A Self-Evaluation Guide For Successful District Operation

To Be Used in Conjunction With Journey to Excellence

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®
SIX MAJOR TASKS FOR VOLUNTEER SUCCESS

Council volunteers and professional staff members strengthen district committees and commissioner staffs with six major tasks—the six things they must do to make a volunteer system work.

1. Define Responsibilities
Volunteers must know what is expected for them to be successful. Carefully define, in writing, the responsibilities for each position. Use Commissioner Responsibility Cards, No. 34265; District Committee Responsibility Cards, No. 34266; and A Handbook for District Operations, No. 34739, to assist you.

2. Select and Recruit
Fit the right person to the job. Consider each prospect’s skills, interests, and other relevant factors. Consider the variety of motivating factors for people getting involved in Scouting. Use all the prescribed steps in recruiting district volunteers and use the recruiting resources of the BSA. Helpful recruiting resources include Selecting District People, No. 34512; A Handbook for District Operations, No. 34739; and the District Nominating Committee Worksheet, No. 513-332.

3. Orient and Train
Provide each person with prompt orientation and adequate training on their individual assignment to be successful. Use the District Committee Training Workshop, No. 34160, and Administration of Commissioner Service, No. 34501.

4. Coach Volunteers
Provide ongoing coaching as needed. Build a volunteer’s confidence and self-esteem. Help conserve a volunteer’s time. Coaching should be provided by the appropriate committee chair or professional.

5. Recognize Achievement
Recognition must be sincere, timely, and earned. Use the great variety of formal BSA recognition items, but also be creative with frequent locally devised thank-yous. Even more effective may be the personal “pat on the back” for a job well done. Recognize volunteers on a face-to-face basis, from a person of status, and preferably in front of the volunteer’s peers.

6. Evaluate Performance
PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

District Scouters want their time and talent to have a maximum benefit to youth. Using proven practices and methods will help fulfill this desire. The Journey to Excellence program is your starting point. Check how you scored on the criteria, and how you scored overall. This guide should be used in conjunction with Journey to Excellence, as it drills even deeper into your performance as a district.

A thoughtful review of the questions in this self-evaluation guide will reveal areas of operation where changes and improvements are necessary. Once these areas have been defined, they should be placed in an order of priority. Most of these changes and improvements can be carried out by the district. Some changes may require the help of others in the council.

As you participate in this self-analysis, keep in mind that the evaluation is intended to help your district and council identify areas of need and provide solutions. Its usefulness depends, in part, upon your objectivity, which precludes defending a district's practice or glossing over any question. An affirmative response to a statement means that all parts or factors in the statement meet the standards. A negative response might prompt an explanation as to what portion of the standards needs improvement. Take the time to assure an answer that reflects the true situation in your district.

The following steps are suggested for completing this evaluation:

1. The council president (or vice president for district operation), council executive, field director, district chair, and district executive determine who should be involved in making the evaluation. This may be simply the district Key 3 or it may include others in the district and council leadership structure.

2. Those making the evaluation are given assignments for appropriate sections of the guide and related information. A deadline is set for a return of the completed section.

3. When all parts are completed and returned, the information is transferred to a master copy by the district executive.

4. The master evaluation is reviewed and substantial agreement reached by the district Key 3.

5. Methods or practices needing improvement or change are listed in priority order.

6. The council president (or vice president for district operation), council executive, and field director are invited to meet with the district chair and district executive and review the profile.

7. Agreement is reached on those needs that the district can fulfill on its own initiative and those needs that might require help from the council.

8. A program of action is launched to make the improvements and changes with the assistance of the council where necessary.
JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE STANDARDS

Standards for Journey to Excellence Awards for units, districts, and councils are reviewed annually by volunteers and professionals and are mutually accepted and approved. Standards for these awards are published on separate worksheets each year.

One of the functions of a district is to help units be successful in operating a quality program for its youth. The percent of units that provide a quality program is an indicator of the effectiveness of a district and its personnel.

