EAGLE SCOUT ADVANCENMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

BSA Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, 1999;
The Boy Scout Handbook, 1998;
The Scoutmaster Handbook, BSA, 1998.

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

A. The purpose of this manual is to provide policy and guidance regarding the advancement program of the Boy Scouts of America to the districts and local units of the Central New Jersey Council. Policies and Procedures in this manual are subject to review and amendment at any time as necessary by the Central New Jersey Council Advancement Committee. These policies and procedures must be administered under the spirit and intent as set forth in the current official publications of the Boy Scouts of America.

B. Education and fun are functions of the Scouting movement, and they must be the basis of the advancement program. A fundamental principle of advancement in Cub Scouting and Boy Scouting is the growth a young person achieves as a result of his participation in his unit program. The rank requirements in both of these phases of the Scouting program, as set forth in the official publications, shall furnish the basis of the activities of the unit.

C. Advancement is the process by which youth members of the Boy Scouts of America progress from rank to rank in the Scouting program. Advancement is simply a means to an end, not an end in itself . Everything done to advance and earn these ranks, from joining until leaving the program, should be designed to help the young person have an exciting and meaningful experience. In Scouting,. recognition is gained through leadership in the unit; attending and participating in the activities; living the ideals of Scouting; and developing a proficiency in outdoor life and other useful skills.

D. Advancement is one of the methods used to achieve the aims of Scouting, which are: character building, citizenship training, and physical and mental fitness. Cub Scout advancement is based on the programs in the den and pack, and consists of preparation, qualification, and recognition. Rank requirements are the basis for Boy Scout advancement. There are four steps in Boy Scout advancement procedures: learning, testing, reviewing, and recognition.

E. Advancement encourages the Scouting spirit. Scouting teaches a young person how to care for himself and help others. Advancement should reflect the desire to live the Cub Scout, Boy Scout, or Venturing Oath in his daily life.

II. GENERAL POLICY

A. The Central New Jersey Council Advancement Committee' s purpose is to implement throughout the council the national advancement policies and procedures by training, promoting advancement,, and supervising those involved in the advancement process. The council advancement committee is a supervisory group, made up of the various district chairs and members at large, that guide the district advancement committees in their work with each unit. The council advancement committee will establish procedures within the framework of national policy.

B. The advancement procedures of the Central New Jersey Council comply with the policies and procedures published in the current edition of the Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, Boy Scouts of America.

C. Standards for all advancement are the requirements listed in the Cub Scout, Boy Scout, or Venturing handbooks, or special change-of-requirement notices as published by the Boy Scouts of America.

D. Advancement standards must be fair and uniform. No council, district, unit, or individual has the authority to add or subtract from any advancement requirement as published by the Boy Scouts of America.

E. All applications for advancement (including Eagle Scout) must be submi- to the Central New Jersey Council Service Center on a properly completed Unit Advancemcn Report. No certificates or awards will be issued without the proper and timely submission of the report

F. Each unit of the Central New Jersey Council shall designate an Advancement Chairman. Troops and Posts should also designate an Eagle Advancement Chairman from the unit registered adult leadership. The same person may perform both duties. Report the name,

address, and.phone number of the designated members to the appropriate District Advancement Committee Chairman.

G. All tenure requirements for Boy Scout advancement shall begin on the date of the successful Board of Review of the previous advancement.

H. The Central New Jersey Council Advancement Committee supports the National Standard for Advancement as outlined under the National Quality Unit Award. At least fifty percent of each unit should have achieved one advancement. level during the preceding unit charter year.

III. EAGLE SCOUT ADVANCEMENT POLICIES

A. All Eagle Scout rank advancement requirements must be completed prior to the Scout's eighteenth (18th) birthday. Youth members with special needs may work toward advancement after they are 18 years of age, under the following conditions: prior to the Scout, s 18th birthday, chartered organizations determine, with appropriate medical authorities-, whether a. youth member is qualified to register beyond the normal age, based on the definitions and guidelines contained in the "Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures, BSA" manual The Central New Jersey Council Advancement Committee must approve these registrations in advance, on an individual basis. Procedures for approving alternate advancement requirements for special needs Scouts are also contained in that manual. Contact your district advancement committee for guidance.

