

My Community

Required adventure • Citizenship

If you read nothing else

Two meetings plus a service project. Meeting 1 covers voting and the elected official visit; meeting 2 builds the law timeline.

Invite the elected official early — six weeks is not too much. School board members, city council members, and county commissioners say yes far more often than you expect.

Requirement 4 is a service project. Coordinate with your committee so it counts toward JTE objective 8 and gets logged in Scoutbook.

The requirements

Official requirement text. Tick each one off as your Scouts complete it — the meeting plans below cover all of them.

- ☐ 1. Learn about majority and plurality types of voting.
- ☐ 2. Speak with someone who is elected to their position. Discover the type of voting that was used to elect them and why.
- ☐ 3. Choose a federal law and create a timeline of the history of the law. Include the involvement of the three branches of government.
- ☐ 4. Participate in a service project.

Meeting 1: How we choose: majority, plurality, and a real official

Goal: Scouts can explain the difference between majority and plurality voting, and hear from someone who was actually elected.

Covers requirements 1 and 2

Before the meeting

- Invite your guest six weeks out. A short, specific ask works best: twenty minutes, ten Scouts, they will ask how you were elected. Offer to come to their office if that is easier.
- Prepare the guest: send the two questions the Scouts must ask so they can answer them concretely — what type of voting elected you, and why is it that way here.
- Print ballots for the voting demonstration.
- Have a backup. If the guest cancels the morning of, run the voting activity long and reschedule the visit.

Supplies

- Printed ballots, three rounds' worth

- A box for a ballot box
- Whiteboard or easel paper to tally
- Name tags for the Scouts, so your guest can use their names
- A thank you card for the Scouts to sign

Run of show

Time	What happens
5 min	Gathering: name tags and question cards
5 min	Opening: Pledge of Allegiance
20 min	Activity 1: the snack election
20 min	Activity 2: the elected official
5 min	Activity 3: thank you and debrief
5 min	Closing

Activity 1 — The snack election (20 min)

Teach this by running it, not defining it. Put four snack options on the board and hold a real vote for the snack at the next meeting.

Round one, everyone votes once. Tally it. Almost certainly nothing gets over half — say, 4, 3, 2, 1 out of ten.

Say something like

Popcorn won with four votes. But six of you wanted something else. Did popcorn really win?

Now define the two words against the result on the board:

- Plurality — the most votes wins, even if it is under half. Popcorn wins with 4 of 10.
- Majority — you need more than half, over 50%. Nobody has it, so nobody has won yet.

Run a runoff between the top two and get a majority. Then ask the real question: which one felt fairer, and which one was faster? Let them argue. Both answers are right, and that tension is the actual content of the requirement.

Mention where each shows up: most US elections for a single seat are plurality; runoffs and many primaries require a majority.

Activity 2 — The elected official (20 min)

Have each Scout ready with a question on a card, written at the gathering. Two are mandatory across the den: what type of voting elected you, and why does your office use that type. That is requirement 2 and it needs a real answer.

Other questions worth seeding if the den goes quiet: What does your job actually do all day? What is something you decided that affected our neighborhood? What is the hardest part? How old were you when you first voted?

Have the denner introduce the guest and a Scout thank them at the end. Fourth graders can do this and it makes the visit theirs.

If no one can come in person, a fifteen-minute video call works, or take the den to a public council meeting and speak with a member afterward.

Activity 3 — Thank you and debrief (5 min)

Sign the card as a den before anyone leaves. Mail it.

Quick round: what surprised you about that person's job?

Send home with families

Ask your Scout which voting type elected our guest, and whether they think it is the fairer way.

Pick a federal law your family finds interesting for next meeting. Suggestions on the handout.

Meeting 2: How a law happens: the timeline

Goal: The den builds a timeline of one federal law showing all three branches of government acting on it.

