

CHAPTER 9

Graduation and Transition Ceremonies



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Let's Have a Celebration!

Do you remember what it feels like to move into a new class in school? There is some fear on one hand and excitement on the other. When we celebrate the moment of a boy's transition from Tiger Cubs to Wolf or Webelos Scouts to Boy Scouts, it helps smooth that adjustment. In fact, why not celebrate each step: Tigers to Wolf, Wolf to Bear, Bear to Webelos Scout, and Webelos Scout to Boy Scout. Next to receiving an advancement badge, there is no stronger memory in a boy's Scouting experience than a transition or graduation ceremony.

Be careful to make all of your props "barrier-free." A bridge from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts could prevent someone who is visually or physically impaired from participating with the den. Instead of making the boy feel different, adapt the plan so that all boys have this experience in the same way. Make freestanding holders for a rope, suggesting a bridge, instead of raising the floor. Use your imagination.

Timing Is Everything

When do you transition your Scouts and start their work on the next rank? The Cub Scout cycle recommends that Tiger Cubs, Wolf Cub Scouts, and Bear Cub Scouts

transition into the next program at the end of the school year. This gives them the opportunity to work in their new books during summertime activities.

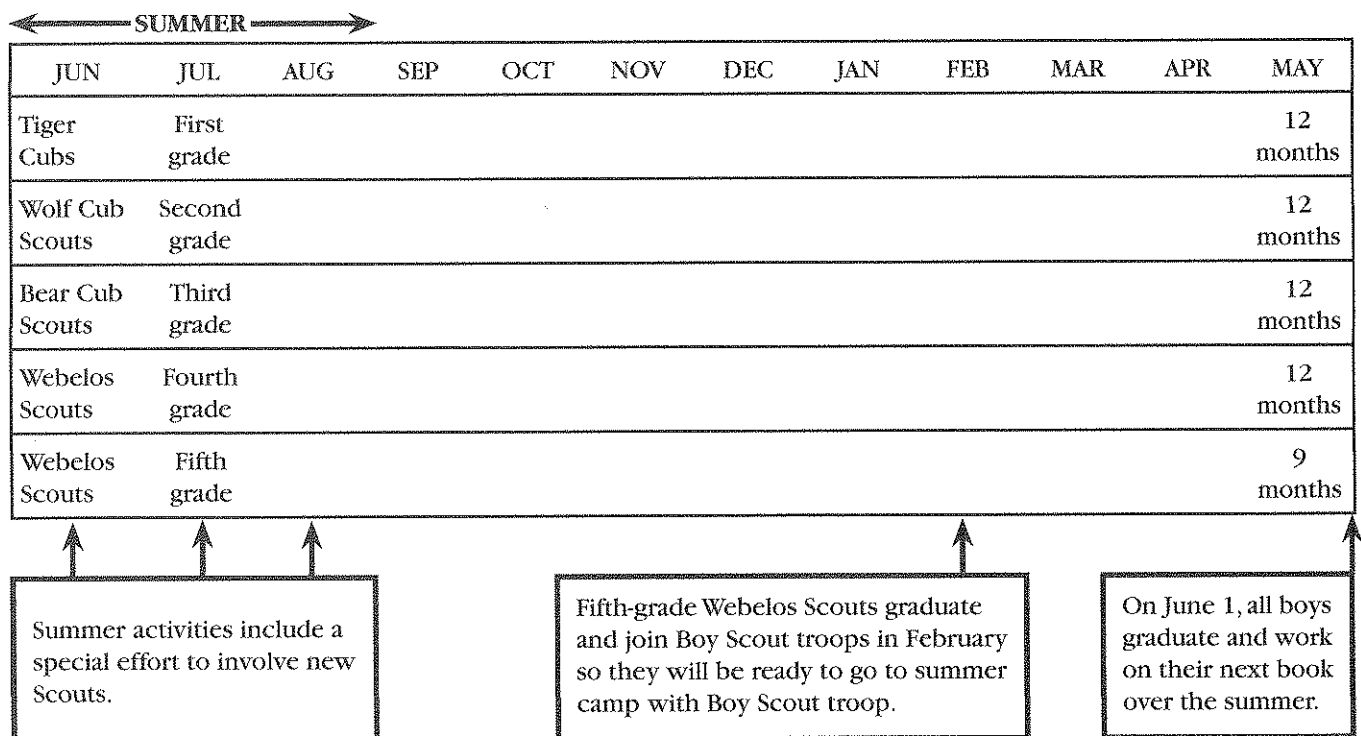
It is important that Webelos Scouts receive the Arrow of Light by the end of February and then begin attending Boy Scout troop meetings in March. They need to have time to develop friendships and skills before attending summer camp with their troop. Boy Scouts who attend summer camp their first year are much more likely to stay in Scouting than those who miss out on this opportunity.

