

TROOP 218



HUNTINGTON STATION NY

Troop 218 Policies and Procedures

The Role of the Troop Parents

The role of parents within Troop 218 is to be supportive of the Troop's efforts and to help provide the atmosphere scouts need to learn and excel. The Troop is fortunate to have many adults contributing what time they can. All parents are invited to participate and all help is appreciated.

Scouting is a family affair. No Scout is expected to travel the Trail to Eagle by himself. Parents should encourage their son to work on advancement and take full advantage of the Scouting program.

If a parent has a special skill or training, she or he is encouraged to serve as a Merit Badge Counselor for interested Scouts. There are over 120 different merit badges available.

Without help of all kinds from our parents, Troop 218 would not exist. We hope you will take an active part in encouraging your son. Your role as "cheerleader" is a big reason for your son's interest and success. Parents also have a big impact on our Troop Committee, which meets once a month.

The Troop Committee oversees the troop, helps plan activities, approves our calendar, and forms the Boards of Review for each Scout's rank advancement. Our troop also needs parents to counsel merit badges, assist with special events and drive to activities. Because the Scouts run the troop, "helping" is usually just "watching." Your participation makes a difference and is not intended to be a burden, but rather an opportunity to support your son as he develops into a fine adult.

For more information on ways to participate in the Troop, please contact the Committee Chair or the Scoutmaster.

Parents Attending Camping Trips

Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend camping trips and outdoor activities. However, all adults attending camping trips, summer camp and other outdoor activities must be trained so that they can properly understand the importance of the BSA program intent, youth protection, health and safety issues, and appropriate activities. Please speak with a troop leader or committee member for the necessary training required.

Patrol Method

Our troop is organized into patrols of six to eight scouts, each with an elected Patrol Leader. The Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders have a key role in helping the Senior Patrol Leader and adult leaders accomplish the goals of the troop. New scouts work with an Assistant Scout Master and with

higher ranking scouts to learn the skills needed to advance and grow in our troop. This way of working together is called the “Patrol Method” and it is a cornerstone of successful scouting.

Youth Leadership

A major goal of Scouting is to develop leadership skills in our sons. Youth leaders are elected by their peers to help run the troop. The highest youth leader is the Senior Patrol Leader, or SPL. The SPL runs the troop activities, with the Scoutmaster’s help, following a plan decided at monthly PLC meetings and a general planning session.

Parents of new scouts have a natural tendency to want to lead the scouts, as was the case in Cub Scouts. In Boy Scouts, the parents **do not** run the meeting; the **youth leaders** do. Parents please try and curb your instincts; *don’t do something for your son that he can do for himself*. Sometimes the best education is to learn from your mistakes and try again to be more successful next time. The lessons learned are not forgotten and the young man (your son) will develop self-reliance and self-confidence.

Court of Honor

When a Scout advances, he should be recognized as soon as possible – preferably at the next troop meeting. He is recognized a second time at a formal ceremony called a Court of Honor. The main purposes of the Court of Honor are to provide formal recognition for achievement and to provide an incentive for other Scouts to advance.

Troop 218 has formal Courts of Honor twice a year. All families are asked to attend and guests are certainly welcome. Every boy who advances deserves to be recognized in front of his family. The court of honor is the boys’ special night.

Advancement

Scout Advancement

Each scout advances at his own pace. Each scout is expected to do his own work to achieve advancement. Parents are encouraged to be active in supporting their scout in advancement (parents shall not do any portion of the work for the scout). The Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster or certain designated senior scouts (i.e. the Senior Patrol Leader) must sign their scout book when the skill is mastered. It is also recommended that the Scout keep a record of all advancements, outings, community service and campouts. There are sections in the scout handbook where these can be recorded. Keeping track of records will be invaluable for proof when it comes time for his Eagle Rank Advancement.

Scoutmaster Conference (SMC)

This is one of the last requirements for every rank. A Scout does not have to be advancing in rank to ask for a Scoutmaster conference. A Scout or Scoutmaster can ask for a Scoutmaster conference at **anytime**. A SMC is designed to give the Scoutmaster an opportunity to have a one-on-one conversation

with a Scout to determine if everything is working according to schedule for that Scout. This is an opportunity for a Scout to tell the Scoutmaster if there is a problem of any kind, with another boy, with an adult, or with any part of the scouting program. When a scout asks for a Scoutmaster conference, every effort will be made to accommodate that conference within a two week period.

Board of Review (BOR)

A Board of Review is made up of at least 3 Committee members. There are several reasons to have a BoR.

