



2026 Executive Membership Plan Summary

CONTENT

2026 Goals

- Retention and Growth Strategies
- Achieving Membership Success
- 2026 Recognitions
- Building Our Brand
- Executive Board Support
- 2026 New Members goals by District
- District Leadership and Culture
- Unit Recruitment Events
Membership Monthly Cycle
- Unit Retention Plan

A Playbook that is practical, simplified, and focused on the things that matter most:

- Recruiting
- Retention
- Relationships
- New Units
- Digital Marketing
- Execution discipline



Join the Scouting Trail... Where Lifetime memories are created.

Retain and Grow Scouting's impact across all Core Programs (Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Exploring) in Scouting America National Capital Area Council (NCAC)

The Scouting Movement calls on us to make retention a top priority for 2026 and beyond, alongside New-unit development; together, these levers are essential to rebuilding and expanding our movement. New Members recruitment growth remains a top priority.

Why does it matter? This initiative ensures that every youth within the Council's boundaries has the opportunity to participate in Scouting, while fostering community engagement and developing the leaders of tomorrow. This program impacts youth of all backgrounds teaches life-long values and promotes inclusivity.



2026 Goals

Recruit over 6,900 new members in 2026.
Each District has (+2 net growth in overall units over 2025)
Timeline: January 1- October 31, 2026

Key Actions:

100% of all unit renewals are completed by February 28, 2026. (Note: All NCAC units, that currently do not have their unit Renewal in December, are to move to December as their renewal month)

100% of units in District (Packs, Troops, Crews, and Posts) partnering with Council/District, to conduct one coordinated effort in the Spring and one coordinated effort in the Fall, that is not to replace the additional recruitment opportunities that the unit puts on, throughout the year. (Note: In the Fall, we ask for the unit's support to partner with the district team, to have at least "one" out of their several joining opportunities, be held at the school)

Conduct District Fall Recruitment Event Training for Packs, Troops, Crews, and Posts in the month of May 2026.

Districts will have a new youth recruitment goal by Quarter to reach over 6,900 new members.

March 31, 2026 - 10% or 690 new members recruited

June 30, 2026 - 30% or 2,070 new members recruited

September 30, 2026 - 80% or 5,520 new members recruited

October 31, 2026 - 100% or over 6,900 new members recruited

Retention and Growth Strategies

1. Building a Unit Culture of having a 12–18-month program calendar, to include Unit, District, and Council events, to provide to current and new families in the unit
2. Pack, Troop, Crew, and Exploring Year-around recruitment
3. Encourage 100% of registered leaders in unit, to be fully trained in their position.
4. New Leaders encouraged to attend roundtable to network with other leaders in their role.

Achieving Membership Success

Growth:

Great Unit Programming.

- When Scouts are having fun, Parents and scouts share their experiences with close friends.
- Peer-to-peer recruitment and additional enrollments are pivotal, supported by unit efforts and the District membership committee.

Program transitions:

- Smooth transitions from Webelos Scout to Scouts BSA, and Scouts BSA to Venturing Crew or an Explorer Post, are managed jointly by unit committees, District volunteers and Council staff to retain members.

Sustaining members:

- Quarterly unit inventory to confirm youth are registered
- Great unit programming, involving parents buy-in.

Marketing - Building Our Brand:

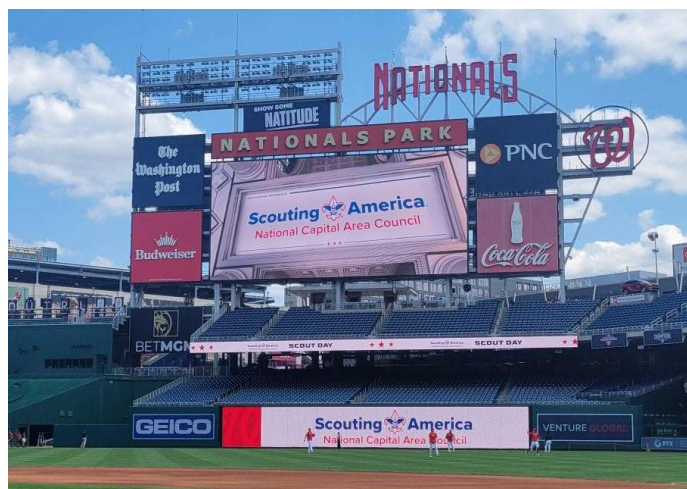
Our market includes 995,551 total available youth.

