

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. Q: Will district names be changed? If so how will they be chosen?**
A: The Johnson County Districts, North Star, and Thunderbird have significant changes to their boundaries and district name will be changed. In addition, new districts have been formed within Johnson county, and the splitting of Thunderbird and North Star Districts. New district committees will select new name and submit to VP of Operations for approval prior to August 30, 2015.
- 2. Q: What will happen with programs that are currently being planned for fall, including camporees, Cub Family Campouts, adult leader trainings, etc.?**
A: All programs that are on the "legacy district" calendar for 2015 can still happen through the legacy districts. A review of the 2016 calendar needs to happen prior to September 30 so that updates to the 2016 calendar can be made and communicated to the units.
- 3. Q: How will this affect the 2015 Investment in Character Campaign?**
A: Goal is have 2015 IIC campaign wrapped up by May 27 Victory and no later than June 30. Campaign will be complete prior to implementation of new plan begins.
- 4. Q: How will 2016 goals Investment in Charter Goals be set?**
A: Starting July 1, past prospects/donors will be moved into new district structure and history for new districts will be formed. Goals will be set off that history. The council strategic plan calls for 7% increase in IIC annually.
- 5. Q: How will 2015 popcorn sale be affected?**
A: The 2015 popcorn sale will be supported by the "new" district structure and goals set accordingly based on history.
- 6. Q: How will redistricting affect 2015 Day Camp?**
A: It will not. Most day camps happen in June, prior to redistrict proposal would take place. For those district whose day camp is in July, the "Legacy District" structure will still support day camp.
- 7. Q: How will this affect the 2015 and 2016 Budget?**
A: 2015 events and activities will still be supported under the "Legacy District" budgets. 2016 budgeting process will be supported by the new district structure.
- 8. Q: How with district realignment effect re-chartering in 2016?**
A: District realignment will only effect re-chartering for units in Bates County and some LDS units. Units in Bates County will re-charter in January 2016, but will only pay for 11 months vs. 12. This will move their re-charter date to December for the following year and put them in the same cycle as Cass County. The same will be true for LDS units that currently have a January re-charter dates (those LDS Units in Kansas, Pioneer Trails, and Lone Bear).

9. Q: What will the 2016 District Dinners and District Award of Merits look like?

A: This will be the 1st “District Event” based on the new district structure. Each new district will hold its Annual Meeting in December/January to elect new district committee, those officers will be installed at district dinner, and Award of Merit Recipients as voted on my new district’s advancement and recognition committee. 2015 JTE will be based on new district alignment adding in IIC from Legacy District alignment (We will know what \$ came from where).

A: Note: Change in answer based on input from the fireside chat conducted with district chairs and district commissioners. The 2016 district dinners will be the final activity conducted by the “legacy districts”. Legacy district advancement and recognition committees will select, approve, and present 2015 District Award of Merits. 2016 Key 3’s and district committee members will be installed during January district committee meeting of the “new” districts. 2015 JTE will be based on new district alignment adding in IIC from Legacy District alignment. This also allows us to set “baseline” for 2016.

10. Q: How will the district realignment proposal effect OA chapters?

A: The Lodge Leadership is reviewing the realignment proposal and will be discussing plans at upcoming meetings of the LEC. A copy of their proposed plan can be viewed by clicking on the following link. <http://www.hoac-bsa.org/Data/Sites/1/media/board-of-directors/District-Realignment-Proposal-OA-Implementation-Plan.pdf>

11. Q: As a Unit Commissioner, how will this affect the units I serve?

A: It is important that we maintain the highest level of unit support possible during the transition process. In some cases, the units that a particular unit commissioner serves may end up in more than one district. As new districts are put together, new District Commissioners will review commissioner staff assignments and make unit assignment changes as necessary. During the 6 month transition phase, we ask that you continue to serve units as you have until these changes are made.

12. Q: Will the creation of the new LDS district, but still having units tied to “geographical districts” for program create a “serving two masters” situation?

A: No. The LDS district will serve units through its structure and support units accordingly. Units will be welcomed and encouraged utilize program resources of the geographic districts in which they live including day camp, roundtable, camporees, pinewood derby, adult leader trainings, etc. Volunteers may choose to volunteer in LDS district and/or geographic district based on their interest and available time.

13. Q: How will geographic districts be able to communicate effectively with LDS unit leadership to promote upcoming programs once units are pulled out to geographic districts to promote upcoming programs?

