



2026-2027 Atlanta Area Council Membership Growth Plan

Principles: Innovation, Execution, Empowerment

The Atlanta Area Council aims to **Build Stronger Families Through Scouting** and innovate to recruit, engage, and retain more youth and adults. Not easy old patterns of youth recruiting – we must **empower our units and leaders** to build local foundations that will welcome, engage, and retain more families.

Headlines: Continue Transition from Staff-Run Recruiting to Pack-Run Recruiting



Major elements of this Plan for **Pack Run Recruiting** (click blue links in the online version):

- Recruiting Tactics: *Guide* (Units Using the Six Steps) More Important than *Goals*
- Team Tactics: Professional and Volunteer Constant Collaboration Serving Units
- Recruiting Seasons: Year-Round with Seasonal Focus (Spring/Summer and Fall and Winter)
- District Action Items (Communication, RT, and Committee) – Spring, Fall Back to School, Winter
- Other Council Recruiting Support (like Training, Materials, ScoutReach, Marketing)
- Supplemental Plan Playbooks:
 - School Playbook: Coaching by Field Staff + District Volunteers for School Sign-Up Nights
 - The “What Do We Do When We Have No School Access” Playbook
 - Postscript: Why Cub Scout Recruiting is New and Different (Starting in 2024)

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RECRUITING RESOURCES

Scan the QR code to learn more about online and downloadable resources you may use for your Cub Scout recruiting.



New Strategy (2024+): Pack Run Recruiting – Right-Sized – Year-Round

Recruiting must support the local units that youth join in a way that will be successful and sustainable – the goal is **recruiting run by the Unit** and recruiting to the right size and in the right ways for Unit success.

- **Council Professionals and District Volunteers** must **empower local units and their volunteers** – through training and coaching and support – to recruit in ways consistent with **their local unit capacity**. We can do this by providing units and parents with the resources and ways to welcome and recruit *how they want*.
- **Pack Run Recruiting** means recruit in a way that works for the unit – when and how and “how much”. Every unit is unique in how to best conduct their own local recruiting for their own local program.
 - *If we recruit too many youth into a Pack with too few leaders, families will leave Scouting.*
 - It is hard for a Pack to grow from 15 to 50 or more. Also hard to go from 50 to 115.
 - We must help Packs where they are – where Packs can thrive at the right size for their resources.
 - **Best Result:** Many youth + deep adult leader teams that are active, successful and sustainable.
 - **OK Result:** Not many youth – just enough for a small adult leader team to keep rolling. *Slow growth?*
 - **Bad Result:** Too many youth – but too few adult leaders. The Pack collapses or sheds most families.
- **Professionals and District Volunteers must support units to build the necessary foundation to recruit.**
 - For Cub Scouts, the key strategy is “**Power to the Packs**” – deference to what local Packs can support.
 - Also, “**Support the Troops**” (and Crews and Posts). Similar empowerment strategies apply here too.

Recruiting Tactics: Guide (Units Using the Six Steps) More Important than Goals

“How Well” Packs recruit for their Pack is more important than “How Many Youth” recruited. Packs can recruit well by following the steps in AAC Recruiting Resources – and then will recruit more.

The Guide, Six Steps, and Related Resources. A “Power to the Packs” strategy begins with promoting the **Six Steps in the Guide to Cub Scout Family Recruiting** attached [here](#). The *Guide* steps are:

- (1) **strong Activity Calendar** – local Den and Pack activities plus participation in District/Council events
 - (2) **Pack and Parent Promotion** of Activities to other families – Peer to Peer Recruiting!
 - (3) **Adult Leader Recruiting, Engagement and Training** – turning parents into helpers and leaders.
 - (4) elevation of **School and Community Profile** to attract attention and support.
 - (5) leading to **Sign-Up Events** (both Pack Fun Sign-Up Events and School Sign-Up Nights)
 - (6) followed by Den and Pack *fun*simple*easy activities* and **advancement** that families will want to join.
- Professionals + District Volunteers promote **the Guide** steps to empower local leaders to grow their Units. If Units apply the **Recruiting Resources** they can grow to their right size for success.
 - Might some Packs have fewer new youth? Yes. But *they might reach a size right for their resources*.
 - Might we want to start new Packs in under-served Schools. Yes: look for a new unit program plan.

The Six Steps work for Troops and Crews too – with involvement by the Scouts themselves in activity planning and promotion. Scouts can and should peer-to-peer recruit into their Units. Field Staff and Volunteers can coach Troop Leaders to that end. See scoutingatl.org/ScoutsBSARecruiting

The Council Does Have An Overall Goal – 6,300 new Scouts in all programs for the full year 2026. But no Unit should feel some need to recruit more than they can serve with their leaders/program.

New Adult Needs. We must recruit, train, and engage enough adult leaders to successfully lead Dens and Packs. If we recruit 6,000 new Cubs, **we need 1,200 new Adult Leaders in Packs (one for every 5 new Youth)**.

- *Want more Scouts to join and stay? **Recruit more Leaders! And engage and train them right away!***

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Team Tactics: Professional and Volunteer Constant Collaboration. Volunteers and Professionals must collaborate with each other to support units, like two strands of double helix DNA.



Recruiting must not be *separate* strands, where Professionals do one strand (*School Sign-Up Nights*) – and leave Volunteers to do the rest – **Professionals and Volunteers need to work together:**

The Old Way of Recruiting – Staff Run (Pack Passive):

Professional Staff Focused on Staff Run Fall Recruiting

Result Was: Maximize Youth Numbers. Sign up ***as many youth as possible*** at School Nights – *sometimes more than Packs could serve. Sometimes before Packs were ready to run program.*

Some Packs “got it”, felt the power, and did their own Recruiting

The New Way of Recruiting – Pack Run (Professional Partnership):

District Professionals + Volunteers Collaborate to Coach Pack Volunteers:

Goal Now: Maximize Pack Success, not Pack Size. Sign up ***a sustainable number of youth and leaders***, by deferring to Unit capacity and needs, and giving them resources to succeed.

With Recruiting Resources, Packs have the Power to recruit in ways – and sizes – and seasons – that work best for them.

District Team Tactics. To deliver on this Plan, Districts should engage Membership Teams by January / February. A District Membership Chair reporting to the District Key 3 leads these team players + functions:

- **District Recruiting Coordinators** support units in Recruiting efforts year-round, able to train and advise units on recruiting methods, circulate resources and messages, and support recruiting efforts, including as an extension of District Professionals in tasks like distribution of Yard Signs and other support.
- Ideally, a ***New Unit Chair*** engages in new program prospecting and development opportunities.
- **Other District Membership Roles** can focus on topics like (1) District Get Out and Scout Events, (2) Troop Recruiting, (3) AoL to Troop crossover, (4) School Relations, (5) What To Do With No School Access, (6) BeAScout and My.Scouting, (7) Flyer Fillers (help create handouts), (8) Social Media, and (9) Venturing.
- **Commissioners Too.** District Leaders helping coach Units about Recruiting are *serving Units* – so Commissioners (Unit Service) are part of the team and should be familiar with and share the [Six Steps for Successful + Sustainable Recruiting in the Guide](#).
- **Unit Level Volunteers.** With coaching and training from District Professionals and Volunteers, local Unit volunteers take the key role in recruiting new families into Scouting in their Units. (Maybe recruit your best unit level volunteers to help other units? Especially in niche roles like Interpreters, BeAScout, Flyer Fillers, District Get Out and Scout Events)