Digital outreach is now a core pillar of membership success. Our simple, high-impact digital strategy to promote the Council's overall growth includes:

- The Google Ad Grant (up to \$10,000/month in free search advertising).
- Use targeted Google and social media advertising to reach parents by ZIP, school district, or interest.
- Promote every recruiting event digitally. Use join event landing page with Google map of joining events, location-based list of joining events, and clear calls to action for all joining events.
- Boost properly-brand, public unit and district posts featuring real youth activities as appropriate.
- Maintain a weekly posting rhythm.
- Use short-form video (15–30 seconds) for maximum engagement.

Digital Marketing Principles

- Lead with outcomes (confidence, leadership, friendship, outdoor skills).
- Target Natural Fit Families and emerging communities.



2026 Recognition:

Two Incentives:

- Every new Member that join, between January 1- October 31st, will be presented with this limited-edition Membership 2026 CSP shoulder patch, as a way to remember the year that the scout started on the Scouting Trail.
- Unit Recognition: Every unit that holds five recruitment joining events and recruits two more new members, than they did in 2025, will enter a drawing to receive an incentive appropriate for that Program (Pack, Troop, Crew, or Posts), by October 31, 2026. (*Note: Please confirm with District, on your 2026 new member recruitment target*)



****Recognition items will be presented on the 1st week of November 2026.**

District Leadership Excellence and Culture

Scouting America National Capital Area Council seeks to recruit and maintain leaders reflecting community diversity. The District Membership Committee focuses on expanding Scouting in underserved areas and fostering relationships with community organizations to support youth growth. The Committee should reflect the makeup of the community served and is primarily responsible for the relationship with community organizations to provide opportunities for youth membership growth and youth recruitment.

The committee will strive to reach into all areas within the Council and District boundaries providing the extra effort required to expand the Scouting program in the underserved areas of the council in the following ways:

- **Gather Information:** Collaborate with District Executives to plan for new units and membership growth and retention. Use market analysis and membership figures to guide decisions and track growth.
- **Cultivate relationships:** Build strong ties with community organizations to encourage the use of Scouting programs. Maintain access to schools and conduct relationship conferences to foster understanding and cooperation.
- **Organize units:** Recruit and train organizers for new and existing units, ensuring each is supported by a commissioner. Promote the "Whole Family of Scouting" concept to integrate Packs, Troops, and Crews under one chartered organization.
- **Lead training effort:** Coordinate the training for the Council's standardized recruitment events.
- **Host training events:** Each District will host training, locally, in May for units (Packs, Troops, Crews, Posts) and District leaders to execute the Council's Plan for what a Fall recruitment sign-up event looks like, and more.



“The Plan” - Recruitment Events

NCAC plans to follow the outlined areas of emphasis to increase new members recruited and new units formed. The implementation of this plan will allow our Council to reach our new members and new units' goal by 10/31/2026.

Our Staff, in collaboration/partnership with District and Unit level Volunteers:

Compile comprehensive list of every elementary, middle, and High school, both public and private, with flier distribution process and deadlines.

Identify and organize new Charter Organizations to create new Units throughout the year. (New Packs, Troops, Crews, and Explorer Posts)

Provide Leadership to conducting Spring and Fall Joining events in 100% of the district's units. Each event will be included in the Council-wide digital advertising after submission by the district representative and must follow the Council's guidelines for Joining events.

Give leadership to joining events at **as many schools** as possible, that do not have a Scouting unit associated. (Note: Having a joining event at the elementary, middle, and high schools, both public and private, is in addition to other awesome joining events that the unit puts on, to have new families join.)

Secure support from District Leadership, to help units confirm an information table at School Open House, and have at least one joining opportunity, out of the several joining events that a unit will have in the Fall, be held at a school.

