The program is designed to increase a youth's independence over time and to help in developing skills of leadership, initiative, and teamwork. In addition, research has confirmed these outcomes:

- A study at Tufts University showed strong evidence that participation in Scouting supports the development of pro-social behaviors, career goals, tolerant beliefs, and positive character attributes (Lerner, et al., 2015).
- Researchers at Baylor University identified significant differences between Scouts and non-Scouts in these areas: health and recreation, connection to others, service and leadership, environmental stewardship, goal orientation, planning and preparedness, and character. These traits carry over into adulthood (Jang, Johnson, and Kim, 2012).
- The time that youth spend in structured activities such as Scouting has been correlated with higher academic and conduct grades, constructive peer relations, and positive emotional adjustment (Posner and Lowe, 2008).





LEVEL OF SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR SCOUTING

Support by local school districts can be modest and still have an enormous impact. Here are some ways to get involved:

- Chartering (sponsoring) Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, or Venturing crews. This is commonly managed through a local PTA or PTO.
- Participation by school board members and school district administrators on support committees, including a BSA local council's board of directors. These bodies help support the delivery of Scouting for youth throughout the community.
- Giving priority in the use of school facilities to any youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society, such as the Boy Scouts of America.
- Supporting recruitment by allowing BSA professionals to give brief presentations to students about Scouting opportunities.
- Encouraging schools to let students participate in BSA activities at times other than instructional classes during the school day, which helps with civic education.
- See if Scout unit service projects can help with school needs such as landscaping, parking/traffic management at major events, presentation of colors at campuses and school board meetings, and assistance with school fairs or carnivals.

Your interest and support of Scouting is appreciated

