

FAQs for JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE
PERFORMANCE RECOGNITION PROGRAM
(Council)

1. Have the calculations been done to determine which level each council falls into based on 2009 data? If so, can we have that information? **Yes, those calculations have been done. The results can be requested from Patty Bowman at patty.bowman@scouting.org by your Scout executive.**
2. It was mentioned that the cost of online training for the executive board would be picked up for the first year. What is the anticipated cost going to be for this training? **The national office will pick up the cost of the new board self-assessment tool the first year. Every board member will be able to take an online assessment, and the results will be in an Excel document for review within two weeks of completion. The value of this service is \$50.**
3. How will the council commissioner get the commissioner webinar info? **There is a webinar PowerPoint available for use by regional and area commissioners. Councils will also have access to the presentation. We may plan commissioner webinars ourselves in the future.**
4. How do we enter the JTE website or is the website the service hour site? **The Journey to Excellence website is still under construction and will be ready after the first of the year. The website will include a link to a separate website, where service hours can be added by units, individuals, or anyone with a username and password to the Good Turn for America website.**
5. Is there a Learning for Life component to this program? **Not at this time.**
6. Will the 100-percent trained direct-contact leaders be going away? **It would be good to have 100 percent of direct contact leaders trained. The reality today is that a lower level matches actual performance, and units need to work at continuous improvement to reach the 100-percent level in the future.**
7. Will there be epaulets specific to the different levels? **The recognition pieces are still being developed. The plan as of today is to have special epaulets for council achievement, and have patches for districts and units. The epaulets and patches will have the year and “Journey to Excellence” on them, and will be bordered in bronze, silver, or gold.**
8. Will the dashboard be searchable down to the district and unit levels? And will it be accessible by volunteers? **Not at this time. The dashboard will only be able to populate council data.**
9. Will the service hours affect Good Turn for America entries? **The new Journey to Excellence service hour website will replace the Good Turn for America website, so there will never be duplication. The reports available in the Good Turn for America site will also be available in the JTE service hour website.**
10. Under finance, there was a criterion for generating more income to the operating budget. Was there ever any thought to creating criteria for lowering expenses compared to the previous year? **The task force was concerned with moving performance in a positive direction over the long haul, and even though reducing expenses may be positive movement, it is short-term.**
11. Where can I download all of the JTE forms? **For professionals, go to [MyBSA>Resources>Mission Impact>Organizational Solutions>Journey to Excellence](#) and click on the link at the bottom of the page. For volunteers, go to www.scouting.org/Volunteers and find the Council Journey to Excellence link under the “Quicklinks” heading.**



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12. Will everyone see every council's data, or just our own? **No.** On the council dashboard, there will be a list of the top performing councils for each requirement. This way, you'll know who to contact for their best practices on any particular requirement where you might need help.
13. Will each council be required to use UVTS, or is there another way to input commissioner visits? **Every council will use UVTS 2.0.** This is how your dashboard will be populated.
14. How different are the presentations for units from the district and council presentations? **The district and council webinars are quite different from each other, and are both different from the unit webinars.** If you are with a unit, you should participate in a unit webinar. If you're on the district level, you should participate in a district webinar.
15. What constitutes a service project? **Any service provided by your unit or members of your unit to someone else.**
16. Shouldn't silver be higher than gold to match other hierarchy in the Boy Scout program? **This was discussed by the task force, and it was decided that Journey to Excellence would be better understood by the majority of volunteers—especially new volunteers—if the program followed the bronze, silver, gold sequence.**
17. Is this presentation available for download? **The webinars will be recorded and placed online toward the end of November at MyBSA>Resources>Council and District Operations, in the blue box on the right.**
18. In fiscal management requirement no. 1, why increase by 2 percent? **The goal of this requirement was to move the emphasis away from single-year surplus or deficits and to "does the council have the unrestricted net assets to make the best long term decisions for the council?"** Two percent was used because subject matter experts considered it prudent and within the reasonable range for most funders, including United Way. We realize every council has a unique situation and has to make the best decision based on their situation; however, even small increases over time will reach the gold standard with continuous achievement.
19. In fundraising requirement no. 2, why 10 percent growth over last year? **Going into this process, we were able to query ScoutNet data and measure 16 of the 17 requirements.** We did that and tested all 297 councils for the last five year-ends to see if there were any anomalies. We used the year-end 2009 data to set the actual benchmarks. The gold standard is the actual performance of the top 10 percent of councils; the silver standard is the 50th percentile to the 89th, and the bronze standard is from the 20th percentile to the 49th percentile. The break points were not arbitrary or what we thought was achievable, but are based on actual performance. The taskforce felt it was important to recognize councils based on our true current performance, and encourage and recognize continuous improvement over time.
20. Why compare endowment growth to the operating statement? **Endowment compares to the operating expenses, because the purpose of the endowment is to support operational expenses within the spending policy of the council's trust agreement.** The taskforce did not want councils to be disadvantaged or advantaged because of things they have no control over, like market performance, but rather recognize councils due to achievement in which something they do have influence. Certainly, councils have great influence over James E. West, 1910 Society, and Founders Circle gifts.



