

# Michigan District Policies

## 2022 – 2023 Edition

### **FOREWORD**

#### **PURPOSE:**

This is why we exist:

The purpose of the Michigan District is to function as an administrative division of Optimist International in furtherance of the purposes of Optimist International Bylaws and Policies as established by the International Board of Directors. The District shall provide service and support to the clubs for the purpose of enhancing growth, participation, administration and youth service. All clubs located within the territorial boundaries of the District shall be members of the District, except as requested by the club or clubs involved, and in concurrence with the District or Districts involved and the Optimist International Board of Directors.

#### **MISSION:**

To be the premier provider of support and leadership to Michigan Optimist Clubs through strategic relationships, education, mentoring, resources, marketing and effective and timely communication.

#### **VALUE PROPOSITION STATEMENT:**

As a part of Optimist International, a worldwide volunteer organization made up of thousands of Optimist clubs, our members work each day to make the future brighter by bringing out the best in children, in their communities, and in themselves.

#### **CORE VALUES:**

We consider these our few essential tenets.

- Optimism
- Leadership
- Hope
- Support
- Achievement

In this document the word “District” will imply “Michigan District Optimist.”

## Table of Contents

A - ADMINISTRATION .....	5
A1. DISTRICT POLICIES .....	5
A2. DISTRICT OFFICERS.....	5
A3. DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS .....	6
A4. DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE .....	6
A5. ASSISTANTS TO THE GOVERNOR .....	6
A6. ESTABLISHMENT OF ZONES WITHIN THE DISTRICT .....	6
A7. DISTRICT COMMITTEES .....	7
A8. PAST GOVERNORS.....	7
A9. GOVERNOR .....	7
A10. GOVERNOR-ELECT.....	7
A11. SECRETARY-TREASURER.....	8
A12. VACANCIES .....	8
A13. DISTRICT PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATION .....	8
A14. DISTRICT OFFICER'S LAPEL INSIGNIA .....	9
A15. DISTRICT LOGO.....	9
A16. NEW CLUBS .....	9
A17. CONFLICT OF INTEREST.....	10
A18. DISTRICT DIRECTORY.....	10
A19. DISTRICT HISTORIAN .....	10
A20. LONG-RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE.....	10
A21. MARKETING COMMITTEE .....	11
A22. CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS COMMITTEE .....	11
B - MEETINGS.....	12
B1. PURPOSE .....	12
B2. DISTRICT MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES .....	12
B3. ZONE MEETINGS AND LOCAL AREA SEMINARS.....	12
B4. DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS .....	12
B5. DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING.....	13
B6. DISTRICT CONVENTION .....	13
B7. RECORDING OF MINUTES .....	14
B8. CONVENTION RULES.....	14

B9. FLAGS, CREED AND BANNERS.....	15
B10. INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES TO DISTRICT MEETINGS.....	15
B11. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION AT DISTRICT MEETINGS	15
B12. FUNDRAISING AT DISTRICT MEETINGS AND CONVENTION .....	15
B13. MEMORIAL SERVICE .....	16
C - FINANCE .....	16
C1. PURPOSE .....	16
C2. FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BUDGET.....	16
C2.1. CONFERENCES & CONVENTION CONTRACTS.....	17
C3. REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES.....	18
C4. DISTRICT DUES .....	18
C5. CAPITAL PURCHASE .....	19
C6. CONVENTION ALLOCATION FROM DISTRICT DUES .....	19
C7. CLUB REGISTRATIONS AND REFUNDS.....	19
C8. GIFTS AND MEMENTOS .....	20
C9. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION .....	20
C10. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION HOSPITALITY ROOM.....	20
C11. RESTRICTED RESERVE FUND.....	20
C12. CHILDHOOD HEALTH AND WELLNESS FUNDS.....	21
C13. DISTRICT ALLOTMENT PROCEDURES.....	21
D - ACTIVITIES.....	22
D1. PURPOSE .....	22
D2. DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT-AWARDS PROGRAM.....	22
D3. DISTRICT ORATORICAL CONTESTS .....	22
D4. STUDENTS WITH NO ORATORICAL CONTEST IN THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL AREA.....	24
D5. DISTRICT ESSAY CONTEST .....	24
D6. DISTRICT JUNIOR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP .....	24
D7. ADDITIONAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS .....	25
D8. DISTRICT HALL OF FAME.....	25
D9. DISTRICT CORPORATE PARTNER OF THE YEAR.....	26
D10. DISTRICT OPTIMIST OF THE YEAR .....	27
E - JOI PROGRAMS.....	27