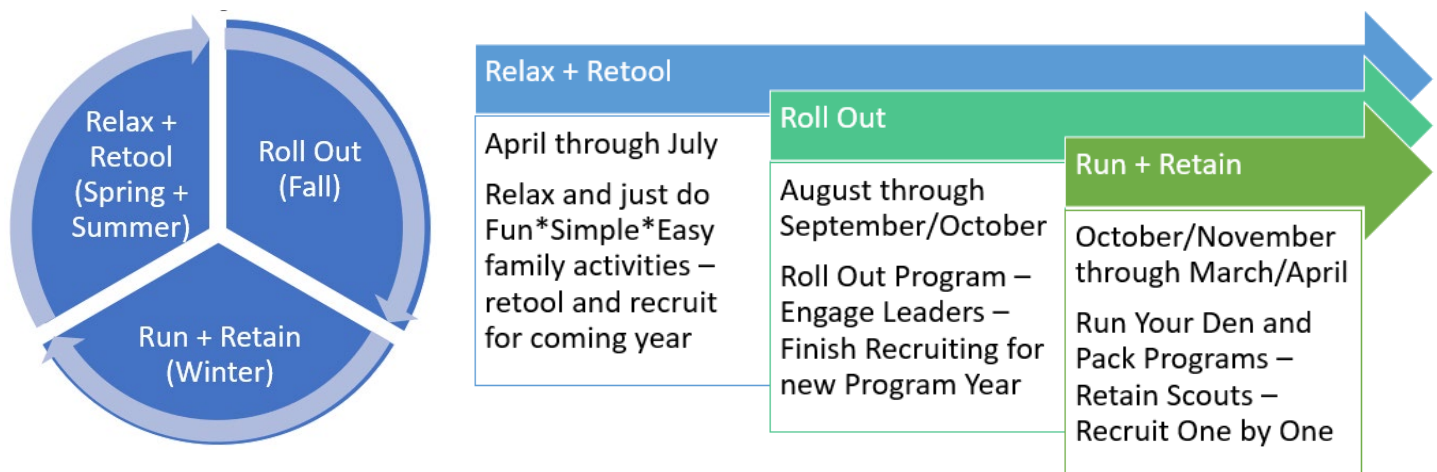


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Recruiting Seasons: Year-Round with Seasonal Focus

Here's our Three Seasons Summary of Cub Scout Recruiting: **Relax + Retool** in Spring and Summer, **Roll Out** at Back-to-School time/early Fall, and **Run (Program) and Retain (Scouts)** from Winter into Spring.

- **Relax + Retool in Spring and Summer.** The two parts of this season overlap: **Relax** with *fun*simple*easy activities* as Den and Pack families hang out. **Retool** during this time as families build bonds and plan for the new school/program year. *School Sign-Up Nights would be rare.*
 - **Relax.** With *fun*simple*easy activities*: simple fun with families and friends. Activities need not have “requirements” or “agendas” or other complications that may be a barrier to gathering with your Den and Pack families. **A bike ride can be a bike ride – it need not be a bike rodeo!**
 - **Retool.** If you do cookouts, bike rides, hikes, field trips, game days, mini golf, and other fun, you can get to know families, invite new ones, share ideas for “what we’ll do next year”, and find ways to engage parents as helpers and leaders. Bring them on your team to plan for ...
- **Roll Out at Back to School Time.** Roll out your program and finish recruiting new families at the start of school, as the School year starts – and the Cub Scout Program Year starts.
 - Finish foundational steps of Calendar of Activities and Leaders and roll into **Pack Fun Sign-Up Events and School Sign-Up Nights.** And launch your program of Cub Scout fun activities.
- **Run + Retain through the Winter.** This is when Dens + Packs Run can run solid, engaging Program like Advancement and retain Scouts – and if they are doing it well, they may attract new families too.



Professionals and Volunteers must know “how” Units can recruit in each season – and then coach Units so they can recruit when and how **they** desire – Units can recruit successfully in each season if they want to.

Let's start the Plan with Coaching Recruiting during what should be the easy season ... **Relax + Retool.**

1) **Spring Relax + Retool Time** – Spring and Summer Den + Pack Fun Events.

- AAC was Number 6 in Cub Scout “Fall” Recruiting (by % of TAY, top 100 Councils by TAY) in 2024. (#2 in 2023). But **we were only 70 out of 100** for Spring/Summer recruiting in 2024. **We can do better.**

Relax. Spring + Summer can be a time for (1) Dens (and Packs) to have *fun*simple*easy activities* that don't stress leaders and parents, and (2) parents and leaders to invite new families to join those *activities* – see the *Guide to Spring + Summer Cub Scout Family Recruiting*.

- **Cub Scouting Can Be Too Hard – Let's Turn it into “Fun with Family and Friends” this Spring.**
 - **Cub Scouting is Fun with Family and Friends.** Encourage Dens and Packs to host multiple *fun*simple*easy activities* that (1) current families will enjoy, (2) don't burden leaders (no complicated plans or advancement), and (3) new families can join to get to know current families.

- Go hiking, biking, kites, rockets, derbies, fishing, sports, picnics, cookouts, s'mores, service, field trips. [Day camp](#) and [Council programs](#) are great for current families + welcoming for new families.
- These don't need to be full "sign-up events" if you don't want that – ***just have fun + welcome!***
- This is also a time to [Retool](#) (like kick around your program ideas for next year). More [below](#).
- **"Fun with Family and Friends" is a Big Shift for Some.** But why? We hear "*Cub Scouting is too complicated*" and the related "*I can't be a leader*". Maybe sharing ideas like this is a great way for our Dens and Packs to re-think what Cub Scouting can be – ***a community built on values?***
 - There will be time for Advancement Plans in the new School/Program year!
 - And if some Dens and Packs *really* want more Advancement as part of these events, they can work on parts of [the Cub Scout Advancement Program](#) – ideally with new parent/leaders stepping up.
- **"Fun with Family and Friends" is Good and Fun – But Can Also Be a Recruiting Tool.**
 - Any fun activity can be a welcoming and joining event – if the Den or Pack is prepared to welcome.
 - ***Fun*simple*easy activities can be a test drive of Cub Scouting.*** Families can take Scouting out for a spin – get to know the Den and Pack families – and decide if they want to sign-up.
 - Family fun events are easy for "peer to peer" recruiting: "parent to parent", "Scout to Scout".
 - Those [activities](#) can expand parent participation as Den and Pack leaders relax with parents and encourage parents to step up to help and join the leader team! Be a Den Co-Leader or Assistant!
- **District Coaching Key: Empower Packs to Empower Parents.** Encourage Den and Pack Leaders to *empower parents* to invite their friends and class parents and be ready to welcome new families.
 - Part of that is to make a one page/two side "[Pack Packet](#)" with pictures that Parents can share.
 - Have a plan to welcome new families, like one or more parents to be a [welcome team](#).
 - **Don't Be Done at "One" Fun Event.** [Every fun activity can be a joining opportunity.](#)
- **This Works for Troops and Crews Too!** Especially because any 10-year-old 5th grader can join on and after March 1, create appealing opportunities for new youth to want to do Troop fun activities.
- **Summertime Too!** [Fun*simple*easy activities](#) work in the summer. Plus: Swimming! Boating!

District Action Items. How should District Teams (Key 3 Plus Membership) support this "Fun with Family and Friends" emphasis? Three ways below – (1) **Communication Channels** (Website, Newsletter, Eblast, Person to Person coaching, etc.), (2) **Roundtable/Commissioners** (Roundtable Programs – at least a "Membership Minute" – plus Commissioner coaching), and (3) **District Committee** agenda attention (again, at least a "Membership Minute" each time if not more). *School Sign-Up Nights will be rare.*

Communications – Share	Roundtable – Promote	Committee – Agenda Attention
<i>(website, Emails, Social, news)</i> Fun*simple*easy activities Advancement Resources Troop Recruiting Reminders Spring + Summer Unit Coaching Climbing to Success tool	Fun*simple*easy activities AAC + District Events for Scouts Climbing to Success tool Recruiting Resources (pick topics) "Pack + Troop Run Recruiting" Advancement Resources	Plan District Events for Scouts Membership Volunteer Teams Coaching Units – Progress District Support of Unit Recruiting (involve Commissioner Corps) New Unit Needs

Early Spring Relax Coaching by District Professionals and Volunteers: Make leaders aware of this Relax and "Fun with Family and Friends" emphasis and Spring/Summer Recruiting.

