**Interest Topic: BSA Structure**

| Time Allotted | Activity                  | Assigned to                                           | Content                                                        |
|---------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|                                                               |
| 30–40 minutes | General session for all participants | Cub Scout roundtable team assisted by district committee members | Overview of district positions and a recruitment opportunity |
| 10 minutes    | Q&A                       | Cub Scout roundtable team                             | Opportunity to answer any additional questions                |
| 5 minutes     | Announcements and Closing | Cub Scout roundtable commissioner                      | Closing flag ceremony                                         |

**Topic: BSA Structure**

**Takeaway:** Pack leaders will understand how the pack fits into the district and how they can support the district, which in turn helps keep the units in the district strong. Provide an overview of district, council, and national structure; an overview of the Friends of Scouting (FOS) appeal; and council, district, and national opportunities.

**GENERAL SESSION**

**Overview of Council, District, and Pack Structure and Relationship**

Every good organization has structure and levels of management. This includes the Boy Scouts of America. To keep the wheels of Scouting turning and provide great program in a safe environment, many people are involved. It all begins at joining night when the parent attends the meeting with their child. Once they join, they are part of a pack, which is part of a district, which is part of a council, which is part of an area, which is part of a region, which is part of the national organization of the Boy Scouts of America.

As a unit Scouter, you may work with district volunteers and council professionals. It is important to understand the part each of these people plays in delivering the promise of Scouting.

**The Unit’s Purpose**

Unit is another name for a pack, troop, crew, or ship. The volunteers of a unit (Cub Scout pack) provide the den and pack activities and meetings, applying the mission statement and the aims and methods of Scouting.

**The District’s Purpose**

A Scouting district is a geographical area of the BSA local council. Districts are determined by the council executive board. District leaders are responsible for the growth and success of Scouting units within the district’s territory. Unlike a council, a district is not a governing body and does not have a board of directors. The district chairman, the district commissioner, and the district executive—together known as the District Key 3—are at the head of the district.

The purpose of the district is to work through chartered organizations, community groups, and the units themselves to organize and support successful units. The end result of effective district support is a growing number of youth members receiving a better program.

The operating committees of the district are responsible for carrying out the functions of membership, finance, and program. The chair of each district operating committee may be a member of the related council-level committee.

All districts are responsible for carrying out four standard functions:

**District Membership Committee**

This committee serves to increase membership through:

- Organizing Scouting units. It schedules units to be organized or reorganized each year, and carries out the schedule.
- Recruiting new members and adult volunteers to join existing units. The district may assist a unit in conducting a roundup night or other recruitment event.
- Cultivating relationships with community organizations and businesses in the district.
- Helping to establish and maintain healthy relationships with schools and religious organizations.

**District Finance Committee**

This committee encourages the members of the district to provide their financial support to the total council operating budget.

**District Program Committee**

This committee concentrates on youth advancement and recognition, helping Scouting units with camp promotion, training adult volunteers, and special activities including community service. It often conducts Cub Scout day camps or twilight camps. Quality program has a positive impact on membership retention.
Unit Service

The unit service function provides direct coaching and consultation by district volunteers (commissioners) to unit volunteers to help ensure the success of every Scouting unit.

The membership, finance, and program functions are carried out by members of the district committee. The unit service function is carried out by the district commissioner staff.

The Council’s Purpose

The next level in BSA structure is the council. You wear your council’s name on the left shoulder of your uniform, signifying you are part of that team. The purpose of the council is to carry out the programs of the Boy Scouts of America within the council jurisdiction. Councils are chartered by the BSA for that purpose. Councils deal with personnel issues, budgets, properties, and more. The council guides and supports its districts for the achievement of the movement’s purpose. The council is the corporate legal entity and can be considered a small or sometimes large non-profit business. Major council decisions are made by the council executive board. The council Key 3 consists of the council president, council commissioner, and council Scout executive (CEO).

Friends of Scouting (FOS) Overview

One of the ways the council raises money is through the annual Friends of Scouting campaign. (Note to presenter: Your council will be able to share information with you regarding the amount of FOS funds it raises each year and how that amount contributes to the council's budget.)

With this income, the council operates, maintains, and improves its camps. It also employs the professional staff needed for the support and guidance of volunteers. There is training to provide, activities to plan and implement, and a service center to build or rent and operate.

While the council's income will come from many sources, one of the most important is the annual Friends of Scouting campaign. Under the campaign, people who support Scouting enroll as Friends of Scouting through their financial contributions. This is usually the major source of income raised by volunteers within the council. The Friends of Scouting campaign has three parts:

District/division enrollment. These are district committee members, commissioner staff members, and others who are demonstrating their support by serving Scouting and enrolling.

Family enrollment. All parents of Cub Scouts, Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts are encouraged to enroll. Though most families welcome the opportunity to give, this is entirely voluntary and not a condition for membership in Scouting. It is important to communicate that money contributed to Friends of Scouting enables the council to support and build Scouting throughout the communities served. An ideal time to conduct the family enrollment is during the Cub Scout pack’s blue and gold banquet and Arrow of Light ceremony, when a large number of parents will be in attendance.

Community enrollment. All prospects not included in the district or family enrollments are enrolled here. This includes former youth and adult members, community businesses, and previous contributors.

District, Council, and National Training Opportunities

Training is an important feature of the district committee. This group keeps up to date on changes in training and makes sure that there are many opportunities for leaders to receive training. Every Scout deserves a trained leader, and a trained leader helps improve retention of youth in the program.

Training is important for other reasons as well:

- It builds the confidence of leaders.
- It improves the experience of the Scouts.
- It increases the tenure of leaders because they derive greater satisfaction from their position.
- It gives leaders the chance to become acquainted with and network with other leaders.

For all unit leaders, several levels of training are available: Youth Protection Training, New Leader Essentials, position-specific training, BALOO, University of Scouting, and many more. Many training courses are offered online or in person and may be taken either way. In addition there is Wood Badge training as well as training for trainers and commissioners, and your council may have a University of Scouting. Volunteers can also benefit from national training opportunities offered at Philmont Training Center, Sea Base, and the Summit Bechtel Reserve.