E1. PURPOSE ..... 27  
E2. JOI DISTRICT CONFERENCES ..... 27

## **A - ADMINISTRATION**

### **A1. DISTRICT POLICIES**

The District shall adopt a set of operating policies authorized by the International Board of Directors, which will cover the items necessary to administer the District. Suggested policy revisions shall be made annually by the District Governance Committee at the third quarter District Conference to the Executive Committee as an informational item. Suggested policies shall be published on the District website, at a minimum of 30 days prior to the fourth quarter District Convention. All suggested policy revisions must be approved by the District delegates at the fourth quarter District Convention to qualify as adoptable. These policies shall be adopted annually by the District Board of Directors at the annual convention or a specially called convention.

Once adopted, a newly revised set of operating policies shall be distributed by the District Secretary-Treasurer or District Secretary to Optimist International, and to the Governor-Designate for incorporation into the District directory, effective October 1 following the District Convention.

### **A2. DISTRICT OFFICERS**

No one shall be eligible for election or hold a District office unless the person is duly enrolled on the International roster as a member of a club in good standing in Optimist International. The District Officers shall be the Governor, Governor-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer (or the Secretary and the Treasurer), the Lieutenant Governors and Assistants to the Governor. To be elected to serve as Governor-Elect of the District, one must have served as a Club President and majority of a full term as Lieutenant Governor, or is currently serving a majority of a full term as a Lieutenant Governor. If a qualified candidate cannot be identified by the Candidate Qualifications Committee by the fourth quarter District Convention, a special convention shall be convened at the first quarter District Conference by the Immediate Past Governor of the District. If no qualified candidate is found by the first quarter District Conference, the immediate or most recent Past Governor shall be reinstated. The District Officers for the forthcoming administrative year are installed by the appointed representative of Optimist International at the annual District Convention.

The Lieutenant Governors shall be elected by their zones at a zone meeting held prior to the third quarter District Conference.

Friends of Optimists shall be ineligible to serve as an officer of an Optimist club and/or on the club Board of Directors.

### **A3. DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The business of the District shall be administered by a District Board of Directors. The District Board of Directors shall consist of the Officers of the District, the two Immediate Past Governors, and the President of each club. In the absence of the President of a club, a delegate from the club would be allowed to speak and act on behalf of the President, in the conduct of business coming before the Board of Directors. The Junior Optimist International (JOI) Governor shall serve as a non-voting member of the District Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is installed for each administrative year at the first quarter District Conference by the appointed representative of Optimist International, or their designee.

The Board of Directors shall delegate authority to the District Executive Committee to oversee the operation of the District, and will assemble once per year, at the District Convention, to renew this provision.

### **A4. DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the District Officers, the two most immediate Past Governors, and the JOI Governor as a non-voting member. The District may delegate, subject to the limitations imposed by these policies and Optimist International Bylaws, the powers of the Board of Directors to the Executive Committee. Duties of the Executive Committee are outlined in Optimist International Bylaws, Article VII.

The Executive Committee is authorized to make purchases and pay expenses, travel allowances, reimbursements and obligations as provided by and within the limitations of the budget, make plans and establish policy furthering the objectives of the District, and exercise general control over plans, budget and program of the District Convention.

### **A5. ASSISTANTS TO THE GOVERNOR**

Assistant(s) to the Governor may be appointed for one year by the Governor-Elect, and shall not number more than four. Only those members who have served as a Lieutenant Governor may be appointed as Assistant to the Governor. The duties of an Assistant to the Governor will be to act as a liaison between a certain number of Lieutenant Governors and the Governor, to attend all District Executive Committee Meetings, as well as the District Convention and perform such other duties as requested by the Governor.

