

Council Local Option Guidelines for Eagle Rank Advancement
Advancement Committee, Mid-Iowa Council, BSA
February 10, 2018

The following are supplemental policy guidelines for advancement procedures in the Mid-Iowa Council. They are options specifically allowed by the Guide to Advancement for local application within the council. Source references following each of these items refer to the Guide to Advancement 2017 (GTA), the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, October 2015 edition (ESSPW), and *Advancement News*. Any questions or comments about these guidelines should be directed to the council advancement committee.

1. Unit Level Eagle Advancement

Eagle advancement in the Mid-Iowa Council is administered at the unit level, with members of the district Eagle Board participating in Eagle Scout boards of review and approval of Eagle Scout service projects as required in the Guide to Advancement. Either the unit committee chair or the unit advancement coordinator, at the option of the troop committee, may choose the chairperson of an Eagle board of review. The unit's role is a significant responsibility, and unit leaders need to be knowledgeable and competent in conducting all phases of the process. District and council advancement administrators should make an ongoing effort to maintain this competence at the unit level through training and direct support.

GTA 8.0.3.0 – item 1

2. The Role of District Eagle Board Members

Members of district Eagle Boards provide vital services in support of unit-based Eagle advancement. They monitor the processes of project approval and boards of review to guarantee compliance with the policy and procedure specified in the Guide to Advancement. They provide guidance to inexperienced boards of review and others within the unit. They ensure a necessary level of objectivity in evaluating candidates within the unit setting – for that reason, they must not serve as a district representative if registered with an Eagle candidate's unit. They must maintain active BSA membership within the council and current Youth Protection Training certification. They must also attend Eagle Board training offered by the council at least once every four years to ensure their understanding of current BSA policy and procedure related to Eagle rank advancement. They are also expected to provide information and guidance on Eagle advancement to units. Selection of members of district Eagle Boards is the responsibility of the district Eagle Board chairman, in consultation with the district advancement chairman, the district executive and commissioner staff. A listing of all current members of the district Eagle Board, with contact information for each, must be maintained by the district and made available to Boy Scouting units within the district and to the council advancement committee. Based on this information and attendance at training sessions, the council advancement committee maintains a listing of all current members of the district Eagle Boards and their training status.

GTA 8.0.3.0 – item 2

3. Approval of Eagle Scout Service Project Proposals

Approval of Eagle Scout service projects is the responsibility of unit committees, and they must comply with the criteria listed in the Guide to Advancement. The minimal requirement for approval of all submitted project proposals is to receive approval signatures from the project beneficiary representative, the unit leader (Scoutmaster), a representative of the troop committee and a member of the district Eagle Board. Instead of merely gathering those signatures in

sequence, it is preferable to hold a meeting with the candidate to discuss the proposal and how to successfully complete it. The size of the group is not specified, but a group of three to six is recommended, and at least one person with a reasonable familiarity with the processes and skills required to complete the project should be included. The district Eagle Board member must be included in this group and must sign the proposal to confirm approval on behalf of the council. To ensure objectivity, the district member of the approval group must not be registered with the candidate's unit. This district member may initially be recommended to a unit, but units may subsequently develop routine relationships with particular Eagle Board members and contact them directly to request their participation in project approvals.

GTA 9.0.2.7 (box)

4. Selection of Eagle Scout Board of Review Members

Selection of members of boards of review for Eagle Scout rank is the responsibility of units, so long as they comply with the criteria listed in the Guide to Advancement. Members of candidates' families must not be involved in this selection process. As with project approvals, every Eagle Scout board of review must include a member of the district Eagle Board who is not registered with the candidate's unit, and who serves and signs on behalf of the council. As with project approvals, it is necessary for Eagle Board members to avoid serving as district representatives in their own unit, to ensure objectivity. Members of the district Eagle Board who are registered with the candidate's unit may serve on his board of review *if not serving as the district representative*. While it is not required, many units make up each Eagle board of review largely from those who served on the project approval board for that individual Scout; this provides familiarity and continuity in consideration of the project's execution. In no case may an Eagle board of review reconsider the initial approval of the service project; at that stage, approval has been granted.

