INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA™

"Inspiration is Contagious"

DKGNJ State Meeting
Steinert HS, Hamilton Township
October 3, 2026

Called to order by President Cathy Fortunato (Lambda) at 10:00 am.

Pledge of Allegiance: led by Corresponding Secretary Cathy Cleenput (Alpha)

Motivational Thought: Wilhelmina Bryant (Lambda), State Motivator

Wilhelmina read the inspirational poem "An Early Fall" written by Lambda sister Arlene Novack.

Roll Call: State Recording secretary Betty Monaghan

A total of 55 members were present. A quorum is present. Chapter President Roll Call as follows:

Chapter	President	Is the President Present?	If not, who is substituting for the President?	Vote on motion (see New business)
Alpha	Kristen Massotta	Yes		yes
Beta	Jo Ann Corvino	Yes		Yes
Gamma	Angela Castaneda	Yes		Yes
Delta	Amy Giulian	No	None	n/a
Epsilon	Patty Curtis	Yes		Yes
Zeta	Kimberley Corso	Yes		Yes (Lucille Ziegler for Kim Corso)
Eta	Tracey Holland	Yes		Yes
Lambda	Wilhelmina Bryant	Yes		Yes
Mu	Teresa Cuesta	Yes		Yes

Nu	Nola Tosti	Yes		Yes
Xi	Diane Brunetti	Yes		Yes
Omicron	Jane Costantino	Yes		Yes
Pi	Michelle Marhefka	Yes		Yes
Rho	Crystal DiBetta	Yes		Yes

Minutes: Cathy Fortunato (Lambda)

The minutes were distributed electronically prior to the meeting. Having no corrections to the minutes, the June 6, 2026 state meeting minutes are filed as dispersed.

Committee Report: World Fellowship Report by Gail Starr (Omicron) Members should be reminded/educated at chapter meetings to contact 2 or 3 assigned World Fellowship recipients throughout the year.

Officer Reports

Treasurer: Ellen Hahn (Beta)

The Treasurer's Report is filed.

- TD Checking account (#. . .9477) Balance $15,558.04
- Margaret Abel Scholarship Fund $ 70,558.55
- Primerica Investments $81,045.87
- Designated Funds:
    - TD Saving account $500.99
    - Live Oak account (#.....7195) $3,577.56
    - Live Oak 1 yr. CD (#6846) $52,118.83
    - Live Oak 1yr CD (#7974) $18,103.34

Members were reminded that anyone who has not paid dues will be dropped by October 15th. They can be reinstated upon payment of dues.

Jennifer Verme suggested using Zelle for dues and convention payments, which Ellen Hahn confirmed can be sent to dkgnjtreasurer@gmail.com. To enhance safety, Dawn Flanders advised using mobile antivirus software and mobile hotspots instead of public Wi-Fi, while Ellen Hahn recommended using gel pens on checks to prevent check. Additionally, Cathy Fortunato expressed that chapters will be able to implement online website dues payment options in addition to accepting check payments.

Corresponding Secretary Cathy Cleenput (Alpha)

Since the last meeting, 6 Sympathy. 10 Thinking of you, and 3 Congratulations cards were sent. Please continue to contact Cathy C. with any card-worthy news from your chapters.

President's Report Cathy Fortunato (Lambda)

DKG Society International News:

Betty Wilkes, Membership and Marketing Manager at DKG, extended deadlines:

First, Form 110 has been extended through October 7, that is the list of chapter officers for 2026-2028. I need to stop here and apologize to past president Laura Perrius. When Betty sent her notice, I traced the forms that were sent to me. Laura did send me the Alpha Chapter Form. Chapter presidents, please be sure you have sent the forms to international.

Second, the automatic drop deadline for unbilled members has been pushed back to October 15.

All information is listed on the international website, dkg.org including upcoming virtual events, virtual networks, impact projects, leadership development, and more.

DKGNJ State News:

Gratitude for Gamma sisters! Angie Belmont for securing our room reservations for the year, Diana Vasil for our refreshments, and President Angela Castaneda for the microphone.

Thanks to Epsilon sister Betty Monaghan for stepping up to be our State Legislation Chair this year.

Thanks to Dawn Flanders for setting up the technology for our state convention workshops for the past three years. We truly appreciated your expertise. We need a new sister to set up the convention workshops for this year. Please contact me if you are able to volunteer.

Thank you, Teresa Cuesta (check with Dr. Terri Evans), for volunteering as Technology Chair for the 2027 state convention!

Thanks to Omicron sister Diane Roberts for organizing our 2026-202 Yearbook/Directory.

