

Lenape District Roundtable  
Annual Program Planning Planning Packet



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## **The Annual Program Planning Conference**

The Annual Program Planning Conference is a meeting of *all pack leaders* designed to establish the pack's yearly program. Planning is based on a 12-month program of Cub Scout themes, Webelos Activity badges, and special activities for the pack which are tailored just for your pack.

Who attends? The pack committee chairman and Cubmaster are jointly responsible to make sure the meeting happens. The committee chairman conducts the meeting. All den leaders, pack leaders, den chiefs, and interested parents or guardians attend. The unit commissioner and chartered organization representative could also be present.

The conference is usually held anywhere between June and August. The earlier the better. As long as you have everything planned before September, or the beginning of your yearly program.

Advance preparation ensures a well-rounded program of fun, variety, and purpose. A program planned in advance allows leaders to look ahead to future activities and gather ideas and resources.

This is not a simple meeting of just taking last year's calendar and switching dates of last year's events and putting new dates and times on them for the upcoming year. You should be thinking about the quality of your pack's program, making improvements, and making necessary changes to help retain the scouts and families that you have in your unit. Plan on this meeting lasting at least 2-3 hours long. So have it in a place where everyone can be relaxed, can eat, no children running around so you can stay focused.

### *Preparation for the conference*

Make sure these items are available for use at the meeting:

- Current Pack Roster
- Completed Parent and Family Talent Surveys
- Cub Scout Leader Book
- Current Cub Scout Program Helps
- Previous year's budget and current treasurer's report
- Calendars from the school district, council, chartered organization, and any other pertinent organizations
- Previous year's Unit Advancement reports/records
- Have you conducted a parent/scout evaluation of your program? Bring them.
- "How do I Rate as an Effective Leader?" page 34-10 of the Cub Scout Leader Book
- Pack Program Planning Notebook
- Unit Self Assessment Report
- Pack Program Planning Chart

Certain steps should be taken to prepare for the conference. Pertinent information should be gathered from dens, boys, leaders, and troops before the meeting. The following might be helpful:

1. What do the dens like and dislike? What pack activities did the boys like or dislike the previous years? Would they like to do something this coming year?
2. Webelos den leaders should meet with Troop leaders to make an annual plan for joint ventures for the Webelos dens. Do they include overnights, day hikes, and other troop-den activities?
3. Wolf and bear leaders should meet with den chiefs and parents to outline an annual plan for the den programs. What day are they going to meet? Do they have a den chief? Would they like a den chief?
4. If the Tiger den was formed over the summer, the Tiger den leaders need to meet with the adult partners and outline an annual plan for the Tiger program. It should reflect shared responsibility of leadership.
5. All Cub Scout den leaders should get a copy of current *Cub Scout Program Helps* for review before the conference. Webelos Leaders should go over the *Webelos Den Leader Guide*.

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6. All leaders should go over the National Summertime Pack Award and the Quality Unit Award requirements. These should be incorporated into the Annual program.
7. All leaders should become familiar with resources, aids, themes, activity badges, etc.
8. Leaders should have a copy of the District or Council calendars for the coming year so that dates can be included. Other calendars pertinent to your planning should be gotten as well-school, chartered organization, community, etc.
9. The advancement chairman or person in charge of such awards should gather and make available awards such as the Cub Scout Outdoor Activity Award, Leave No Trace Award, Conservation Award, National Den Award, BSA Family Award, Crime Prevention Awards, Religious Awards, etc.
10. The membership chairman of the unit should find out what the retention rate of your unit is. How many Scouts joined last fall and how many do you still have in the unit?

### *Steps in the Program Planning Conference*

1. Evaluation – what did we do well or not so well and what could we do better?
2. Goal Setting – what do we want to achieve this year?
  - Program
  - Recruitment
  - Parent Involvement
  - Retaining Scouts
  - Better Budgeting
  - Training
3. Program – what will allow those goals to be fulfilled?
4. Calendar & Assignments – events that will help fulfill goals and who will help carry out the program.
5. Budgeting – what financial resources do we have and need?
6. Communication – How will we communicate our plan?
  - e-mail (den leaders)
  - website (committee member)
  - newsletters (committee member)
  - phone contact (den leaders)
  - Pack Meetings (announcements and newsletter)
  - Den newsletter?

### *Conducting the Conference*

1. Appoint a recorder for the meeting. Someone who will take notes and report back all of your results and decisions to the pack. This may be your Pack Secretary or another individual who will take their place. This of course does not keep other parties from taking notes. The treasurer should take notes on budgeting, cubmaster on program, and the newsletter committee person on communication.
2. Provide each leader with a copy of the Cub Scout Leader Program Notebook. Post the Pack Program Planning Chart on the wall of use the one from the insert section of the Cub Scout Program Helps. This helps as a visual tool until you can make your own calendars to hand out to everyone in your pack.

