



Sunset Trail District

2013 Recruitment Plan & Strategy

District, Council, and National Perspective

Membership recruitment is critical to the success of our movement. The need for character development will never go away. Some may argue that it is needed now more than it was when our organization was founded over a century ago.

Nationally, our membership has been sliding downward since the 1970s. Today, our youth membership stands at roughly 3 million- down from nearly 5 million in 1973. While many factors affected this downward trend, all must agree that if we are going to change the lives of youth, we must reverse this trend.

Despite the long list of factors working against us in the new century, some founded, some myth, parts of the county are experiencing sharp membership growth. That means that there are things we can do to reverse this trend.

The Cascade Pacific Council has adopted an aggressive stance on membership recruitment, in order to reverse our own downward trend.

Like the disparity at the national level, our own council has some districts that are growing, and some that are losing members annually. For example, the Calapooia district based in Linn County, Oregon, was able to reverse a five-year

trend of membership loses, and grew by 20% between 2010 – 2012. Their Cub Scout program alone grew by 35% during that time frame.

In 2010, the Sunset Trail district grew by less than 1%. In 2011, we ended the year down 113 boys, and closed the year down 3% compared to the year prior.

We are excited to announce that in 2012, the district was able to grow by 4%. This would not be possible without the hard work of our district membership team, and unit leaders everywhere.

If we are to bring more youth into our program, we must change the way we approach recruitment. This plan will use strategies from other districts and councils that are experiencing growth.



Fall 2013 Cub Scout Recruitment Plan

Councils in the U.S. have experienced great success with a council-wide, standardized and highly coordinated, one-night join night. In 2012, our district experienced moderate to high-levels of success with this model. However, Cub Scout leaders reported the following problems:

- a. Due to the school district changing their school marketing policies for non-profits with short notice, our

- packs didn't have time to properly adjust their recruitment marketing strategies before their joining event.
- b. September 19th fell before a pack's home school's "back to school night," so some packs felt like they couldn't take advantage of this event before their pack held their join night.

In light of this feedback, the district is engineering our fall recruitment campaign in order to support a one-night join-night on **Wednesday, September 25, 2013**. By having each pack hold their join night on the same night, but at their unique location, it allows the district membership team to focus our efforts on supporting packs. We realize that not every pack will be able to hold their join night on the 25th, but the district team will work with those packs.

The district will be taking care of the following:

- Recruitment training for all packs (Dates to be announced May of 2013).
- Ensure that each pack has a helper from outside their pack that can take care of all registration paperwork on behalf of the pack. This will ensure that all paperwork is turned in as required, and will take the stress away from unit leaders worrying about how to get paperwork turned in.
- Printing, delivery, and usage approval of marketing materials in public and private schools.
- Securing each public school for September 25 (all requests to be made in April of 2013). The district will coordinate with packs during the summer, to ensure a location has been secured.

Packs will need to take care of the following:

- Recruit a leader or parent from your pack that will be the pack recruiter. This can be a year-long position, or one that is only in effect for this fall campaign.
- Packs will need to send their pack recruiter to the recruitment training.
- The pack recruiter will be responsible for ensuring the proper planning and execution of the pack's joining night.

Everyone has a part to play during this membership campaign. If we are going to recruit as many boys as possible into our programs, the council, district, and units all need to fulfill their role. The council and district will try hard to minimize the planning work that packs need to do.

Fall 2013 Recruitment Recognition- Free Pinewood Derby Cars

Like in previous years, the council will be recognizing those packs that grow. Packs that have 10% more members over what they had on December 31, 2012, shall receive free cars. The number of cars they shall receive will be the same number of youth renewed on their 2014 re-charter. In 2012, youth applications had to be turned in by October 15th in order to count towards your pack's goal. We will confirm the due date for 2013 at the fall membership training.

We know based on experience that very few boys actually join in November and December. The applications the council receives in November and December are months old. We want to expedite when we receive the applications from those youth that join in September and October.



2013 Spring Recruitment Plan

While a majority of our boys will join in the fall, it is also important to remember that boys join our program all year long. Some boys will finish up with seasonal sports, or other activities, looking for things to do.

The district also recognizes that organizing a full-blown recruitment function during the spring may be difficult, given tight schedules and other activities your pack is doing.

Our lowest hanging fruit in the late spring are kindergarteners. In the eyes of the BSA, those kindergarteners are eligible to join as Tigers on June 1. Packs should make it their goal to recruit a full Tiger Cub Den in the month of May. Due to fliering restrictions, packs cannot market through their elementary school until the middle of May, which means that the joining nights will need to be at the end of the month.

The district will be holding four kick-offs for our kindergarten recruitment on April 2, 3, 9, & 10. Each pack is assigned a kick-off day based on where your pack is located. Kick-offs will be as follows:

April 2, 7pm
Oak Hills Community Center
2400 NW 153rd, Beaverton
Packs: 467, 641, 848, 726, 718, 207, 137, 208, 769, & 889.

