

Webelos to Boy Scout Transition



Lake Huron Area Council #265

Webelos to Boy Scout Transition

Planning

Preparation

Performance

Success

You must plan ahead to recruit Webelos Scouts into your Troop or (from a Webelos Leader's point of view) what you are going to do to get the Webelos sent on to Boy Scouts. You must then prepare for this transition with activities built along this plan. You must complete all of these activities, not just part of them, in order to achieve success.

The Importance of a Good Webelos Leader

- The leader must accept the need for a good outdoor program.
- Must have knowledge of outdoor skills, fire building, cooking, wood tools and knots, camping, sanitation, tents and equipment
- Should be Scoutmaster Fundamentals trained (outdoor program)

The Webelos Den Leader Role

- Most influential in the boys preparation
- Should have the Webelos function as a patrol
- Ensure the boys attend camp
- Verify the presence of the necessary Scout skills
- Attend roundtables and get to know Scoutmasters
- Attend troop meeting and recruit a den chief
- Plan the graduation / bridging ceremony and promote troop summer activities
- Verify the transfer of documents (the boy's records)

The Scoutmaster's Role

- Include the Webelos in summer camp reservations
- Discuss camp and troop activity costs with the Webelos Scout parents
- Have Webelos Scouts and their parents attend troop meetings
- Become part of the pack graduation ceremony
- Assist in finding den chiefs for Webelos dens
- Ensure all forms are completed
- Invite the Webelos Den Leader to become part of the troop
- Hold a pre-summer camp orientation for Scout skills

The Assistant Scoutmaster's Role

- Helps to form the new Scout patrol
- Make sure the Webelos Scouts feel welcome and that they belong to the troop
- Work with the Troop Guide in planning instruction of Scout skills and patrol learning
- Assist with advancement up to the Star rank
- Verify and reinforce basic Scout skills

The Den Chief's Role

- A resource for Scout skills
- Helps form the patrol and patrol spirit
- Helps to operate the patrol
- Assists in the Arrow of Light Cross-over ceremonies
- Counts as leadership time

The Cubmaster's Role

- NOW – Search for Scout Troop; develop point-of-contact for the troop; examine membership levels and activities within the troop
- October – Confirm the February graduation; invite the Scoutmaster(s), Senior Patrol Leader(s), and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader(s) to the Blue and Gold banquet; encourage visitation to troop meetings
- February to April – conduct the graduation; ensure the boys' funds get transferred.

The Unit Commissioner Role

- Determine which troops can accommodate more Scouts
- Contact the district executive to start more troops if necessary
- Ensure graduations are planned
- Track graduating Scouts and ensure they get registered as Boy Scouts
- Attend graduations
- For those Webelos who do not join a troop, determine why.
 - Family moving?
 - Parent problem?
 - Scout problem?
 - Troop problem?
 - Transportation?
 - Finances? (be discreet)

A Good Webelos Den Leader will:

- Train the boys to be good Scouts
- Enforce the requirements for camping and troop visitations (at least two and three best)
- Enforce the importance of the Arrow of Light Award (it's as important as the Eagle Award)
- Work from February to April graduation plan (to keep them interested)

Why a two year Webelos plan if they are going to graduate in February – April?

- Better retention
- Early transition is important so they are ready to go to summer camp
- 70%-80% of Boy Scouts were Webelos
- 100% better chance of retaining a Scout if they attend summer camp their first year
- The boys are looking forward to summertime fun
- May is the end of the year for school and sports
- Webelos is really a 21-22 month program
- 1st year / 4th grade, 12 months
- 2nd year / 5th grade, 9-10 months
- Arrow of Light in January or February of the 2nd year
- Join the Troop in February
- Graduate as a patrol and stay as a patrol in the troop
- The Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster get to know the boys before they go to summer camp

Second Year Webelos Leader

- Have the boys begin functioning as a patrol not a den
- Choose a patrol name
- Make a patrol flag
- Wear a patrol emblem / patch
- Elect patrol officers
- Rotate patrol position

Uses of Den Chief

- Resource for Scout skills and help training
- Assist in operating the patrol
- Assist in the patrol graduation
- Counts as leadership time