- Done individually by District Executive or Membership Volunteer to discuss spring/summer Relax and "Fun with Family and Friends" emphasis – share the [Spring + Summer Fun, Families and Friends Guide](#).
 - Sure, many Packs will also be "wrapping up rank advancement" – and should do that too.

- Review Pack details (numbers of leaders and youth, publicized activities) using the **Spring Into Scouting Checklist** on the back of the [Spring + Summer Fun, Families and Friends Guide](#) and fill in missing items:
 - *Dates.* Spring + Summer plans, using the [six steps in the Guide](#), especially an updated calendar of activities with *fun*simple*easy activities* and AAC/District programs because (1) current families will enjoy, (2) leaders can take it easy, and (3) parents/leaders can invite new families.
 - *Data.* Current Number of Youth and Leaders at each Grade (including those still participating); Family Pack plan; Meeting/Activity Days + Frequency; Recruiting Team Members.
 - *Direction.* Confirm Pack leader resources – how much help do they need. Consider succession (*5th Grade Parent Leader Loss!*), parent engagement, Den operation and training.
- If your Packs are doing *fun*simple*easy activities*, *seek an invite to one to help with your Coaching.*
- Encourage creation by April 15 of a calendar of key activities from summer into the next year.
- **Climb to Success!** Encourage use of the [Climbing to Success](#) tools for Packs and Troops.
 - Using Spring + Summer Pack and Troop casual events can allow you to get more parents on the team as leaders and get consensus on how to build out your program and climb to success!

<**Early Spring District Coaching Benchmarks** – 2026: 50% of Units by 3/1, 75% by 3/15, 100% by 3/31 – **Hot Pro Tip:** *combine with scheduling FOS visits! Instead of just asking your Unit to **give you** FOS time at their events, **give them** recruiting resources and coaching.*>

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Retool While You Relax. Early Spring District Coaching is all about the **Relax** part of Spring / Summer Cub Scouting. But we need Packs to **Retool** while they relax – don’t wait until late July!

- Planning for the [Back-to-School Roll Out season](#) must happen in late Spring and early Summer.
- **District Recruiting Rallies** in April or early May are a big part of that District support of Units.
 - Available Council recruiting training videos outline the Year-Round Recruiting and Unit Run Recruiting Program. District Rally parties/programs are a time to emphasize how your District will support Units – highlight your teams. Share plans and Pack progress. Distribute materials.
 - District Recruiting Rallies are a big stage for your Membership Chair and Team, *your* volunteers working directly and building relationships with Pack leadership (including Pack recruiting teams).
 - Fine tune the presentation to the district and your team resources: share best practices but confirm that every unit is unique and can decide how best to conduct their own recruiting.
 - Share sign-up dates and visually identify gaps: areas and schools without Packs, Troops without “feeder” Packs. Do not dump multiple schools onto Packs – follow a plan for new Packs.
 - Review the [steps in the Guide](#), so that Packs can have the best foundation for recruiting.
 - Where needed, share [BeAScout.org](#) profiles and [give BeAScout tips](#) to upgrade those profiles.
 - Empower Packs to Promote! Not just School Sign-Up Night flyers, but [other promotional tools](#).
 - **Be sure Packs know dates of school “open house” or “meet the teacher”** and why deploying families (not just leaders) at those for “one on one” (peer to peer) recruiting is so valuable.
 - A **“Pack Packet”** of key information is powerful. So are Unit-made videos of what you do!
 - Confirm Sign-Up Event promotion and Council and District resources – include the following:
 - Distribution of Yard Signs, Posters, Peer to Peer Cards and how to use those.
 - Describe Field Staff role with Buzz Ups, School Sign-Up Night flyers and digital promotion.
 - Advance School Sign-Up Night planning, including “week before” confirmation of script + plan.
 - See the attached [School Playbook](#) – those steps start in spring and summer.

- **Want More Rally Time and Help?** Look for some Council Wide events in June and beyond to support recruitment and retention, including:
 - A Council-wide recruiting rally in early June.
 - A “how to” about Sign-Up Events in July, with demonstrations of how to apply the plan and script found in [the Guide](#) by a team of leaders.
 - A “Den Leader Rally” led by experienced Den Leaders with tips + tricks to be “Rock Star” Leaders.
 - “Den Leader Kits” will be shared to help Den Leaders run their adventures in a fun*simple*easy way, like “rip and run” adventure plans Den Leaders can put in the hands of other parents.

Late Spring Retool Coaching by District Professionals and Membership Volunteers: Discuss spring/summer recruiting steps from [the Guide](#) and other [recruiting resources](#).

- **Make leaders aware that local Units now run their own Unit Recruiting** – District Professionals are here to help Unit Leaders. Not “do the recruiting”.
 - District Professionals will support and coach Units about recruiting and Sign-Up Events – but should no longer run the events. **District Professionals are support partners for the Pack.**
- **Summer Coaching with Pack Leaders** individually by *Field Staff* (Membership Volunteers help) to support recruiting plans. Review Pack plans, including numbers of leaders and youth, any spring growth, and fill in missing items at the Coaching, using the [Are You Prepared for Recruiting? Checklist](#):
 - **Data.** (1) Guesstimates of Returning Youth and Leaders, at each Grade (*review roster renewals*); (2) Family Pack Plan; (3) Meeting/Activity Days + Frequency; (4) How Hard to Pitch for Leaders; (5) Which School? (*ideally, just one school*).
 - Develop a recruiting plan with Pack leaders that is challenging, attainable, and in sync with the District plan – *like which school has the Sign-Up Night for the Pack?*
 - **Direction.** How much help does the Pack Need? Discuss [recruiting resources](#) from the Council. **Units with few planned activities or little leadership have poor prospects for recruiting success.**
 - **Dates.** Review dates for School Open House/Meet the Teacher, End of Summer Fun “Back to the Pack” Event(s), School Sign-Up Night, Fun Pack Event(s) for Sign-Up and Orientation and Fun.
 - Review the importance of using the [steps in the Guide](#) (share a copy of [the Guide](#)), and create an expectation that the Pack completes these key preparation steps by fall recruiting kickoffs:
 - 1) Create a [calendar of activities that families will want to do](#) – don’t just list meeting dates;
 - 2) [Promote those activities](#) to Pack families and more – including as part of a “**Pack Packet**” of key information – empower Packs to empower parents to share at school, church and community;
 - 3) [Recruit leaders](#) including Den Co-Leaders or mentors and welcome team – target returning parents – *and* develop a list of “open” roles (including small “helper” tasks for new parents),
 - 4) Elevate [school and community presence](#), including ‘Adopt a School’ (Field Staff can help elevate those relationships if they invite Pack Leaders to Principal contacts), and
 - 5) [Sign-Up Events](#). Both Pack Fun Events and School Sign-Up Night (decide on presentation style or station to station – and how much Professional help is needed).



<**Late Spring District Coaching Benchmarks** – 50% of Units by June 1, 75% by 6/15, 100% by 7/1>

- **Also: Share District Activities Supporting Fall Recruiting.** Families will want to “Get Out and Cub Scout”. Districts should plan one or more **“Get Out and Cub Scout” Events** from August into November for returning and prospective Scouts and families.
 - Activities can include fishing, hiking, boating, BB guns, archery, rockets, kites, bike rodeos/rides, pinewood derby, iron chef contests, fire building, s’mores, skateboards, etc.
 - Districts need to recruit chairs and teams for these events. Consider recruiting Day Camp teams.
 - Set dates early to get on Pack calendars and increase Pack attendance and participation. Pack attendance can include overseeing an activity – and also connecting with new families.

