

**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
REGARDING PROPOSED MOVE TO ONE OATH & LAW**

Q: What, specifically is being recommended?

A: Cub Scouts:

- Adopt the Scout Oath and Law for use in the Cub Scout program, retiring the Cub Scout Promise.
- Revise the Core Values of Cub Scouts to align exactly with the twelve points of the Scout Law.
- Retire the Law of the Pack, while maintaining the concept of “Akela” as leader.
- Maintain the current Cub Scout motto, sign, salute, and handshake.

A: Venturing:

- Retire the Venturing Oath, Code, sign and salute
- Adopt the Scout Oath, Scout Law, Scout sign, and Scout salute
- Engage the task force and National Youth Cabinet to determine whether Venturing should have a differentiating motto/slogan or adopt “Be Prepared”

Q: Why are these changes being considered?

A: Each of our programs is designed to help instill the goals of the BSA mission in its members’ daily lives. As the BSA strives to operate as one organization, build continuity of membership over a person’s life, and deliver its mission, considering one Oath and Law as a tool to unify our membership is appropriate. Additionally, the earlier and longer a member is exposed to the values of the Scout Oath and Law, the better the opportunity is that they will be able to live those values in their lives.

Q: How did these recommendations come to be?

A: Two separate task forces have worked on the deliberations leading to the recommendations – the Strategic Plan Goal 411 Task Force and the Venturing Task Force. Each of these is volunteer-led and staffed (approximately 50 and 25 volunteers, respectively).

These task forces made the initial deliberations and recommendations beginning in 2011 and early 2012 respectively.

In the case of the Cub Scout, the 411 task force consulted with cognitive and child development specialists and educational practitioners involved in Scouting. Specifically, these professional and scouters were asked to consider age & developmental appropriateness of the current Cub Scout Promise and Law of the Pack versus the Scout Oath and Law. The outcome of this study suggested that comprehension difficulty is high for both but not materially higher for the Scout Oath. Further the study group concluded that Cub Scouts could understand the Scout Law just as well as the Cub Scout Promise with appropriate support and guidance. Additionally, research among parents (62% favorable) and Cub Scout leaders (59% favorable) was also supportive. Cub Scouts would not be asked to memorize or recite the Scout Law at early ages.

With respect to Venturing, the primary discussion points centered around the length and lack of use of the current Venturing Code, the desire to support a seamless set of value statements between Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Venturing (one program) and a desire to align Venturing’s value statements with those used for similar age programs worldwide.

Q: What is the process that is being used to decide whether to adopt the recommendations or not?

A: The above mentioned task forces developed their reports and made their initial recommendation in October 2011 to the Program Content Support Committee, a national committee responsible for approving any change in program structure, content, or advancement with their final recommendation in February 2012. These recommendations were reviewed with National Council management concurrently.

Based on the committee's unanimous endorsement, the recommendation was forwarded for review and discussion to the national officers of the BSA in mid-July 2012. After discussion, the officers unanimously approved that the recommendations move forward to the next step.

Since the recommendations, if approved, would modify the Rules and Regulations of the Boy Scouts of America, the final step in the process is the submission of a resolution to the National Executive Board of the BSA. Such a resolution will be offered during the October 2012 National Executive Board Meeting.

Q: If the resolution is approved, when would the change happen?

A: If adopted, timing will be different for the Cub Scout portion of the recommendation versus the Venturing recommendation.

Cub Scouts: The 411 Task Force is considering a number of potential changes to the Cub Scout program. Its work on finalizing those recommendations and realizing the many changes to leader aids, handbooks, etc., will be complete for the 2015-2016 program year. All changes associated with Cub Scouts, including these recommendations, will be executed at that time.

Venturing: The Venturing Task Force has not yet completed its deliberations and recommendations. It is anticipated that they will do so late this year or at the beginning of 2013. As such, the exact timing of implementation is not known at this time but is most likely 2014.

Cub Scout-Specific Questions

Q: Isn't the Scout Oath and Law much more difficult for Cub Scout age boys to memorize and understand?

A: This was an initial concern of the task force. To address this concern, the task force recruited a group of individuals with experience in child development and linguistics and a group of educational practitioners. All of these individuals are scouters.

After study, the group's conclusions were:

- Both sets of value statements contain complex concepts requiring support and guidance for the user to fully understand and learn to live by.
- Both sets of values statements are written at a relatively high reading level, but the Scout Oath is not significantly more difficult to read and comprehend than the Cub Scout Promise.
- The Law of the Pack is significantly more difficult for Cub Scout age boys to understand than either the Cub Scout Promise or the Scout Oath and contains concepts for which younger Cub Scouts are not developmentally prepared.

- Cub Scout age boys will be able to learn and comprehend the Scout Oath with support and guidance similar to that currently provided when learning the Cub Scout Promise (cards as prompts, guided discussion on meaning, etc.).
- Cub Scouts in early ranks should not be expected to memorize the Scout Law but are developmentally ready to begin exposure to the words of the Law and are ready to begin building understanding of the concepts with help.

Q: Cub Scouts is not Boy Scouts. If Cub Scouts use the Scout Oath and Law, what will separate the programs, what will the boys look forward to?

A: Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts are separate programs. Cub Scouts preparing to move to Boy Scouts will continue to anticipate the new uniform, the increase in independence and leadership growth of the patrol method, the enhanced opportunities for fun and adventure thru age appropriate troop activities they could not do as Cub Scouts and the Boy Scout advancement program and other opportunities. Use of the same Oath and Law will unify them with their older “brothers” but will not make them Boy Scouts.