April 3, 7pm
Fire Station #65
3425 SW 103rd, Beaverton
Packs: 198, 122, 592, 595, & 444

April 9, 7pm
Tualatin Fire: N. Operations Center
20665 SW Blanton St, Aloha
Packs: 841, 598, 723, 819, & 136

April 10, 7pm
Conestoga Recreation Center Rm. 203
9985 SW 125th Ave, Beaverton
Packs: 767, 292, 383, 685, 605, 872, 673, & 353.



About School Marketing

Packs that recruit out of Beaverton School District public schools must follow the school district's guidelines when marketing at their school.

Each non-profit organization can only flier the schools up to three times in a given school year. The district will be using two of those allocated times- **once in September, and again in May**. Those two times align with fall and spring recruitment.

Per the school district's policies, packs may use their optional third month in either February or March. Fliers must be submitted to the district staff by the first Thursday of each month. We then have to wait until the school district approves those fliers before we can get them out. The flier request form is attached to this guide.

Please use the form and email Kelly McHargue your flier request. We will print the fliers for you if needed, or at the very least we will send you

the approval document you will need to distribute your marketing materials at your school.

Many of our packs have historically recruited from schools in their neighborhood that does not currently have a pack. Please read more about these “NON-Pack Schools” below. Know that the district is always trying to start new packs at these schools, so we may ask that packs stop advertising at a given school at any time.



About New Units, and “NON-Pack Schools”

The council and national membership losses are in some ways a direct result of packs that have died over the years.

Boy Scout Troops and Venture Crews get most of their boys from packs. That is why healthy growing packs should be our priority. Generally speaking, we lose half of all second year webelos in between Webelos and Boy Scouting. This means that in order to have a sustainable program for our troops, we need 2-3 packs for every one troop we have in the district. It’s also why the district will not start any new troops- except in unique or isolated situations.

The district and council’s focus will be on new pack creation.

Experience shows us that packs best serve the kids from their own school. Packs that have historically fed from two or even three or four elementary schools cannot best serve the needs of the families from neighboring schools.

The council’s goal has always been that every elementary school has its own pack.

First, for those packs that serve kids from schools with no packs, we will be asking them to change their internal organization, starting with their incoming new Cub Scouts in the fall. We want to always be ready to start new packs at non-pack schools. For this to happen, we must make it as easy as possible for families who are currently in another pack to join a new pack if it is created at their own school. **Packs should organize their dens by school.**

If a pack serves three schools, they should try and form a tiger den from each of those schools, and likewise at every grade level. When it is time to create a new pack, those dens simply move over to their home school.

Packs should recognize that as a movement, we want to affect the lives of as many boys as possible. We know that the best way is to have a pack at every school. We do not want to gut existing units in order to create new packs. We will target those units that are the healthiest, and those that will remain healthy after a new pack is created from part of their ranks.

Families will always be able to make a choice- and can choose to stay in their old pack, or join other families from their home school and join the new pack.

The district will only be able to start so many new units at a given time.

The following lists of schools are those that do not currently have their own pack. Some will be targeted in the short-term (ST), and others will be targeted in the long-term (LT) for new pack

creation. Schools with Hispanic Emphasis will focus on engaging Hispanic families at those schools.

St. Cecilia Catholic School (Fall 2013)
Skyline Elementary (Spring 2013)
Bonny Slope Elementary (Spring 2013)
McKay Elementary (Fall 2013)
Chehalem Elementary (LT)
Montclair Elementary (LT)
Aloha Huber Elementary (LT)
Elmonica Elementary (LT)
Vose Elementary (Hispanic Emphasis- ST)
Barnes Elementary (Hispanic Emphasis- LT)
William Walker Elem. (Hispanic Emp.- LT)

Pack and NON-Pack School pairing-

The district will always aim at having a pack at every school. However, we also know that new pack creation takes time, and sometimes starting a new pack at a school that has for a long time been associated with a neighboring pack can actually cause great harm to that neighboring pack. Proper conditioning and planning is essential.

We encourage packs to create dens by school, rather than trying to mix them all together. Especially important for our long-term new unit schools, these pairings are essential in order to ensure that boys who want to join have a place to go, and that when the time is right, new packs can be created.

Example: For a number of years, Pack 207 out of Cedar Mill Elementary has been employing this method. Their NON-Pack partner school is Bonny Slope Elementary. Families who join Pack 207 out of Bonny Slope were organized by den. Pack 207 has two dens for each grade level, one from Bonny Slope, and the other from Cedar

Mill. We have started to initiate new pack planning, and the new pack will hope to be created before the summer of 2013.

In order to execute this plan, the district will be supporting the following pairings:

Bonny Slope Elementary – Pack 207
McKay Elementary – District Staff
Chehalem Elementary – Pack 383
Montclair Elementary – Pack 595
Aloha Huber Elementary – Pack 723 & 819
Elmonica Elementary – Pack 723
Vose Elementary – Pack 605
Barnes Elementary – Pack 598
William Walker Elementary – Pack 122



Catholic Scouting

The district will be supporting our Catholic families, by attempting to strengthen our program within Catholic private schools. The goal shall be to have a Cub Scout pack at St. Pius, St. Cecilia, Valley Catholic, and Holy Trinity. Troop 136 should be the primary troop webelos join from all four of those packs.