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2) **Roll Out Your Program in August and early Fall – Back to School Sign-Up Events**

and **Program Launch**. Back-to-School Recruiting starts with the Spring/Summer efforts and plans above – and Packs following [the Guide steps](#) to create a foundation that will lead to success.

- **Early Recruiting** is a game-changer (especially “meet the teacher” / “open house” events):
 - **Good:** Pack promotes their Activity Calendar at and around Summer *fun*simple*easy activities*.
 - **Better:** That, plus **Pack empowers parents to promote the Pack Program** to their friends + families.
 - **Best:** Those, plus **Pack gets returning families (not just leaders) to “meet the teacher” / “open house” events** with one on one “peer to peer” recruiting, parent-to-parent and scout-to-scout.
 - **Two Types of Sign-Up Events** exist – **Packs should do both** if they can:
 - 1) **A School Sign-Up Night** at the school the Pack draws from and scheduled by Pack Leaders coordinating with their District Executive. For details on planning these, see the attached [School Playbook: Coaching By Field Staff + District Volunteers for August School Sign-Up Nights](#).
 - 2) **One or more Pack Fun Sign-Up Events** conducted by the Pack anywhere convenient for families – both **for returning families with “Back to the Pack” fun, and for new families to join**.
 - Pack Fun Sign-Up Events are often outdoors, not at school (local park, pool, playground).
 - Have *fun*simple*easy activities* for current + new families to do and enjoy: cookout, pool party, bowling, biking, kites, rockets, derby, fishing, sports, magic, picnic, festivals, trunk ‘r treats.
 - Some might also include initial Pack orientation presentation while kids do fun activities.
 - **These become the primary sign-up event if a school denies access for School Sign-Up Night.**
- Both events require coordination between Pack Leaders and Professional Field Staff.
- **Private School Recruiting.** Packs at private schools also do Sign-Up Events that work for them. Could be School Sign-Up Nights. Could be just Pack Fun Sign-Up Events. Could be both.
- **Timing: School Sign-Up Night First? Or Pack Produced Fun Sign-Up Event First? That depends.**
 - Got an early August School Sign-Up Night? *Maybe put another Pack Fun Sign-Up Event second.*
 - Got a later School Sign-Up Night? *Put a Pack Produced Sign-Up Event first.*
 - Tell Packs: **it is OK to have multiple Pack Fun Sign-Up Events, even before school starts.**
 - Fun events can be a Pack’s **“Second Chance” Joining Events**. Or first or third or fourth chance!
 - The Council can help with ‘It’s not too late to join’ flyers and promotional materials.
 - And deliver those to schools prior to a “Second Chance” Joining Event.
 - **Program Launch!** With Sign-Up Events done, the Pack needs to launch program ... if the Pack has sufficient Den Co-Leaders (and Sign-Up Events are done), that can include Den level Advancement

work (meetings) – if Sign-Up Events are not done, or if the Pack is still short of leaders, the Pack might just do *fun*simple*easy activities* as Sign-Up time concludes and use those activities to recruit leaders.

District Action Items. Some ideas about how District Teams (Key 3 Plus Membership) support this time:

Communications – Share	Roundtable – Promote	Committee – Agenda Attention
<i>Leader Training Options</i> Cub Advancement Resources <i>Troops Helping Packs – Joint Fun</i> Fun*simple*easy activities <i>District and AAC Events</i> <i>Financial Aid and Renewal Help</i> <i>Fall Unit Coaching (see below)</i>	Cub Advancement Resources <i>Troop/Pack Joint Activities</i> Fun*simple*easy activities <i>AAC + District Events for Scouts</i> Turning Parents into Leaders <i>Leader Training Options</i> Climbing to Success (Retention)	<i>Finalize District Events for Scouts, including “Get Out + Scout”</i> <i>Membership Volunteer Teams</i> <i>Coaching Units – Progress</i> Recruiting Resources <i>Leader Training Progress</i> <i>New Unit Needs</i>

Fall Coaching by District and Unit Volunteers: Mostly follow up with Units to be sure they are on track to get their Recruiting done and in line with the [School Playbook](#) – and coordinate Council Support.

- **“Week Before” Sign-Up Planning (Pack by Pack, Sign-Up by Sign-Up).** As School Sign-Up Nights come up on the calendar, call so you will be in sync with Pack volunteers at School Sign-Up Nights.
 - *Can’t contact the Cubmaster?* Call the Chair and COR. Then other leaders until you make contact.
 - Confirm need for Professional support, number of Pack Sign-Up volunteers, script and speaker roles and timing – keep parts short, rotate, and show parents that volunteers run the Dens and Pack.
 - Details in the [School Playbook](#) below and in the [script/plan for your School Sign-Up Night](#).
- **October Wrap Up Review.** Schedule meetings with leadership from each Pack to review progress toward recruiting and retention – both youth and adult leaders – and next steps for support.
 - Confirm that Pack has a solid program launch with activities, sufficient leaders, access to program resources, and an activity and leader engagement plan that will promote retention.
 - Collect any outstanding paperwork or registration fees.
 - Discuss successes and opportunities of fall campaign and current progress. Share successes with your District – Committee, Communications, Awards. Get Help Where Needed!

<**Fall District Coaching Benchmarks** – Pack by Pack, four weeks after main Sign-Up Night.>

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3) Run + Retain through the Winter – Run Program + Retain Scouts. Winter is darker, but also when Dens and Packs and Troops shine. Units generate their own program – and good program keeps kids and leads families to invite others to join. Key program support to aid youth retention includes:

- *Fun*simple*easy* ways to do *Den advancement program* using [Council Cub Scout Advancement help](#).
- Help to *plan Pack program*, like how to [Plan Your Best Year Ever in Cub Scouting](#).
- Click [fun*simple*easy activities](#) to find hundreds of ideas for Packs and Dens to do.
- If your current families enjoy Den and Pack activities – if they are getting positive results from the program and earning Advancement and having fun – you have a program that more families will join.

Troops and Crews too! For Troops, the Council has launched [a portal page of Troop activities](#).

- Crossover! Districts can support crossover of 5th Grade Scouts into Scouts BSA Troops – and the *signup of any 5th Grader after March 1*. Districts may host events to help **Pack↔Troop interaction**.

All Scouting is Local. All Scouting Success is Local. Dens and Packs can't succeed just by attending District and Council activities – they need a robust local program.

District Action Items. Some ideas about how District Teams (Key 3 Plus Membership) support this time:

Communications – Share	Roundtable – Promote	Committee – Agenda Attention
<i>Leader Training Options</i> <i>Cub Advancement Resources</i> <i>Fun*simple*easy activities</i> <i>District and AAC Events</i> <i>Recharter/Renewal Help</i> <i>Climbing to Success (Retention)</i> <i>Crossover from Cubs to Troops</i> <i>Winter Unit Coaching (see below)</i>	<i>Cub Advancement Resources</i> <i>Fun*simple*easy activities</i> <i>Crossover from Cubs to Troops</i> <i>AAC + District Events</i> <i>Turning Parents into Leaders</i> <i>Training Options</i> <i>Recharter/Renewal Help</i> <i>Climbing to Success (Retention)</i>	<i>Plan District Events for Scouts</i> <i>Membership Volunteer Teams</i> <i>Coaching Units – Progress</i> <i>(involve Commissioner Corps)</i> <i>Training Progress</i> <i>New Unit Needs</i> <i>Troop Recruiting + Crossover</i>

Winter Coaching by District and Unit Volunteers: Make leaders aware of resources to support program and continue “Organic” local recruiting, especially “peer to peer” (parent to parent).

