



Agenda Item Identification Code
(For National Board Office only):

Girl Scouts of the USA
420 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10018-2798

Agenda Item Submission Form 58th National Council Session

Name of Girl Scout Council(s)

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois

City

Bettendorf

State

IA

If a group of councils is submitting a single agenda item, all councils must be listed on this form.

Is this council(s) submitting a ☒ Discussion Topic or ☐ Proposal?

Is this a ☐ draft or a ☒ final submission?

Write the following information exactly as the council wishes it to appear in the *Workbook* if accepted for the agenda.

TITLE OF PROPOSAL OR DISCUSSION TOPIC

To amend the credentials section of the blue book to allow participants who are age 5 to be Girl Scouts

STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL OR DISCUSSION TOPIC, QUESTION, OR ISSUE

(Proposals should be written in the form of a motion)

TOPIC, QUESTION, OR ISSUE

or

THAT

or

TO

Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois moves to amend the Certificate of Membership section of the Credentials section of the GSUSA Blue Book to allow participants who are age 5 to be Girl Scouts as follows:

Girl Scout Membership Levels

~~Kindergarten-1~~ age 5-grade 1 Girl Scout Daisy

Allowing Girl Scout membership at age 5, whether in kindergarten or not, will benefit these members through the experiences and socialization in Girl Scouts. There is Girl Scout content to allow for three years of Daisy Girl Scout programming while previously, there was not as much developed. As families

determine programs for their children to participate in at younger ages, this gives families the option to make Girl Scouts an opportunity for their child.

Allowing transitional (alternative) kindergarten programs to be Girl Scouts provides informal education that would benefit these youth through an extra year of participation in Girl Scouts. Currently girls in this category are not being served by Girl Scouts while younger participants may be benefiting from Girl Scouts through extended year. In many cases, the determination of when a student is placed into an alternative Kindergarten program is not assessed until closer to the school year starting. This creates the potential for an extended year member to no longer qualify under the incoming Kindergarten guidelines and would potentially prevent them from being included in the Girl Scout program until the following year.

In both situations, these potential members are reflected in market share population counts at age 5, however a potential member turning 5 after a school cut off for kindergarten would be excluded for months until extended year. Likewise, a 5 year old not yet quite ready for kindergarten would also be excluded until the following extended year option.

These families may be seeking access to programs for their child to learn and grow to prepare them for kindergarten. Girl Scouts would be an excellent option for these families early on, continuing through primary school years and then beyond.

REASONS:

1. What is the issue the discussion topic or proposal is trying to address?

GSUSA Blue Book of Basic Documents currently states Kindergarten as the eligibility to start Girl Scouts. This national proposal is to allow for age 5 or in alternative kindergarten to join Girl Scouts. Prior to June of 2005, the age of eligibility for Girl Scouts was age 5. This was changed to kindergarten during a Bylaws revision by the National Board in June 2005 and the revised membership standards became effective October 1, 2008.

2. Are there other ways to address this issue?

Councils could ignore the standard and not align with GSUSA Blue Book of Basic Documents. GSUSA could start a new program level for this age group, however this seems unnecessary when Daisy level program would serve this group well.

3. How does this proposal improve Movement governance or policy? OR How does this discussion topic inform Movement strategy?

This proposal recognizes the stated guidelines in the GSUSA Blue Book of Basic Documents and seeks to adjust to increase access to our youngest potential members. This would allow councils to serve potential members already reflected in their market share starting at age 5 and allow councils to be competitive with youth serving programs beginning before primary school years.

Girl Scouts is missing a critical window of time with families as many start selecting activities for their children around the age of 3 to 5 years old.

4. Does this agenda item have Movement-wide significance? Does it apply to all councils?

On average, around 152,823 females are born each month in the USA.

Alternative kindergarten is frequently an option for families with a female child turning 5 in the few months before the required age for kindergarten enrollment. With majority of areas having before September 1 as their eligible age for enrollment in kindergarten, approximately 458,469 5-year-old females may be in alternative kindergarten and unable to participate in Girl Scouts.

Further, families with females missing the eligibility to enroll in kindergarten due to not turning age 5 until after the required date for enrollment would not be able to be Girl Scouts until extended year on April 1. This represents nearly 1,069,761 potential members for Girl Scouts with families seeking activities for their child's growth and development.

While communities may interchange the meaning of Alternative Kindergarten and Transitional Kindergarten (TK), Transitional Kindergarten is generally designed for children who are not yet old enough to enter regular kindergarten but are ready for a more structured learning environment than preschool. By including females turning age 5, these youth would be able to be served by Girl Scouts.

5. Is this agenda item time-sensitive? What happens if it is not addressed at NCS 58?

As a membership organization, it is to the benefit of the Movement to include as many participants as possible. Further from a societal impact, it is a benefit to begin group experiences for youth at age 5.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR PROPOSALS

Indicate the projected expenditure and impact on resources for councils and the national organization, for a five (5) year period.

This proposal opens the opportunity to bring Girl Scouts to a younger subset to begin their Girl Scout experience even sooner while not requiring many additional resources. The biggest financial impact on councils would be in potential additional financial assistance.

Tracy Schwind  _____ 5/15/25 _____
Signature and Printed Name of chair, council board of directors Date of council board meeting

Open Comment and Collaboration Period: April 7-May 14, 2025

To submit for Open Comment and Collaboration, completed forms must be emailed to BoardOffice@girlscouts.org, copying abeck@girlscouts.org, with subject line: Draft Agenda Item from [INSERT COUNCIL(S)].

Please note that if a group of councils is submitting a single agenda item, the submission form should be signed by each council's board chair.

Final Submission Deadline: May 30, 2025

Final submissions, signed off by your council(s) board chair must be emailed to BoardOffice@girlscouts.org, copying abeck@girlscouts.org, with the subject line: Final Agenda Item from [INSERT COUNCIL(S)].

If additional space is needed, please attach a separate page.