B. Scouts who have completed all requirements for the Eagle Scout rank award prior to their 18th birthday may be reviewed and recognized within three (3) months after that date. For Boards of Review conducted between three and six months after the candidate's 18th birthday, a special statement explaining the reason for the delay must be attached to the application. Contact the Central New Jersey Council Service Center for further information.

IV EAGLE SCOUT SERVICE PROJECT

A. The Eagle Scout Service Project Work (No. 18-927a) must be used to meet the requirements of this section. Copies of the workbook are available from the Council Service Center, and on the Internet at the National BSA web site, at [http://www.bsascouting.org]. Copies of the workbook may be downloaded in PDF (portable document format) and printed using Adobe Acrobat Reader software (also available free on the Intemet.). You also may download the workbook in RTF (rich text format) and use your favorite word processor software to complete

the required information in the form directly on your computer. If a preprinted or PDF format workbook is used, additional pages should be attached as necessary to completely describe the projects with the phrase "see attached pages" entered into the appropriate spaces in the workbook. All required signatures must be recorded on the workbook.

B. For an Eagle Scout Service Project, an Eagle candidate, while a Life Scout, must plan develop, and give leadership to others in a service project benefiting any religious institution, school, or. community. The project must also conform to the wishes and regulations of those for whom the project is untaken. Original and creative project ideas are encouraged.

C. The Eagle Scout Service Project provides the opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate the leadership skills he has learned in Scouting. He must do the project outside the sphere of Scouting. As a demonstration of leadership, the candidate must **PLAN** the work, **ORGANIZE** the personnel needed, and **DIRECT** the project to satisfactory completion.

D. Service to others is a key principle. Projects that serve or benefit people in need are encouraged. Work involving BSA properties or activities is not acceptable for an Eagle Scout Service Project. The project must not be performed for a business, or be of a commercial nature. The project itself may not be primarily a fund-raiser. Fund-raising is permitted only for securing material or supplies needed to carry out the proposed project. However, there are no regulations restricting the funding of a project. Routine labor, or a job or service normally rendered, will not be approved.

E. There is no minimum number of hours that must be spent on an Eagle Project. The amount of time must be sufficient enough for the candidate to clearly demonstrate leadership skills. Total time involvement should be considerable, and should represent the candidate's best effort.

F. Eagle Project proposals must be typewritten (or printed) using the Eagle Scout Service Project Wookbook, and must include the following information:

1. A complete, detailed, step-by-step description of how the project will be conducted, including safety procedures.
2. A statement describing which group will benefit from the project and how that benefit will occur.
3. The name, title, and signature of the contact person form the project beneficiary organization or group.
4. How many, people will work on each phase of the. project.
5. A detailed estimate of the total man-hours it will take to complete the project.
6. Cost of project (materials list and cost), including the sources of funds or materials.

7. A letter from the beneficiary organization (on their letterhead stationery if available). approving the proposed project.

G. Eagle Scout Service Project proposals must be reviewed and approved by the District Advancement Committee before project work is started to make sure that they meet the required standards for Eagle Scout Service Projects. The approval of the project proposal does not mean that the Eagle Scout Board of Review will approve the way the project was conducted and completed. Projects will not be approved when project work (other than planning) is accomplished prior to District approval.

1. Each District Advancement Committee will establish a primary and alternate contact person to be responsible for receiving and initial processing of Eagle Scout Service Project proposals. This information will be widely available among District Scouters, and at the Council Service Center.
2. District Advancement Committees may review each service project, proposal in the entire committee, or by one to three members. A specific committee member should be designated for each Scout's proposal, to communicate directly with the particular Eagle Scout candidate regarding proposal change. and approval. Thereis no requirement that the same person in a district advancement committee approve all proposals. There is significant benefit to be gained by involving more than one person in the review / approval process, in order to gain multiple perspectives regarding the value of the project. In addition, having more than one or two district committee members qualified to review and approve project proposals will add flexibility, and provide a greater number of district advisors for Eagle Scout candidates.
3. Districts should consider having the same member who approved the service project proposal serve on the candidate's Eagle Scout Board of Review whenever possible, for reasons of continuity.
4. Each District Advancement Committee will make every effort to return Eagle Scout Service Project Proposals to candidates within 10 to 14 calendar days of receipt (maximum 21 days.) When retained, each proposal will be approved and signed, or the candidate will be provided with specific written guidance with regard to changes necessary for approval. Additional follow-up on revisions will be dependent on Scout actions, with the district representative.taking no more than 7 calendar days for each subsequent review.