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21. Why are youth-serving executives a criterion? Youth-serving executives to TAY is a criterion, because when we ran correlation tables on more than 20 different performance indicators, it was the single most predictive indicator of them all. Councils that scored in the high range on YSE to TAY also scored high in most quality, growth, and sustainability indicators. The converse was also true for councils that scored low. It is the strongest leading indicator to performance that we have been able to identify. This also is a leading indicator that a local council can directly influence and improve.
22. Youth retention is important, and the retention calculation by ScoutNet has had flaws. Is it fixed now? The retention number has to be one in which we all have confidence and that has credibility in the field. There is a small group working on this issue, and it is in a rigorous testing phase currently. We are confident we will have it solved by the time the JTE dashboard goes online.
23. Why is community service a criteria item? Community service has long been a major part of Scouting; it is something that the community expects of us and we expect of ourselves. This is a requirement, because the taskforce wanted to address this expectation, along with image and marketing—key strategies for the BSA—in a way that could be measured and remain consistent with other requirements. It was determined that encouraging and recognizing community service would accomplish that from both having a positive impact on the community and positive PR for the local council and the BSA.
24. Why are we making the change from the Centennial Quality Council-type award recognition program to A Journey to Excellence? Several reasons. The Centennial Quality program was designed as a four-year program to end with our 100th Anniversary. The BSA also has a new strategic plan that provides opportunities to achieve our mission and vision. The Journey to Excellence program is designed to encourage and reward improved or sustained high performance in our councils, districts, and units. The youth in our programs learn while having fun with Scouting’s many programs, resulting in advancement and leadership development. The Journey to Excellence program intends to provide recognition and help leaders achieve success. More than that, though, is the feedback from the field. The two major criticisms of the Centennial Quality program was that units did not want to set goals and they wanted the awards application to coincide with their charter renewal date. For these reasons, we began looking at a new program.
25. What is the basis behind A Journey to Excellence from a performance measurement standard, and how does it vary from our prior system? The Journey to Excellence program is designed to encourage councils, districts, and units to function in a mode of continuous improvement. Most requirements can be met in two ways: by showing improvement and by meeting a determined standard. This is new. Also, many of the Journey to Excellence requirements are based upon the key performance indicators and the National Strategic Plan.
26. What are we trying to accomplish with the adoption of a program that measures performance standards as opposed to other criteria? We are moving away from measuring process and toward measuring outcomes. The outcomes being measured are those that have been shown to have a direct effect on the quality of our program.
27. How do we expect A Journey to Excellence to evolve over time? Each year, the program will be evaluated as to its effectiveness and to the levels of recognition achieved. If a requirement is shown to be an ineffective influencer of good program or youth retention, it will be eliminated. If the point system is shown to be too high or too low, it will be altered. This will be done every year.



