

Delegate Council Meeting – Fall 2025

October 16, 2025, 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

On behalf of Board Chair Nicole LeVine, Board Treasurer Jennifer Dempsey Fox opened the meeting at 6:33 p.m. Girl Advisors to the Board, Girl Delegates, and Service Unit Delegates who are girls conducted the opening flag ceremony. An attendee from the Daniel Boone Service Unit shared a Mission Moment in which she explained that the older girls in her Service Unit host a four-week Daisy Camp in the summer for rising kindergarteners. A Girl Delegate also then shared her love of summer camp with the attendees.

Introductions

Jen Fox 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. Jen and CEO Kim E. Fraites-Dow 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

On behalf of BDC Chair Joann Gonzalez-Generals, BDC member Deb Walters 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.

Deb 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 Board and one open seat on the BDC itself, due to resignations over the summer. However, no Board or BDC members are coming to the end of their respective third and final terms this year so the slate at the 2026 Annual Meeting will focus on re-election of current members.

National Governance News

On behalf of the 2026 NC Delegation, NC Delegate Deb Walters reminded the attendees that GSUSA has been developing and working on their strategic plan, culminating in Movement-wide goals called “Vision 2030.” GSUSA -- and all the Councils -- are laser focused on these ideas:

- To revolutionize engagement by making Girl Scouting easy, flexible, and accessible
- To amplify impact by ensuring that Girl Scouts is THE trusted resource to meet girls’ and their families’ needs in their leadership development
- To secure tomorrow by managing our resources wisely – that includes property management, philanthropy, the cookie program, etc.

Vision 2030 is the road map and strategic plan for GSUSA and informs local Councils of how to meet the next 3-5 years as a collective movement.

Deb also offered an overview of the National Board’s July meeting, at which they discussed:

- Vision 2030
- MY2025 membership (which was slightly down in July)
- How GSUSA is addressing “pain points” as well as promoting best practices to meet the needs of families and girls
- GSUSA’s FY25 financial state (and the National Board also approved GSUSA’s FY26 budget)
- How to strengthen & broaden individual giving, specifically focusing on alums and especial Gold Award alums
- The national licensing program and the plan for the next five years
- An update on the three-year technology road map.

A copy of [the highlights of the National Board’s July meeting](#) can be found on GSEP’s website.

Deb then shifted the focus of the National Governance update to the upcoming 2026 National Council Session. Deb reminded the participants that GSEP had submitted a proposal to GSUSA back in June. The NCS Advisory Team reviewed the 23 submissions from all the Councils and made recommendations to the National Board. GSEP’s proposal did receive support from enough sister Councils to be considered. However, the National Board will not create the official version of the NCS agenda (with the final proposals) until January 2026. Those proposals will be the focus of GSEP’s Winter Delegate Council Meeting in February 2026.

Two other recent pieces of news from GSUSA were also shared:

- At their September 30th meeting, the National Board approved the property strategy that supports Vision 2030. The property strategy includes:
 - Selling the Edith Macy Conference Center
 - The net proceeds from the sale of Macy will be placed in a designated fund from which in perpetuity:
 - 75% of the annual spend will be allocated to national training & education to prepare and inspire those who deliver Girl Scouting, and
 - The remaining 25% will be allocated to support council camp improvements through the deployment of grants to revitalize council-owned property.
 - Selling up to three floors (of the current five floors) of GSUSA’s National Headquarters, located at 420 Fifth Avenue in New York City.

- GSUSA will maintain two floors as the national headquarters, and they will continue to operate Girl Scout Central to serve the many Girl Scouts who visit the city annually.
- Proceeds from this sale will be designated to pay for Council support for the last two years of the national Girl Scout pension fund.
 - Councils are expected to utilize those savings to invest in our respective Councils (not just save some annual operating expenses).

A Service Unit Delegate asked if a portion of that savings could be used here in GSEP for additional financial aid for returning girls. CEO Kim Fraites-Dow explained that three years ago, GSEP instituted a process that individual girls should use their cookie proceeds for membership dues, before applying for financial aid (as well as troop proceeds before applying for camperships). GSEP does have a hardship fund for individual members to use if those other mechanisms are not sufficient.

MY26: Setting the Stage

CEO Kim Fraites-Dow shared statistics and data points regarding GSEP's annual membership figures since 2019, including:

- Number of girl members
- Renewed vs. new girl members
- Adult members
- Renewed vs. new adult members

Three key observations noted were:

- Retention has dramatically increased.
- Although our girl membership numbers are not at pre-pandemic levels, the number of adult members is relatively similar. So, about the same number of volunteers which served over 35,000 girls in 2019 is currently serving 25,000 girls in 2025.
- The pandemic impacted the recruitment of younger girls which has had a ripple effect in the respective age levels four years later, but we have retained more older girls.

Kim then talked about the “key lenses” for Membership Year 2026:

- 1) Improve the member experience.
- 2) Grow membership.

GSEP's MY26 girl membership goal is 26,400. The various cohorts that make up that figure are renewed girls in troops, new girls in troops, girls in community troops, and girls in series.

Kim also shared that the Council has received final approval to renovate the house we purchased three years ago which was adjacent to Camp Mountain House. The goal is to start the renovations this fall, so we will have a new year-round Girl Program Center in the Lehigh Valley by next summer. The house and surrounding property added two more acres to our camp; plus, this building and the yard back up to 400 acres of conserved land, so this new Program Center will be a tremendous resource for our Council. She also announced that GSEP has received approval to build a new pool at Camp Wood Haven. Due to the timing, the new pool will be ready by summer 2027.