### **A6. ESTABLISHMENT OF ZONES WITHIN THE DISTRICT**

The number and boundaries of zones, for any administrative year, is subject to revision, and shall be approved by the Executive Committee at the third quarter District

Conference upon presentation by the Governor-Elect for the next administrative year. Such revisions shall be submitted to the Governor not less than 30 days prior to said District Conference. New clubs shall, as practical, be assigned to the zones in which their parent clubs reside for at least one, but not more than two administrative years. The Lieutenant Governor of the zone in which the new club will ultimately belong shall monitor the progress of the club along with the presiding Lieutenant Governor.

## **A7. DISTRICT COMMITTEES**

The District Board of Directors shall establish in its District Policies, such committees as it deems appropriate to carry out the administration of the District. At a minimum, those committees shall include Finance\*, Membership, New Club Building, Leadership Development, Club Fitness Advisors\*, Youth/JOI clubs, Marketing, Governance\*, Candidate Qualifications\*, Long Range Planning\*, and Meetings/Conventions. The incoming Governor shall appoint the chairpersons and required number of members of all committees and shall announce such appointments not later than October 1 following his/her election.

Note – committees denoted with an asterisk (\*) are required to have a minimum of 3 members.

## **A8. PAST GOVERNORS**

In an effort to utilize the experience and knowledge Past Governors have to offer, they are encouraged to make themselves available as requested by the Governor or other District Officers for advice and counsel. They are encouraged to attend zone meetings, to offer their services as guest speakers at club and zone meetings, and to assist in mentoring first timers in the methods of the District at these meetings.

Past Governors shall take a proactive role in identifying and counseling Optimists, particularly in their own clubs and zones, who show potential and/or interest in future District involvement.

## **A9. GOVERNOR**

The Governor-Elect shall automatically become Governor on 1 October of the year following the year in which he/she was elected Governor-Elect. Following the District Convention, the Governor-Elect shall be known as the Governor-Designate.

## **A10. GOVERNOR-ELECT**

The Governor-Elect shall be elected at the District Convention, or a special duly called convention, by a majority vote of the votes cast of the accredited delegates present and

voting at the time of the election. The Governor-Elect shall not serve in any other elective office in the same year he/she is Governor-Elect.

## **A11. SECRETARY-TREASURER**

The District Secretary-Treasurer (or the District Secretary and the District Treasurer) shall be appointed for a term of one year by the Governor-Elect. The appointment of the Secretary-Treasurer (or the Secretary and the Treasurer) shall be confirmed by the District's Board of Directors and shall take office October 1 next following confirmation.

A District Secretary-Treasurer, District Secretary, District Treasurer, or any combination thereof, shall not serve more than three consecutive years. The term of office for Secretary-Treasurer shall be one year. A Secretary and/or Treasurer shall, at the end of his or her term of office, deliver all District records to the incoming Secretary and/or Treasurer.

The District Board of Directors shall annually determine the official depositories for District funds and designate officers authorized to endorse, execute and sign checks or orders for the payment of money and such shall be co-signed by two such officers, the District Secretary-Treasurer and the District Governor. The co-signers shall not be members of the same family, household and/or business partners.

## **A12. VACANCIES**

For good cause or upon death, resignation or incapacitation of any elected or appointed officers or any officer-designate of the District, or in the event of the failure of any officer to carry out the duties of the office, the incumbent District Executive Committee may declare said office vacant and shall select a successor to fill the remainder of the term.

Should the Immediate Past Governor(s) be unable to serve as members of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, the next Immediate Past Governor shall automatically become a member of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors in his/her place and stead. The foregoing shall apply to any individual who has been elected or appointed to office but for any reason does not assume or carry out the duties of the office.