What percent of your units are Journey to Excellence Units?__________________%  
Bronze _________ %  
Silver _________ %  
Gold _________ %

Was the district a national Journey to Excellence district during the most recent calendar year?  
Bronze _________  
Silver _________  
Gold _________

FINANCE

1. The district has a finance steering committee. Yes ______ No ______
2. The district has a finance chair capable of tapping the fundraising resources (men and women) of the community. Yes ______ No ______
3. In cooperation with council leadership and the district finance chair, a top-flight Friends of Scouting chair is recruited at least three months prior to the FOS kick-off so that majors, captains, and workers can be recruited. Yes ______ No ______
4. The district follows the council Friends of Scouting plan, including:
   a. Functioning steering committees as needed Yes ______ No ______
   b. Conducting the three phases of FOS in the district Yes ______ No ______
   c. Recruiting deadlines Yes ______ No ______
   d. Prospect list is revised and a prospect and evaluation meeting is held at least once a year Yes ______ No ______
   e. Kickoff deadlines Yes ______ No ______
   f. Levels of membership Yes ______ No ______
   g. Reporting dates Yes ______ No ______
5. The district raised its fair share of the council’s FOS goal. Yes ______ No ______
   a. Fair share goal: $______________
   b. Amount raised: $______________
   c. Percent of goal reached:__________
6. All units are recognized for participating in the Family FOS Campaign. Yes ______ No ______
7. The district finance chair involves district volunteers in the project-sales program of the council and accepts the responsibility of selling projects in the district. Yes ______ No ______
8. District volunteer and professional leadership support the efforts of local United Ways in their community and assist in promoting their programs. Yes ______ No ______
9. Fireside chats are held when needed and involve representation from at least 50 percent of the units. If no, what percent?________ Y es ______ No ______
10. Units submit money-earning applications to the district/council at least 14 days prior to the fundraiser. Yes ______ No ______
11. All district activities and events have income and expense budgets approved in advance, including the use of purchase orders, field receipts, and assigned account numbers. Yes ______ No ______
12. Following the council’s lead, recruit a team of volunteers to support the council’s product sales (popcorn) campaign. Include the district chair and other positions as needed. Yes ______ No ______
MEMBERSHIP

Packs

1. Membership and total available youth (TAY) are analyzed by communities to clearly define where special emphasis should be placed on membership growth. 
   Yes ______ No ______

2. Individual pack needs have been analyzed and addressed prior to roundup events.
   Yes ______ No ______

3. Have a roundup chair and pack organizer that are active on the membership committee.
   Yes ______ No ______

4. The district has a year-round plan to recruit Tiger Cub/Cub Scout–age members which includes the following:
   a. Boy-fact survey or other promotional opportunities in the spring for boys in kindergarten, spring/fall for first through fifth grades.
   b. Endorsement by school authorities and community leaders.
   c. Community-based promotion such as radio or TV PSAs, billboards, yard signs, etc.
   d. In-school promotion such as fliers, posters, classroom visits, assemblies, etc.
   e. Spring and fall recruitment events (pack roundup), which requires that pack leaders be present to take the initial steps in registering new members.
   f. Enough dens are organized to include all new boys recruited.
   Yes ______ No ______
   Yes ______ No ______
   Yes ______ No ______
   Yes ______ No ______
   Yes ______ No ______

5. Volunteers are recruited and trained to organize Cub Scout packs on a ratio of one organizer for every pack to be organized with a commissioner and a trainer assisting. If no, what is the ratio? __________________________
   Yes ______ No ______

6. Periodic visits are made to the heads of prospective organizations to cultivate their interest in adopting Cub Scouting as part of their program.
   Yes ______ No ______