Who Plans the Ceremony?

The responsibility of planning the graduation belongs to many people in the pack and should be discussed at a pack leaders' meeting. The key is to involve as many people as possible, with one person leading the group. Use your parents, Cubmaster, assistant Cubmasters, Tiger Cub den leaders, den leaders, Webelos leaders, den chiefs, and Scoutmasters. In other words, involve the people who have played an important part in providing the Cub Scout program for the boys. When you schedule these events ahead of time during your annual pack program planning conference, you'll be sure to make it a memorable and impressive event.

The Cub Scout Cycle

(with February graduation of fifth-grade Webelos Scouts)



April and May: Selecting the best possible den and pack leaders is critical. Carefully identify and recruit next year's leaders now so that they can help current leaders and transition into their new roles.

Akela Transition Ceremony for Tiger Cubs

Preparation: Lay a path of paper Tiger Tracks from where the Tiger Cub den is seated to the area where the ceremony will be held.

Materials: Tiger Tracks made from black construction paper, an electric campfire, a Tiger Cub emblem, and a graduation certificate for each boy

CUBMASTER: Come to the council fire, those of you who wish to become Wolf Cub Scouts. As I call your name, come follow the Tiger trail to our campfire. (*Call the names of Tiger Cubs and their adult partners.*) For the past year, you have lived the Tiger Cub motto: Search, Discover, Share. You have discovered that by doing activities with family and friends, you feel a sense of being part of a family, community, and country.

TIGER DEN LEADER: Along this Tiger trail, you were helped and guided by your Tiger Cub adult partner.

CUBMASTER: Now it is time to begin a new trail, a new path, a new adventure in Cub Scouting. You will be helped along this new trail by Akela. As your Cubmaster, I am Akela. Your adult family members, your Cub Scout leaders, and your teachers are also Akela. Listen and learn as they guide you in Cub Scouting. May the Great Spirit always be by your side as you follow the Cub Scout motto: Do Your Best!

Mark of the Tiger (Tiger to Wolf)

Materials: Orange or black marker and poster

NARRATOR: Today, we honor our Tiger Cubs. Will the following boys and their adult partners please come forward. (*Call the names.*) On behalf of our pack, Tiger Cub Den Leader [Name] would like to recognize your journey this year.

TIGER CUB DEN LEADER: During the past months, you and your families have explored new and exciting things and places. You have taken each part of the Tiger Cub motto—Search, Discover, Share—and you have used it in your home and neighborhood. (*Draw the pad of the tiger paw on the poster.*)

You and your partner have searched out new activities that have shown you how people work and have fun together. (*Draw the first toe.*)

You have discovered that by doing things together with friends and family, you feel a sense of belonging. (*Draw the second toe.*)

You have shared with your family, friends, and fellow Tiger Cubs the things that you have searched out and discovered, which helped them learn more about you. (*Draw the third toe.*)

In Cub Scouting, your family is important, just as it is throughout your whole Scouting experience. Support in earning each badge comes from your family as well

as from your den leader. Your family will help you each step of the way. (*Draw the fourth toe.*)

On behalf of our pack, I want to congratulate you as you move to the next step of Scouting! Let's give them a round of applause and congratulate them!

Neckerchief Ceremony (Tiger to Wolf, Wolf to Bear, Bear to Webelos Scout)

Materials: Wolf, Bear, Webelos, and Boy Scout neckerchief on display; a neckerchief for each boy for his next rank

NARRATOR: Today, we have the privilege of watching our Scouts take a step toward their next station on the Cub Scouting trail.

