Susquehanna Council Guide for completing the Eagle Scout service project and application for advancement to the rank of Eagle Scout

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide information to assist Scouts and adult leaders in the Susquehanna Council to properly complete an Eagle Scout service project and submit a complete packet for application for the rank of Eagle Scout. This guide does not address all of the requirements for advancement to the rank of Eagle Scout. The authoritative sources for BSA's requirements for advancement to the rank of Eagle are BSA's Guide to Advancement and the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, No. 512-927. Much of the information in this guide comes from those sources.

The information is organized into six phases, with key points, steps, and notes provided for each phase.

1. Project idea phase
2. Project proposal phase
3. Project planning phase
4. Project execution phase
5. Project report phase
6. Eagle application phase

Project idea phase

Key points:

1. Eagle Scout candidates *must use the official Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, No. 512-927*, as produced by the BSA.
2. The project must meet two core requirements:
   a. benefit a *religious institution, a school, or* an organization in the *community. The project must benefit an organization other than Boy Scouting.*
   b. present an opportunity for *planning, development, and leadership* [all three]. A good test of any project is to evaluate its complexity.
3. The project should *result in a significant impact in the Scout's community to be special and should represent* his/her *very best effort*; it is not a routine service project. Helping the Scout select a project that fully meets the service project requirements at the outset will make it more rewarding and save him from potential frustration and loss of time. If there are questions about the acceptability of a project idea, contact the District advancement chair before submitting a proposal.

Steps:

1. Start by going to the Advancement pages of the Council's website and reading all of the information available on the page titled: "Information and Resources for Life to Eagle Advancement". **It is very important that leaders and Scouts read all of the information listed under the section**: "Information to assist Life Scouts …" That page also provides access to the current version of all the forms that you will need. Link to page here.
2. Download the most current version of the Eagle Service Project Workbook from the council's site or www.scouting.org/advancement. It is listed under "Rank Advancement". Note: After downloading the document, you must find the file in your PC's download folder and open the document from there.

3. Read the following sections of the workbook. It is strongly encouraged the Scout do this and review it with an adult leader before he/she starts considering specific project ideas.
   a. Message From the Chief Scout Executive
   b. How to Use This Workbook
   c. Meeting Eagle Scout Requirement 5
   d. Message to Scouts and Parents or Guardians
   e. Excerpts and Summaries From the Guide to Advancement
   f. Instructions for Preparing Your Proposal
   g. Procedures and Limitations on Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising
   h. Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project - *Information for Project Beneficiaries*
4. The scout identifies ideas for different projects and discusses them with an adult leader to identify a specific idea he/she wants to explore. The adult leader helps the scout identify questions about the potential project to discuss with the beneficiary.
5. The scout meets with a representative of the beneficiary to discuss the potential project to obtain enough information to prepare his/her proposal.
6. The Scout *provides a copy of "Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project" to* the representative of *the beneficiary*.

Notes:
1. For a service project to qualify as an Eagle Scout service project, the Scout, *while a Life Scout*, must *plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project* benefiting *any religious institution, school, or community organization*. The project must conform to the wishes and regulations of the project beneficiary.
2. The Eagle Scout service project provides the opportunity for the Eagle Scout candidate to demonstrate the leadership skills he has learned in Scouting. He/she does the project outside the sphere of Scouting. As a demonstration of leadership, the Scout must plan the work, organize the personnel needed, and direct the project to its completion.
3. Eagle Scout projects must provide service to others. Guidelines to follow include:
   a. *A project involving council property or other BSA activities is not acceptable.*
   b. *A project may not be performed for a business.*
   c. *A project may not be of a commercial nature.*
   d. *A project may not be a fund-raiser.*
   e. *Fund-raising is permitted only for securing materials* needed to carry out the project.
   f. *Donors to the project must be made aware of what entity is benefiting from the project* and that it clearly is not the Boy Scouts of America.
4. *Routine labor, such as a job or service normally rendered, should not be considered.*
5. *There is no minimum number of hours* that must be spent on carrying out the project. The amount of time spent must be sufficient for the Scout to clearly demonstrate his/her leadership skills, including planning and preparation.

6. For ideas and opportunities regarding service projects, the Scout can consult people such as school administrators, religious leaders, local or state government department directors, or leaders of a community service organization.
7. The unit should consider assigning a project coach, advisor, or mentor to help the Scout through each phase.