## **A13. DISTRICT PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATION**

At the beginning of each administrative year, a District directory shall be published in paper and/or electronic form containing contact information for all District Officers, Committee Chairs, Club Presidents, and Secretary-Treasurers. Included in the directory shall be a copy of District Policies and the dates and locations of all District meetings and conferences for the administrative year. The District may publish directory

information on the District website. Such information shall be password protected and its use is restricted to Optimist International business by authorized representatives of Optimist International. Directory information will not be shared with any party outside of Optimist International.

The District administration (Governor and Secretary-Treasurer or Secretary and/or Treasurer) may publish a bulletin under the direction of the Governor. Costs, frequency, and distribution shall be established by the District administration each year according to budgetary provisions.

The District web site has been designed as a communication tool to offer updated information about the District, including District Publications, and referencing the Optimist International web site. The Web Master is appointed by the Governor each administrative year, and every effort will be made to maintain consistency in the administration and upkeep of the District web site.

While we provide links to club's websites, the District does not accept responsibility for information contained on a club's web site.

#### **A14. DISTRICT OFFICER'S LAPEL INSIGNIA**

The District shall provide official lapel insignia for all District Officers to be presented at the time of their installation. Such insignia may or may not be returned to the District Secretary-Treasurer or District Secretary at the end of the administrative year. As permitted in the budget, the District may also purchase past District Officer's insignia to all retiring District Officers.

#### **A15. DISTRICT LOGO**

The official District Logo shall include an outline of the Lower Peninsula of the State of Michigan with the Optimist International logo. The logo may appear on all District correspondence, directories, or other items as approved by the Executive Committee, with the addition of the words "Optimist International".

#### **A16. NEW CLUBS**

The District will promote the building of new clubs in accordance with the Bylaws, Policies, and Guidelines developed by the International Board of Directors. Dates and programs for the charter presentation events of new clubs shall be established by joint action of the new club, the sponsor club, and the District administration. The Governor or his/her appointee shall present the charter. In the event of a charter presentation occurring after the end of the administrative year in which the club was established, the Immediate Past Governor shall have the prerogative of presenting the charter.

The District administration shall provide each new club with a complimentary club banner, bell and gavel to be purchased from the provider designated by Optimist International, as budgeted by the District.

### **A17. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

A conflict of interest shall exist when a member of the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, or any District committee would stand to personally benefit financially from any transaction brought before that body for approval. Said member shall notify the Finance Committee in writing of such conflict immediately upon its discovery. Any transaction not made in good faith and with the good of the District and its mission at its core shall be declared null and void.

### **A18. DISTRICT DIRECTORY**

All District Directories and mailing lists of Optimist International club members are records that should be held in trust. Their use for commercial or solicitation purposes shall be denied to all. Exceptions must be made in writing to the District Board of Directors. Upon Board acceptance, the District Governor shall submit in writing said request(s) to the International Board of Directors in compliance with International Policy I-33. At no time shall access to District or club directories be made available through unsecured access.

### **A19. DISTRICT HISTORIAN**

The Executive Committee shall appoint a historian who shall keep the records, including all minutes of the District Executive Committee and Board of Directors in cooperation with the District Secretary-Treasurer or District Secretary, information on the District activities of the past and copies of the District's annual financial reports. Historical information will be available to assist Governors in their planning to provide consistency in meetings and conferences.

### **A20. LONG-RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Long-Range Planning Committee shall formulate five-year goals and objectives for the District. The focus of the committee is to provide vision and direction that moves the District forward. The committee shall consider ways to improve service to the local clubs as well as ways to establish and strengthen our brand throughout the Michigan District. The committee should maximize the technology available to bring out the best in our leadership, as well as drive efficiency in meetings and operations throughout the District. This committee may consider any other topic that is deemed appropriate.

The committee will annually prepare a plan to the Governor and the Board of Directors to be presented and adopted at the District Convention.

The committee will prepare a report to be presented and approved at each quarterly District Conference and at the District Convention, using a progress report format to show the progress toward reaching the goals of the committee and the District.