- **Renewal.** Families that signed up last year will see their “annual subscriptions” come up for renewal ... be sure Packs know how to help guide them ([details here](#)). Do that, **and also** ...
- **... Do a Progress Review of Your Packs.** As you help recharter, do a **Pack Progress Review** of demographic and unit health data with your District Membership Chair and Commissioner staff.
 - Review end of year adult leader and youth numbers (ratio of adult leaders to youth), BeAScout pin profile, information about program and activities (including as advertised on website/Facebook/other channels), school coverage (not more than one school).
 - If a Unit needs program help, point them to Council resources like [Advancement](#) and [fun activities](#).
 - [Scout Sunday / Sabbath / Jumu'ah](#) programs – planning for February starts in December/January.
 - Be sure Fifth Grade Dens have scheduled activities with local Troops they might join.

Winter Field Staff Check-In Benchmarks – 50% of Units by Nov 15, 75% by 12/1, 100% by 12/15.

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Other Council Recruiting Support: Apply in all seasons, with added elements in summer and fall.

- **Recruiting Kickoff.** An in person, high energy kickoff for the fall recruiting campaign, focused on practical, action driven strategies – starting with the Six Steps – including recruiting outside of the traditional school night, building strong relationships with schools, peer to peer recruitment, and strengthening renewal efforts. Units that attend and commit to completing several key recruitment and renewal actions will receive a Dutch oven. Attendees can pick up recruiting materials and resources on site.
- **Recruiting Trainings.** A series of trainings to better equip districts and unit leaders with the tools and strategies needed to successfully recruit – and the AAC resources to support recruiting. Live and online.
- **Den Leader Support.** To further support Packs and strengthen retention:
 - *Free Uniform Incentive.* Any new Den Leader (after 3/1/26) who completes required training within two months of registering will receive a free uniform from Scouting Outfitters (Scout Shop).
 - *Den Leader Rally.* VSC event to bring all Den Leaders together to talk about the year ahead and set them up for success. “Rock Star” Den Leaders will lead the conversations and focus on practical ideas, program highlights, common challenges, and tools to deliver a fun and engaging experience for Scouts.

- *Den Leader Kits.* Kits for new Den Leaders with materials and resources to help them successfully deliver their first three months of program that they might use in their Den or Pack.
- **Materials.** Flyers, yard signs and more – for use in all seasons when Units want to hang a “welcome” sign.
 - AAC flyers, Trifolds, Yard Signs, Posters, Peer to Peer Cards (Cub Scout and Scouts BSA), Feather banners, Tabletop Standees, Stickers (several versions), Cub Scout Pencils, Parent Orientation Guides, Slime. [Scout Sunday / Sabbath / Jumu’ah](#) bulletin inserts + promotion.
 - New Handbook Distribution Method in 2026: each new Scout receives a Certificate for a free handbook redeemable at the Scout Shop. Ideally, they also purchase some uniform parts at the same time.
 - Brightly colored Cub Scout themed backpacks available as a Sign Up Night exclusive.
- **VSC Fun Days.** As families visit the VSC on Saturdays to redeem handbook certificates and buy uniform parts, new Scouts and their families will experience the excitement that makes Scouting special, featuring an inflatable BB gun range, Pinewood Derby tracks, and additional interactive activities.
- **Reports.** To be developed for Districts beyond (or from) the AAC Professional Recruiting Tracker.
- **New Pack Program.** Implementing best – and practical – practices to starting new Packs.
- **Strategic ScoutReach Partnerships.** New Units through the ScoutReach Program Specialist teams.
- **Online Media.** ⚙ Geo-Fencing for events. ⚙ [BeAScout and online registration tips](#). ⚙ AAC Social Media. ⚙ Tips for [Unit Social Media](#) and overall [Unit promotion](#). ⚙ Pack Buzz Up Videos ⚙ AAC will reimburse units up to \$25 for social media ads with DE approval
- **Marketing Membership Support** (emails, social media, website, direct mail, more), as noted below.
 - Onboarding emails to new families, event emails to all families and all leaders.
 - Marketing Support of Activities with a “membership mindset”: emails (all leaders and all Cub parents), direct mail (including a postcard with a patch that encourages families to invite their friends to Scouting), and social media (Facebook, Instagram, with Council paid ads/boosts for key events). Messages [now available for District download](#) and use at any time as a District sees fit.
 - Marketing Support of Leader Development (Training) whether sponsored by AAC Training Committee, Membership, or Districts, including “Scout Leader News” slots monthly.
 - Macro and Micro Marketing Membership Support including the following:
 - General “*Get Out and Cub Scout*” and/or “*Cub Scouting is Fun, Family and Friends*” joining invitations, plus specific seasonal campaigns directed at new families highlighting Scouting, such as: (1) May, June, July dual focus on camps and summer activities like swimming plus patriotism (Memorial Day wreathes, Independence Day parades); (2) August/September/October focus on outdoors events; (3) November/December focus on Veterans Day, family, faith, holidays, etc.
 - *Renewal Messaging*: a more personal approach to renewal communication to improve retention.
 - Media Methods in some or all seasons might include (1) Direct Mail to all Atlanta Elementary School age families; (2) Promotion/boosting Facebook posts from Pack pages and groups, and Social Media paid ads on Council Facebook and Instagram; (3) Dropped Scouts emails and letters.

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School Playbook:

Coaching By Field Staff + District Volunteers for August School Sign-Up Nights

School Sign-Up Nights are often our best attended fall recruiting events. This is a summary of the tasks of Pack Volunteers and District Professionals in setting up School Sign-Up Nights for the benefit of District Professionals and District Membership Volunteers *as you coach your Pack leaders* – and also steps to get school support of *Pack Fun Sign-Up Events*. This Playbook is best used alongside the Plan and Script for Sign-Up Events posted at [our Sign-Up Events page](#).

1) **Meet with School Superintendents** (by May 1) – **by District Professionals and/or Field Directors**

- Find the right person in the Superintendent's office to work with – it may not be the Superintendent. Show the school system administration that our goals for the youth of our communities are the same.
- Thank for past cooperation and access, and seek to gain approval to recruit through schools and make specific note of any administrative needs they may have (flyer approval, facility approval)
- Request opportunity to speak at a system principals meeting or training.
- Deliver gift (mug) and invite to the upcoming Braves Game VIP experience.
- Confirm Open House/Meet the Teacher dates – share with District Teams to share with Packs.

2) **Secure School Sign-Up Night Dates with Schools** – **by Pack volunteers in coordination with District Professionals**. Schedule School Sign-Up Nights for when the Pack will be ready to launch their Pack Program! District Professionals coordinate with Pack volunteers to ensure these steps happen and that **Volunteer ↔ Professional communication** is solid. **Follow up with Pack Leaders!**

- **Benchmark Dates to Set School Sign-Up Nights** – 25% of Sign-Up Night dates set with Schools by May 1, 50% by June 1, 75% by June 30, and 100% by July 15.
 - If a school won't allow a School Sign-Up Night or you don't have one by July 15, confirm with the Pack that a Pack Produced Fun Sign-Up Event will be the primary August Sign-Up event.
- **Pick Pack Preferred Days and Dates:** Have the Pack identify preferred days of the week for School Sign-Up Nights, as well as weeks that work for leaders. *If a Pack and their Dens always meet on a certain night of the week, you can use that day for your School Sign-Up Night.*
 - School Sign-Up Nights work better with more leaders and parents and returning Scouts attending.
 - If you do School Sign-Up Night on the Pack's regular meeting night (as the Pack's regular meeting event), you should get better leader and parent participation from the Pack.
 - If new families are able to show up on *that* night of the week for School Sign-Up Night, they are more likely to be able to show up for future meetings on that night of the week.
 - *Maybe* don't do School Sign-Up Nights during the first week of school – that's a very hectic time.
 - **But if the Pack is ready to launch** a program (with activities and leaders), **don't wait too long** – a Pack doesn't want to lose families to other activities by waiting too long to recruit.
 - **Be realistic with the Pack: Are They Ready?** Do they have a [Calendar of Fun Activities](#) (not just "meeting dates")? Enough Leaders? A [Plan for More Leaders](#)? A [plan to promote Pack activities](#) like a "Pack Packet" and a [decent BeAScout profile](#) with online applications open?
 - **If by the end of July the Pack will not be ready** to launch Pack Program in August, the Pack has two choices: either (1) start an August Pack program launch with just *fun*simple*easy activities* like pool parties, cookouts, bike rides, hikes, field trips, game days, mini golf, and other fun – not complicated stuff like Den Meetings and Cub Scout Advancement, or (2) work with the School to postpone the School Sign-Up Night until a program and leadership are in place.