Congratulations to:

- Claire Swanson (Alpha) for her new appointment to the International Editorial Board for this biennium, and
- Dr. Denise Furlong (Lambda) for the launch of her book *Learners First: Purpose and Practicality in Your Early years of Teaching*. Co-authored with Dr. Keri Orange-Jones, Learners First is meant to empower and equip aspiring and early-career teachers.

- In celebration of our nation's 250th anniversary, she wrote another book with co-author Darcy Daniels. The title of the book is Portrait of a Citizen: Strategies and Tools for Teaching Action Civics in Grades 6-12.
- Eta Chapter for being recognized as the second highest fan of Delta Kappa Gamma by engaging online.
- Zeta Chapter President Kim Corso. Her daughter delivered a baby boy last night!
- Congratulations to State Social Chair Diana Vasil who began this school year in a new position as school superintendent.

Welcome new leaders! Our motto for the state biennium is "Inspiration is Contagious." Let's continue to inspire each other by moving forward to accomplish our goals with purpose, planning, steady support, and kindness.

The state service project is "Breast Cancer Awareness." October is the month to stand in solidarity and plan an event with your chapter sisters during this year.

Mu Chapter President Teresa Cuesta, please let us know about your planned event on October 18? (Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk in Point Pleasant)Lambda Chapter President Wilhelmina, tell us about your project last year. (kindness rocks for breast cancer patients to take home after treatments)

I hope your chapter has an event planned for this year.

We had a chapter president sharing session on Zoom to build community. The chapter presidents shared concerns, upcoming programs, and parliamentary procedure. A requested topic we still need to address is planning ice breakers for meetings.

Ice Breaker: Cathy Fortunato (Lambda) encouraged chapters to use ice breaker activities at meetings to assist sisters in getting to know each other. She led us in a sample activity in which an attribute for a member was chosen from a basket by one sister. Then she gave it to another sister, not in her chapter, who exemplified the chosen quality.

One goal this year is for chapters to begin to sponsor collegiate chapters. We can help mentor future educators and introduce them to the benefits of our Society by being a sister chapter to a collegiate chapter. Introduction of Dawn Flanders.

Program Presentation Dawn Flanders (Mu) gave a power point presentation on starting a collegiate chapter. She took us through several steps to forming a successful collegiate community: Reach out to local colleges, offer to volunteer or tutor. Connect with existing clubs. Have your chapter scholarship chair contact the college and explain what DKG has to offer. Epsilon chapter is moving forward with Sussex County Community College in the hopes of

starting a collegiate chapter. These are the DKG requirements when organizing a collegiate chapter.

- There must be 12 members to start a chapter.
- The collegiate chapter must be sponsored by an existing chapter.
- Dues are half of international and state dues. The sponsoring chapter may subsidize.
- There must be officers and separate meetings.
- Freshman to senior education majors may be included.

At 11:00 for Breakout sessions were assigned as follows:

Chapter Presidents: Cathy Fortunato (Lambda) in the media center

Chapter First Vice Presidents: Diane Roberts (Omicron) in B3

Chapter Second Vice Presidents: Chris Musick (Mu) in B124

Convention Chairs: Sue Davis (Epsilon), Jan Paxton (Alpha) in B4

At 11:20 am, President Cathy Fortunato (Lambda) continued the meeting.

State Committee Reports

Arts: Patty Curtis (Epsilon), Suzette Given (Alpha)

This year the convention Arts program will include 2 open mike sessions for members to share original poetry, short stories, song lyrics, essays, book chapters, etc. Music will again be included. Registration will begin in January.

Communications: Dr. Pam Albert Devine (Mu)

Chapters and members are encouraged to share exciting news, updates, and photos for the state organization's website, newsletter, and social media platforms. Posts featuring photos—especially those with four or more images that allow for reels—generate the highest level of engagement. Members are also asked to follow and promote the state social media accounts during their chapter meetings and assist members with setting them up if needed.

Convention: Sue Davis (Epsilon), Jan Paxton (Alpha)

Following the closure of the Somerset Doubletree, the 2027 DKGNJ State Convention will be held at the Crowne Plaza Princeton in Plainsboro from April 9–11, 2027. The event includes Friday's Ice Cream Social and Basket Auction, followed by Saturday's Induction, Banquet, and Celebration of Life. Rooms are $139 per night (including breakfasts) if booked by the March 9, 2027 deadline. Registration details and meal counts will be finalized over the fall and winter,

with inquiries directed to Susan Davis for hotel info, Jan Paxton for registration, and Carol Schwartz for general questions.

Financial/Audit Claire Swanson (Alpha) for Joan Oehm (Alpha)

A successful audit of the DKG and State Convention accounts for the 2025–2026 fiscal year was completed and will be read into the meeting minutes. The proposed 2027–2028 budget remains balanced, balancing a decrease in liability insurance costs against an increase in electronic communications funding for the new convention site. State presidents and the executive committee will review these financial documents before voting on them during the winter 2027 state meeting. Additionally, meetings are planned to reallocate Securian and Primerica investments to new fund managers for increased flexibility.

