

Dear Scouting Representative,

My name is Dan Wentling. I am currently the Vice President of Programs for the Jayhawk Area Council BSA. I am also the Chair for the Kansas American Legion Scouting Committee and a member of the Executive Committee for the American Legion Boys State program. As you may know, Scouting has been the official youth program of the American Legion since 1919. I would like to make you aware of what the Boys State program is and how it can benefit our Scouts. I would appreciate it if you could get this information down to the unit level so the boys can know what is available to them. Here is a description of Boys State and how interested Scouts can apply or find more information.

The American Legion Boys State program began in 1935 by two Legionnaires in Illinois to counter the rise of socialism-inspired Young Pioneers Programs. The Kansas program was chartered in 1937, and the 87th program will be held from June 1-7 at Kansas State University in Manhattan. In addition, Sunflower Girls State is held at the same time at the University of Kansas in Lawrence.

At Boys State, participants learn the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of franchised citizens. The training is objective and centers on the structure of city, county, and state governments. Operated by students elected to various offices, Boys State activities include political debates, legislative sessions, court proceedings, law-enforcement presentations, assemblies, bands, choruses, and recreational programs. The program is open to youth who have completed their sophomore or junior years of high school.

During the weeklong experience at Boys State, Scouts will have the opportunity to work on seven merit badges. These badges, several of which are required for achievement of the Eagle Scout rank, will be offered under the supervision of individuals who are counselors of the American Legion Boys State of Kansas, as well as past and current registered adult leaders in the Scouts BSA program. To augment the merit badge process, Delegates/Scouts will benefit from the tutelage of subject matter experts in the field of communications, education, public service, government, and the legal profession.

The badges that can be complete in whole or in part are:

- **American Heritage**
- **Citizenship in Society**
- **Citizenship in Community**
- **Communications**
- **Citizenship in Nation**
- **Law**
- **Public Speaking**

The merit badges will only be offered to Scouts who are also registered delegates of the American Legion Boys State of Kansas. Scouts will be provided with a link from Boys State to register for the merit badges before arriving at the session in Manhattan. Staff at Boys State will provide Blue Cards for documentation of progress on the badges, as well as any materials necessary for completion of the badges. However, Scouts/Delegates are encouraged to bring notebooks or other means to document what they learn during their Boys State experience and merit badge classes.

At the conclusion of the weeklong Boys State session, Scouts/Delegates will receive documentation of the work they have completed toward achieving the merit badges. It is possible that additional work for some requirements will be necessary upon return to their Troops.

The cost to attend Boys State is \$375. A sponsor (Legion Post, civic organization and families) pays most of the fee but we ask the applicant to pay \$50 so there is some personal responsibility. There is no additional cost for participating in the merit badge classes for the Scout/Delegate, parents, sponsors, or Troops. In addition, Scouts/Delegates are also able to earn college credit through Kansas State for a substantially reduced tuition rate for their successful completion of the Boys State program and required instructor-assigned paper.

We hope that this partnership provides Scouts/Delegates a meaningful opportunity to complete required merit badges along their trail to Eagle, as well as learn more about our nation's heritage and civic responsibilities.

For more information about Boys State, please visit www.ksbstate.org. For more information about Girls State, please visit www.ksgirlsstate.org.

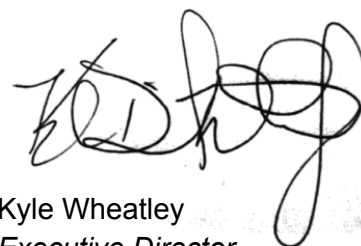
[The American Legion awards a \\$10,000 scholarship to its Eagle Scout of the Year. Three runners-up receive scholarships of \\$2,500 each.](#)

We look forward to working with you and your Scouts.

Sincerely,



Dan Wentling
*Vice President of Programs for Jayhawk Area BSA
Chair of Kansas American Legion Scouting Committee
Kansas Boys State Committee Member*



Kyle Wheatley
*Executive Director
American Legion Boys State of Kansas*