7. Consideration is given to a “together plan” program as a method of organizing packs.
   Yes ______ No ______

Troops/Teams

1. The district has a year-round plan to recruit Boy Scout/Varsity Scout–age members and provide an adequate number of units for them to join.
   a. Boy-fact survey of boys in the fifth grade.
   b. Graduation of Webelos Scouts into Boy Scouting, through a Webelos Scout transition plan.
   Yes ______ No ______
   Yes ______ No ______

2. Periodic visits are made to the heads of prospective chartered organizations to cultivate their interest in adopting Boy Scouting/Varsity Scouting as a part of their program.
   Yes ______ No ______

3. Volunteers are recruited and trained to organize Boy Scout troops/Varsity Scout teams on a ratio of one organizer for every troop/team to be organized.
   Yes ______ No ______

4. Consideration is given to a “together plan” program of organizing troops/teams.
   Yes ______ No ______

5. A transition chair monitors all Webelos Scouts and makes sure all are given an invitation to join a Scout troop.
   Yes ______ No ______

6. Membership and total available youth (TAY) are analyzed by communities to define where special emphasis should be placed on membership growth.
   Yes ______ No ______

Crews

1. The district has a Venturing organizer team.
   Yes ______ No ______

2. The district has a year-round plan to recruit Venturing-age youth.
   Yes ______ No ______

3. Periodic visits are made to the heads of prospective chartered organizations to cultivate their interest in having a Venturing crew.
   Yes ______ No ______
4. Impact plans
   a. Did you hold impact meetings for the purpose of organizing new crews? Yes ______ No ______
   b. Were any crews organized without an impact plan? Yes ______ No ______

5. Do you have open house meetings for the purpose of reorganizing crews or adding membership? Yes ______ No ______

PROGRAM

Packs

1. Immediate training (fast start) is provided to new
   a. Cubmasters Yes ______ No ______
   b. Den leaders and assistants Yes ______ No ______
   c. Webelos Scout den leaders and assistants Yes ______ No ______
   d. Pack committee chair and committee members Yes ______ No ______

2. The district participates in or conducts the following training experiences:
   a. New leader Essentials training Yes ______ No ______
   b. Leader Specific Training Yes ______ No ______
   c. Cub Scout leader pow wow Yes ______ No ______
   d. Den chief conference Yes ______ No ______

3. A satisfactory system is used for recruiting, training, and guiding instructors for the Cub Scout leadership training program. Yes ______ No ______

4. More than 60 percent of Cub Scout packs are operating a quality program for their youth by earning the Journey to Excellence Unit Award. District percent is ________.

5. At least 70 percent of the Cub Scout packs have qualified for the National Summertime Pack Award. Yes ______ No ______

6. There were at least 70 boys advancing a rank per 100 Cub Scouts in the district last year. Yes ______ No ______

7. All packs have Tiger Cub dens. If not all, indicate percent: ________ Yes ______ No ______

8. The district conducts monthly quality roundtables for Cub Scout leaders with an average of 50 percent or more of the packs represented. If not all, indicate percent: ________ Yes ______ No ______

9. District leadership provides year-round and summertime supplemental quality program experiences for Cub Scout packs and conducts such programs as appropriate to meet the needs of the packs. Yes ______ No ______

10. An annual pack program planning conference is promoted for each pack. Yes ______ No ______

11. Webelos Scout/adult overnight camping trips are encouraged with troops providing necessary support and assistance. Yes ______ No ______

12. A where-to-go booklet is provided for pack use. Yes ______ No ______

Troops/Teams

1. Over 60 percent of the troops/teams have qualified for the National Camping Award. Yes ______ No ______

2. An annual troop/team program planning conference is promoted for each troop/team. Yes ______ No ______

3. The district has an up-to-date and complete list of competent, certified merit badge counselors for use by all Boy Scouts and encourages troops to have their own counselors where appropriate. Yes ______ No ______
4. The district carries out a plan that encourages troops/teams to have 10 days and nights of camping. It would include one outdoor activity each month including weekend camping trips and a long-term summer camp. Yes ______ No ______

