

## Frequently Asked Questions - Realignment

### **1. *Why are Girl Scouts councils merging?***

Girl Scout councils are realigning to create the infrastructure necessary to prepare for the future of Girl Scouting. This realignment will strengthen the Girl Scout movement by creating high capacity councils capable of providing more opportunities for girls, enhanced services for adult volunteers, continued outreach to underserved populations, and stronger community partners.

The council realignment will create economies of scales at all levels of the organization including fundraising, public relations, property, staffing, and volunteer support. This realignment will help us develop our resources more effectively and decrease duplicating efforts.

For additional detail, refer to the full mission statement for the Girl Scouts of Western New York.

### **2. *How is the Council Realignment Committee (CRC) organized?***

The CRC is made up of three representatives from each of the merging councils – the CEO, the board president, and volunteer from the community that has a specific skill set or area of expertise and a demonstrated commitment to Girl Scouts. All twelve members of the CRC have full voting rights on all decisions with exception of the CEO Search. The CEOs do not participate or vote on any aspect of the CEO Search. All major decisions require a three-quarters majority vote.

### **3. *What does the merger mean for individual troops?***

Girls will remain in the same troops, or as always, may choose to join a new troop at the end of the membership year. The current troop numbers will likely change, as there will be duplication of troop numbers when the four legacy councils merge. Membership cards will reflect the legacy council's name until next year.

The most exciting immediate news is that our new council will be pooling volunteer and staff resources. This change will enable us to increase the number of program events offered and the locations we can offer them in, and it will afford all girls the chance to meet more Girl Scouts.

### **4. *Will our service center remain open? What about other Girl Scout properties?***

No decisions in regard to any properties have been made and there are no plans to close any of the service centers. It is the recommendation of GSUSA that all property decision be deferred until after Realignment. The new CEO and the new board will be looking at all properties and facilities and making decisions in the future. The new leadership is committed to serving all the areas within the Western New York's council jurisdiction and will make these decisions with the interests of girls and volunteers in mind.

### **5. *How will product sales be affected?***

GSUSA recommends that product sales stay on the same timetable for the immediate future. Western New York's leadership will determine whether changes need to be made for the future.

### **6. *Will the Bylaws of the new council be different?***

The new Bylaws are a bit different. In keeping with recommendations from GSUSA, Girl Scouts of Western New York will adopt a new delegate structure. Overall, there will be fewer delegates but the delegates will have greater responsibility and a more meaningful role to play in Girl Scouting. In the new council, delegates will have greater influence over decisions and outcomes for the council.

Considerable care has been taken to ensure that geographic areas of the new council have equivalent representation. Please refer to the Bylaws included in your packet for details.

### **7. How has the board of directors been put together?**

The new board of directors is made up of members-at-large from the boards of the legacy councils as well as new members within the Girls Scouts of Western New York's jurisdiction nominated by the CRC. Insofar as high caliber candidates from each area could be identified that are *willing* to serve on the new board, effort has been made to see that all legacy councils have equivalent representation.

### **8. What will happen after the new CEO is hired?**

Once the new CEO is hired, there will be a period of transition from mid-April--early May until July 1, day one of the new council. During the time, the new CEO will be familiarizing him or herself with all aspects of the realigning council and planning and preparing for Western New York's Day 1, when they will step into full leadership of the newly merged council.

### **9. What are the roles and responsibilities of the delegates in the context of realignment and the vote on the Plan and Agreement of Merger?**

The CRC has developed a merger plan and a governance structure for the new council. The main document for the merger is called the Plan and Agreement of Merger. The framework for the governance structure is contained in the Bylaws of the new council. At the time of the delegate vote, the board of directors of each existing council will have approved the merger. The voting membership of each council will approve the merger by voting on the same documents approved by each legacy council's board.

#### **Schedule of Board and Delegate Voting Meetings**

##### Board Meetings:

Buffalo – March 17  
Niagara – March 25  
SW – March 31  
GV – April 10

##### Delegate Meetings:

Buffalo– May 19  
Niagara – May 20  
SW – May 22 (4/29 info meeting scheduled)  
GV – May 13 (4/1 & 4/2 info meetings scheduled)

#### **Common Definitions for Realignment**

**Realignment:** another way to refer to merger of our four councils - Genesee Valley, Niagara, Buffalo/Erie and Southwestern New York - into one new high performance, high capacity council known as Girl Scouts of Western New York.

**Legacy councils:** a way to refer to the merging councils (Genesee Valley, Niagara, Buffalo/Erie & Southwestern New York).

**CRC Sub-Committees:** these include Governance, Finance, Human Resources, CEO Search, Nominating Committee, Property, Fund Development, Program and Services, Communications, and Information Technology

**Bylaws:** the bylaws are agree-upon rules that dictate how Girl Scout councils operate; also referred to as the "governance structure"

**Plan and Agreement to Merge (P&A):** the P&A is the legal document prepared by the law firm Phillips Lytle, LLP with input from the CRC that is to be voted on by the legacy boards and delegates. Once it has been approved, it will be submitted to the State of New York for approval.