5. No proposal approvals may be granted verbally under any circumstance. All Eagle Scout Service Project Proposals must use the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook (No. 18-927a), including any additional sheets necessary to thoroughly describe the intended project. All approvals must be signed on page 6 of the workbook Scouts may not begin actual project work until all required written approvals have been obtained.

H. Eagle candidates must comply with the following project approval process:

1. Discuss, plan, and write a project proposal with the guidance of the unit Eagle Scout Advisor.
2. Discuss the written plan with the beneficiary group contact person. Have this person sign the project workbook and provide a letter approving the proposal on behalf of the sponsoring organization.
3. Discuss the written plan with the unit leader. Have the unit leader approve the proposal and sign the workbook.
4. Discuss the written plan with the Unit Committee. Have the Unit Committee representative approve and sign the proposal. (Tbe unit Eagle Scout Advisor may act on behalf of the unit committee.)
5. Contact the appropriate District Advancement Committee. Make arrangements for a review of the proposal for final approval. Allow sufficient time for district approval (with possible revisions) before planning for project wook to begin. Eagle Scout Service Projects are the sole responsibility of Eagle Scout candidates. Therefore, candidates must communicate directly with the District Advancement Committee regarding their project proposals. Parents and Scouters may play a supporting role only. Direct communication on project proposal changes and approvals should only occur between the Eagle Scout candidate and the District Advancement Committee representative.
6. Actual work on the project may not begin until after the project workbook has signed by the District Advancement Committee and returned to the Scout.
7. Should the candidate think that approval has been unfairly withheld, or requirements arbitarily added, he may appeal directly to the District Advancement committee, and subsequently to the Council Advancement committee.

I. Completion of the Eagle Scout Service Project:

1. A major portion of the project should be performed by Scouts (Cubs, Scouts, Venture, Varsity, or Explorer) if possible.
2. Adults, family, friends,, and others may also be involved in the project work.

3. The Eagle Scout candidate must clearly demonstrate leadership during the project work sessions.
4. Any significant changes in the planned scope of the project must be approved in writing by the District Advancement Committee representative.
5. All candidates should keep a day-to-day logbook with the dates, names, work, performed, and total hours expended by each person involved on the project. The time to be included should begin with the first planning session and end with the completion of the project report.
6. The Eagle candidate must direct the project to a successful completion in an orderly and responsible manner. He must demonstrate his BEST EFFORT in the completion of the Eagle Project.

V. EAGLE SCOUT SERVICE PROJECT REPORT

A. A detailed final report (in narrative form) shall be prepared to describe the entire Eagle Scout Service Project. The report should be typed or neatly printed. Typing or computer word processing is recommended. (NOTE: Grammar, spelling, and neatness are an integral part of the overall impression of an Eagle candidate's best effort.)

B. The report should include:
1. A complete detailed description of the project and the manner in which it was completed.
2. A description of how the project was of benefit to others.
3. A detailed statement as to the people who worked on project, and the man hours necessary to complete the project.
4. A statement as to who provided the candidate with guidance during the project.
5. A detailed list of materials that were used in the project, their costs, and how they were acquired.
6. A description of how planning, development, and leadership were. demonstrated by the candidate.
7. A summary of lessons learned by the Eagle candidate, including any modifications to the plan necessary to bring the project to completion.
8. The report should include all supplementary materials related to the project, such as: before and after photographs, diagrams, maps, equipment lists and work schedules as necessary to provide a clear picture of the work done.
9. A. letter of completion (on letterhead stationery if available) must be included from the beneficiary group contact person, confirming the satisfactory completionof the project, and the value of the project to the group or organization.