5. Sixty percent or more of troops/teams are operating a quality program for their youth by earning the Journey to Excellence Unit Award. Yes ______ No ______

6. The district conducts monthly quality roundtables for troop/team leaders with an average of 50 percent or more of the units represented. If no, indicate percent:_________. Yes ______ No ______

7. Immediate training is provided to new Scoutmasters/Coaches and troop/team-committee members. Yes ______ No ______

8. A satisfactory system is used for identifying, training, and guiding trainers for the Boy Scout/Varsity Scout leadership training program. Yes ______ No ______

9. The district participates in or conducts the following quality training experience for Boy Scout/Varsity Scout leaders in order to achieve a minimum of 70 percent of top leaders trained:
   a. Fast Start with all new leaders Yes ______ No ______
   b. Basic Leader Training Yes ______ No ______
   c. New Leader Essentials training Yes ______ No ______
   d. Other adult Boy Scout/Varsity Scout leader training experiences. Yes ______ No ______

10. Learning opportunities are provided for Scoutmasters/Coaches, assistants, and troop/team committee members on how to conduct Scoutmaster/Coach conferences. Yes ______ No ______

11. There were at least 50 boys advancing a rank per 100 Boy Scouts in the district last year. Yes ______ No ______

Crews

1. The following quality events are conducted: Yes ______ No ______
   a. ____________________________________________
   b. ____________________________________________
   c. ____________________________________________
   d. ____________________________________________

2. Over 60 percent of crews have qualified for the Journey to Excellence Unit Award. Yes ______ No ______

3. The district conducts quarterly Advisors’ meetings. Yes ______ No ______

4. Training is provided for all Advisors. Yes ______ No ______

5. More than 75 percent of Advisors conduct crew officers’ seminars for elected officers. Yes ______ No ______

6. Crews have an annual superactivity. Yes ______ No ______
UNIT SERVICE/COMMISSIONER STAFF

1. There are competent, trained, and uniformed commissioners giving quality service to units, making meaningful personal contacts with units at least once a month. Strive for one unit commissioner for every three units. Indicate ratio.
   a. Total units:____________________
   b. Total unit commissioners:____________________
   c. Ratio:____________________

2. The district has one assistant district commissioner for every five unit commissioners. Current ratio:_______

3. Commissioner staff, in conjunction with professional staff, adheres to the requirements of the plan for renewing unit charters. Indicate percent of units reregistered on time during the past year:_________.

4. The district commissioner staff has a plan which provides early information regarding units that are in danger of not reregistering on time or that need special assistance.

5. Commissioners encourage proper uniforming of all packs/troops/teams and conduct uniform inspections as part of the Annual Commissioner Service Plan. They also have a plan to help Scouts in low-income communities obtain uniforms.

6. There is a plan for the promotion of Boys’ Life. A subscription should go into the home of each Cub Scout/Boy Scout/Varsity Scout.
   Number of 100% units:__________
   Percent subscribing:__________

7. Unit commissioners follow the Annual Commissioner Service Plan with its specific purposes for regular contact with units.

8. The district provides Fast Start training within 48 hours of recruitment of new commissioners.

9. Districts provide basic training within two months of recruitment of new commissioners.

10. The district participates in the council’s annual commissioner conference. Percentage of unit commissioners participating ________%.

11. The district has well-run roundtables which provide unit adults with lots of hands-on ideas for providing a better unit program. Average monthly percentage of units attending roundtables ________%.

12. Monthly commissioner staff meetings have a significant training topic and ADC breakout sessions when assistant district commissioners meet with their teams of unit commissioners to review unit needs and plan commissioner actions to help meet unit needs.

13. The commissioner staff uses the DVD Commissioner Annual Orientation to assist commissioners in carrying out their responsibilities with monthly unit visits.