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28. At first glance, A Journey to Excellence appears to be fairly complex. How do we respond to volunteers and professionals who have difficulty understanding the program or the need for its adoption? **Every document has an explanation page, and there is also a glossary of terms. All of this will be online with the forms. You can also call Stan Willey at the national office (972-580-2381) or e-mail questions to jte@scouting.org.**
29. What role do you want unit and administrative commissioners to play in the launch, implementation, and support of A Journey to Excellence? **They will be critical to the program's success. There will be numerous webinars, but because of capacity limitations in our systems, not all volunteers from every unit in the nation will be able to participate in a webinar. To ensure everyone who needs to know how this works has the opportunity, the commissioners and district executives will also help by meeting with unit leaders to explain the Journey to Excellence program and how it works for their unit.**
30. Tell me about the different types of webinars that are going to be available. Will these sessions be recorded and posted on the national website? **There will be webinars for packs, troops, crews, districts, councils, areas, and regions. One of each will be recorded and placed online toward the end of November, for volunteers to listen to at their convenience.**
31. What type of written materials will be available to support the implementation of A Journey to Excellence? **All support materials will be online, along with the taped webinars. This information will be accessible to volunteers and professionals.**
32. What role should professionals expect A Journey to Excellence to play in the context of the measurement of their professional performance? **That will be dependent on how closely the Journey to Excellence program aligns with their SMART goals. Some will more than likely be very close, while others may not match up at all. Every council and staff leader will be different.**
33. Do the various performance measures apply to a small, rural council as well as to a large, metropolitan council? **Care was taken when developing the requirements to consider units, districts, and councils in all areas. There were urban, suburban, and rural volunteers and professionals on the task force. The key performance indicators of success in Scouting are universal.**
34. What role will roundtables play in the introduction and implementation of A Journey to Excellence? **Roundtables should schedule a few minutes each month to provide information about the Journey to Excellence program and to answer questions. A trained commissioner should be ready to answer any questions that arise.**
35. What is the difference between a determined and an improvement standard? **A determined standard is one that is achieved or not achieved. An example would be participating in two service projects. An improvement standard is one where improvement alone will be enough to achieve the requirement. An example would be improving Cub Scout camping by having a 2 percentage point increase.**
36. What is contemplated in terms of changing the performance standards in future years? **Future goals will include Voice of the Customer feedback, which is a customer satisfaction survey that your Scouts and parents will use to provide their thoughts and experiences to help improve the program.**
37. With regard to the endowment fund criteria, what is the definition of a permanently restricted gift? Will the program consider the value of pledges or other planned gifts? If not, will recognition programs continue for these types of gifts? **A permanently restricted gift to the endowment fund is any contribution where the original gift must be kept, but**



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the earnings may be used to support council operations. The Journey to Excellence program will only recognize actual gifts (cash and pledges), not deferred and planned gifts. However, councils will want to continue their efforts in cultivating and securing deferred and planned gifts.

38. For purposes of the membership measures, why are we including the Exploring component of Learning for Life but not any other Learning for Life components? Exploring is our community-based LFL program, which operates similarly to the way our traditional programs operate and is almost exclusively member-paid.
39. Council measurement no. 4 and no. 5 include Exploring, but no. 6 is limited to only traditional programs? Why? Youth join Explorer posts to investigate career choices. As a result, some decide on a different career path and choose to drop out of the post. In these cases, retention suffers by design.
40. To what degree will the program measurements require additional resources, computers, or staff to input data in ScoutNet? There should be no additional resources needed. The council data will feed the performance dashboard automatically when data that is already being entered by a council. Districts and units will calculate their data the same way they have been.
41. Given the camp and high-adventure standards for Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, why did we decide not to provide a similar measurement for Venturing? The number of Venturers reported as participating in a long-term or high-adventure experience remains small. Including these in the count would not be comparable with the larger number of Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts both registered and participating in camping.
42. In terms of council leadership and governance measurement no. 15, why are we also not measuring the district key 3? We are, it's in district requirement no. 9 on district leadership.
43. Is there a point recognition system for Learning for Life units? No. Learning for Life units do not participate in Journey to Excellence.
44. How do the performance measurements for retention and membership take into consideration the performance of councils and districts that have historically performed at or above the national standard? Councils and districts that have been performing at or above the national standard can continue to achieve recognition by remaining above the standard. The requirement is to be above the standard, or have a 2 percent increase. This way, those high-achieving districts and councils can continue to be recognized, even with a very small or no increase.
45. How do the performance measurements for finance take into consideration the performance of various councils and districts that have historically performed at or above the national standard? The silver and gold levels will be challenging for everyone, as they should be. However, as with other criteria, high-performing councils will be recognized for remaining at or above the national standards.
46. In terms of council board and district committee training or orientation, why is a 100-percent trained criteria the minimum standard for bronze recognition? The more knowledgeable our leaders are, the better prepared they are for their jobs.
47. Is it necessary to satisfy the criteria for each level in order to be eligible for consideration for the next level? For instance, can gold criteria be attained without satisfaction of the bronze and silver criteria? In order to claim the points for silver, you must be able to qualify for the bronze level first. The same for gold; you must qualify at the bronze and silver levels to get the points for gold. The council award is based on total points earned



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and does not require bronze achievement in every single criterion. (An exception is that positive unrestricted net assets are required in the operating fund to achieve overall gold status.) The district and unit awards require a prescribed number of criteria to achieve bronze. Once that is met, the overall point totals determine the overall bronze, silver, or gold levels.

