



Thanks for your positive responses to our first issue of *Realignment News*. Some of the questions you submitted are answered in this edition – some will be answered in future editions – and some will be answered on an individual basis.

In addition to submitting questions, we invite councils/council groups to send in a paragraph or two about the progress you have made in your discussions about realignment. Submissions should be brief and focus on lessons learned. We will share as many submissions as we can in future editions of *Realignment News*.

Please send your questions and comments to jverhage@girlscouts.org or vwright@girlscouts.org

ITEMS OF INTEREST

A Conversation about Boundaries – What should we discuss?

Conversations about council realignment are taking place on a daily basis. All of you are generating great lessons for the days, weeks, and months ahead. Several of you have indicated that topics appropriate for jurisdictional discussions are easy to identify, however keeping the conversation “on point” requires discipline.

Discussions about boundaries should focus on elements that will create a workable jurisdiction. Topics appropriate to the conversation include, but are not limited to, the available girl population, issues of regional identification, traffic and transportation patterns, and economic information including the potential funding base. Demographers connected to state colleges and universities have been a great resource for councils, and many have donated their services for this project.

Topics we love to discuss – the cookie sale, camp fees, staffing structures, how program is delivered – are important to share for the purpose of understanding each others’ councils, but not for the purpose of deciding boundaries. Once boundaries are established, all questions related to operations will come into play. A step-by-step guide will be provided to councils to support this important next phase of council realignment.

Q & A

1. I know that our realignment criteria recommendations are due on January 3.

Can you let us know exactly how the information should be presented? Answer:

The criteria input form was sent to councils by Nancy Fox, Interim Executive Vice President, on

October 21, 2005. To help those who may have misplaced the form, we have attached a copy to this edition of *Realignment News* and will post it in the CEO Corner of the OCN.

[Open attachment; fill in answers; click save; click e-mail icon: e-mail form opens – address it to vwright@girlscouts.org; click send.]

Please note that we have added three questions to the form that require “yes” or “no” answers. These questions have been added to give GSUSA an early sense of how many councils/council groups plan to submit maps on or before February 7 – and whether those councils would like to be considered in the pool of “early adopters.” If you have already submitted your form, we will contact you directly for answers to the additional questions.

2. I would like to share my copy of *Realignment News* with council staff. Is that OK? Answer: Absolutely. To that end, we will begin posting *Realignment News* on the OCN. To insure that Board Chairs and CEOs have first access to the information, we will post *Realignment News* on the OCN with a one-week delay. The edition that you received on Monday, December 5 will be posted today, December 12.

3. I have heard that there will be a Board-appointed task group to support this effort? What will their role be? Answer: The National Board of Directors established a Council Realignment Task Group at their December meeting. This group will be chaired by Linda Foreman, Secretary of the National Board and a former Council President. The Task Group will provide advice to the National Board on policy issues related to realignment. They will also provide support to the National CEO and her staff as they implement all aspects of this important work.

4. What is the job of our council Nominating Committee as we prepare for realignment? Answer: The Nominating Committee needs to fulfill its responsibility to present a complete slate of candidates for elective office at each local council annual meeting. As we head into a period of Movement-wide change, Nominating Committees need to look for candidates who thrive on organizational change and who believe strongly in the future of Girl Scouting. Candidates with positive experience in mergers, both in the corporate and nonprofit sectors, would be very helpful.

5. What if some councils in a state want to be “early adopters” and some do not? Answer: All councils within a proposed jurisdiction must be in agreement to be considered as a potential “early adopter.” If the proposed jurisdiction includes the entire state, then all councils within the state need to agree. Only council groups who have submitted proposed maps by February 7, 2005 can be considered in the pool of potential “early adopters.”

6. What about all the council work that is in progress or about to begin? We are about to start our CPA and I know of others who were considering Capital Campaigns. Answer: Remember that council realignment will be a long process. Councils need to pace themselves and focus on their most important work – serving girls. We have already implemented a much-simplified CPA that will greatly reduce the time required by councils and, in many ways, will help councils get ready for realignment. We continue to urge councils to consult with GSUSA before launching Capital Campaigns.

7. What resources will be available from GSUSA to support this process in the months ahead? Answer: We realize that councils are concerned about costs and are working to determine what resources can be made available as this process moves forward. Additionally, we are creating cross-functional teams who will provide support to councils throughout the country as we work together to implement our realignment strategy.

8. What do I say to donors? Answer: If you are currently discussing multi-year grant opportunities, you may want to address the subject of realignment. For example: “We are involved in a nationwide effort to expand the capacity of councils to deliver exceptional program for girls. Part of this effort is a nationwide realignment of council boundaries. We consider this a positive step forward for all of Girl Scouting and want to assure you that it will not affect our ability to deliver on our promises to you.”