Project proposal phase

Key points:
1. The proposal is *an overview, but also the beginnings of planning. Most of the* Scout's *planning will come with the next phase, preparation of the project plan*. **The purpose of the proposal is for the Scout to show he/she has a reasonable idea of what it will take to complete the project**, by addressing all of the sections in the proposal. It is the beginnings of a plan so do not cause the Scout to have a detailed plan in this phase.
2. *The project proposal must be approved by the organization benefiting from the effort, the unit leader, the unit committee, and the district <u>before</u> the scout can start work on the project.* The Scout cannot begin any work, or raise any money, or obtain any materials, until his/her project proposal has been approved by the District.
3. If the Scout plans to do fund raising, he/she must also complete the Fund Raising Application in the workbook.

Steps:
1. Using the Eagle Service Project Workbook, the Scout prepares a complete written proposal.
2. When applicable, the Scout should take photographs of the project site to show the "before" conditions and to help visualize and describe the project.
3. The Scout prepares sketches or drawings to help visualize and describe the project.
4. The Scout prepares a complete fund raising application, if he/she plans to raise funds for the project.
5. Once the Scout has completed filling out the proposal, he/she signs the "Candidate's Promise". When the Scout signs his project proposal, he/she promises *he/she has read the entire service project workbook*. Doing so will be important to his/her success.
6. The Scout obtains additional approvals of the proposal and fund raising application, if required, by getting signatures on the proposal from the following:
   a. Beneficiary
   b. Unit leader
   c. Unit Committee [not required for fund raising application]
7. Once the Scout has obtained the three approvals (above), an adult leader in the troop notifies the District Advancement chair that the proposal is ready for review at the District level.
8. The District Advancement chair will coordinate a date, time, and location with the Scout to conduct a review of the completed proposal.

9. The Scout brings the completed project proposal to the review, including any photographs, sketches, drawings, and any other supporting material that will help explain the project.

Notes:

1. The Scout must use the most current Eagle Service Project Workbook.
2. While preparing the written proposal, the Scout made need to talk and/or meet with a representative of the beneficiary additional times. The additional meetings may be necessary to further clarify expectations and requirements for the project and possibly make suggestions for changes to the project (modifications, additions, or deletions).
3. Scouts are strongly encouraged to type all contents in the workbook for legibility and to facilitate updating as the project progresses.
4. The first section of the proposal (Project Description and Benefit) is very important.
   a. The description of the project in the first sub-section should provide a <u>complete</u> picture in words of everything involved in the project. Be as specific as possible, such as quantities and dimensions.
   b. The second sub-section describes how the project will be helpful and why it is needed should provide a thorough description of the benefits and reasons for the project.
5. The Scout should fill out all sections of the project proposal in the workbook. If the scout thinks a section does not apply, he/she should insert "not applicable" to show he/she has considered that section.
6. Pictures, sketches, and drawings can be separately attached to the proposal. They do not need to be uploaded into the workbook (in fact, uploading to the workbook is discouraged). Sketches and drawings may be hand drawn.
7. *If* the Scout's *fundraising effort involves contributions **only** from the beneficiary, the Scout,* his/her *parents or relatives,* his/her *unit or its chartered organization, or parents or members in* his/her *unit, then* the Scout does *not need a fundraising application*.
8. Make sure the Scout explains what he/she wants to do in sufficient detail. A good proposal will make clear the full scope of what the Scout is planning to do and not cause the reader to have to guess at the Scout's plans. Make sure he/she has completed all of the sections of the proposal in writing and they are more than simple responses. The reviewers on the advancement committee don't want to hear from an adult leader what the Scout meant or intends to do. The Scout needs to put all the information about his/her proposal in writing.
9. Scouts are strongly encouraged to provide "before" pictures to help describe their proposal and show the conditions before the start of the project.
10. **The beneficiary's representative, unit leader, and unit committee representative should carefully read the certification that they are signing on the proposal and ensure they fully agree with every statement in the certification**. Each of these individuals are expected to carefully review the proposal before they grant approval and, if necessary, guide the Scout in how to improve the proposal before granting approval.

11. A proposal is considered a complete proposal, ready for review at the District level, only after it has been approved by the beneficiary's representative, unit leader, and unit committee representative.

12. The review and approval by the district advancement committee is to make sure that the proposal meets the stated standards for an Eagle Scout service project before the project is started.