VI. EAGLE SCOUT RANK APPLICATION

A. The Eagle Scout Application must be completed by the Eagle Scout prior to the candidate's 18th birthday and prior to the Eagle Scout Board of Review. All applications must be submitted to the Council Service Center for verification no later than two business days after the candidate's 18th birthday. The application may be submitted to the Central New Jersey Council Service Center for verification of advancement records as soon as all required merit badges and the Life Board of Review have been reported to the council on the unit advancement report. Early verification by the Council Service Center is desirable in order to resolve any discrepancies in council records well in advance of the candidate's 18th birthday. The Council Service Center staff will confirm:

1. The applicant is a registered member of his unit.
2. All listed ranks and merit badges have been recorded in the unit file at the council office, and the dates indicated on the application are correct.
3. At least four months between First Class and Star rank board of review dates.
4. At least six months between Star and Life rank board of review dates.
5. 21 merit badges earned, day-month-year listed, 12 required, 9 optional
6. Four "Eagle required" merit badges earned before the Star rank award (6 total).
7. Three more "Eagle required" merit badges earned before the Life rank award (7 required, 11 total).

B. The candidate should type (or print) all required information on the application form. Remember that this is the only document forwarded to the National Advancement Committee of the Boy Scouts of America. Typing is strongly recommended.

C. Enter the exact dates for all rank advancements and merit badge completions on the application. If more than 21 merit badges have been earned, be sure to enter those that were earned for the Star and Life ranks. Save any excess badges for Eagle Palms. These merit badge dates will be confirmed by the Council Service Center. Draw a line through the non-applicable merit badges for numbers six and nine. If these badges have been earned, they may be entered as optional badges. Submit the completed application to the council service center, and allow sufficient time (7-14 days) for record confirmation prior to the Eagle Scout Board of- Review. The Council Service Center staff will make every effort to complete the verification process for Eagle Scout Rank Applications within seven calendar days (maximum 14 days.) Eagle Scout candidates aree directly responsible for delivering Eagle Scout Rank Applications to / from the service center, not Scouters or parents. U. S. Mail may be used, but allow for extra transit time. The council staff will sign the reverse side of the application to certifiy that all dates of merit badges and rank are correct.

D. Provide the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of at least. five personal references in the spaces indicated. Ask each reference listed to write a personal recommendation on the candidate's behalf, providing evidence that the candidate lives by the principles of the Scout Oath and Law in his daily life. Letters of reference from the parents or guardians, religious advisor, educational advisor, and two others are mandatory. A letter from the employer is necessary if the Scout is employed. All letters should be mailed dirrectly to the Scout's Eagle Advancement Advisor or Unit Committee Chairperson. The Scout should not have any contact with these letters. (Note: Only request letters from people. who are readily available, in case follow-up questions are necessary.) Eagle Scout Boards of Review will not be conducted until all of these letters are received and verified if necessary by district or council representatives. A form is available at Appendix A that Scouts may use to request these letters.

E. List the last positions of responsibility held in the unit, listing only those held after the Lffe Scout Board of Review. The combined tenure in these positions must be at least six months.

F. Eagle Scout Rank Application requirement #6 is a three-part requirement.

1. The candidate should prepare a statement of his ambitions and life purpose. The statement should be sufficient so as to allow the Board of Review the Board of Review opportunity to assess the candidate's approach to his life and future.
2. The candidate should also prepare a listing of positions of responsibility held in his religious institution, school, community, camp, or other organizations during which he demonstrated leadership skills. The list should include honors, awards, and recognition received during this service.
3. Finally, the candidate must take part in a Scoutmaster conference with his unit leader prior to the candidate's 18th birthday. The unit leader will review all of the completed Eagle requirements and documents at that time, including the Project Final Report, and recommend approval to the Unit Committee.

G. The Unit Committee Chairperson must sign the application, indicating to the Eagle Scout Board of Review that the Scout has successfully completed all requirements for the Eagle Award prior to the candidate's 18th birthday.