The committee shall be made up of a maximum of 10 members. The actual committee shall be comprised of a Past Governor, a Past District Secretary-Treasurer (or a District Secretary and a District Treasurer), a present or past member of the District Finance Committee and two at-large members. The actual committee shall be a three-year appointment (this is a rolling three-year commitment). The District Governor shall appoint the chairman and the chairman shall choose the remaining members.

The advisory members shall be the current Governor, the Governor-Elect, the current District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Secretary and District Treasurer), a current District Finance Committee member, and the most recent Past Governor.

## **A21. MARKETING COMMITTEE**

The Marketing Committee shall formulate strategies that shall raise brand awareness as well as establish corporate relationships that result in sponsorships that fully fund all district events.

The committee will annually prepare a report that will lay out their strategy to complete their mission for the remaining year and that plan will be presented to the Governor and the Board of Directors at the first quarter meeting.

The committee shall be made up of no more than 10 members. The committee shall consist of a committee chair, and additional members from the following: a Past District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Secretary and District Treasurer), a Past District Finance committee member, a member at large. The advisory members can include the current Governor, the Governor-Elect, the current District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Secretary and District Treasurer), a current District Finance Committee member, and most recent Past Governor, at the committee chair's discretion.

## **A22. CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS COMMITTEE**

The Candidate Qualifications Committee shall be composed of the Governor-Elect, the two immediate past governors and two members appointed for a term of one year appointed by the District Governor. The Candidate Qualifications Committee will determine if candidates meet the minimum qualifications as outlined in District Policy A2. An interview may be held. The list of all qualified candidates will be presented to the Executive Committee and to the Board of Directors at the third quarter District Conference.

## **B - MEETINGS**

### **B1. PURPOSE**

District meetings should provide an effective means to support the viability of Optimist clubs within the District and provide opportunities to enhance the personal growth of Optimist members. District meetings also provide the principal forum for conducting the business of the District.

### **B2. DISTRICT MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES**

District meetings and conferences shall be planned and conducted by the administration. The administration will invite and encourage attendance of all members, especially District officers and committee chairpersons, club officers, and club committee chairpersons. All District meetings and conferences will be budgeted and conducted by the administration on a break-even basis at the end of the Optimist fiscal year (September 30), all monies taken in by all the District meetings and conferences, shall not exceed the expenses of those same meetings for the year's total receipts versus expenses, (within a reasonable margin). The District Secretary-Treasurer or District Treasurer may pay deposits as necessary for facility reservations for future district meetings.

The third quarter District Conference shall include the introduction of Lieutenant Governors for the ensuing year and the District oratorical finals.

Training at District meetings and conferences will be facilitated by District officers, committee persons, certified international trainers, certified club/district trainers, certified club builders, and other party as appropriate.

### **B3. ZONE MEETINGS AND LOCAL AREA SEMINARS**

All lieutenant governors are responsible for conducting zone meetings each quarter of the administrative year and notice of each meeting shall be sent to the president and secretary-treasurer of each club in the zone not less than 30 days prior. An invitation shall also be sent to the District Governor and District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Secretary and District Treasurer). Lieutenant governors shall be responsible for the preparation and distribution of each zone meeting program, and the completion and filing of a report on each meeting using the form provided by Optimist International.

### **B4. DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The District Executive Committee will meet quarterly if the District Board of Directors meets quarterly. If the Board does not meet for a second quarter District Conference, neither will the committee. The committee may also meet at the call of most of its

members or the Governor. Meetings may be held in-person, by teleconference, or e-mail. However, any decisions made during teleconference calls or by e-mail, must be placed on the agenda for the next subsequent meeting, and the actions because of such teleconference or e-mail communication affirmed therein so it may appear in the official record.

## **B5. DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

The Governor may call a meeting of the Board of Directors each quarter, or at such time and place as determined with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. Notices of all meetings of the District Board of Directors shall be issued and caused to be delivered to all members of the District Board of Directors by the District Secretary-Treasurer or District Secretary at least 30 days prior to said meetings. Most recent financial statements and minutes will be distributed two weeks in advance of any District meeting.