Typically, it is when a Scout goes before the BoR Committee members with the express purpose of discussing rank advancement. Although, a Scout does not have to be **advancing** in rank to go before the Board. A scout can request a board of review **at any time** to discuss his scouting program. If a Scout is having a problem with another scout or adult leader, this is one place a scout can go to voice a complaint. Places a scout should go if he is having a problem is directly to the Scoutmaster, during a Scoutmaster conference or at a Board of Review. If the problem is not handled to the satisfaction of the scout, he should then approach the committee Chairperson. If a Scout in the Troop is not advancing, the Scoutmaster may request that he go before the board to discuss his Scouting program. When a Scout has completed a rank, and has completed his Scoutmaster conference, he goes before the Board of Review.

For a **rank advancement Board of Review**, the Scout is encouraged wear his *complete* Field (class A) uniform. The Board will ask questions about his scouting program and give the scout an opportunity to discuss any issues he may have. The members of the Board of Review must be members of the Troop Committee. Boards of review are usually set for 30 minutes prior to the start of the Troop meeting. The Scout is awarded his badge for rank advancement in a troop meeting as soon as possible after the Board of Review.

Meetings

Troop 218 holds troop meetings every Wednesday during the school year at Birchwood School from 7:30-9:00, except during holidays. Once a scout arrives at a troop meeting, he is expected to remain at the meeting unless leaders are told of special situations in advance. He **must be dropped off and picked up in view of another adult at the meeting** to ensure the safe arrival and departure of all scouts. As per BSA YPT (Youth Protection Training), no-one-on one contact is permitted. This means a scout should NOT be left alone with 1 adult. **Please make sure that when dropping off your son, there are at least 2 others present.** This can be another scout or adult. Occasionally a meeting will be held at another location for a special event. Scouts and parents will be told about these special meetings as far in advance as practical.

Committee and Adult Leadership

Our Troop Committee of parents and leaders helps to facilitate all activities and oversees the troop finances and events. As described throughout this booklet, parent involvement in the committee is very

important. The committee typically meets once a month on a Sunday at 7 p.m. for about 2 hours. The location of the committee meetings varies from month to month, so contact the committee chair for this month's location. The committee helps with record keeping, advancement, including Boards of Review, fund raising and long-range planning. Committee members work with the Scoutmaster and other troop leaders to ensure an interesting, successful and safe troop. Parents are welcome to attend meetings and express their views at any time and can register as a Committee Member to have an official vote in troop decisions.

The Scoutmaster is responsible for day-to-day troop operations, and is in charge of scout meetings and activities. The Scoutmaster communicates with the Troop Committee regarding the status of the troop and scouts. Assistant Scoutmasters work with the Scoutmaster and youth leaders to carry out meeting plans and activities.

Advancement

Advancement is the way a boy grows as a Scout, and becomes eligible for troop leadership positions and other honors. He starts as a "Scout" and progresses to "Eagle" in the following order: Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life and Eagle. An example of an honor is election to the Order of the Arrow (OA), Scouting's honor camping society.

Although a boy will start at "Scout" rank, he can progress to First Class within one to two years. To do this, he will work with other first year scouts and with youth and adult leaders. He should bring his Scout Handbook to every meeting and activity. This is very important in order to have his progress promptly recorded.

Merit Badges

Once a boy reaches First Class, Merit Badges become the main advancement tool. There are over 130 merit badges to choose from. Some badges like Athletics, Citizenship, Pets and Theatre, may be worked on at home or at school. Summer camp offers many of the available badges and is a great opportunity to work on and complete them.

Getting a Merit Badge: A Scout must get the Scoutmaster's permission and a Blue Merit Badge Card **BEFORE** starting to work on a badge. An approved counselor is chosen and signs the blue card when the scout has completed all requirements. The signed card is then RETURNED to the Scoutmaster. The Scout should keep **ALL** "Applicants Records" halves of their completed Merit Badges in a safe place for their own records - they are the scout's proof that he has completed the merit badge. The Scoutmaster and Advancement Chairperson have a list of District approved merit badge counselors.

Board of Review

After a boy has completed a rank, **he** needs to tell the Advancement Chairperson so he can have a Board of Review (BOR). Before a BOR can be scheduled the Advancement Chair will check to see that the scout's troop record shows that he has completed a rank. Boards are currently held on Wednesday evenings prior to the start of the weekly Troop meeting. The BOR is made up of at least three members

of the Troop Committee. The Board will ask the scout about what he learned while working on the rank, and what he thinks about the troop in general. This may sound scary to the Scout, but it really isn't. Many of the people on the BOR are the same ones he sees each week. They all want to see the Scout succeed and grow with the troop. **Advancement is the Scout's responsibility.** He should request a BOR no later than the Saturday preceding the next troop meeting.

