girl scouts of eastern pennsylvania

Delegate Council Meeting Overview

Delegate Council Meeting – Fall 2026
October 7, 2026, from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
~ in-person @ Shelly Ridge and virtual over Zoom ~

***Invited*:** GSEP Board of Directors, Girl Advisors to the Board, Board Development Committee Members, Girl Delegates, Service Unit Delegates & Alternates, 2026 NC Delegation, and Interested Members

Meeting Opening
Board Chair Nicole LeVine opened the meeting at 6:38 p.m. Girls who are members of the 2026 National Council (NC) Delegation, Girl Delegates, and Service Unit Delegates who are girls conducted the opening flag ceremony. As a Mission Moment, NC Delegate Gisele A. eloquently shared how impactful her experiences during the 2026 National Council Session have been on her personally (including serving as a member of the Proposal Resource Team, which prepared the formal language, messaging, and education for GSEP's proposal at NCS).

Introductions
Nicole LeVine recognized the respective cohorts in attendance (Board, Girl Advisors, Board Development Committee, SU Delegates and Alternates, Girl Delegates, National Council ("NC") Delegates, and Interested Members). She reiterated the decision-influencing role of the Delegate Council and thanked the members for their service. Nicole and CEO Kim E. Fraites then presented position pins to the new SU Delegates and Girl Delegates. Virtual attendees who have not received pins were asked to submit their names in the chat log; their pins will be mailed to them.

Board Development Committee (BDC) Report
BDC Chair Joann Gonzalez-Generals reviewed the names of the committee members. She explained that the members come from a variety of professional areas, live in various communities throughout the council, have different racial and ethnic backgrounds, and are wide-ranging in age.

Joann then provided an overview of the work of the BDC, which focuses on identifying, cultivating, and recruiting candidates to become members of the Board of Directors and the BDC itself. The BDC is responsible for reviewing the applications for the Girl Delegates and Girl Advisors to the Board to create the slate for the Delegate Council to elect. The BDC also suggests Board engagement and development opportunities.

She announced that the BDC is currently working on filling one open seat on the BDC, due to a resignation. This year, the Committee will also be confirming the Officers' slate in addition to the Board Members-at-Large for the elections at the 2027 Annual Meeting.

National Governance Update
CEO Kim Fraites presented the recent findings from **GSUSA's research study, "State of the Girl**." Girls today face social, personal, and societal challenges beginning as early as five years

old (e.g., one data point in the report states that 25% of young girls say their body and how it looks is a top concern). The impacts grow exponentially throughout middle and high school (for example, 58% of high school girls have already decided that they are not smart enough for their dream job). Yet, girls are clear about who they are and what they want in the future. However, girls facing cyberbullying, loneliness, and other mental health issues need adults committed to providing safe, supportive areas and funding for these spaces and programs. This study also focused on three questions: 1) what is being built for her? 2) who is on her side? and 3) is there joy in her journey? After 114 years of serving girls, our organization has learned the conditions that help girls grow: 1) consistent caregiving, 2) culturally inclusive spaces, 3) intentional family engagement, 4) safe paces to explore and fail, 5) in-person community connections, and 6) joyful, low-pressure activities.

The 2026 National Council Delegation then gave a report on the **2026 National Council Session**. Bridget Powell explained the 18-month timeline leading up to the NCS, starting with GSEP's Delegate Council brainstorming possible proposals and discussion topics in March 2025. After the National Board shared the official NCS agenda in January 2026, the NC Delegation had an intense six months of education, conversation, and learning sessions via webinars, in-person gatherings, and Zoom meetings with other Delegations from across the country.