A majority of the District Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and a majority vote of those present shall be necessary to give effect to any action of the Board.

The District Board of Directors will not be required to meet during the administrative year other than to assemble at the District Convention for the purpose of delegating responsibility for the oversight of district business to the Executive Committee.

## **B6. DISTRICT CONVENTION**

The District Convention shall be planned and conducted by the administration for the purpose of achieving the following core objectives:

1. To inspire and celebrate the success of members and clubs in the current year
2. To prepare the following year's club and District officers and committee persons
3. To conduct the business of the delegates
4. To conduct business of the Board of Directors (policy A4), reaffirming delegation of duties to the Executive Committee

The convention will be budgeted by the administration on a break-even basis, in accordance with B2 of these policies.

The incumbent Governor, Governor-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer (or Secretary and Treasurer), Immediate Past Governor, and Past Governor, as designated by the Executive Committee, as well as the Optimist International representative, shall receive complimentary convention registration and such shall be provided for in the district convention budget.

## **B7. RECORDING OF MINUTES**

It shall be the responsibility of the District Secretary-Treasurer or the District Secretary to keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the District Executive Committee, the district board of directors, and district convention, and to provide a copy of such minutes to members of the District Executive Committee, Board of Directors, Optimist International, District Historian and others as appropriate. Such minutes are to be distributed not later than the following district meeting.

## **B8. CONVENTION RULES**

A convention of the clubs in each District shall be held between August 1 and September 30 on such dates and at such location as shall be determined by the District Board of Directors. The convention city shall be determined by a vote of the accredited delegates at the District Convention for as many years in advance, not exceeding five years, as may be deemed necessary. The District Board of Directors shall have power to substitute another city in the event circumstances later make such action necessary or advisable. The District Secretary-Treasurer or District Secretary shall issue and cause to be delivered to each member club in the District an official call for the annual convention at least 30 days prior to the date thereof, in which notice the time and place of the holding of said annual convention shall be set forth. In the event of an emergency, with the approval of the International Board of Directors and the District Board of Directors, a District may hold a special District convention at any time or place. The District Secretary-Treasurer or District Secretary shall issue and cause to be delivered to each member club in the District, at least 20 days prior to the date of said special convention a written notice of the time and place of the holding of same together with a general statement of the proposed business to be transacted.

The method and means of voting at convention shall be established by the District Board of Directors. Convention rules shall be adopted by a majority vote (of those present) during the first business session of each convention; but may be suspended, rescinded or amended after their adoption by a two-thirds vote. A quorum of any District Convention shall be established by these District Policies

The District Convention shall be composed of registered Optimist delegates as set forth in the Optimist International Bylaws. To be accredited by the credentials committee and eligible to vote on convention business, delegates must have registered at the convention, paid the registration fee, and produced such credentials as may be required by the Executive Committee. The number of accredited delegates of a club shall not exceed the voting strength of the club. Club voting strength will be based on one vote for each ten members.

Roberts' Rules of Order shall govern the convention proceedings in all cases not governed by the Constitution and Bylaws and these convention rules.

All voting shall be voice, hand, or rising vote at the discretion of the chair, unless a ballot or roll call vote is ordered by a majority vote of the accredited delegates. In the event a vote by ballot is ordered, the chair shall appoint a committee of tellers and name its chairperson. At the conclusion of the balloting, the tellers shall certify the tabulated result in writing to the chair. If the balloting has been conducted for the purpose of electing an officer, the chair shall announce the name of the winner only, and then entertain a motion to destroy the ballots. Accredited delegates from each club shall select a chairperson who shall cast the votes of the club's delegation on any convention business requiring a vote by written ballot or roll call.

## **B9. FLAGS, CREED AND BANNERS**

It shall be the policy of the District Administration to display at all District meetings and at the District Convention the appropriate national flags, District banners, and the Optimist Creed banner in the podium area of the same room in which business is being conducted. The District will also encourage clubs to bring their banners for display at the meetings and convention.

