
Greater St. Louis Area Council, Boy Scouts of America

Summary of Survey Findings
and Recommendations

April 4, 2006

Who We Asked

Relationship to Scouting	Number of Surveys	Response Rate
Administrative Support Staff (<i>Employed</i>)	28/36	90%
Professional Staff (<i>Employed</i>)	43/45	95%
Board Members (<i>Community and Business Leaders who serve on Scouting's Governing Board</i>)	40/97	41%
Community Leaders (<i>Leaders of business, community or government organizations</i>)	47/191	24%
Scouting Volunteers (<i>with or without children involved in Scouting</i>) and/or Parents of Scouts	731/5000	15%
Total Surveys	889/5369	17%

What We Asked

- Scouting Mission
- Resources/Structure
- Communication
- Leadership (Executive Board)
- Unit Leader/Chairman/Manager (Immediate Supervisor)
- Culture
- Performance Management and Compensation and Benefits (Council Only)
- Open-ended Comments
 - ❑ What should the Boy Scouts **keep** doing?
 - ❑ What should the Boy Scout **stop** doing?

Good News

- Great response rate – many cared enough to complete the survey, including writing comments
- All stakeholders are proud to be associated with the Boys Scouts
- All stakeholders believe that developing young people and providing quality programs are the top two priorities of the Boy Scouts
- A strong relationship exists between Unit Leaders/Chairman/Managers and their direct reports
- All stakeholders believe the Council to be truthful
- Top community leaders are perceived as committed to the Boy Scouts
- In dealing with conflicts, Parents, Volunteers and Community Leaders are the most positive group about how conflicts are dealt with
- Paid staff are clear about their performance expectations and have had a performance discussion
- Stakeholders have a strong desire to continue teaching the foundational elements of scouting (values) to young people

Not So Good News

- Administrative Support Staff are the least satisfied group overall. In addition, the results indicate they feel out of the “communication loop”
- Most groups, including the Board, desire more direct oversight from the Board for membership and program records
- Administrative Support Staff are not satisfied with their compensation and benefits
- Parents, Volunteers and Community Leaders believe there is room for improvement in the quality of Council services and the amount of resources and staff available for programs and services
- Most stakeholders desire more timely information regarding important decisions
- Stakeholders are concerned about the emphasis placed on membership numbers and fundraising dollars over quality programming

What do the Boy Scouts need to Keep Doing?

Themes from 480 Responses

- Provide safe, fun, quality programming
- Continue to teach the core values and founding ideals
- Keep the focus of the activities “outdoor” and on community service
- Keep the focus on “boys first”
- Recruit quality, enthusiastic and fun volunteers
- Provide quality training for volunteers and scouts
- Keep the purpose, story and benefits of Boy Scouts in the public eye, including through the use of the Website and Duffle Bag
- Continue to modernize, update and innovate programs

What do the Boy Scouts need to Stop Doing?

Themes from 382 Responses

- Stop emphasizing quantity (recruiting and membership numbers) over quality programming
- Stop placing so much emphasis on fundraising
- Stop discriminating against homosexuals
- Stop increasing the costs of Scouting to keep Scouting affordable for all families
- Provide more timely communications through District Leaders, the Website and the Duffle Bag
- Increase involvement at the pack level from Professional, Commissioner and District Leaders (proactive rather than reactive or just coming to ask for money)
- Find ways to avoid “burn out” for volunteers
- Identify a different fundraiser other than popcorn
- Provide more accurate record keeping for advancement
- Update camp facilities and modernize other programmatic elements (uniform look)
- Provide more options of location and time for Scouting activities and volunteer training

Recommendations

- Stick to the Mission
- Capitalize on the passion and belief the Stakeholders hold in the Boy Scouts
- Reevaluate the appropriate level of Board involvement and oversight of the Greater St. Louis Area Council
- Leverage the strong relationship that exists between Unit Leaders/Chairman/Managers and their pack leaders or direct reports
- Provide strategic and more timely information to the multiple levels through multiple avenues
- Engage Administrative Support Staff by increasing the depth and breadth of feedback and communication with them
- Remain “open” to the volunteers’ suggestions and feedback for programmatic updates and enhancements

Noteworthy Suggestions from Open-ended Comments

- Seek unit quality rather than quantity – don't overemphasize recruitment and membership
- Address poor unit quality
- Provide information in a timely manner to volunteers
- Increase advertisement and Public Relations on the value of Scouting
- Identify ways to avoid “burn out,” especially for parental volunteers
- Innovate, modernize and update facilities and programs
- Provide positive feedback to volunteers more frequently
- Seek to understand the feedback that is provided by volunteers
- Visit pack level activities more often
- Seek more diversity – socio-economically and physically
- Provide training and support for those leading diverse groups
- Identify ways to increase the opportunities for Scouting in low-income areas