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3. Review the purposes of Cub Scouting. You want everyone to remember why you are here while the planning is being done.

4. Evaluate – How did the boys view the program last year?
- The contents of the program itself.
  - The pack's leadership performance and future needs.
  - Advancement and pack management

Use the "**Pack Self-Assessment**" form to help with this process. Work the form together. Get a flipchart, use a chalkboard, large piece of paper, etc and talk about the information gathered by the leaders prior to the conference from their boys in the dens.

- What awards did the pack and leadership qualify for this year?
- Did you earn the National Quality Unit Award and the National Summertime Pack Award?
- Are you likely to earn them this year?
- How many dens earned the National Den Award?
- Did any of your leaders earn the Cub Scout Leader Training Awards?

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Although attaining awards is not an indicator that your pack has a great program, it shows you could be on the right track. The method to attaining these awards is what is important. There is a lot of service that one must provide in order to get these.

- What service projects did the pack perform this year?
- Was at least one of them for your chartered organization?

Let's look at membership

- How many scouts do you have?
- How many joined this year?
- Of the scouts that joined in June and September, what is your retention rate?

If you find that you aren't retaining your new scouts each year then you need to evaluate and find out why this is happening.

- How many scouts are attending pack meetings?
- Do their parents and families come to the pack meetings?
- What percentage of your Scouts advanced this year?

If very few Scouts are earning badges, their den leaders and parents may need help with the program.

- Did Scouts earn other awards?
  - World Conservation Award
  - Outdoor Activity Award
  - Leave No Trace Award
  - Sports and Academic Awards
  - Religious Awards

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If yes, then these are signs that scouts and families are active and engaged.

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- What percentage of your scouts attended camp last year?

Now that you have evaluated your program, continue to plan your calendar!!!!

5. Review the Program Helps recommended monthly themes and activity badges. Decide on themes and activity badges for the next 12 months. Remember resources will be available on the recommended themes and activity badges through the current literature and roundtable meetings.
6. List the themes and activity badges you have selected on your planning chart.
7. Plan special activities as needed throughout the year to meet requirements for the National Summertime Pack Award and the National Quality Unit Award. If you have special activities that require renting space in advance place it on the calendar now and fill out the appropriate forms in a timely manner. Make sure to include any other special program needs you have discussed in your evaluations.
8. Share the load. Appoint special committees as needed for each monthly theme and special event to manage program, decorations, physical arrangements, food, and other required tasks. Try to assign parents and guardians to committees to get them involved.
9. See if you can identify activity badge counselors. If you can't at the meeting, see if your Webelos leaders can identify them the first couple of months by using a parent talent survey.
10. List pertinent information on the Pack Program Planning Chart:

Pack Family Campout	District/Council Events
Special Activities	Training Dates
Names of Key Resource People	Joint pack-troop events
Dates of Pack Meetings	Webelos-Troop Activities
Committee Meetings	Webelos Overnights
Pack Leaders' Meetings	Uniform Inspections
Day Camp & Family Camp	Webelos Resident Camp
11. Assign dens on a rotating basis for set-up, clean-up, opening and closing ceremonies, refreshments, etc for pack meetings.
12. Plan nights for recruitment-dates for membership drives.
13. Identify leadership vacancies and make plans to select leadership to fill these positions.
  - What leaders are likely to leave this year?
  - What positions would you like to add this year? (try to find a position for everyone)
  - How many of your leaders are trained for their specific position?
  - Did you know that your Unit Leader must be trained in order to re-charter at Jersey Shore Council?
  - Do you have den chiefs and do you want more?

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Ask each leader to evaluate himself/herself with "How do I rate as an effective leader?" They don't need to be shared with others. They will just give the leader an opportunity to think about how they performed as a leader and rededicate themselves this year to the youth in your pack.

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14. Review your finances so that your unit can budget while setting your goals.
- How much did it take to run the pack program this past year?
  - Cost per Scout
  - Did you reach your fundraising goals?
  - Were you always having to fundraise?
  - Are the dues you collect sufficient?
  - Do you have a sufficient, not huge, surplus to carry the pack into the new year?

(Review the purposes and values before setting your goals and remind yourself that you need to incorporate these into your program always.)