14. Commissioner visits/contacts are being made and are entered into the Unit Visit Tracking System 2.0.

15. The commissioners use the unit self-assessment tools to work with their units in ensuring a quality program.
COMMUNICATIONS

1. There is a marketing chair for the district who provides news releases and stories to newspapers, radio, and television, and stimulates unit publicity to the media. Yes ______ No ______

2. A district newsletter or website informs volunteers of upcoming programs. The timeliness of the newsletter provides sufficient advance notice for units and volunteers to plan adequately. Yes ______ No ______

3. The climate for Scouting is favorable throughout the district. Yes ______ No ______

4. Unit and district Scouters are aware of the district’s relationship to the council and how the council serves the district. Yes ______ No ______

5. The district has a page and regularly updates information on the council website. Yes ______ No ______

CHARTERED ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES AND CHARTERED ORGANIZATIONS

1. Training is held for chartered organization representatives separately or in conjunction with a district meeting to review planned programs, provide training, consider problems, and share successes. Suggested resource, *Training the Chartered Organization Representative*. Yes ______ No ______

2. Inactive chartered organization representatives and their chartered organization heads are personally contacted by the district executive to stimulate involvement or bring about a new appointment to this position. Yes ______ No ______

3. A specific district volunteer is given the responsibility of training, coordinating, and inspiring chartered organization representatives. Yes ______ No ______

4. Recognition is given to chartered organizations to strengthen their relationships with Scouting. Yes ______ No ______

5. Volunteer and professional Scouters approach chartered organizations and potential chartered organizations from the point of view of “What can Scouting do to help your organization carry out its purposes in serving youth and families?” Yes ______ No ______

6. The district executive considers heads of chartered organizations as “customers” and calls on them regularly. Suggested resource: the BSA relationships videos. Yes ______ No ______

RURAL OR LOW-INCOME URBAN OUTREACH

(These additional practices are included for districts serving major low-income urban and/or remote rural areas.)

1. District executives are aware of all the audiovisuals, written materials, methods, and training developed by the BSA for use in low-income urban and rural communities.
If no, is there a plan to acquaint district executives with them? Yes ______ No ______

2. The council has considered the use of the *Neighborhood/Small Community Plan of District Operation*. Yes ______ No ______

3. Appropriate professionals and key volunteers have been trained in the Neighborhood Small Community Plan of District Operation designed for rural and low-income urban districts.
If no, is training planned? Yes ______ No ______

4. A prompt and spontaneous response to unit needs (those expressed by unit people and those observed by unit service people) is a priority for the district and neighborhood structure. Yes ______ No ______

5. District professionals and key volunteers are involved with significant community needs, events, and organizations in poverty neighborhoods. Yes ______ No ______
6. The district/council has developed measures to assure that Scouting needs such as equipment, camp fees, and numerous council/district events fees do not prevent low-income boys and leaders from participating in the program.

7. A copy of *Rural/Low-Income Urban Venturing Action Ideas* is being used by the district.

8. Lone Scouting is used in serving youth who cannot attend pack and troop meetings.

9. The district Key 3 have copies and have reviewed either *Local Council Guidebook on Serving Rural Communities* or *Local Council Guidebook on Serving Low-Income Urban Communities*.

**DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

1. Each district operating committee is chaired by a trained, effective volunteer chair with sufficient committee members to achieve the objectives of the district. If no, list committees that need strengthening:

   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________

2. The district executive and district nominating committee, in consultation with the council president (or the president's designee) and the Scout executive (or designee) conduct an annual volunteer inventory and develop a program to recruit and strengthen committees.

3. The district committee held an annual planning conference to schedule the district calendar in carrying out the council program, agreed upon objectives, and determined volunteer needs for operating committees.

4. Have the commissioners met regularly with unit leaders to reinforce communications, determine unit needs, plan action programs to meet needs, and review the district's annual calendar?

