



## Patriots' Path Council Webelos to Scouts BSA Transition Plan

### Why an emphasis on Webelos to Scout Transition?

The passage from Cub Scout pack to Scouts BSA troop should be smooth, with no time lost in between. By the time Arrow of Light den Scouts are ready to cross over, they and their families should be familiar and comfortable with the youth and adult leaders of the troop, their role in the troop activities and feel excited about beginning this new adventure. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade Scout's graduation ceremony should clearly signify his or her transition to a new level of Scouting and could include the presentation of the Arrow of Light Award, a Scout Handbook and a troop neckerchief and/or shoulder tabs.

The key factor to improved Webelos transition is the ongoing working relationship of the leaders of the Cub Scout pack(s) and the Scout troop(s). Ideally, a community organization would have both a pack and a troop with leaders who work together to help move Arrow of Light den Scouts into a Scouts BSA troop the same way schools move students from elementary school to middle school. A smooth and maximized transition requires cooperation between a variety of stakeholders. These responsibilities are laid out below.

### Webelos Scouts and Families:

- Work with Webelos den leaders and attend events with the troop.
- Attend council and district Webelos-specific events.
- Ask many questions and obtain a comfort level with the troop, its adult and youth leaders, and the annual troop calendar of activities.
- Assist the Arrow of Light den Scout in successfully transitioning to the Scouts BSA troop.

### Packs:

- Develop a working relationship with the leadership of a Scouts BSA troop or troops in the community. Most troops should have either an assistant scoutmaster or a committee member assigned to new Scouts. (Unit commissioners can help facilitate contact with troop leaders).
- Compare calendars of troop and pack activities to coordinate the activities. Community events can be done together, and planning can help prevent conflicts in the use of equipment and facilities.
- Work with troop leaders to secure den chiefs for Arrow of Light, Webelos, and Cub Scout dens (see the Patriots' Path Council Den Chief Plan).
- Work with troop leaders to plan and conduct Webelos overnight activities.
- Work with troop leaders to plan visits to troop meetings.
- Invite the scoutmaster and troop youth leaders to special pack activities and/or meetings with specific dens. This will help create familiarity and a level of comfort for the Webelos Scouts and their parents as they ease into the troop.
- Plan a meaningful transition ceremony at the pack's Blue and Gold banquet (or shortly thereafter). Have troop leadership be present to accept the Arrow of Light den Scouts as they graduate to Scouts BSA (the local Order of the Arrow lodge can also often be a valuable resource in conducting ceremonies).
- Arrow of Light den leaders should be strongly encouraged to move into the troop with the boys, either as assistant scoutmasters or troop committee members. This will give the new Scouts a familiar face at troop meetings and a connecting link to Scouts BSA.
- If a troop does not exist in your community, discuss with the head of the pack's chartered organization the possibility of organizing a troop. A graduating Arrow of Light den can form the nucleus of a new troop.



**Troops:**

- Select Scouts to serve as den chiefs for Arrow of Light, Webelos, and Cub Scout dens (see the Patriots' Path Council Den Chief Plan).
- Serve as a resource for overnight activities. The troop can be of service to provide equipment, leadership, and logistics for Webelos parent-Scout campouts.
- Conduct an orientation in the Bear Cub Scout dens to explain the changing role as boys become Webelos Scouts, and then again as they become Scouts. Explain how being a Webelos Scout will help prepare them for Scouts BSA.
- Webelos den/Scouts BSA troop campouts should show Webelos Scouts and their parents what to expect when they move into the troop. The troop should cook and camp by patrol, and use skills in which the Webelos Scouts can participate.
- Arrange for Arrow of Light and Webelos dens to visit a troop meeting. This should be planned several weeks in advance.
- Provide each Arrow of Light den Scout a copy of the troop's activities for the upcoming year.
- Work with Arrow of Light den leaders to encourage them to plan to move into the troop with their Scouts and to serve either as committee members or assistant Scoutmasters.
- Conduct a transition conference under the guidance of the scoutmaster or the assistant designated by the scoutmaster. Minimally this conference should cover the meaning of the Scout Oath and Scout Law, the advancement program, troop camping, the patrol method, summer camp, personal equipment, and the annual troop calendar of activities.
- Work with the Cubmaster in planning a meaningful transition ceremony at the pack's Blue and Gold banquet (or shortly thereafter). Coordinate the ceremony and arrange for each Arrow of Light den Scout to receive a troop neckerchief, shoulder tabs, and *Scout Handbook* along with his Arrow of Light Award. Members of the Order of the Arrow may assist in the ceremony.

**Unit Commissioners:**

- Be a catalyst in developing good relationships between troop and pack leaders.
- Promote communication by scheduling a meeting of key volunteers.
- Help plan an Arrow of Light and Webelos den(s) visit to a troop meeting and other joint activities.
- Keep the pack and troop on schedule as plans develop for the transition ceremony at the Blue and Gold banquet or shortly thereafter.
- Attend the transition ceremony.
- Be sure new Scouts have completed a new or transfer youth application, that they have a copy of the troop's activities, and that they know when and where the troop meets.
- Work with the district membership chair/committee to follow up on Scouts who have not yet joined a troop. Make sure they are invited to join a troop.
- Be sure Arrow of Light den Scouts join a troop in time to prepare for Scouts BSA summer camp.