Strategy Café Discussions

Kim Fraites-Dow introduced the topic to be discussed: GSEP's strategic plan and how our plans align and grow out of the national vision. The staff and Board members have been meeting to gather data and discuss insights (Phase 1). We are currently in Phase 2, which is to determine how those insights can drive decisions for the strategic plan. The Situational Analysis in Phase 1 focused on six areas:

- Market Awareness
- DEIRJ
- Current Strategy
- Mission Delivery
- People & Operations
- Finance & Revenue

The information and data from the six areas were then synthesized through a SWOT analysis (strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats). Kim shared common themes of needs and goals which emerged:

- Customer Service Mindset (around clarity, consistency, and responsiveness)
- Staff Development (training, accountability, and retention)
- Volunteer Dependence (consistency and recognition)
- Revenue Diversification (beyond cookies)
- Data & Tech Leverage (accuracy and insight)
- Brand Storytelling (shift from scarcity to strength mindset)
- Risk Awareness (safety, financial, reputational)

Kim then shared the vision of success for this three-year strategic plan, which includes GSEP being “best in class” and providing equitable program experiences, having families become our ambassadors and advocates, and developing a culture of clarity, purpose, and pride. She also shared the new Program Experience Framework, the shift in Communications messaging, and the evolution of the Council's revenue model. *(For more details, please see slides 37-42 in the [meeting deck](#).)*

All attendees had small group discussions at their tables or in Zoom rooms (with dedicated girls-only spaces) for 20 minutes. Each group was assigned one of these five strategic objectives: 1) Grow Membership, 2) Elevate Program Quality, 3) Diversify Revenue Streams, 4) Invest in People, and 5) Improve the Member Experience.

Each small group then shared the discussion notes from their table/room. *(These notes were collated and can be found at the end of this Overview.)* These ideas have been passed along to the staff planning teams to incorporate any best tactical concepts into the FY26-FY28 Strategic Plan.

Closing

Board Treasurer Jen Fox reminded attendees that the Fall Product Program has started and will continue through November 9. This program is an easy money-earner for troops to garner some funds in the beginning of their troop year.

All girls involved in GSEP governance will be invited to participate in the 2026 Troop PA experience in Harrisburg, which is being planned for early February. Girl Scouts from all three

Councils in the Commonwealth will host the female legislators in an Investiture Ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda.

Finally, she reminded the Delegate Council that the next meeting will be held on February 10 (*new date!*). The primary focus will be the proposals for the 2026 National Council Session.

Jen adjourned the Fall Delegate Council Meeting at 8:15 p.m.

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

GSEP Strategic Insights

Delegate Council

Strategy Café Discussion Notes

October 16, 2025

Summary of Key Strategies & Opportunities

Strategy #1 – Grow Membership

- Core Challenge: Recruitment starts too late; families commit early.
- Launch recruitment earlier (spring/summer).
- Expand channels beyond schools (community orgs, digital outreach).
- Increase troop flexibility: time, location, virtual/traveling options.
- Use Council centers for meetings & programs.
- Reflect community diversity in recruitment.
- Leverage existing volunteers & build succession pipelines.
- Focus messaging on impact & outcomes, not process.
- Address transportation & scheduling barriers for working families.

Strategy #2 – Elevate Program Quality

- Core Challenge: Inconsistent program quality & limited communication.
- Deliver programs led by field experts, tailored by county identity.
- Create local, smaller, age-varied events; offer 'Program in a Box.'
- Improve leader communication networks (shared database, service-unit links).
- Build leadership pipelines: older girls mentoring younger ones.
- Form specialized 'Area Patrols' for outdoor & skill programs.
- Strengthen leader training & behavior support.
- Use social media & partnerships to amplify visibility.

Strategy #3 – Diversify Revenue Streams

- Core Challenge: Heavy reliance on cookies & a few events.
- Build dedicated grantwriting team (staff, Board, alums).
- Expand corporate & community partnerships (PECO, Comcast, Merck, etc.).
- Introduce new fundraising events (scavenger hunts, speaker series, conferences).
- Grow workplace giving, legacy gifts, volunteer-match donations.
- Strengthen PR & storytelling—highlight GS impact beyond cookies.
- Promote camps as both mission and revenue drivers.
- Tailor incentives by age and celebrate success stories.

Strategy #4 – Invest in People

- Core Challenge: Leadership turnover & communication gaps.
- Establish succession plans (3-year rotations, mentorship, shadowing).
- Foster two-way communication among Council, service units, and families.
- Recruit and train diverse leaders/staff; bridge generational gaps.
- Develop non-school recruitment pipelines where access is limited.
- Support SUMs with feedback, mentoring tools, and training.
- Expand awareness & access to Gold/Silver Award and leadership programs.
- Empower families & alums as ambassadors for GSEP.

Strategy #5 – Improve Member Experience

- Core Challenge: Uneven quality and difficult technology.
- Introduce camping early and mentor non-camp troops.
- Strengthen Council programs & adult engagement.
- Ensure consistent troop quality & fit.
- Fix tech frustrations (registration, GoGold, camp reservations).
- Continue Daisy/Brownie Boxes; expand in-person training.
- Promote inclusivity (gender-neutral merch, girl-led designs).
- Rotate Council meetings beyond Shelly Ridge to increase access.

Cross-Cutting Themes

- Start earlier, plan smarter, communicate better.
- Empower and retain leaders & volunteers.
- Diversify visibility, access, and revenue.
- Celebrate outcomes—Girl Scouts change lives.
- Tell our story louder through PR, digital, and community channels.