Covers requirement 3, and plans 4

Before the meeting

- Pick two or three candidate laws with clear, findable histories and a Supreme Court case attached, so all three branches are genuinely involved. Good ones: the Americans with Disabilities Act, the National Park Service Organic Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Clean Air Act, the 19th Amendment.
- Print a one-page fact sheet on each candidate so Scouts are not searching the open internet during the meeting.
- Cut a long strip of butcher paper for the timeline.
- Have your service project options ready to propose, cleared with the committee.

Supplies

- Butcher paper strip, 6 feet or so
- Markers, sticky notes, tape
- Printed fact sheets on the candidate laws
- Three colors of sticky note, one per branch of government

Run of show

Time	What happens
5 min	Gathering: three branches sort
5 min	Opening

Time	What happens
10 min	Activity 1: pick the law
25 min	Activity 2: build the timeline
10 min	Activity 3: plan the service project
5 min	Closing

Gathering — Three branches sort (5 min)

Cards on the table: makes the laws, enforces the laws, decides what the laws mean; Congress, President, Supreme Court; House and Senate, federal agencies, federal courts. Scouts sort them into three columns.

Keep the three colors straight from here on — legislative, executive, judicial. The timeline uses them.

Activity 1 — Pick the law (10 min)

Read the fact sheets aloud, one paragraph each. Let the den vote — and use majority voting on purpose, then point out loudly that they just used what they learned last meeting.

The Americans with Disabilities Act is the most reliable choice with this age group: the story is concrete, there are Scouts in the room who know someone it affects, and all three branches show up clearly.

Activity 2 — Build the timeline (25 min)

Roll out the butcher paper and draw the line with year marks. Then work through the story, writing each event on the sticky note color for the branch that acted.

Using the ADA as the worked example:

- Before: people with disabilities are denied jobs, buses, and buildings. Advocates push for years. (No branch yet — this is where laws come from.)
- 1988–1990, legislative: the bill is introduced, argued over, amended, and passed by the House and the Senate.
- July 26, 1990, executive: President George H. W. Bush signs it into law.
- After, executive: federal agencies write the rules — what a ramp has to look like, what counts as a reasonable accommodation.
- Since, judicial: courts including the Supreme Court decide what the words actually mean in specific disputes.

Make sure all three colors are on the line before you call it done — that is the part of requirement 3 dens most often miss.

Finish with the question that makes it land: what is something in this building, or on the way here, that exists because of this law? Ramps, the parking spaces by the door, the automatic doors, the elevator braille.

Activity 3 — Plan the service project (10 min)

Requirement 4 is participation in a service project. Let the den choose from options your committee has already cleared, so you are not stuck vetoing their favorite idea.

Options that work for Webelos: a park or trail cleanup, a food drive with sorting at the pantry, flags at a veterans cemetery, a conservation planting, assembling care kits.

Pin the date now and put it on the pack calendar. Tell the committee so the hours get logged in Scoutbook — it counts toward JTE objective 8 for the whole pack, and packs lose those points by simply not recording them.

Send home with families

Service project date and location on the handout. Bring work gloves.

Ask your Scout to tell you the story of the law they picked. If they can tell it as a story, they have it.

Leader notes

- Stay neutral on candidates and parties. Invite officials of any party; if you can invite two of different parties, better. The requirement is about how we choose, not who we chose.
- If a Scout's family is politically active, expect strong opinions in the room. Redirect to the mechanics — majority versus plurality — rather than shutting a Scout down.
- The service project can be shared with the pack, but each Scout must actually participate.
- Log the service hours in Scoutbook. It is two minutes and it is worth JTE points to the whole pack.

Safety

Before this adventure

A guest speaker who is not a registered leader is never alone with Scouts. Two registered adults stay in the room throughout.

Follow the SAFE Checklist for the service project site — gloves, closed shoes, no sharps, no roadside work without high-visibility vests and adult spotters.

Get photo permission before posting pictures with an elected official.

Tracking

Write each Scout in and tick the requirement number as it is completed. Report to your advancement chair once the row is full.

Scout	1	2	3	4

Scout	1	2	3	4