- If the Pack is ready to launch but needs the District Professional to be part of the Sign-Up Night, pick a date when the District Professional or a trained district membership volunteer can attend.
 - **Visit Principals (Staff) to Set Dates – by Pack volunteers in coordination with District Professionals.** Thank for support of Scouting and get a School Sign-Up Night on the calendar.
 - Visits should start in May and must finish before July 15.
 - Often, assistant principals, parent liaisons or other administrators can set these dates. In these cases, meetings with those administrators works (but thank the Principal for the good help!)
 - District Professional will (1) deliver a Principal gift (mug) and invite to the upcoming Principal Braves Game VIP experience, and (2) mail a “thank you” letter including Waffle House free waffle gift card. (Pack Volunteer thank you letters and baked goods are also welcomed!)
 - **Successful Scheduling Tips for School Sign-Up Nights:**
 - School Sign-Up Nights should start no earlier than 6:00 p.m. and no later than 7:00 p.m.
 - Don’t schedule School Sign-Up Nights **during** a PTA/PTO meeting, open house, or other times with conflicting meetings at the school. **Each School Sign-Up Night should be a standalone event.**
 - But ... Pack Leaders and parents should *attend* those other school events and promote.
 - If a PTA/PTO, open house, or other meeting allows the Pack to make a brief sign-up pitch and/or have a table or space to pitch people coming in or out, take advantage of it.
- 3) **Best Practices for Coaching Pack Volunteers on School Sign-Up Nights and Buzz Ups – District Professionals and Volunteers need to keep these ideas in mind to help Pack volunteers:**
- **Know THIS Pack’s Program – Not some other Generic Pack Program!!** Know *their* key leaders, their need for more leaders, *their* activity plans, and help them sell *their* activities.
 - If they don’t have an activity plan or calendar yet, [help them put one together](#).
 - Recruiting into a Pack with no plan will be a failure. Especially with higher entry costs!
 - Confirm with Packs that they have scheduled activities so families can *Get Out and Cub Scout*:
 - One or more fun activities within a week (maybe two) after School Sign-Up Night. Then More!
 - Packs can do second chance (or third or fourth chance) fun “*Get Out and Cub Scout*” sign-up options with fun events, perhaps in connection with a Pack orientation.
 - **Any fun activity can be a joining event** – if the Den/Pack can ***be prepared to welcome families***.
 - Coordinate with Packs to review [the Guide](#) and to edit the Plan and Script for Sign-Up Events they can download at [our Sign-Up Events page](#) to fit ***their*** Program, ***their*** Team, and ***their*** Needs.
 - They need to bring copies of their “[Pack Packet](#)” or Pack calendar/contact page, plus other items, including those described in the Sign-Up Event Plan and Script posted [here](#).
 - Do they need AAC printing assistance? District Professionals need to share that help.
 - **Ensure that Presentations Stay On Script and On Time.** Follow “Goldilocks Principles”: give parents the basic information they need to decide to sign-up. **Not too much** (use handouts to share more). **But not too little** (you have to give them enough to make a significant financial and time commitment). **Aim for “Just the Right Amount of Information”** (like, our activities and dues, not “*how to use ScoutBook*”!) Respect the precious time of families – be Helpful, Friendly, Courteous and Kind!
 - Presentation style School Sign-Up Nights should take 40-45 minutes and allow for Q and A with unit leadership if needed after application and registration collection is complete.
 - Station to station sign-ups should take a family around 20 minutes from start to finish.
 - **Because most Schools allow only a limited time for School Sign-Up Night, ensure that Pack Leaders understand that School Sign-Up Nights are not Parent Orientation Night.**
 - Packs should share a “[Pack Packet](#)” handout – a written parent orientation resource as a starter.

- A Pack Fun Sign-Up Event **separate** from School Sign-Up Night might have a parent orientation – you’ll have more time and flexibility – and works best if the Scouts do fun events away from the parents with extra leaders or an affiliated Troop. (Troop led fun is great for School Sign-Ups too!)
- **Every School Sign-Up Night **must have Professional Coaching** – Some Might Need Professional Leadership.** When you coach Packs and see that the leader team “gets” how to recruit – **let them run with it!** (It’s *their* Pack!) If they need more help, help them or get them help – but give them a part of the Script that will let them succeed even in a small way.
 - Sometimes, a trained district membership team member might lead a School Sign-Up Night ...
 - ... but the specific role of Council Professionals and district membership volunteers will vary depending on the strength of volunteer Pack and Den leaders at each event.
- **Assist Packs in Leadership Identification at School Sign-Up Nights:**
 - Ensure that every School Sign-Up Night encourages and welcomes new adult leadership.
 - Packs will want to be fun, organized programs – Packs need adult leaders to put on program.
 - Share a basic expectation that all adult partners participate to their ability.
 - Know the Pack’s leader needs – if they need many leaders, make a strong push on Parents to join.
 - Give an easy Adventure Plan to every parent – **let them see how they can lead and succeed.**

4) **What About Buzz Ups?** – **Most done by District Professionals. Maybe trained/tested Volunteers:**

- “Buzz Ups” are **very brief** announcements (ideally) in School Classrooms to get kids excited about this Pack and Cub Scouting (“**very brief**” like, *90 seconds top. Fast. In and Out!*).
 - *Why Must It Be Quick?* If not brief, **teachers will complain** and our relations with that school and the whole School District **will suffer**. That will hurt the Pack and hurt Cub Scouting in the District.
 - For that reason, District Professionals must ensure that any Volunteer (District or Pack) really “gets it” – best practice is to practice and get approval on a “tight 90 second” routine.
 - If your District Professional or a District Volunteer does a Buzz Up for your Pack, be sure they know about **your** Pack Program – District People should not sell activities that you don’t do.
- **Will Every School Sign-Up Night Get a District Professional Buzz Up?** Not necessarily.
 - If many Packs want to have School Sign-Up Nights during early weeks of School, there may be too many Schools for District Professionals to cover in Buzz Ups.
 - In that event, your School Sign-Up Night can either proceed without the benefit of a Buzz Up, or you can postpone your School Sign-Up Night and do a Pack Fun Sign-Up Event now.
- **Best Plan for Timing of Buzz Ups and School Sign-Up Nights** are below (because holding School Sign-Up Nights one day after a Buzz Up – not more than two days – gives families enough time to plan their attendance but not so much time that excitement is lost):
 - Tuesday Sign-Up Night? *Monday Morning Buzz Up.* // Wednesday Sign-Up? *Tuesday Buzz Up.* // Thursday Sign-Up? *Wednesday Buzz Up.* // Friday Sign-Up? *Thursday Buzz Up.*
 - Weekend Pack Fun Sign-Up Event? *Friday Morning Buzz Up.*
 - Monday Sign-Up Night? *Probably a Friday Morning Buzz Up. Maybe Monday morning.*
 - **Warning:** your “return” from a Friday Buzz Up to a Monday Sign-Up Night may be low – too many families will forget. But if Monday is the best night otherwise, go for it. Choose wisely!
- **Successful Buzz Ups lead to successful School Sign-Up Nights**
 - Call the school a week before to remind of your Buzz Up and School Sign-Up Night dates.
 - Ask for a classroom map and track your progress to ensure that we speak to every youth.
 - Do not miss youth at specials, grades that are not in their classrooms, classes testing or any other classroom that is not ready when you drop by.