Find a troop early

- Contact commissioners, Scout Executives, and professional staff
- Ask other Scouts
- Ask at Scoutmaster Fundamentals
- Ask at Webelos Overnight Training
- Plan joint activities
- Summer camp fund savings
- Build a good relationship with the boys of the troop
- Make the transition natural and fun

Planning the Transition

- The Scoutmaster and the Webelos Den Leader should meet in November or December to:
 - Share rosters
 - Plan the transition graduation / bridging ceremony
 - Review camp plans and fees
 - Set a date for the Scoutmaster to meet with the Webelos' parents

Troop and Pack Committee

- Share the responsibility for graduation ceremony
- Transfer Cub Scout account if there is one
- Ensure the transfer of records and transfer application is completed

Graduation Briefing to Webelos

- Remind the Webelos that activity badges are like merit badges
- Accuracy is important
- Neatness is important
- Timeliness is important
- The Arrow of Light qualifies the Webelos Scout for the Scout badge
- The Webelos Badge required them to earn the fitness activity badge and that has the requirement of the course for substance and child abuse, which is part of the Scout Badge requirement
- The Arrow of Light Ceremony equates to the Eagle Ceremony for Boy Scouts
- Ensure that the Arrow of Light is just as nice
- An impressive ceremony will instill in boys the desire to continue in Scouting
- Show that the Scoutmaster and Troop Junior Leaders really want the boy in their troop

Webelos Transition

Elements of this Webelos Transition Plan when you begin at least two months before you start. It should start when the troop plans its yearly calendar. Have pack committee members and troop committee members meet to review and approve the calendar. This step has to be repeated once a year. After all, younger boys love to follow the older boys. The Den Chief will tell stories of Scouting from his adventure in the troop and his past days in Cub Scout adventures.

April is Scouting for Food time. The troop and pack should be collecting food together and is a great service project for all to work together. In March or April, the 1st-year Webelos should be transferred to 2nd year Webelos and they should be going to the spring camporee.

May / June – Hopefully, all of the 5th grade / 2nd-year Webelos crossed over in February to a Boy Scout troop. This is a great time for the new Webelos and their parents to see Boy Scouting in action. When Webelos go camping like this, they must follow the Cub Scout camping requirements in the *Guide to Safe Scouting*. The new Webelos and Boy Scouts must not compete with each other on events and possibly should have a related program event of their own.

June / July / August - Boy Scouts go to summer camp and other summertime adventures. The Webelos Scouts go to Day Camp, Resident Camp, and other pack summertime adventures.

That's it. The parts all come together and make the transition from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts easy. It is also very important to invite all Webelos Scouts to any and all Eagle Courts of Honor which is a big and important show of Scouting. It also seems to keep more boys in Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts.

An important note about Den Chiefs - have the den chief commit to a two-year stay if he is with a 2nd year Webelos den. The first year, he is the den chief for the 2nd year Webelos starting March or April. When these Webelos graduate into the troop, he becomes their troop guide. Now the new Scouts really know someone from the troop that is their friend.

September / October - Everyone should be at the District Fall Camporee. Hopefully, all the 2nd year Webelos Scouts are also invited to this event. This is also a great time for the Webelos Scouts and their parents to see Boy Scouts working.

January - The 2nd-year Webelos den start meeting on troop nights with the troop. Once the opening is done, the Webelos Scouts move to their own room for their regular meeting. Invite the 2nd year Webelos to the Summer Camp Promotion Night. Here the parents of these soon-to-be new Scouts will get the answers to their questions about this week-long campout. Sometime before Webelos graduation, meet with the Webelos Scouts parents and answer more questions. If your troop has a troop handbook that contains the troop rules and policies, give them a copy.

February / March - Now is Blue and Gold banquet time and Webelos graduation. The troop is present for the graduation. Have the BSA applications available and have the parent fill them out that evening. Make those new Scouts welcome as soon as they cross the bridge. Boy Scout troops must do most of the work to recruit Webelos Scouts. It is not a given that Webelos will simply come walking through the door looking for you. You must find them and earn their trust for them to join your troop. Even on a single pack or troop town, it is important to work hard to keep the boys in Scouting. The longer boys are in Scouting, the better they will be in the long run.