Using Be-a-Scout.org

A few years ago, the Boston Minuteman Council observed a serious problem when a family tried to join Scouting. If a person wanted to join, they might use Google to search for their local council. A parent would then call the council and speak to the receptionist. That receptionist would

then transfer that parent to the relevant district executive. The district executive would then have to find out where that family lived, and then pass them along to unit leaders, where they would finally get connected.

Parents had to talk to three or four people, just to find out more about Scouting. This is of course assuming that every point of contact is available right when that parent calls, or returns their call in a reasonable amount of time.

The Boston Minuteman Council engineered a website that would detail where their nearest units were, and the direct contact information for those units. That process eliminated all of the hoops the parent historically had to go through, and they were immediately able to contact the unit leader directly. That council's success led to the development of the national beascout.org site.

In all of our marketing- beascout.org is advertised. When a parent selects "pack 123" to get more information from, those pack leaders get an email that indicates someone wants to contact them about joining. Unit leaders need to monitor that regularly. What often has been happening is the council staff realizes that those families haven't been contacted, so they end up doing it themselves, starting the whole cycle over again that the website was created to eliminate.

Units should recruit one person in their unit to be responsible for be-a-scout leads.



Using Research to Improve How we Market Ourselves

Last year, the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America conducted a research study on the "perceptions of Scouting." From survey respondents, they were interested in capturing the information that deals with the following areas:

- 1) Awareness of and participation in other youth organizations or activities.
- 2) Impressions & opinions of the BSA.
- 3) The decision to join Scouting.
- 4) Satisfaction with Scouting.
- 5) The decision to stay in Scouting.
- 6) Reasons for attrition.

The full study is available in pdf form by emailing District Director Patrick Nance.

By changing the way our Cub Scout and Boy Scout leaders market their packs and troops, we can make a big difference on the decision making process of potential Scouts and their parents.

Participation in Other Youth Activities:

Consider this- of the survey respondents, 64% of Cub Scouts also participated in sports. Almost half of all non-Scouts also participate in sports.

Implications: We need to let parents know that it is okay to be in Cub and Boy Scouting, and also participate in sports. Scouting should not be an absolute. The program should be designed to allow youth members to come and go. If units tell families when they join that they don't have

to be at every meeting, we may see greater program satisfaction and recruitment success.

Impressions & Opinions of BSA

According to survey respondents, Scouting is associated with the great outdoors, fun and adventure, and learning life lessons, but less so about community service and helping others.

Implications: Units should integrate adventure into their yearly planning. Make sure that there is a fun activity planned right after the primary recruitment season.

Parents of non-Scouts view Scouts and their parents as “somehow different,” and less likely to do the things they are most interested in (such as team sports).

Implications: At Cub Scout joining activities, pack leaders should make a point to mention that participation in sports and Scouting is possible.

The Decision to Join Scouting

Of the non-Scouts that were surveyed, 60% of Cub Scout age boys expressed interest in joining. However, as the boys get older, that percentage drops dramatically. When boys reach age 11, that percentage shifts from being interested, to 74% expressing non-interest.

Implications: We must focus on Cub Scout recruitment. The long-term stability of our Boy Scout troops is directly related to Cub Scout membership.

Respondents indicated that their top reasons for joining are group activities with friends and

learning new things they couldn't learn anywhere else- like camping.

Implications: Scouting groups should ensure their programming delivers on the expectations that boys will get to learn things about the outdoors.

The Decision to Stay in Scouting

Boy Scouts who advanced into the organization from Cub Scouts say that outdoor activities and trips were the top reasons for continuing, along with achievement of the Eagle Scout rank.

Implications: The promise of outdoor activities and camping are great motivators for joining and staying, but troops must deliver on them to keep the boys in.

Unit leaders should take time to address some of the implications that we outlined above. By doing so, units maybe be able to increase the number of boys they recruit, and retain more over the long term.

Cascade Pacific Council
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 360-695-1741-Vancouver
 Fax: 503-225-5717

2012-13 Materials Request Form

Please allow 7 business days for processing
 (may take longer depending on your School District approval procedures)

Flyer Choices
 (white supplies last)



Customize for Your Unit!

Council District _____

Name _____

Phone # _____

Date Submitted _____

Date Needed _____

School District _____

Information for the front of the flyer

Event _____

Pack _____

Day & Date _____

Time _____ Location _____

Contact Info. _____

Other Info. _____

Choice / Quantity _____

Number of flyers, stickers, postcards, etc. you are requesting.

Office Use: Date Completed _____ Contacted _____ School Dist. approval: Sent _____ Approved _____ Disclaimer _____

Questions? Contact:
 Kelly McHargue, kmchargue@cpbsa.org, 503-225-5727

Reserve banners or the Tiger Truck from the
 Volunteer Services Desk at 503-225-5759