**District Membership Chair/Committee:**

- Coach scoutmasters, cubmasters, and Arrow of Light den leaders in the transition process at roundtables, training courses, and through personal contact.
- Run fall cub/family camporee/cubelos and arrange with packs to have Arrow of Light dens function as a patrol (where possible).



- Track and maintain records of Arrow of Light den Scouts graduation by using a wall chart that lists the transition record of each pack.
- Work with unit commissioners to follow up on Arrow of Light den Scouts who have not joined a troop.
- Work toward 100 percent Webelos transition.
- Offer den chief training (See the PPC Den Chief Plan).

**Council:**

- Maintain and update Patriots' Path Council Webelos to Scouts BSA Transition Plan.
- Offer den chief training (See the PPC Den Chief Plan).
- Coordinate and offer Webelos Woods and/or winter/outdoor activity for all Webelos.

**A Sample Monthly Plan**

**June:**

- Troop arranges to have a direct contact adult leader attend pack committee meetings (year-round).
- Troop gets names and contact information of new Arrow of Light den from packs.
- Troop plans a joint Scouts BSA troop/Arrow of Light den camping trip for the fall.
- Troop develops annual program plan to present at Arrow of Light den meeting visit in September.
- Troop selects den chief for each Webelos and Arrow of Light dens after troop elections.
- Council and districts hold den chief training courses (see PPC Den Chief Plan).

**July/August:**

- Troop mails or e-mails a letter of introduction to Arrow of Light den Scouts
- Troop puts Arrow of Light den Scouts on the mailing list to receive the troop newsletter
- Troop continues planning the joint camping trip for October
- Council and districts hold den chief training courses (see PPC Den Chief Plan)

**September/October:**

- Troop adult and youth leaders attend Arrow of Light den meeting to discuss how the troop works, orient parents, briefly discuss summer camp, and use calendar and council literature.
- Troop considers inviting Arrow of Light den to troop's Fall Court of Honor.
- Districts and packs have Arrow of Light den function as a patrol at fall cub/family camporee/cubelos (where possible).
- Troop adult and youth leaders attend a meeting of Webelos Scouts to introduce them to Scouts BSA Troop, sets date for Arrow of Light den families to visit troop meeting in December or January.
- Council and districts hold den chief training courses (see PPC Den Chief Plan)

**October/November:**

- Troop sets date for Arrow of Light den families to visit troop meeting in December or January.
- Council holds Webelos Woods event.
- Troop conducts the joint camping trip with the Arrow of Light den.
- Troop sends a formal, written greeting letting Arrow of Light den Scouts know you look forward to them joining the troop & reminder about coming to upcoming troop meeting.

**November/December/January:**

- Troop hosts Arrow of Light den families at a ScoutsBSA troop meeting.
- Troop offers to run the December pack meetings with youth leaders.



- Troop and pack plan a bridging ceremony for the Blue and Gold banquets in February to welcome graduating Arrow of Light den Scouts to their new troop. Ensure that youth leaders and Scouts are the prominent part of the ceremony.
- Council runs winter/outdoor activity for all Webelos.
- Troop plans an activity for new Scouts to get them quickly involved after crossover.

**February:**

- Troop and pack hold the bridging ceremony at the Blue and Gold banquet. (Note: Some troops and packs elect to do the bridging one month later).
- Troop completes transition paperwork to move Scouts from packs onto troop roster.

**March:**

- Troop adult and youth leaders attend a second meeting for first year Webelos Scouts to introduce them to Scouts BSA (see September/October above)
- Troop gets new Scouts actively involved with the troop through troop activities
- Troop recruits parents of new Scouts to become assistant scoutmasters or troop committee members. Begin to get them trained.
- Troop conducts summer camp orientation to encourage troop involvement.

**April:**

- Troop adult and youth leaders attend a meeting of Bear Cub Scouts to introduce them to Scouts BSA.
- Troop sponsors activities for new Scouts. Focus on skills and rank advancement.

**April – July:**

- Troop works closely with new Scouts and parents during their transition to the Scouts BSA troop, ensuring their needs are met and that their move has been natural and fun.
- Troop works on rank advancement with new Scouts. Attain Scout badge, then work on Tenderfoot.
- Troop works to ensure that all new Scouts attend summer camp

**Sample Arrow of Light and Webelos to Scouts Transition Ceremonies**

<http://www.boyscouttrail.com/ceremonies.asp>

<http://usscouts.org/Ceremony.asp>

<http://www.oocities.org/~pack215/ceremonies.html>

... and so many more!!

**Other Resources:**

<https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/improved-webelos-transition/troop/>

<https://www.scouting.org/programs/boy-scouts/year-round-guide/graduate/>

<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/BoyScouts/ImprovedWebelosTransition.aspx>