Will the Tiger Cubs and their families please come forward. During the past year, you have worked hard to search, discover, and share your big ideas. As you start on the trail of the Wolf, you will wear the yellow neckerchief, which reminds you of the happiness, good cheer, and warm sunshine of the Cub Scout Promise. (*Present mementos.*) Pack [number], I would like to present to you your new Wolf den.

Will the Wolf Cub Scouts and their families please come forward. You have worked hard this past year on the achievements and electives for the Wolf rank. The next neckerchief you will wear is blue to remind you of the truth in the Law of the Pack. (*Present mementos.*) Pack [number], I would like to present to you your new Bear den.

Will the Bear Cub Scouts and their families please come forward. The Webelos program has more challenges ahead for you. The plaid neckerchief you will wear is multicolored, combining the blue and gold of the Cub Scout program with the red and green of the Boy Scout program. (*Present mementos.*) Pack [number], I would like to present to you your new Webelos den.

May you walk the Cub Scouting trail with pride and live the Cub Scout Promise and Law of the Pack.

Bear Trail Adventure (Wolf to Bear)

Preparation: Make a bear paw for each boy and write "God, Country, Family, Self" on each.

NARRATOR: We have some Cub Scouts who are getting ready to embark on a new adventure! Will the following boys please come forward. (*Call the names of transitioning Wolf Scouts.*) You have accepted the challenges that were sent your way this past year and mastered them. Are you ready to walk a new trail? (*Boys say "yes."*)

This trail will have choices for you to make. There are lots of achievements, and you will be making choices in four areas: God, country, family, and self. The choices you make will shape your future trails. If you accept

this new challenge, please make the sound of the bear. (*Boys roar.*) Here is a bear paw to remind you of the challenge ahead. (*Present a paw to each boy.*)

Four Winds (Bear to Webelos Scout)

Materials: Holder with five candles or lights

NARRATOR: (*Have someone dim the lights.*) Tonight, we have some Cub Scouts who are ready to join a Webelos den. Will the following boys and their families please come forward. (*Call the names.*)

(*Have the Webelos leader light the first candle or light.*) The winds can be both our friends and our enemies. They can bring rain clouds with much needed moisture or heavy storms that damage our crops. Today, they are bringing us messages of goodwill. Listen to what they are saying.

BEAR DEN LEADER: I am the north wind. People say that I am cold, but I will always bring you the warmest of winds because you live up to the Law of the Pack. (*Webelos leader lights the second candle or light.*)

I am the south wind. I wish you good Scouting and carry stories of your Cub Scouting achievements throughout the land. (*Webelos leader lights the third candle or light.*)

I am the east wind. I spread the story of your Scouting spirit and tell how you live up to the Cub Scout Promise. (*Webelos leader lights the fourth candle or light.*)

I am the west wind. I guide families to help these Cub Scouts. They do not walk the trail alone. Each has the help of his family. (*Webelos leader lights the fifth candle or light.*)

All the winds are wishing you the best of luck on the Webelos trail toward the Arrow of Light.

NARRATOR: Congratulations! Let's all welcome these new Webelos Scouts!

Colors of the Wind (Webelos Scouts to Boy Scouts)

Materials: Holder with four candles or lights (blue, yellow, white, and red). Webelos den leader lights the candles. Have a trail ready if you are using one in this ceremony.

NARRATOR: Tonight, we are honoring some Webelos Scouts who are moving forward along the Scouting trail. Will the following boys please come forward. (*Call the names.*)

Today, you are making a giant step—that from Cub Scouting to Boy Scouting. As we present to you the colors of the four winds, remember them, and let them continue to guide you along the Scouting trail.

(*Light the blue candle or light.*) Blue stands for the Cub Scout spirit and the north wind. You are a true blue Cub Scout and live up to the Law of the Pack. It brings you only the warmest of winds.

(*Light the yellow candle or light.*) Yellow stands for the south wind that carries the story of your achievements far and wide. As a Cub Scout you have been eager, fair, and a credit to your den and pack.

(*Light the white candle or light.*) White stands for the east wind and the spirit of Scouting. The east wind carries the story of your fun and happiness to your Scout troop and tells others how you live up to the Cub Scout Promise.

(*Light the red candle or light.*) Red stands for the west wind and represents the families of these Webelos Scouts. It tells of the help and guidance that these Webelos Scouts receive from their families. Continue to help your boy go and grow as he continues to walk the Scouting trail in Boy Scouting.