H. The members of the Eagle Scout Board of Review will sign the application upon successful completion of the review.

VII. EAGLE SCOUT BOARD OF REVIEW

A. Procedures for the Eagle Board of Review:

1. The Eagle Scout Board of Review will be conducted by the Unit Committee.
2. The Eagle Scout Board will have a minimum of 3 members and a maximum of 6 members.
3. Board members are not required to be registered in Scouting, but they must clearly understand the importance and purpose of the Eagle Board of Review.
4. All Eagle Scout Boards of Review will be composed of two district/council (minimum one) and four troop committee representatives (minimum two). District or council advancement representatives may serve as the chairperson if so requested by the umt.
5. All Eagle Scout Boards of Review will be held at a location that is mutually convenient for the Scout, the troop, and the district representatives. District representives will make every reasonable effort to accommodate troop requests for location and timing, based on District Advancement Committee member availability.
6. Eagle Scout Boards of Review should be scheduled as needed by Scouts and troops, within two weeks of the initial request to the district advancement point of contact, if possible (maximum four weeks). Districts may conduct a regularly scheduled monthly date for Eagle Scout reviews if they meet the above requirements.
7. Only unit Eagle advancement advisors should contact the district advancement point of contact for scheduling an Eagle Scout Board of Review, only after all other portions of the Eagle Scout Advancement Requirements have been completed by the candidate. District Advancement Committee representatives should not discuss Eagle Scout Board of Review scheduling requirements with the Scout directly.
8. Troop representatives will forward a photo-copy of all documents associated with the candidate's application (including letters of recommendation) to the designated district advancement representative at least seven calendar days prior to the scheduled date of the board of review. Reviews may not proceed until this requirement is met. (Note: Do not mail original documents. Do not make additional copies of letters of recommendation. The unit should preserve all original documents for the Board of Review.)
9. The Central New Jersey Council Advancement Committee requires candidates to request a letter of recommendation from each person listed on the front of the Eagle Scout Rank Application, in Requirement #2. These letter's should be on

letterhead stationery if appropriate. They should not be handled directly by the Scout. Instead, they should be mailed in a Scout-provided, addressed and stamped envelope to the unit Eagle Advancement Advisor or unit Committee Chairperson. The contents of these letters of recommendation are confidential and their contents are not to be disclosed to any person who is not a member of the Board of Review.

10. District representatives are responsible for verifying the authenticity of any letter that appears questionable, prior to the Eagle Scout Board of Review.
11. The board should convene at least 30 minutes before the candidate appears to review the application, references, project proposal, project report, and all original paperwork and signatures.
12. The candidate's parents, guardian, and/or unit leader may make a statement or ask questions of the board of review (prior to the Scout Interview) if they desire. This totally voluntary policy is intended to allow parents to be a part of the process and to answer any questions they may have. However, the Eagle Scout candidate is the only person required to appear before the board of review. Whether or not the parents choose to appear will have no bearing on the ultimate success or failure of the candidate.
13. The candidate's unit leader may remain in the room, but may not participate in the review. The leader may be called upon to clarify a point in question. In no case may any relative or guardian of the candidate attend the review, even as a unit leader.
14. The interview portion of the Eagle Scout Board of Review should a minimum of 30 minutes, with more time taken as necessary to clarify any points of conflict, so as to provide the greatest possible opportunity for the Scout to advance.

B. Objectives of the Eagle Scout Board of Review:

1. The review is not an examination to test the Scout; rather, the Board should attempt to determine the Scout's attitude and his acceptance of Scouting's ideals.
2. Discuss the Scout Oath and Law to make sure the Scout recognizes and understands. the value of Scouting in his home, unit, school, and. community. The Board should confirm that the morals. and ethics described by the Boy Scout Oath and Law exist in all phases of the Scouts life.
3. A thorough discussion of the Scout's success and experiences in Scouting should be considered.