A: This will be accomplished in several ways. 1st. The LDS district will be broken up into sub-districts to align with the stakes of the LDS Church. Though the LDS district, local day camps, roundtables, camporees, training’s, etc. can be promoted through the LDS district. 2nd. District Commissioners will have access to unit rosters through commissioner tools. 3rd. By keeping information up-to-date on district web-site, opportunities can be seen by all.

14. Q: How will the Order of the Arrow work within the LDS Districts? What chapter will I belong to? Who will be responsible for elections?

A: OA members within the LDS church will belong to the OA chapter in their geographic area. That OA chapter will be responsible for running elections.

- 15. Q: Because districts are now aligned by school district's, what if I attend school in one school district and want to attend a unit in another?**
- A: No problem. Just as now, a person can join any unit they choose. All units are listed on BeAScout.org so a family can find a unit most convenient to them regardless of school district.
- 16. Q: Did the Task Force consider aligning DeSoto with a district other than Pelathe (Lawrence, Baldwin, Perry, and Eudora) and Olathe?**
- A: Yes the Task Force considered leaving aligned with Shawnee Mission, or forming a new district with Gardner/Edgerton. Although DeSoto borders Shawnee Mission for a short distance, DeSoto shares much larger borders with Olathe and Gardner/Edgerton. Our experience with Northern Tier shows that De Soto is considered by most to be remote from Shawnee Mission. Combining De Soto and Gardner/Edgerton would create a district that is too small in current membership and resources, even if combined with Springhill. The later option may be considered in the future if those areas grow significantly.
- 17. Q: Will the LDS Administrative District conduct its own Eagle program (packet processing and boards)?**
- A: Yes, though maybe not immediately.
- 18. Q: Might the re-alignment of districts adversely impact re-chartering in December 2015 and January 2016.**
- A: Yes, particularly if units and commissioners don't stay focused on getting re-chartering done on time. The Task Force considered various other times for implementing realignment, but all other options risked more significant disruption of program delivery and finance.
- 19. Q: Why did the realignment committee recommend breaking up the large districts of North Star and Thunderbird?**
- A: Several factors were discussed during the committee meetings as to the reasons for forming four new districts to replace the current two. The most important of these discussions is to increase volunteer opportunities and increase membership. By forming four districts, more opportunities exist for volunteers to take leadership roles in camping, activities, training, advancement, membership, fundraising and unit service. It also makes the role of those leadership responsibilities smaller and more manageable. For example, it is easier for a district commissioner to manage 40 units and 13 unit commissioners than 120 units and 40 unit commissioners.
- 20. Q: It's hard to find enough volunteers now to fill the North Star and Thunderbird District Committees. Won't it be harder to fill committees in smaller districts?**
- A: Recruiting volunteer leaders is always a challenge and an ongoing process. This is true in large district and small districts. People are more likely to take on small jobs vs. larger ones. People are also more likely to volunteer time to benefit their local area and community vs. neighboring ones. BSA provides us an excellent model for recruiting volunteers that has been proven successful for many years. The publicized creation of new district positions for volunteers will open opportunities to bring new volunteers to help relieve those who have labored for years in the same positions. The creation of

new positions will also signal to prospective volunteers that there is a need for their service, a need not often apparently in older established districts where the same uniformed volunteers are routinely in charge.

21. Q: Aren't smaller districts at a disadvantage to larger districts when it comes to providing quality program and unit support?

A: The data does not support this. Both large and small districts in the Heart of America Council perform well in some areas and struggle in others. In 2014, all districts qualified for either Silver or Gold in JTE points. District size, taken by itself, was not a barometer for success (see charts below). As stated on page 4 of the proposal, advantages and disadvantages were discussed for small, medium, and large size districts. The committee identified more advantages related to smaller and medium size districts than to larger districts.

Cub Scout Advancement		Boy Scout Advancement		Opportunity to Join		UVTS	
Lone Bear	71.32%	Pelathe	57.78%	North Star	7.23%	Big Muddy	93.75%
Pelathe	70.57%	Big Muddy	49.62%	Twin Rivers	7.10%	Twin Rivers	45.45%
Pioneer Trails	69.79%	Thunderbird	48.41%	Lone Bear	6.96%	Lone Bear	40.81%
North Star	68.14%	North Star	48.35%	Big Muddy	6.91%	North Star	34.48%
Thunderbird	65.53%	Lone Bear	48.21%	Pelathe	6.06%	Thunderbird	33.33%
Big Muddy	56.23%	Pioneer Trails	44.23%	Pioneer Trails	5.78%	Pioneer Trails	33.33%
Twin Rivers	52.68%	Twin Rivers	35.24%	Thunderbird	5.13%	Pelathe	27.77%