### **Purposes of Cub Scouting**

1. Character Development
2. Spiritual Growth
3. Good Citizenship
4. Sportsmanship and Fitness
5. Family Understanding
6. Respectful Relationships
7. Personal Achievement
8. Friendly Service
9. Fun and Adventure
10. Preparation for Boy Scouts

### **Core Values**

Citizenship  
Compassion  
Cooperation  
Courage  
Faith  
Health and Fitness  
Honesty  
Perseverance  
Positive attitude  
Resourcefulness  
Respect  
Responsibility

15. Address your weaknesses and your strengths.
- What problems are you going to fix?
  - Do you really need those weak programs?
  - Trainers and Commissioners may be able to help!
  - Do you want to add to the part of the program that is working?
  - Do you want to bring new ideas to the table?
  - Enhancements.....
  - Milestones.....
    - Numerical goals for membership
    - Other awards the pack can earn
    - Train all leaders
    - % of boys advance
    - Attendance at camp to increase

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16. Set budgets. Determine how much money the pack will need to meet the goals of the program. If you are adding a significant program, make sure you support that program with your budget. Consider one or two fundraisers with aggressive goals rather than making your unit a fundraising machine and worrying about where the next dollar is coming from to support the boys. That way you can concentrate more on the program and the fun.

17. Make sure you set your dates, avoid conflicts, and get your chairmen in place as soon as possible. Use as many parents as possible to help out. The more people involved, the more pride they will take in their pack and the easier it will be to manage.

18. Budgeting should be left to the *pack committee* to refine.

19. Communication – All of this hard work is for naught unless you communicate with your entire pack. Calendars should be sent to every member. Newsletters, emails, phone calls can follow up for events. Every parent should get a calendar-especially for families that have step-families, involved aunts and uncles, etc. We don't want lack of communication to hurt the scout. If you have a pack handbook that is distributed to families, make sure that goes out with the calendar at the same time. Hold a parent/organizational meeting at the beginning of the year.

***After all of the foundation is laid out, your Pack Leaders Meeting will start the details.***

### *Monthly Pack Leader's Planning Meeting*

At the monthly pack leader's planning meeting will:

- Plan in detail the themes established at the Annual Program Planning Conference.  
(It may be useful to plan the first two months ahead of time in August and every month thereafter you can plan each month)
- Plan the details of the next den and pack meeting
- Finalize plans for the current month's pack meeting

All adult leaders attend this planning meeting; den chiefs do not attend. The pack committee chair leads it. The unit commissioner can be invited to attend occasionally.

The meeting should take place two weeks before this month's current pack meeting and at least five weeks before next month's pack meeting.

The meeting should be informal at a home or a room of the chartered organization. The atmosphere should be friendly so you can have fellowship with your co-leaders.

5 parts to a pack leader's meeting:

1. Evaluating the previous month  
Pack committee chair calls the meeting to Order  
  
The Cubmaster reviews the previous den and pack meeting activities and asks for suggestions. Evaluation will help with upcoming month's activities.
2. Finalizing Current Month  
The Cubmaster confirms current assignments for upcoming months pack meeting.  
  
Special committees report on plans for current month's activities or special events. (i.e. fund-raising, bike rodeo, Christmas party)

Den Leaders turn in advancement reports to the person responsible for obtaining awards for the next pack meeting.

Den leaders turn over den dues to treasurer and receive a receipt for them.

### 3. Planning Ahead

The Committee Chairman leads a general discussion about the upcoming month's den and pack meetings.

The Cubmaster comments on next month's theme and activity badges and confirms assignments concerning den participation in next month's pack meeting.

Special Committees report on upcoming activities or special events.

Den Leaders report on den meeting plans for the upcoming month.

Activity badge counselors report on activity badge projects planned for next month.

The Committee Chair reports on pack needs, problems, and progress.

Completion of new dens, pack-troop relationships, financial matters, improving family participation by committee members.

### 4. Unit Leader Enhancements

Short training discussions intended to help leaders conduct a quality Cub Scout Program found in the Cub Scout Leader Book in Chapter 28. Conduct a short discussion and exercise during each leader's meeting with the other leaders following along in the leaders manual.

### 5. Social Time and Fellowship

At the end of the meeting allow leaders to enjoy social time and fellowship and refreshments. (Anyone who needs to leave, should feel free to do so)

### *Monthly Den Chief Planning Meeting*

Den Leaders, Assistant Den Leaders and Den Chiefs should meet monthly to go over their plans for the month. They should share information and make assignments. Ask the den chief for ideas. Give the den chief assignment to make sure they feel like part of the leadership team.

Should you want a more formal meeting with all Den Leaders, Assistant Den Leaders, and Den Chiefs there is an outline in your Den Leaders Book on how to run a Monthly Den Leaders Meeting – led by the Assistant Cubmaster. (Even if your pack decides to meet with them three times a year as a group to make sure your leadership teams are going well)

The end result of such a meeting could be well-informed junior leaders, trained den chiefs, and a stronger, more effective leadership team.

*\*referenced from the Cub Scout Den Leader Book, Cub Leader Specific Training, Commissioner Training, and BSA Self Assessments.*

Lenape Roundtable usually holds a Training session on Annual Program Planning – watch for the training session in June