48. Has any consideration been given to councils that expend significant resources in supporting Scoutreach units? Do historical measurements indicate that these youth are more difficult to retain in the program, and if so, are we providing a disadvantage to councils with large Scoutreach programs? True, some units have had poor records in retention, advancement, camping, and other measures. The Journey to Excellence program rewards continuous improvement such that all units can increase their positive impact. Support for the Scoutreach program was very carefully taken into account by the taskforce.
49. Are units submitting their advancements consistently so there will be an adequate basis for measurement? Yes. Plus, this requirement may help to increase the number of units turning in all of their advancements promptly.
50. How are regions and areas going to support councils in introducing and implementing A Journey to Excellence? Area and regional personnel will be trained in this new program, and will be charged with helping councils and units understand and use the program.
51. As to fiscal management, is the measurement of positive unrestricted net assets only measured at year-end? For councils, there will be a MyBSA dashboard created that will be updated shortly after every month-end close. A real-time view will be available for all the requirements.
52. Some professionals and volunteers have expressed frustration with the first version of the Unit Visit Tracking System for tracking unit commissioner visits. What has changed in terms of the functionality of UVTS version 2.0 that was released to the field this summer? Feedback from many commissioners validate that the improvements are working and the UVTS 2.0 is now user-friendly.
53. Are there resources available to help a council design a custom training and orientation program for the council key 3 and the council executive board? For councils, the training is council-defined. There are many resources available, from the *Council Executive Board Orientation* notebook to the *Orientation Guide for Council Officers and Executive Board Members*. Councils can always add training specific to their needs.
54. Are the community service hours exclusive of hours that are already devoted to community improvement, such as Eagle Scout projects and Order of the Arrow service work? Does service to the Scout council count in the same manner as service to non-Scout interests? Service hours by Scouts, leaders, parents, OA lodges, and Eagle Scout projects make the Scouting program visible in your community. Any service projects that benefit another person or organization, including the council or the council camp, can be counted.
55. Who will keep the data and statistics for the advancement criteria? Will the online advancement program support this sort of measurement?
The new data retrieval system in ScoutNet will now count advancements by individual members. The percentage that the report will show is the number of members that are advancing, not the total number of advancements divided by the total number of members. This is a much better measure of our impact. If a boy advances two or three times in one year, it will reflect as one boy advancing.



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56. What constitutes council-generated net contributions in requirement No. 2?
Friends of Scouting, project sales, net special events, foundations and trusts, and other direct support, but not including legacies and bequests.
57. On the myscouting.org training update website, it indicates the 100-percent trained direct contact leadership criterion will be required in 2012. The JTE scorecard does not appear to reflect that push.
The Journey to Excellence scorecard reflects how councils actually performed in the previous year. The 100-percent trained direct contact leadership criterion is still a corporate goal, but the Journey to Excellence scorecard is based on actual performance data, not goals.
58. Where on scouting.org is the information? The search engine does not find it anywhere.
Once on www.scouting.org, click on “Volunteers” and scroll down to find a heading called “Quick Links.” Under this heading is a Journey to Excellence line. Click on that to access Journey to Excellence information.
59. Will any of these forms be available in Spanish?
Not at this time, but that is a great idea and we’ll look into it.
60. As volunteers go through online training, will this be entered automatically on the dashboard?
Yes, as online training is taken, the council’s dashboard will be updated.
61. If a Cub Scout, Boy Scout, or Varsity Scout advances more than one rank in a year, does the council receive credit for more than one advancement?
No. The standard is for individual youth earning at least one advancement during the year, not for the total number of advancements during the year.
62. Can I achieve the silver or gold level without achieving the bronze level in any individual requirement?
No. You must achieve the bronze level before you can qualify for the silver or gold levels. You must achieve the bronze and silver levels before you can qualify for the gold level.
63. What is the latest version of the scorecards?
The documents that are on-line are the most current. We have begun to put the date on the bottom of page two of the scorecards so you can always tell which is the most current.
64. As a council level volunteer, where will I go to be able to see my council’s Journey To Excellence dashboard?
You will log on to MyScouting.org with your volunteer log in and password and click on the MyScouting link at the top right of the page. If the volunteer is eligible based on registered position to view JTE, there will be a category called Council Tools and Journey to Excellence will display there. Account holders must add their member ID to the My Profile page in their MyScouting account for JTE to view.