## **B10. INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES TO DISTRICT MEETINGS**

In keeping with the policy of Optimist International to provide an official International representative to the first quarter District Conference and the District Convention, the Governor shall issue an invitation to such individuals as soon as their identity is established. Courtesies traditionally provided to the International President, including complimentary accommodations and registration, and a suitable gift or memento not to exceed a cost of \$200, shall be provided to such International representative.

## **B11. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION AT DISTRICT MEETINGS**

The agenda at District meetings, including but not limited to the Executive Committee meeting, District Convention, and general membership meetings, will include the opportunity for a brief invocation and recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, and if a foreign dignitary is in attendance, a toast to their country. If there is an invocation, it must be universal and sensitive to the diversity of our membership, containing no language that intentionally or inherently promotes or excludes anyone based on race, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, or political preference.

## **B12. FUNDRAISING AT DISTRICT MEETINGS AND CONVENTION**

All funds solicited and raised during any District Conference or District Convention shall exclusively benefit any of the following organizations:

- 1) Optimist International Foundation (OIF)
- 2) Any District fundraiser approved by Optimist International

This policy in no manner disallows information sharing, publicizing or promoting club projects at District events in the exposition area. These efforts are not to be a distraction to, or a disruption of, conducting the business of the District.

## **B13. MEMORIAL SERVICE**

A memorial service shall be held at the District Convention to commemorate Optimists deceased during the current administration. Such service is usually conducted by the Immediate Past Governor with care being given to present a service that is nondenominational in deference to the diversity of faiths present in our membership.

## **C - FINANCE**

### **C1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the District Finance Committee is to provide the Executive Committee and Board of Directors with an independent opinion on the appropriateness of the budget and spending on a quarterly basis (at or in advance of any Executive Committee meeting or District Convention.) The committee also oversees the annual accounting review and acts as a 'check and balance' to the treasurer/governor's spending.

### **C2. FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BUDGET**

There shall be a three-member rotating committee, to which the Governor shall appoint a person of leadership and ability to serve on this committee for a three-year term and that the governor shall also fill vacancies as may occur on said committee for the uncompleted term.

The Governor-Designate and Secretary-Treasurer-Designate (or the District Treasurer-Designate), in consultation with, review of and final approval by the District Finance Committee, shall prepare a proposed balanced budget for submission to the incoming Board of Directors for approval at the first board meeting of the new administrative year.

At its first meeting the District Board of Directors shall review, amend and approve the annual budget submitted by the Finance Committee, ensuring that is done in a manner conforming with the standard District chart of accounts established by the Board of Directors of Optimist International. Such budget shall be submitted to the Board of Directors of Optimist International for final approval. The budget shall include income only from authorized sources for the current fiscal year, any accumulated surplus, and shall not authorize the expenditures of any money in excess of such income and surplus.

All budgets shall employ the standard District chart of accounts, account numbers, definitions, and required supplements established by Optimist International.

The committee must consider all proposed revisions and proposals for expenditures not previously budgeted or approved and shall make recommendations in writing thereon to the executive committee.

The committee shall exercise advisory supervision over all financial transactions and shall:

- oversee the preparation and timely filing of all financial reports as may be required by the Executive Committee and/or Optimist International. An annual review of the books and accounts as of September 30 shall be performed by an independent certified public accountant, a certified managerial accountant, a certified general accountant, a chartered accountant, or a review committee and a report thereon shall be submitted to the District Board of Directors and District Finance Committee not later than 30 November of each year. The review report shall be submitted to Optimist International as required. The assessment shall occur prior to the filing of the IRS Form 990.
- ensure that the IRS Form 990 has been prepared and has been submitted as required by law. Should the District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Treasurer) be unable to complete his or her duties towards preparing the records for the annual review and the IRS records in a timely fashion as prescribed by law, the finance committee, with the assistance of the Immediate Past Governor, shall complete these duties.
- supervise the orderly transfer of all pertinent District records and funds from each administration to its successor no later than December 31.
- meet with the District Secretary-Treasurer (or the District Treasurer) and the Governor on a quarterly basis to review all financial transactions that have occurred as well as the financial condition of the District.