- Tip: use the “Stopwatch” feature on your phone to chime after 60 seconds. Wrap Up! Bye!
- Maybe record your best Buzz Up pitch ... share with School, Parents, More!
- Thank the administration, secretary, parent liaison and anyone else who assisted you.

5) **Technical Tips for School Sign-Up Night Success** – District Professionals and Volunteers need to coordinate with Pack volunteers about these ideas (and know who is doing what and when):

- **Maximize School Access with the Strongest Advance Promotion Possible:**
 - In addition to Classroom Buzz Ups, can you get time/space at Assembly, Lunchroom, CCTV?
 - Flyers (Print and digital). Posters? Feather banners? Stickers? Yard Signs?
 - Supplemental promotion: school website calendar, social media, marquee, yard signs, etc.
- **Order Printed Materials and digital flyers as soon as School Sign-Up Nights are scheduled.**
 - **!!Make sure all flyer information is accurate!!** – date, time, contact information, **test QR codes.**
 - Add the lead unit volunteer as the primary contact number and Council new Scout interest number, or your own as secondary contact number on flyers.
 - Put Pack’s QR Code from my.scouting.org Invitation Manager on each flyer!
 - District Execs: Submit flyer orders on the AAC google doc as soon as information is finalized.
- **Deliver announcement flyers to every school:**
 - Know the School’s “take-home day” so flyers get to school in time to go home on time.
 - Make available to future Scouts two weeks before scheduled the School Sign-Up Night
 - Supplement with digital flyers.
 - Add posters, trifold, feather banners and yard signs to create as much visibility as possible.
- **Empower the Pack and Parents to do promotion too.**
 - Share the AAC Sign-Up Night flyer with Pack Leaders – email and invite them to share!
 - Be sure they see the ideas found at scoutingatl.org/promotingthepack.
 - Peer to Peer, Parent to Parent recruiting can be more powerful than a professional’s pitch.
- **Use Sign-In Sheets** (with parent contact phone/emails, and names/grades of children).
 - Include everyone, whether they sign up or not.
 - Many families will not be “sold” at Sign-Up Night – but will join if/when they are invited to another Pack or Den Event and take a “test drive” of Cub Scouting.
 - Keep notes on who might have leader potential, special concerns (like financial needs).
 - *If the District person holds this, share copies of all with Pack Leaders no later than the next day.*
- **Close the Sale.** Be sure it is easy to “say yes” and “Sign Up”.
 - That’s the final part (or final station) of a Sign-Up Event ... be sure you have enough help to make “check out” a success. [Print Paper Applications from Here](#) (Spanish too).
 - Have a Credit Card reader on your Treasurer’s Phone to easily “swipe” payments.
 - Train some parents to help new families with the steps needed to join.
- **Online Registration Option.** Sign-Ups can occur thru BeAScout.org. But not Council-Funded Packs.
 - All families still encouraged to completely register if using BeAScout.org before they leave.
 - Including the Pack’s QR Code from my.scouting.org Invitation Manager on each flyer helps!

6) **Last Minute Check-Ins Needed for Success** – District Professionals and Volunteers need to coordinate with Pack volunteers about these ideas (and know who is doing what and when):

- **District Professionals and Volunteers** contact Pack Leaders the week before School Sign-Up Night to confirm plans, script, speakers, and supplies; confirm again the day before that all is on course.

- **Who will contact the School** a week before Sign-Up Night to confirm the event timing and doors? Who will call the School on the morning of the event and ask for a reminder on afternoon announcements?
- **Supplies On Hand?** Ensure that all supplies for a successful sign-up event are on hand:
 - District Professional brings these – or supplies to Pack Leaders in advance:

Handbook Certificates	Orientation Guides	<i>If you want these, ask your DE:</i>
Slime for Kids	Braves Bookmarks	Credit Card Reader, Feather Banners
Waffle House Cards	Paper Applications	Stickers, Yard Signs, Peer 2 Peer Cards
Cub Scout Backpacks	Pencils / Stickers	Tabletop Standee

- Pack brings – click on links to download some of these:

Your Pack's " Pack Packet " of Information to Share	Print Paper Applications from Here (Spanish too)	Current Leaders + Parents + Scouts for "Peer to Peer" Recruiting
Your Pack's Revised Script	Financial Aid Forms	Treasurer's Credit Card Reader
Sign In Sheet and Pens	"How to Sign Up Online"	Maybe: Side Activity for Kids
Parent Skill Survey		Easy Den Adventure Plan

- **Testing ... Testing ... One Two (Wi-Fi).** Test your location for Wi-Fi – and post any Wi-Fi Password.

7) **Finish and Follow Up**

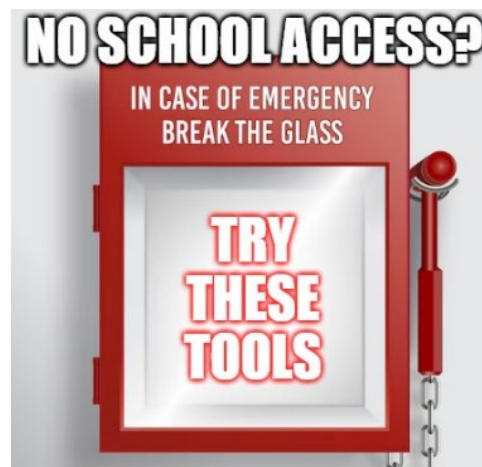
- **Say "See You Next Time".** Be sure the Pack volunteers greet people as they leave!
 - Say "goodbye" one by one and "*see you at the next event at ___ on ___*".
 - Be sure the Pack has everyone on the Sign-In Sheet so you can contact them.
 - Ask (if not obvious) if they submitted an Application tonight.
 - If "no", check the comfort level, and maybe follow up with an offer like "*maybe I can help ... can you share what questions you might have?*" and see if you can help solve it.
- **Huddle Up.** Before you leave, compare notes – especially about leader prospects, special follow up concerns, who will take the next steps, successes, challenges, etc.
- **Clean and Close.** Make sure the facility used is as clean or cleaner than we found it with any special instructions followed (lock up, lights, etc.); this will help ensure that we are invited back next year.
- **Thank You!** Thank the administration and let them know how many new Scouts were recruited and how that compares to the goal for that school (or how much that increases membership).
- **District Professional Reports.** District Professionals will report sign-up event results and families attending by reporting via Google Form on the day of the event – so if a District Professional was not in attendance to collect that data, a Pack volunteer needs to report that data.
- **Turn In Applications.** Follow up Paper and Online Applications:
 - Check (and fix glaring errors) Applications and turn in Paper Applications and \$\$ to the Council.
 - The Pack should keep copies for their Records. Process (accept) online Applications.
- **Reach Out To All.** Follow up with families – invite everyone to your upcoming events.
 - Email everyone on the Sign-In Sheets, not just "ScoutBook" contacts.
 - Follow up with all parents to encourage being on the leader team and to take Youth Protection Training. Start with Congratulations and "Thank You" for those who have signed up so far.

[[Click here to go Back to the Top of the School Playbook](#)] [[Click here to go Back to the Top of the Plan](#)]

The “What Do We Do When We Have No School Access” Playbook

From time to time a Unit will not have full “School Access” for recruiting. That means maybe your school won’t:

- 1) permit a **School Sign-Up Night** in the school building, or
- 2) permit in person classroom (or cafeteria/assembly) **Buzz Ups**, or
- 3) **send Scouting flyers home** that describe your Scouting Unit or your Unit’s Sign-Up Event, or
- 4) allow your Unit “space” or “**bandwidth**” on **School channels** like Websites, Newsletters, eBlasts, bulletin boards, or yard signs, or
- 5) allow presentations or presence at **PTA/PTO events**, or
- 6) allow a table, booth, or **display at any back-to-school Open House / Meet the Teacher / Registration Day** event for families.