Devyn Stek reviewed GSEP's proposal and announced that it was approved after a few hours of debate (GSEP's proposal offers Councils the opportunity to allow girls working on their Bronze and Silver Award projects to seek philanthropic donations). Ellen Iobst reported that the second proposal also was approved. This proposal lowered the threshold of a dues increase that the National Board can enact by themselves (i.e., a dues increase of 15% or more must now be approved by the National Council Delegates). Chloe T. and Suzi Walters explained that the third proposal (which sought to limit the sale of Girl Scout cookie-branded items licensed by GSUSA during the national Cookie Program sale period) generated a tremendous amount of discussion. Ultimately, the NC Delegates requested a one-hour discussion before the formal debate about whether this proposal fulfilled the purpose of actions at a National Council Session (to improve and propel our Movement forward). The National Council determined that this proposal was "out of order" and did not consider it further. Olga Torres also reported on the elections of the National Board members and National Board Development Committee members.

Charlotte H. described her experiences during the breakout for the first Discussion Topic, "Amplify Impact: Building Connections with Our Communities." All NC Delegates, NC Alternates, Council staff, and registered visitors shared thoughts on how Girl Scouts can be more welcoming and inclusive to promote belonging. She said it was amazing to be part of this national conversation and talk with other Girl Scout members from across the country. Lindy A. and Emma Smirk then explained the second Discussion Topic, "Revolutionize Engagement: Girl Scouts Her Way." During that breakout, GSUSA first shared some research on what caregivers and girls are looking for in out-of-school experiences. The research shows that our mission and outcomes are what families are looking for (allowing girls to grow their whole selves and to develop supportive relationships and a sense of belonging); however, our delivery model can be challenging. GSUSA presented five ways to be a Girl Scout: 1) troops, 2) camp, 3) caregiver + child experiences, 4) short-term topic deep dives, and 5) Girl Scout experiences in more places. Emma also added that the conversations about these topics continued throughout NCS and Girl Scouts Unite (including at the Young Alum brunch she attended).

NC Delegate (and Board Chair) Nicole LeVine concluded this update by stating that participating in National governance and attending a National Convention is a life-changing experience, and she thanked her sister NC Delegates for their dedication. She also encouraged GSEP's Service Unit Delegates & Alternates and Girl Delegates to consider applying (next year) to be part of the 2029 NC Delegation, which will travel to Indianapolis.

GSEP Governance Update
CEO Kim Fraites shared GSUSA's Vision 2030, the national three-year strategic plan (based on the concepts of Revolutionize Engagement, Amplify Impact, and Secure Tomorrow). GSUSA's strategic objectives are to 1) increase diversity, 2) expand ways to experience Girl Scouting, 3) create a compelling and widely understood value proposition, and 4) establish financial stability, enabling a strong Movement. She then explained that those concepts serve as guideposts for GSEP's new three-year strategic plan (MY27-29). Our Council's strategic objectives are to 1) grow membership, 2) elevate program quality, 3) invest in people, 4) improve the member experience, and 4) diversify revenue streams.

Strategy Café Discussions
Nicole LeVine introduced the strategy café topic, which was based on both the national and local Council strategic objectives: "How do we, here at GSEP, amplify impact and revolutionize engagement to grow membership, elevate program quality, and improve the member experience?" After the small group breakouts, a number of themes emerged during the large group report-outs, including these suggestions: increase career exploration opportunities for younger girls and older girls; offer more flexible and varied experiences to "try" Girl Scouts; encourage passion and engagement among Cadettes; increase networking opportunities for volunteers and establish a "buddy" system to pair new troop leaders with seasoned leaders; review best practices for registering for Spark programs (including communicating financial aid is available); and survey families and current members at the end of the troop year to learn what they want to see in the next year.

Closing
Board Chair Nicole LeVine mentioned the Fall Product Program will begin tomorrow and will continue through November 8. This program is an easy money-earner for troops at the beginning of their troop year and she encouraged anyone interested in participating to contact the Council.

She also reminded the Delegate Council that their responsibilty is to share what they learned tonight with their Service Units, troops, and Girl Scout friends. She asked that tonight's participants mark their calendars for the Winter Delegate Council meeting, scheduled for January 25 on Zoom.

Nicole adjourned the Fall Delegate Council Meeting at 8:29 p.m.

Please email any questions, concerns, or thoughts to governance@gsep.org