As you cross into Boy Scouting, we'll give you the Cub Scout handshake one last time. (*The Cubmaster and Webelos leader shake hands with the Webelos Scout. The boy walks to the Scoutmaster, giving him and the senior patrol leader the Scout handclasp.*)

Seven Virtues of Life (Webelos Scouts to Boy Scouts)

Materials: Holder with seven candles or lights, graduation certificates, troop neckerchief (if one is going to be presented; if the neckerchief is not going to be presented, reword the ending of the ceremony)

NARRATOR: Will the following Webelos Scouts please come forward. (*Call the names.*) Today, we are honoring these boys who have brought honor to our pack as they climbed the Cub Scout trail. They are now ready to go into Boy Scouting. With the help of their families, they will soon start walking the Boy Scout trail.

WEBELOS LEADER: The seven candles [lights] before you represent the rays in the Arrow of Light. As they are lighted, you will hear how they stand for the seven great virtues of life. (*The narrator lights the candles or lights.*)

1. Wisdom doesn't mean that you are smarter than others. It means that you use what you know to lead a better life.
2. Courage doesn't mean that you have no fear of danger. It means that you can face danger despite your fear.
3. Self-control means being able to stop when you have had enough of something, such as eating, playing, or even working too much.
4. Justice means being fair with others as you play and work with them.

5. Faith is belief in God and things you cannot see but feel are true.
6. Hope means to look forward to good things you believe will happen and work hard today to make them happen.
7. Many kinds of love are important: love of family, fellow humans, God, and our country.

NARRATOR: If you live by these virtues, you will be a happier person. It is my pleasure to present to you your graduation certificates. Scoutmaster [Name] is here to receive you into your troop. *(Scoutmaster says a few words of welcome.)*

SENIOR PATROL LEADER: As you remove your Cub Scout neckerchief, remember the things you learned in Cub Scouting. And as you wear this Boy Scout neckerchief, remember that it represents the members of our troop who always try to do their best and be prepared. Welcome to our troop. *(He gives each boy a Scout handclasp.)*

Cub Scout Trail (Webelos Scouts to Boy Scouts)

Preparation: A Tiger Cub holds a Tiger Cub badge, a Wolf Cub Scout holds a Wolf badge, a Bear Cub Scout holds a Bear badge, a Webelos leader holds a Webelos badge, a den chief holds an Arrow of Light Award, a Scoutmaster or senior patrol leader holds a Boy Scout badge. Space the badges apart so that they form a trail. This ceremony can be done inside or outside (arrange them around the edge of a clearing).

NARRATOR: Tonight, we are honoring some Webelos Scouts who are moving forward along the Scouting trail. Will the following boys please come forward. *(Call the names.)*

You are taking a giant step—that from Cub Scouting to Boy Scouting. We would like to think back on some of the steps you have taken along the way.

(Walk with the boys to the Bobcat station.) Remember when you first joined Cub Scouts? The Cub Scout motto, Law of the Pack, and the Cub Scout Promise were new to you then.

(Walk with the boys to the Wolf station.) At this stop, you worked on achievements that included knowledge about the flag, fitness, tools, safety, and feats of skill.

(Walk with the boys to the Bear station.) While working on the Bear badge you completed achievements in four areas: God, country, family, and self. You were able to choose which achievements to complete.

(Walk with the boys to the Webelos station.) As Webelos Scouts, you worked on activity badges. You learned the different parts of the Webelos uniform, the Outdoor Code, and furthered your knowledge about your duty to God. You began to discover the meaning behind the Scout Oath and Scout Law.

(Walk with the boys to the Arrow of Light station.) To earn the highest award in Cub Scouting, you committed yourself to living the Scout Oath and Scout Law. You learned about the Boy Scout uniform and the parts of the Scout badge. You participated in a Webelos overnight campout [or day hike] and visited a Boy Scout troop meeting [or activity].

(Walk with boys to the Boy Scout station.) And now you have reached the beginning of a new trail. I would like to introduce your new Scoutmaster and senior patrol leader. *(The Scoutmaster and senior patrol leader take a few moments to welcome the new Boy Scouts.)*