4. Review and provide final approval of the Eagle Scout Service Project. The Eagle Scout Board of Review must determine that the project was completed in an appropriate manner. Questions that must be addressed include:
   a. Did the candidate demonstrate leadership to others?
   b. Did he indeed direct the project rather than do all the work himself.
   c. Was the project of real value to a religious institution, school or community group?
   d. Did the project follow the approved plan, or were modifications needed to bring it to completion?
5. Discuss the Scout's demonstrated leadership: (a) in his Eagle Scout Service Project, (b) within the Scout's unit, and (c) outside of Scouting. Use the list of leadership positions, honors, and awards from application requirement #6, and the unit leadership positions listed in application requirement #4, as a basis for this discussion.
6. Discuss the Scout's statement of his ambitions and life purpose from application requirement #6. Determme his fature goals and whether his plans include a involvement in Scouting. Encourage continued involvement in Scouting.

C. Decision of the Eagle Scout Board of Review:
1. The Board must deliberate in private. The candidate and unit leader must leave the room prior to the deliberation. The Board may ask the unit leader to stay for a brief discussion after the candidate leaves the room.
2. A unanimous decision is required for approval during all Boards of Review.
3. All discussions about the candidate during the deliberation are confidential and based on the principle of non-attribution. Their contents may not be released to the candidate.

D. Conclusion of the Eagle Scout Board of Review:
1. If approved:
   a. After the unanimous approval decision is reached, the Board members will sign the Eagle Scout Rank Application and Boy Scout Handbook, invite the candidate back in the room and formally announce the results to him. Parents, guardians, and unit leaders should be invited in for the announcement.
   b. The District Advancement representative should explain the Process of paperwork through the Central New Jeney Council and the National BSA Council for "Official" confirmation of the Eagle Award. The Scout's unit must forward all of the *original documents* reviewed by the Board to the council service center for certification by the Scout Executive. A properly

completed unit advancement report must accompany the successful EagLe Scout application package.

c. Unit Leaders of successful candidate's are, encouraged to enroll their new Eagle Scout in the National Eagle Scout Association for an inital 5-year membership. This membership can be a gift from the Scout's unit or leaders.

d. The Eagle Scout Presentation Kit may not be purchased, or the Eagle Scout Court of Honor may not be scheduled until the approved Eagle Scout credentials are received at the Central New Jersey Council Service Center from the National Eagle Scout Service. The Council office staff will notify the unit leader when confirmation is received.

2. If disapproved:

a. The Board Chairperson must tell the candidate the reasons for his failure to qualify, exactly what must be done to meet the requirements, and a specific time period within which to meet those requirements. The appeal process as described iia the BSA Advancement Guidelines. Council and District Functions must be explained to the Scout.

b. A follow-up letter must be sent to the Scout confirming the agreements reached on the actions necessary for advancement, with copies to the Council Advancement Committee Chairman and the Council Scout Executive.

c. The applicant, the unit leader, or the unit committee may request a new review.

d. Appeal of Eagle Scout Board of Review decisions must go to the District Advancement Committee, the Council Advancement Committee, and the National Advancement Committee, IN TURN. Refer to the special rules for appeals in National BSA "Advancement Committee Policies and Procedures".

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION GUIDELINES

Life Scout _____ has indicated that you are willing to attest to his character, morals, and personal code of conduct in a letter of recommendation for attaining the Eagle Scout Award, Scouting's highest honor.

Below you will find the Scout Oath or Promise and the Scout Law. Please review these and indicat- in your letter your personal opinion as to his lifestyle in following the Scout Oath or Promise and the Scout Law in his daily life.

THE SCOUT OATH OR PROMISE

On my honor I will do my best
to do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight

THE SCOUT LAW

A Scout is:
Trustworthy, Loyal,
Helpful, Friendly,
Courteous, Kind,
Obedient, Cheerful,
Thrifty, Brave,
Clean, and Reverent

Some points you may wish to consider in your letter are:
The Scout's fidelity to the three major points of the Scout Oath or Promise:

a. Duty to God and Country
b. Helping others at all times
C. Duty to self

Please mail your completed letter, at-your earliest convenience, to:

_____

_____

_____

(Troop Committee Chair, Scoutmaster, or Eagle Scout Advisor)

A stamped envelope has been provided for your convenience. The letter should not be returned directly to the Scout. Thank you for your cooperation and support in this matter of great importance to this young man and to the Scouting Program.