Courts of Honor

The accomplishments of Scouts and leaders are formally recognized at Courts of Honor (CoH), held twice a year (Fall and Spring). Parents' attendance at Courts of Honor is an important and very easy way to support your son and demonstrate an interest in his scouting progress. Although Scouts are formally recognized at a CoH, they receive their rank patches and are recognized in front of their peers at regularly scheduled troop meetings.

Fundraising

One way Troop 218 tries to keep the cost of Scouting reasonable is by holding fundraisers during the year. Participation is asked of every scout to ensure the success of the fundraiser. The Troop Committee votes to credit a portion of the profit directly to individual scouts. These earnings can help to pay for summer camp or other Scouting costs.

Notes and Questions

The committee members and adult leaders of Troop 218 want to ensure that your son's time in Boy Scouts is as successful and confusion-free as possible. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to talk with us. If your son has a question he should first approach his Patrol Leader and then the Senior Patrol Leader.

Website

You are invited to visit our troop's website for a more detailed look at our troop. This site has our current Troop calendar, frequently used forms, and other information that may be of interest.

www.bsatroop218.com

Merit Badge Counselors

Any adult can become a Merit Badge Counselor. There are no fees, very few requirements, and these adults are vital to the scout's success. Look at the list of Merit Badges in the Scout Handbook, and see what you would like to teach. Work or hobby related skills and knowledge are basically all that is required to become a Merit Badge Counselor for most badges. For shooting sports and water sports, counselors are required to have some additional certification. Information on becoming a Merit Badge Counselor may be obtained from the Committee Chair. We encourage all adults to consider their own personal skills, and share them with the Scouts.

Troop 218 Code of Conduct

All members of the Boy Scouts of America are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the Scout Oath and Law. Physical violence, hazing, bullying, theft, verbal insults and drugs and alcohol have no place in the Scouting program and may result in the revocation of a Scout's membership in the unit. (Guide to Safe Scouting)

Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best

To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law;

To help other people at all times;

To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.

Scout Law

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent.

Outdoor Code

As an American, I will do my best to

Be clean in my outdoor manners,

Be careful with fire,

Be considerate in the outdoors,

And be conservation minded.

Troop Member Agreement

I alone am responsible for my behavior at all Boy Scout functions. I understand that each Scout has the privilege to learn about Scouting and to enjoy all Scouting activities. Some behaviors take away from the Scouting experience, hurt others, destroy property and impact the ability of Scouters to obtain the full benefit of participation in the Scouting program. I understand that by following the ideals and teachings of the Boy Scouts of America I will more safely enjoy, and benefit from the Scouting experience.

To make certain the privileges of Scouting are available to all members of my Troop, I agree to the following:

1. I will demonstrate good Scout spirit and follow the Scout Oath and Law and the Outdoor Code.

2. I will actively participate in all activities while in attendance unless excused by the Scoutmaster or for medical reasons.
3. I will remain in attendance at the activity location unless excused by the Scoutmaster.
4. I will follow directions from adult or scout leaders promptly and respectfully.
5. I will not participate in any form of harassment – verbal, physical, sexual or racial. This includes intimidating behavior (ridiculing, teasing, bullying) and fighting.
6. I will treat others with respect at all times.
7. I will not say negative or critical things about other Scouts or Leaders.
8. I will not use profanity.
9. I will use equipment in the manner for which it was designed and in keeping with the proper safety guidelines set forth by the Boy Scouts of America.
10. I will respect the personal equipment and property of others.
11. I will respect troop equipment.
12. I will properly wear the appropriately classed Scout uniform to all Scouting functions. The insignias on my uniform will be kept up-to-date.
13. If I have any problems, I will inform a leader in the following order based upon availability/my comfort: my Patrol Leader, Senior Patrol Leader, Assistant Scoutmaster, Scoutmaster, Committee.

Failure to follow the rules in this Code of Conduct will result in the following consequences, though risky or serious behavior will be dealt with more severely and be escalated more expeditiously:

1st I will be warned

2nd I will be removed from the activity

3rd I will be sent home from the activity

4th I will not be allowed to attend other activities without a parent/guardian present.

I also understand that continued failure to follow these rules will result in more severe consequences, including revocation of my membership in the Troop.

In addition to any actions noted above, if I commit any of the following infractions, I will replace or repair the damaged, destroyed or missing equipment at my own cost:

1. Items stolen (no matter how small or inconsequential)

2. Other's personal property damaged or destroyed (intentional or accidental)
3. Troop equipment damaged or destroyed through neglect

On My Honor as a Scout I, _____, agree to live by the Scout Oath and Law and the Outdoor Code. I have read and understand the above Code of Conduct, agree to follow the rules set forth in it and understand the consequences of breaking any rules.

Scout Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____