5. An annual calendar is issued to all district and unit volunteers.

6. The district executive holds an in-depth planning and action meeting separate from the district meeting, with each key district leader as follows:

   - Key 3—district chair, district commissioner, district executive (every two to four weeks)
   - Membership (monthly and more frequently during special programs)
   - Program
   - Training (monthly)
   - Camp promotion and outdoor (monthly)
   - Activities and civic service (monthly)
   - Advancement and recognition (monthly)
   - Finance (monthly and more frequently during FOS time)
   - District commissioner (monthly)
7. District volunteers and professional staff are committed to the idea of volunteerism wherein the volunteer is deeply involved in planning and executing the program and the professional staff provides all forms of support and inspiration. 

8. District meetings are held on a regular monthly basis as follows:
   a. District committee meets regularly
   - Coordinated committee meeting plan, or
   - Neighborhood plan of operation—optional—or
   - Committee-of-the-whole plan of operation—optional
   b. Roundtable meetings—Cub Scout leaders
   - Boy Scout leaders
   - Varsity Scout leaders
   - Venturing leaders
   c. Commissioner staff meetings are held monthly (and at a time separate from other meetings of the district)

9. The district chair regularly attends executive board meetings to represent and report for the district and maintain communications with the council.

10. The district professional staff member(s) has carefully developed work schedules (reviewed with staff adviser) for meetings, training experiences, and activities.

11. The district has a recognition program for unit leaders and other volunteers—district recognition dinners and other recognition events. Explain_____________

12. At least 80 percent of the district executive’s time is available for direct service to the district.

13. There is an orientation program for new district volunteers and members, which includes:
   a. An orientation meeting
   b. Appropriate literature and visual aids
   c. District/council training opportunities
   d. Personal coaching by volunteer leader or professional staff

14. District objectives are developed through collaboration of and agreement by volunteer and professional leadership.

15. It is understood that district objectives may be reevaluated if staff changes or unusual and unexpected conditions develop.

16. The district follows the Council and District Plan Book in its annual planning.

17. There is a harmonious working relationship of the district professional staff and volunteers.

18. The district executive keeps and uses a complete, updated District Fieldbook (Fieldbook for Professionals).

19. The professional and key volunteers review the standards for the District Journey to Excellence each month.
VOLUNTEER RESOURCES

1. The district nominating committee is composed of persons who have the proven capacity, especially board members residing in the district, to persuade top community leaders to serve in Scouting. Yes ______ No ______

2. The nominating committee is active on a year-round basis. Yes ______ No ______

3. The performance of district volunteers is reviewed at least once a year and they are given an opportunity to change their responsibilities by mutual agreement. Yes ______ No ______

4. A perpetual inventory of volunteer prospects is maintained indicating name, business position, Scouting background, leadership strengths, hobbies and other interests, and associates. Yes ______ No ______

5. There is a plan to contact volunteer prospects as needed and invite them to accept specific positions in the district organization. Yes ______ No ______

6. The district executive is an active member of a service club or other community group and/or appears before such organizations in the district at least once each year. Yes ______ No ______

7. Operating committee chair feel responsible for recruiting their committee members and are capable of doing it.
   Number of committee chairs: ______________________________________
   Number qualified: _______________________________________________
   Yes ______ No ______
   Yes ______ No ______
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district executive’s signature

district commissioner’s signature
district chair’s signature
council name
date completed
district name
headquarters city
Resources in Support of Successful District Operations Evaluation:

A Handbook for District Operations, No. 34739
A Self-Evaluation Guide for Successful District Operation, No. 34207
Commissioner Fieldbook for Unit Service, No. 33621
Commissioner Service and District Operations Support, No. AV-06DVD08
Council and District Plan Book, No. 33032
District Committee Training Workshop, No. 34160
District Nominating Committee Worksheet, No. 14-33157
Neighborhood/Small Community Plan of District Operations, No. 14-402
Rural/Low-income Urban Venturing Action Ideas, No. 33628
Selecting District People, No. 34512
Training the Chartering Organization Representative, No. 4-113
The Chartered Organization Representative, No. 33118
Administration of Commissioner Service, No. 34501