Recognize Districts/Units that achieve their new members recruitment goal for 2026.

NCAC Plan for conducting recruitment events in the Spring and Fall:

·Units and District work together to set the one coordinated Joining event in the Spring, and the one coordinated event, in the Fall, three weeks in advance. (Note: Again, these two coordinated events, involving Council/District support, and is not to take the place of other joining opportunities that the unit has been successful putting on, to recruit new families.)

·Unit distributes Council-approved recruitment flyer with unit leader email/contact information, along with the District Executive email/contact information.

·100% of Joining events must adhere to our Council's guidelines and have a Geofenced digital ad created by Council.

·Scout talks to youth must be conducted at the school or location being promoted, the day before the event, or if not possible, permission is obtained to hand out flyers.

·Strongly encourage all Joining events to happen on a Tuesday or Thursday evening at 6:30 p.m.

·Make sure the remaining new youth that attended the Joining event, but didn't sign up that evening, are registered by the next Den or Pack meeting.

Membership Monthly Cycle

The 2026 plan for New Members recruitment and New Units, is outlined by specific month to retain and increase members, emphasizing collaboration with volunteers and leadership support. It includes timelines for recruitment events and training, with goals for unit renewals and new member and unit recognition.

January - February

- Council Staff Planning Conference- 2026 Council Membership Executive Summary shared with staff. (Note: Information was collected from District Membership Chairs, back in the Fall of 2025, and was compiled to make this plan.)
- Prepare to email Webelos to Scout Transition/Dropped Webelos list to Troops in February
- Unit Membership Inventories conducted
- New Unit Organization – Packs-Troops-Crews-Exploring

March:

- Webelos to Scout Transition/Dropped Webelos list to Troops, process, completed by March 1st.
- School appointments with school administrator are confirmed and conducted this month.
- December dropped youth email sent to Unit Committee Chairs, to confirm participation
- Minimum of 10 Spring Joining events (Packs, Troop, Crew, and Exploring events) for the month of March are conducted.
- Schedule 10 Spring Joining events (Packs, Troop, Crew, and Exploring events) for the month of April.
- **100% of units confirm Be-A-Scout information is accurate for unit meeting location.**
- **1st New Unit for each District, to be organized and posted by March 31st.**
- **10% of new youth members District goal, recruited in District**
- New Unit Organization – Packs-Troops-Crews-Exploring

April

- Minimum of 10 Spring Joining events (Packs, Troop, Crew and Exploring events) for the month of April are conducted.
- Schedule 10 Spring Joining events (Packs, Troop, Crew, and Exploring events) for the month of May.
- (Retention) District to host BALOO training for Packs and ScoutsBSA training for Troops. District to confirm that units have 12–18-month calendar, that include Council, District, and Unit events.
- School appointments with school administrator are confirmed and conducted this month.
- January dropped youth email sent to Unit Committee Chairs, to confirm participation
- Logistics for May Recruitment training for the Fall for (Packs, Troops, Crews, and Posts) confirmed, and rsvp communication has gone out, to publicize event
- **20% of new youth members District goal, recruited in District.**

Membership Monthly Cycle (cont.)

May - June

- Minimum of 10 Spring Joining events (Packs, Troop, Crew, and Exploring events) for the month of May are conducted.
- School appointments with school administrator are confirmed and conducted this month.
- February dropped youth email sent to Unit Committee Chairs, to confirm participation in May
- Day Camp roster checks for unregistered Scouts, are conducted in the month of May/June
- District Fall recruitment training held for (Packs, Troops, Crews, and Explorer Post Key Leaders.), in the district.
- March dropped youth email sent to Unit Committee Chairs, to confirm participation in June
- New Unit Organization – Packs-Troops-Crews-Exploring
- **2nd New Unit for each District, to be organized and posted By June 30th.**
- **All Districts to achieve 30% of their new members recruitment and two new units organized, by June 30th.**