13. The approval of the project proposal only means that the project has the <u>potential</u> to meet all of the standards for an Eagle Scout service project. A board of review after the project is completed will determine if the Scout carried out the project in a way that met all of the standards for an Eagle Scout service project.

14. If changes or additions to the proposal are suggested during the review for approval at the district level, the Scout must record them in the first section of the project plan and do his best to incorporate those changes or additions. The Scout may determine that he cannot incorporate some or all of the suggestions. However, he should be able to explain the reasons for not incorporating a suggestion to his unit leader and the board of review.

15. However, if changes or additions to the proposal are required as a condition of approval during the review for approval at the district level, the Scout must incorporate those changes or additions into the project. If the Scout is having difficulty incorporating a required change or addition, the Scout should contact the adult leader that approved the proposal at the district level for guidance on how to proceed with the project. Typically, a Scout will be asked to revise and resubmit a proposal if there are changes or additions required for approval.

16. Questions to consider when preparing the proposal:
    a. Who will have the authority to say that the project is completed satisfactorily?
    b. If you are building something, have you included a drawing or blueprint?
    c. If your project involves landscaping, is there a drawing showing what will be planted/placed where?
    d. If material and supplies are required, have you thought about where you will get them?
    e. What is your plan to obtain funds for the project's expenses?
    f. What is the basis for your estimate of the man hours needed?
    g. If working longer than four hours, are there plans to provide some food for the workers?
    h. Have you considered safety measures for different possible weather conditions?
    i. If painting is involved, have you thought about safety measures (such as ventilation)?
    j. If the project involves removing or tearing down something, have you checked with the beneficiary to ensure you are not dealing with lead paint or asbestos?
    k. If the project involves clearing brush, etc, have you thought about what to do if there are poisonous plants?

17. A checklist is provided at the back of this guide as a quick summary of items to check to be sure all is in order to complete this phase.

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Project planning phase

Key points:

1. The Scout should prepare his/her project plan after his/her proposal *has been approved, but before he/she begins work on the project*. **Preparing the Project Plan is putting into practice the Scout motto "Be Prepared"**. *It is important in helping the Scout show he/she has done the required planning and development.*
2. It is during this phase where the Scouts demonstrates and improves his/her ability to do the detailed planning for a project that he/she began when developing his/her proposal. The Scout is strongly encouraged to devote time and effort to this phase before beginning any work.

Steps:

1. Using the Eagle Service Project Workbook, the Scout prepares the plan for completion of his/her project.
2. The Scout is strongly encouraged to especially focus on the following sections. Good advance planning in these sections will result in the Scout being better prepared for each phase of the project and better organized in leading others throughout the project and during each phase.
   a. Project phases
   b. Work processes – list of the tasks required to complete each phase in sequence
   c. Materials
   d. Supplies
   e. Tools
   f. Other Needs
3. The Scout should review his/her project plan with a project coach or adult leader in his/her unit prior to starting work on the project. The project plan will greatly help him plan and prepare for and organize his/her project's work days.

Notes:

1. The scout should start a log or journal to keep track of the time he and others spend working on the project, including the time devoted to planning. He will need this information to complete his/her final report.
2. The advice of a project coach or mentor could greatly assist the Scout in this phase, but the adult should not do the planning for him – cause the Scout to think it through.
3. The project plan may be updated as the Scout works through the phases of his/her project.
4. Scouts are strongly encouraged to type all contents in this section of the workbook for legibility and to facilitate updating as the project progresses.
5. If the Scout plans to use tools (hand and power) for the project, he/she must review and comply with the appendix in the Guide for Safe Scouting (available on line) that provides the age guidelines for the use of tools.

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Project execution phase
Key points:
1. The Scout needs to show LEADERSHIP during the execution of his/her Eagle Project!!!!!! The project needs to be planned, written, organized and supervised by THE SCOUT, not adults.

Steps:
1. Using his/her project plan, the Scout should plan, organize, and execute each of the project phases.
2. The Scout should take photographs during each phase of the project to show its progress. When applicable, the Scout should take photographs of the completed project to show the results of the project.

Notes:
1. The Scout should help do the work for his/her project, but he/she should not do most of the work. He/she should primarily be leading others in doing the work. He/she could design and build the Eiffel Tower, but doing all the work himself will not show his/her leadership ability.
2. There is not a minimum number of people or hours required for a successful project, but the project needs to have sufficient complexity for the Scout to demonstrate his/her leadership and ability to plan.