Historian PJ Madreperl (Mu) and Elizabeth (Puddy) Flynn (Mu)

Chapters are encouraged to maintain detailed membership records using a standardized template that tracks member status, join dates, offices held, and awards received. To help alleviate the storage burden on individual members, Georgian Court University has designated a secure space to house DKG state and chapter records, scrapbooks, and memorabilia. Chapters are encouraged to transfer older materials—such as records dating prior to 2005—to this permanent repository rather than passing them between members' homes. Over the summer, all collected records were thoroughly reviewed, organized, and stored in new filing cabinets provided by the university, with additional tubs available for future archival needs.

Membership Chris Musick (Mu)

State Second Vice President contact details were provided alongside updates on the Centennial Challenge, noting that member reinstatements count toward the goal. Attendees were introduced to the new "Unlock Your POTENTIAL" brochure, the International Membership Committee, and valuable resources available on the official website. The session highlighted that the next "Inside International" meeting is scheduled for October 13 and outlined the ten essential steps required to establish a successful collegiate community. Finally, chapters were reminded that cultivating and supporting membership remains the collective responsibility of every member.

Necrology Jane Murphy (Sigma) and Pam Watkinson (Rho)

The committee has received only a single report of a member's passing, and Doris Lambert will be honored at the upcoming convention's Celebration of Life. Chapters are reminded to promptly submit a Form 6 whenever a member passes away to facilitate planning for the memorial tribute. Blank copies of Form 6 will be distributed at the meeting and are also conveniently accessible on the DKG website.

Nominations Michelle Marhefka (Pi) for Dr. Amy Franz (Pi)

The Nominations Committee is actively seeking qualified, enthusiastic members to fill key state leadership roles for DKGNJ Alpha State, including President, First and Second Vice Presidents, and Recording and Corresponding Secretaries. Serving in these capacities helps advance the organization's mission, engage members, and shape its future while strengthening professional networks and leadership skills. The open offices offer a rewarding opportunity to collaborate with dedicated educators across New Jersey and support the overarching goals of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International.

Program Planning Diane Roberts (Omicron)

The committee has made progress on workshop and book discussion proposals for the 2027 DKGNJ convention, noting that nine workshop ideas and five book titles have been submitted so far. Attendees discussed potential additions, including topics on self-regulation and district-approved professional development options. Additional workshop proposals and book suggestions remain open until October 31, after which first vice presidents and chapter members will vote electronically on the final selections in November and December.

Rules/Bylaws Wilhelmina Bryant (Lambda) for Dr. Barbara Glazewski (Lambda)

International will be sharing guidelines shortly regarding the new governance documents; these will be reviewed by DKG NJ and shared at the January State meeting along with how to adapt the chapter documents.

Legislation Betty Monaghan (Epsilon)

The report noted that retiree health benefits will remain unchanged in 2027 following the passage of the NJ state budget and full funding of the pension system, along with repayment of up to $70 million borrowed from the retiree reserve account. However, the State Educators Health Benefit Plan faces financial strain due to a recently approved 34% premium increase, which shifts significant cost burdens onto school districts and employees. To address these rising costs and improve stability, members are urged to support the Public-School Employees Health Benefits Trust Act (A5285/S4438). Active and retired educators are encouraged to maintain a united front by getting involved and advocating through NJEA and NJREA.

New Business

1. Ellen Hahn introduced a motion as follows:

"I move to change the current financial institutions to another due to lack of communication."

The motion was seconded by Diane Burnette (Xi)

The vote was a roll call of the Executive Board as follows:

Roll call of Executive Board members:

President Cathy Fortunato (Lambda)	Yes
First VP Diane Roberts (Omicron)	Yes
Second VP Chris Musick (Mu)	Yes
Corresponding Secretary Cathy Cleenput (Alpha)	Yes
Recording Secretary Betty Monaghan (Epsilon)	Yes

Roll call of chapter presidents (and substitute for one): please see the table on page 1 of these minutes).

The vote was unanimous. The motion carries.

2. Diane Burnetti (Xi) asked if a Zoom meeting would be considered for January's meeting if there was inclement weather. President Cathy Fortunato (Lambda) replied an emergency phone list was sent via email and will be used if necessary

3. Congratulations to Diana Vasil((Gamma) who was appointed Superintendent of Evesham Public schools

Adjournment

Lorie Jeskey (Epsilon) made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Gail Harris (Xi) seconded the motion. President Cathy Fortunato adjourned the meeting at 12:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Betty Monaghan
DKGNJ State Recording Secretary