July and August

- Confirm Scout table at School Open House/Charter Organization Location for 100% of units in District.
- Work with District Leadership and Unit Leaders to set up Geofenced digital ad for all Joining events following Council guidelines.
- Schedule recruitment sign-up evening event at as many schools in your District as possible. Tuesday or Thursday is preferred.
- April and May dropped youth email sent to Unit Committee Chairs, to confirm participation in July/August
- Unit Membership Inventories conducted
- New Unit Organization – Packs-Troops-Crews-Exploring
- 35% of new youth members District goal, recruited in District

September “September is the biggest Recruitment Month for Scouting”

- School Open House/Charter Organization Location/date/ time confirmed for 100% of Packs in District.
- 100% of all Packs, and as many schools as possible, that do not have a unit associated with them, in District, have their Joining event scheduled with the district.
- July dropped youth email sent to Unit Committee Chairs, to confirm participation in September
- **3rd New Unit organized and posted by September 30th.**
- Start scheduling Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Exploring Open Houses for October.
- District hosts required training for New Leaders.
- 80 % of new youth members District goal, recruited in District

Membership Monthly Cycle (cont.)

October

- Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Exploring Open Houses are conducted in October.
- Bring-A-Buddy invitations sent to youth that may not have joined at the 1st event.
- Unit Inventory for Scouts that are not registered are conducted.
- District training opportunities for New Leaders are conducted.
- August dropped youth email sent to Unit Committee Chairs, to confirm participation in October
- “Thank You Cards” to go out to School administrators/Charter Partners who welcomed Scouting.
- 100% of new youth members District goal, recruited in District

All Districts achieve new members recruitment goal and have (+2 net overall growth in District total units) by October 31, 2026



Retention Plan for Scouting America Core Programs (Packs, Troops, Crews, and Posts) Sustaining Unit Initiative

Providing a year-round, quality Scouting program should be the goal of every Scouting Unit in order to keep youth engaged. The Retention Plan helps leaders develop their annual program along with a budget and fundraising plan to ensure a high-quality Scouting program year-round. The result is a well-managed, well-financed Scouting Unit. It encourages strategic planning and continuous evaluation to improve offerings.

Importance of a unit having a Retention Plan:

Program planning: Retention Plan helps Scouting units develop a plan for the year, including activities, meetings, and key dates and encourages the creation of a 12–18-month calendar that includes Council, District, and Unit events.

Budgeting: Retention Plan helps Scouting units create a budget for the year. Costs of activities and other Unit expenses (such as awards, camperships, equipment and registration) need to be determined and plotted. The goal is to know what it will cost for a youth to have a full year of program in the Unit.

Fundraising: Retention Plan helps Scouting units create a plan for raising funds to support their program to determine how the fun will be funded such as with the popcorn and camp card sales which are the easiest options because they are branded to support Scouting. If a unit wants to do more, following Scouting America policies for unit fundraising must be followed.

Membership: Retention Plan outlines making sure Scouts return while providing recruitment resources and strategic planning for the number of Scouts in the unit.

Volunteer Management: Retention Plan encourages confirming who will return, where there are holes, and identifying potential leaders among neighbors, friends, or colleagues.



Goals for Units:

During the summer, consider what your unit would like to do for the year, instead of just repeating what's been done in the past. Going through this process helps to engage families, retain Scouts, and recruit more leaders.

Brainstorm ideas for activities, evaluate ideas to see if there are resources to carry them out, vote on which programs to participate in.

Create a 12–18-month calendar for the year, including activities. Reevaluate your plan throughout the year and make changes as needed.

Provide your Retention Plan to the District so that Unit Commissioners and District Executives can support your unit and provide information to new and existing families when they inquire about the Unit's programming.

Program Resources Provided:

- Unit Program Planner
- Unit Budget Planner
- Unit Program Planning Calendar
- Unit Leader Resources
- Unit Succession Planning Worksheet
- Unit Scout Camping
- Online Advancement Reporting
- Recruitment Resources



One Stop Shop for Recruitment:

<https://ncacscouting.org/resources/for-leaders/unit-and-district-resources/>

Scouting  **America**[™]
National Capital Area Council

9190 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20814
Tel: 301-530-9360

Website: NCACscouting.org
NCAC Blog: WeOwnAdventure.com
Join Scouting: BeAScout.org