Project report phase
Key points:
1. The report is the opportunity for the Scout to describe what he/she has learned through the project about his/her ability to plan and lead others.

Steps:
1. Using the Eagle Service Project Workbook, the Scout prepares a complete project report.
2. The Scout should review his/her project report with a project coach or adult leader in his/her unit.

Notes:
1. The Scout should take time to thoughtfully fill out each section with more than just brief answers, especially the following sections.
   a. Under Project description, the second sub-section (Describe what you did after your proposal was approved to complete the planning of your project)
   b. Observations (both sub-sections)
   c. Changes
   d. Leadership (all four sub-sections)
2. Scouts are strongly encouraged to type all contents in this section of the workbook for legibility.
3. Scouts are strongly encouraged to provide "during" and "after" pictures to show the results of their project.
4. The Scout should include attachments to the report that provide the following:
   a. The data that supports the summary of the number of workers and total hours worked in the project data section.
   b. A record of all funds received/raised, expenses paid, and balance remaining.

5. It is recommended the Scout organize all the material for their project in a three-ring binder or similar container for submission to Council. Use of a binder helps protect all of the contents and keep them together as it is handled by many individuals during the review. A well-organized packet provides a good initial impression to the board of review and makes it easier to review by all members of the board.
6. Scouts are strongly encouraged to make copies of all pages of the workbook before submitting their packet to Council, especially any pages with signatures.
7. **Any funds raised for an Eagle Scout project that are not used for completion of the project, must be given to the beneficiary**.
8. A checklist is provided at the back of this guide as a quick summary of items to check to be sure all is in order to complete this phase.

Eagle application phase

Key points:
1. The Scout must complete *the following requirements before* his/her *18th birthday: merit badges, service project, active participation, Scout spirit, position of responsibility, and unit leader conference*.
2. A complete packet for application for advancement to the rank of Eagle must include **all** of the following. The Council will not accept a partial packet.
   1. Eagle Scout Rank Application, No.512-728
   2. A self-statement
   3. Letters of reference (see notes below on letters of reference)
   4. Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, No. 512-927

Steps:
1. Download the most current version of the Eagle Scout Rank Application from www.scouting.org/advancement. Note: The application lists all of the requirements for advancement to Eagle and records significant information for most of those requirements to substantiate their completion.
2. Complete the application.
   a. Fill out all of the requested information on the form.
   b. An adult leader should verify that **all** of the dates recorded on the form match the dates recorded in internet advancement. Tip: Print out an advancement summary report for the Scout.
   c. After the Scout has completed all of his/her requirements, he/she must sign and date the certification on the form.
   d. The Scout must obtain approval of the unit leader by his/her signature and date on the application. Tip: The Scout may obtain this approval at the unit leader conference.
   e. The Scout must obtain approval of the unit committee chair by his/her signature and date on the application.

3. Request a letter of reference from five individuals (other than your parents/guardians) *who know you personally,* can attest to *how you live by the principles of the Scout Oath and Scout Law in your daily life, and would be willing to provide a recommendation on your behalf.*
   Tip: These are the five individuals that are listed on the Scout's application for requirement 2.
   Caution: See notes below.

4. The Scout must write a self-statement - *a statement of* his/her *ambitions and life purpose and a listing of positions held in* his/her *religious institution, school, camp, community, or other organizations, during which* he/she *demonstrated leadership skills. Include honors and awards received during this service.* See notes below.

5. The Scout is encouraged to submit an Eagle Scout Service Project Summary along with his packet. Submission with the packet is encouraged but not required; otherwise, bring the completed summary to the board of review

6. Combine all of these documents into a single packet (use of a 3-ring binder is recommended), including all letters of reference that were received, and turn the complete packet in to the Council Service Center. It is strongly recommended that a unit leader submit the complete packet to Council; not the Scout.

Notes:

1. Letters of reference.
   a. Do your best to provide an individual for each category on the application. However, if a category is not applicable to the Scout (such as religious or employer), then identify another reference and cross out the title for that category.
   b. The completed letters of reference must be sent by the reference to one of the adult leaders in the troop to collect on behalf of the scout prior to submission of the complete packet to Council. The Scout should identify and coordinate with this leader before contacting the references for a letter. The unit leader will keep all letters received until time for the Scout to submit his complete packet. The letters must remain sealed until opened by the members of the Board of Review on the day of the board. See **"**Information to assist Life Scouts to plan and complete the requirements for Eagle" on the advancement pages of the Council's website for additional information and instructions.
   c. There is no requirement to receive a minimum number of letters of reference.
   d. If the Scout has turned 18 or is within one month of his/her 18th birthday, submit the complete packet as soon as possible regardless if any letters of reference have been received. Do not delay the submission of packet for a Scout in this situation if all that is missing are letters of reference.