GTA 8.0.0.3 and 8.0.3.0 – items 1, 2 and 3

5. Submission of Eagle Advancement Documents by Units

Transfer of Eagle documents between units and the council service center in advance of the board of review has been simplified. Sending the entire workbook is no longer required. Only key information from the Eagle Service Project Workbook must be included with the Eagle application form, and the candidate's statement of ambitions and life purpose and listing of accomplishments (Eagle requirement 7). Two elements from the Report section of the workbook must be submitted: (a) the listing of hours worked and (b) the approval signatures. A photocopy of each must be included. The original signed workbook and all of its attachments remain with the unit during the submittal process.

GTA 9.0.1.5 (box) – approved by the National Advancement Team, 2013.

6. Fundraising Applications for Eagle Service Projects

Fundraising for Eagle Scout service projects is permitted only for securing materials and otherwise facilitating a project – projects that are primarily fundraisers are not allowed. Normally all fundraising efforts must be to be approved by submitting an Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising Application to the council service center, but local councils have the option of allowing certain exceptions to this rule. The Mid-Iowa Council currently allows two exceptions to the Eagle project fundraising application requirement:

- (a) Any effort expected to raise less than \$250 for an entire Eagle Service Project does not require a fundraising application.
- (b) Discounts on materials from suppliers do not require a fundraising application.

Funds contributed by the beneficiary, or from the candidate, his parents or relatives, his unit or its chartered organization, or from parents or members in his unit are not considered to be the result of fundraising and need not be reported. The following references should be consulted for more details:

GTA 9.0.2.10 (including box); ESSPW – Fundraising Application Page B; and Advancement News, Vol. 5, No. 6, November-December 2015.

7. Management of Eagle Scout References

Eagle Scout references are most commonly submitted in the form of a sealed letter sent to the Advancement Coordinator or another designated member of the unit leadership. District Eagle Boards may choose to have them submitted to the district representative on the Eagle board of review instead, but this must be clearly communicated to unit personnel and to all persons sending letters, to avoid confusion. The use of pre-addressed envelopes is strongly encouraged, and both the sender and the candidate should be clearly indicated on the envelope to aid in organizing the letters without opening them when they are received. Verbal references, via either telephone or face-to-face interviews, are acceptable alternatives to written reference letters. They are less desirable, however, because they are generally paraphrased from notes. Those notes seldom convey the exact words of the individual, which are usually not captured. Submission of reference letters by electronic media is discouraged. After the board of review, all reference letters and notes collected from reference interviews must be sent to the council service center along with the signed application form. After the Eagle advancement is approved, they are destroyed.

GTA 9.0.1.7

8. Selection of Eagle Scout Service Project Coaches

Eagle project coaches are typically selected by units from Scouting volunteers available in their units and districts. All project coaches must be registered members of the BSA and hold a current Youth Protection certification. District volunteers and professionals may also suggest individuals who are qualified. They should be chosen for their understanding of the work to be done in a particular project and for their ability to work effectively with youth, especially in developing their organization and leadership skills. They must also understand and agree to follow the guidelines for project coaches outlined in the Guide to Advancement. Likely choices would include registered merit badge counselors, district Eagle Board members and others with skills and experience relevant to a given project. There is currently no organized listing of project coaches within the Mid-Iowa Council.

GTA 9.0.2.9 (including box)

The Mid-Iowa Council Advancement Committee, with the approval of the Scout Executive, maintains and distributes this supplemental listing. It is updated as necessary to maintain currency with ongoing revisions of the GTA and other Scouting documents, and to accommodate the changing environment of Scouting within the council. It was last updated on February 10, 2018.