When any of this happens to your Scouting Unit, do not despair – you still have many tools to recruit!

Do What You Are Allowed To Do! And Ask About Alternatives! Looking at the list above:

“No School Sign-Up Night”?	Have several Pack Fun Joining Events for families – current and prospects – where you meet or in a nearby fun location (pool, park, playground) *
“No Buzz Ups”?	Double down on contacts you can make with kids and families , like wearing the uniform, handing out your Pack Pamphlet where you can – car pool line? Playground? Kid to kid sharing? Back to School events? *
“No School-Sent Flyers”?	See above and double down on contacts you can make like engaging current pack parents – not just leaders! – to contact other parents in their grade to pitch Scouting. <i>Calls, emails, texts, social media, face to face.</i> *
“No Bandwidth on School Communication Channels”?	See above and check to see what you can do ... if no website, can you get space in an email or newsletter? If not that, can you get poster space for a bulletin board? A “Join Scouts” yard sign? <i>A story with pix about a Scout Service Project at the School?</i> *
“No Presentation at PTA/PTO”?	If you can’t speak on Scouting at a PTA/PTO event, can you show up in Uniform? (Yes.) Volunteer to lead an opening flag ceremony? *
“No Display at back-to-school Open House”?	See above and check to see what you can do ... if you can’t have a display in the building, ask about a display outside (a tent? a campfire with s’mores?). <i>No display? No problem.</i> Families can be at an “Open House” and talk with other families and hand out your Pack Pamphlet. *

The Six Footnotes * above are each: **these steps help you recruit even if you have full school access!**

Empower Parents In The Schools! Who Has Access to Schools? **Parents Do!** Pack and Den Leaders need to empower all parents to promote the Pack to other families!

- Leaders need to *voluntell* parents: **parent to parent recruiting is a job you need to do!**
 - Peer to peer (parent to parent) recruiting is most powerful – **and can only be done by parents.**
 - **Being an Inviting Welcoming Recruiting Person is perfect for any friendly parent.** If a parent likes Cub Scouting for their child, *that’s all they need to be a successful inviting welcomer.*

- You cannot have too many Inviting Welcoming Recruiting Parents – don’t stop at one in each grade (though you need parents at each grade reaching out to others in that grade), because every parent has a different circle of influence.
- Those parents can also be part of any outreach and cultivation of School Principals and staff.
 - Even if they are not Registered Leaders in the Pack.
 - They can “open the door” and get non-parent leaders into contact with school staff.

What Can Parents Do To Help Recruit More Families?

- Attend **back-to-school Open House / Meet the Teacher / Registration Day** with their Scout and invite other families to join the Pack. Share your [Pack Pamphlet](#) with them.
- Attend **any Sign-Up Events** with their Scout and welcome other families to join the fun and the Pack. Share your [Pack Pamphlet](#) with them. Sign-Up Events should be for everyone – returning and new!
- **Be inviting** at other times around school (assemblies, car pool line) and neighborhood. Share your [Pack Pamphlet](#) with families. Invite them to the next fun event!
- Be Social. **Use Your Social Media** to show that you like Cub Scouts. Share pictures and video – your own, and also share any from Council, District, Pack and other sites. Invite others to join you at events.
- **Post on Message Boards / Listservs** about your Den and Pack and to invite others to join you at events.
- Put up a “Join Scouts” Yard Sign to show you’re part of Scouting.
- **Attend PTA/PTO meetings and talk up Scouting.** Can your Scout wear a uniform to that? Sure. Can you wear a name tag that says “Hello! Ask Me About Cub Scouts”? Of course you can.
- **Be an Ambassador to the School.** If your Pack or Den wants to provide baked goods or snacks to teachers compliments of Scouting – parents are the ones to bring those in.
- **Chat Up Scouting at the School.** Parents will see Principals and staff – tell them you appreciate that the School supports Scouting and that your child is benefiting from Scouting.

Continue to Cultivate School Relationships! Including as described in the [School Playbook](#).

- Elevate [school and community presence](#), like ‘Adopt a School’ service projects, welcome back baked goods, cards and letters and True Stories of Scouts in Service (like stories and pictures of what your Scouts did to help the School ... or “*where are they now*” stories of past Cub Scouts becoming Eagles).
- After getting a “No” answer to your request for School Access, share notes about what happened, why, and how to approach a next contact and request.
 - Not just Cubmaster and District Executive – involve parents with Scouts in the school.
 - Consider whether you can have greater success with other school staff – yes, the Principal is in charge, but are there teachers or other staff who are your fans and can influence the Principal?
 - District Executives can check with Field Directors – is there any central office influence that can be both positive (don’t get the Principal mad) and successful?
- Field Staff can help elevate school relationships if they invite Pack Parent Leaders to school contacts.
 - If the “No” answer came after a meeting with a Cubmaster with no parent in the school plus the District Executive – for the next visit at the right time involve parents with Scouts in the school.

Cultivate Community Presence and Relationships! See [these ideas](#) for how to grow your Unit’s presence in the community – many of which simply involve fun family activities you do in uniform as a Den or Pack – like festivals, trunk ‘r treats, cookouts, pool parties, kites, rockets, derby, fishing, sports, and more.

Postscript: Why Cub Scout Recruiting is New and Different after 2024-25+

Biggest Change: Transition away from “Council Conducted” fall recruiting by Council Professional Staff to “Pack Run Recruiting” by Pack volunteers on their own schedules with Council coaching and resources.

- For District Professionals: instead of scheduling and conducting School Sign-Up Nights with some Pack participation, District Professionals will (with District Volunteers) train and coach Pack Volunteers to run their own recruiting events. District Professionals / Volunteers will support with Handbook Certificates and other materials and may attend to help support Pack Volunteers.
- For Packs: with Council coaching and resources, local Pack volunteers will schedule and conduct their School Sign-Up Nights and Pack Run Fun Events as they like, with the spotlight and microphones on **their** local leaders, **their** local program, **their** schedules, and **their** needs – including adult leaders.

Foundations for Easy Transition to Pack-Run Recruiting. Since 2019 Atlanta Area Council Cub Scout Recruiting has been in transition from a Council Conducted process (with some support from volunteers) to one run by local Packs themselves (with coaching and support from District Professionals and Volunteers).

Why have those AAC Recruiting Resources focused on Pack empowerment instead of Council control?

- In part, because Pack empowerment **magnifies** Council efforts: dozens of Pack volunteer leaders coached by District Professionals can do more than one District Professional.

Too Many New Youth Not Enough Adults. Despite those resources, professional staff recruiting and metrics continued to put primary emphasis on maximum youth recruitment, often conducting recruiting at schools with insufficient Pack foundation to deliver the Cub Scout program – or at schools with no Pack at all.

- If Packs lack program and leaders, recruiting lots of youth rarely results in a sustainable Pack.
- Plus, we know that Packs that have had successful and sustainable recruiting with Council conducted recruiting of youth already have strong (1) **activities/calendar**, (2) program **promotion**, (3) **leader** recruitment, and (4) **school relationships** – **the first four steps to successful and sustainable recruiting**.
 - Yes, “it goes without saying” that Packs will do those steps ... but if it is not “said” to Packs that they “need to do this”, too many Packs just don’t take those steps and rely solely on the Council.
 - And **they need to hear it from multiple sources, including from their District Executives**.
- Sometimes there has been insufficient communication/coordination between Packs and Professionals.
 - More emphasis on coaching and coordination will help sync the process with Pack priorities.

National Fees. The 12-month Annual Registration Fee is a challenge.

- New families need to see a viable program at the Sign-Up point ... with attractive activities and a robust program staffed by a sufficient team of leaders.
- If they have to pay significant amounts right away just on the National Fee, families are less willing to take the risk of joining a new or rebuilding or unorganized Pack or Den.

The 2025+ Landscape. Whether or not the “annual subscription” model of the National Registration Fee will continue, costs will remain high.

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