Investment in Character		Webelos to Scout Transition		Day Camp Attendance	
Lone Bear	107.6%	North Star	60.1%	Lone Bear	44.5%
Twin Rivers	100.6%	Thunderbird	59.4%	Pelathe	41.7%
Pelathe	100.0%	Pelathe	48.9%	North Star	35.3%
Thunderbird	83.5%	Big Muddy	46.8%	Twin Rivers	34.8%
North Star	80.7%	Pioneer Trails	45.9%	Thunderbird	25.1%
Pioneer Trails	76.6%	Lone Bear	45.6%	Big Muddy	17.3%
Big Muddy	64.7%	Twin Rivers	40.0%	Pioneer Trails	13.4%

22. Q: Aren't the customs, traditions, and close affiliations of districts with a long history more important than any benefit to be obtained by realignment?

A: Customs, traditions, and close affiliations are very important. However, realignment to increase growth and to deliver Scouting to more youth must be our priority. We know from common experience that new districts will soon develop new customs and traditions, some reminiscent of old and others will be new. We also know that working for the common benefit of our community youth will cause us to establish new and strong affiliations while maintaining our old affiliations through our camping and our honor camping programs.

- 23. Q. How will Journey to Excellence (JTE) goals be set for the realigned districts for 2016?**
- A. Goals for geographic districts are set based on national and council guidance and performance of districts in the defined geographic area for 2015. For example, recruiting, fund raising, and unit performance are all easily identified by specific geographic areas based on unit location and Zip Codes. Goals for the LDS Administrative District will be set based on the performance of LDS units during 2015. JTE goals for 2017 will be based on performance of all districts in 2016.
- 24. Q. Can a unit “choose” what district they are in, especially in area of heavy crossover of youth between school districts?**
- A. No. District alignment is based on the address of the charter partner and the public school district in which the charter partner is located. This is for district service purposes only. A youth can join any unit they wish regardless of location.
- 25. Q. Why is school district alignment so important?**
- A. In the days of open school access, it was not. Our recruitment model was to hand out flyers, conduct boy talks, and invite youth to join. With more and more school districts limiting school access by only allowing electronic flyers and not allowing boy talks, different strategies are needed to invite families to join Scouting. Aligning our BSA districts with school districts permits the development of more effective strategies to promote Scouting in the local communities, while avoiding a conflict that can arise when two different BSA districts split a school district. With only one BSA district creating a strategy of recruitment of youth in an area, we have a cohesive recruiting plan for each given area/school district. This only effects Cub Scout membership in the near-term, but because 92% of all Boy Scouts come from Cub Scouts, in the long run it affects Boy Scout membership as well.
- 26. Q. I have volunteered on the district level for many years in a certain district. I have many friends and affiliations to that district and don't want to change districts. Realignment changes the district that I am in, what can I do?**
- A. The fellowship of Scouting is very important and the reason many volunteers stay in the program long after their sons leave the program. As a district volunteer, you are welcome and encourage to volunteer in the district that you choose best fit you regardless of where you live or where your “home unit” is located.
- 27. Q. If the committee started looking at district realignment in September, why was rank and file unit and district volunteers not asked their opinion until April?**
- A. The Heart of America Council Strategic Plan called for a committee to review current district alignment and to make a recommendation to the Board as to the best alignment to serve Scouting in the future. Committee members were chosen that represented all areas of the council and at all levels of service; Unit, District, and Council. Committee members were expected to set aside any personal bias or preference and make decisions in the best interests of Scouting and HOAC. The committee had to select a process for orderly review and development of its recommendation to the HOAC Board. The committee established deadlines for its work. The committee worked for 6 months considering numerous options, agreeing to some and rejecting others. “No Change” in the current alignment was always an option. The committee agreed to what they believe is the best proposal and provide the report to the Executive Committee

(EC) of the Board that is currently being circulated for comment. The EC could have directed the committee to stop work and that no realignment would occur. However, the EC approved the report presented and authorized the work group to release the report and receive public comment for a period of 3 months through 5 fireside chats, 1 with the district Key 3's, and 4 from any interested volunteer. All areas of concern will be discussed and evaluated before a final recommendation is made to the HOAC Board on June 26. Every district has a vote on the proposal through their district chairman and board members residing within their districts, many of which are actively engaged at the unit and district level as well.