



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®  
NORTHEAST ILLINOIS COUNCIL

April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013

National Key 3  
Boy Scouts of America  
1325 West Walnut Hill Lane  
Box 152079  
Irving TX 75038

Dear Gentleman,

The Executive Board of the Northeast Illinois Council, Boy Scouts of America (NEIC) has surveyed its institutional heads and its chartered organizations representatives, invited more than 500 registered adult volunteers to participate in three open forum listening sessions, convened a task force of its members to study, and carefully considered other information in relation to the current Boy Scouts of America (BSA) statement of membership requirements. Having polled all of the corporation's active members and having received responses from more than half of them, NEIC's Executive Board determined to present the following statement on the BSA statement of membership requirements for consideration:

1. NEIC serves over 17,000 youth through Cub Scout Packs, Boy Scout Troops, Explorer Posts, Venturing Crews, Sea Scout Ships, Learning for Life and other programs under our charter with the BSA. Our mission is to provide character development, citizenship training, growth in physical and mental fitness, and leadership opportunities for the young people of the communities in our council's service area. We maintain one of the most rigorous of youth protection programs through biennial, mandatory, adult leadership training (for both our volunteers and our professional staff), diligent oversight in all sponsored activities and camping venues, and coordination with local, regional and national law enforcement agencies.

2. The current BSA statement of membership requirements provides:

The applicant must possess the moral, educational, and emotional qualities that the Boy Scouts of America deems necessary to afford positive leadership to youth. The applicant must also be the correct age, subscribe to the precepts of the Declaration of Religious Principle, and abide by the Scout Oath or Promise, and the Scout Law.

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While the BSA does not proactively inquire about the sexual orientation of employees, volunteers, or members, we do not grant membership to individuals who are open or avowed homosexuals or who engage in behavior that would become a distraction to the mission of the BSA.

The Executive Board of NEIC recommends that the second paragraph of the foregoing BSA statement of membership requirements should be replaced by the following:

While recognizing the rights of our chartered organizations to determine the leadership and membership of their units in accordance with the lawful principles of those chartered organizations, it is the policy of the BSA as an organization not to discriminate against individuals based on race, religious affiliation, national origin, ethnicity, disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic status, or political affiliation.

3. The Executive Board of NEIC recommends that BSA introduce this statement with the following:

We are committed to preparing the youth of America to assume their positions as adults in our society with dignity and purpose. We welcome back any person who previously felt excluded by our former policy and we will happily restore rank and awards which may have been surrendered due to the policy. We hope that anyone who is interested in the valuable programs Scouting offers will feel welcome to participate in a unit that best fits them and their needs. We trust that our communities and our supporters will recognize that we have listened and responded to their concerns through a lengthy process that ensured all voices were heard. We thank all of our volunteers and professional staff for guiding us to this point, and we look forward serving and supporting our communities and nation in the years to come.

Yours in Scouting,

Ron Peterson, Council President  
Northeast Illinois Council, BSA