2. The following are suggestions for the content of the Scout's self-statement:
   a. One or more paragraphs that describes the Scout's involvement during the past 4-5 years in other organizations and/or activities outside of Scouting (such as school clubs, sports, band, church, community organizations, work) - highlighting any positions held, leadership demonstrated, or recognition received.

b. One or more paragraphs that describes the Scout's ambitions or goals in the next 4-5 years (such as continued involvement in scouting, attendance in a trade or college program {including identifying trades or majors of interest}, future profession or career of interest, and other ambitions.

3. Check to ensure that the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook is complete with all attachments and signatures.
4. If the Scout has turned 18 before submission of the complete packet, a request for extension may be required (see the Council's policies available on the Advancement pages of the Council's website)
5. The Scout is encouraged to submit a Eagle Scout Service Project Summary with his/her packet but it is not required; otherwise, bring the completed summary to the board of review.
6. A checklist is provided at the back of this guide as a quick summary of items to check to be sure all is in order to complete this phase.

Upon completion of the Eagle board of review

1. The board will return to the Scout the following:
   a. The complete service project workbook with all attachments – keep it as a reference of this significant accomplishment.
   b. The Scout's self-statement.
2. The members of the board will sign the Scout's application. The application with board signatures will be submitted by the district to the Council for approval. The Council will submit the application to the National Service Center for validation and preparation of the award.
3. The letters of reference will be destroyed.
4. Following validation at the National Service Center, about two to three weeks later an Eagle Award Presentation Kit will be sent to the Council Service Center. The kit will include the Eagle Scout Award pin and patch, two parent's pins, and one mentor pin. The Presentation Kit is made available for free to the Scouts via a generous annual donation.
5. The Council Service Center will notify the unit when the kit is available for pick up. Following notification, the kit may be picked up by a unit leader or a family member from the Service Center at the front desk. A signature is required from the individual that picks up the kit to acknowledge its receipt.
6. It is the responsibility of the Scout and his family, with the assistance of his unit, to schedule, plan, and conduct the Scout's Eagle Court of Honor.
7. The Scout's family is encouraged to submit an article and photograph of the Scout's significant achievement to a local newspaper(s).

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Checklists

Project proposal phase

The packet is ready for review for approval if all of the following are satisfied:
- ☐ Current version of workbook utilized
- ☐ A response provided in all sections of the project proposal in the workbook
  - o Strongly suggest contents are typed for legibility
- ☐ "Before" pictures included
- ☐ Sketches or drawings, if needed, included
- ☐ Three signatures and dates on Proposal page E
- ☐ Fund raising application, if needed, included

Project report phase

The workbook is ready for submission if all of the following are satisfied:
- ☐ Complete approved project proposal section included
- ☐ Fund raising application, if utilized, included
- ☐ A response provided in all sections (plan and report) of the workbook and both sections included
  - o Strongly suggest contents are typed for legibility and to facilitate updating as project progresses
- ☐ "During" and "after" pictures included
- ☐ Additional sketches or drawings, if needed, included
- ☐ Three signatures and dates on Project Report page C
- ☐ All the above is neatly put together – recommend in a 3-ring binder

Eagle application phase

A complete packet is ready for submission if all of the following are satisfied:
- ☐ Application
  - o Current version of application utilized
  - o All information and dates on the application are verified by a unit leader, especially all dates provided for requirements 1, 3, 4, and 5.
  - o Three signatures and dates
- ☐ Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook – as stated under project report phase
- ☐ Letters of reference
  - o Submit as many as have been received
  - o Letters are unopened and in separate envelopes
- ☐ Self-statement – a statement of ambitions and life purpose
  - o Strongly suggest contents are typed for legibility
- ☐ Request for extension – if the Scout has turned 18 before submission of the complete packet, a request for extension may be required (see the Council's policies available on the Advancement pages of the Council's website)
- ☐ Eagle Scout Service Project Summary – submission with packet is encouraged but not required; otherwise, bring the completed summary to the board of review
- ☐ All the above is neatly put together – recommend in a 3-ring binder