An annual financial review of the prior fiscal year shall be given to the District Board by December 31.

## **C2.1. CONFERENCES & CONVENTION CONTRACTS**

The District Finance Committee shall have the responsibility to review all contracts for District Conferences and Conventions to make sure that they are in the best interest of the District and shall make recommendations for changes when appropriate before they are signed by the District Governor.

### **C3. REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES**

Authorized individuals shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred on district administration business upon receipt, by the District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Treasurer), of a properly completed and signed voucher accompanied by the proper documentation or report. Reimbursement for mileage shall be at the current Internal Revenue Service mileage rate except that no reimbursement shall be made for District business within the limits of one's residency. All reimbursement shall be made within the limitations of the budget and available funds. All requests for expense reimbursement shall be submitted on a District voucher to the Governor for approval, within budgetary guidelines, not later than September 30. Failure to comply with the above will cause disapproval of said request for reimbursement.

### **C4. DISTRICT DUES**

The conduct and administration of District business shall be financed by District dues, payable by clubs for each of their members enrolled in the office of Optimist International, from convention fees, and as hereinbefore provided from the general fund of Optimist International. The amount of each district's dues, and dates on which such dues shall be payable, shall be established by the Board of Directors of Optimist International. A district, by resolution adopted by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the accredited delegates to its annual convention, may petition the Board of Directors of Optimist International, in the form and manner prescribed by that Board, for adjustment of the amount of its annual dues. No financial obligation or assessment, of any kind, other than provided in the Bylaws of Optimist International, shall be placed upon or requested of the clubs or their members by the district.

Each club shall pay to the District for each member enrolled at the time, annual dues of \$15.00 per member, payable in quarterly amounts on October 1, January 1, April 1, and July 1, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors of Optimist International and in accordance with the bylaws thereof (Article III Section A.3).

Dues payable by a newly affiliated club shall commence on the first day of the third month following that in which such club is officially organized, such payment to be based on the number of members enrolled in the International office on that date.

Districts may reduce or eliminate dues for a college member; however, the Michigan District has established dues for college members. Full-time college students will pay annual dues of \$4.00 a year, payable in three (3) installments as follows: \$2.00 on November 1; \$1.00 on January 1; \$1.00 on March 1. A full-time college student is as defined by the Constitution and Bylaws of Optimist International.

Members in Special Needs clubs will pay annual dues of \$4.00.

Michigan District clubs outside of the United States are excluded from payment of district dues.

## **C5. CAPITAL PURCHASE**

Purchases of computer programs, fax machines, etc. shall be considered capital purchases and must first be approved by the District Governor, District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Treasurer) and the District Finance Committee. Those items, if purchased, shall remain the property of the Michigan District. No transaction or contract for capital purchases of more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) may be entered into without the prior review by the District Finance Committee, the District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Treasurer) and the District Executive Committee.

The District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Treasurer) shall maintain an accurate record of district assets and shall provide annually a copy of the record to the District Finance Committee.

## **C6. CONVENTION ALLOCATION FROM DISTRICT DUES**

In keeping with the fact that clubs and members benefit from the business of the District Convention, the sum of \$.75 per member shall be allocated from District dues paid by clubs for each of their members enrolled in the office of Optimist International as of the last dues billing date, which allocation shall supplement convention registration fees for financing the District Convention.

Michigan District clubs outside of the United States are excluded from allocation since they do not pay District dues.

## **C7. CLUB REGISTRATIONS AND REFUNDS**

Registrations by phone, fax or e-mail shall be recognized as a valid registration. Payments for "early bird" registration must arrive before cutoff date. All registrants will be billed for same if they do not attend the registered event unless notification of non-attendance is received at least 72 hours before the start of the Saturday business meeting.

All refund requests of prepaid registrations must be made in writing or email by the pre-registered individual. Such refund requests must be received by the District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Secretary or District Treasurer) at least 72 hours before the start of the Saturday business meeting. A refund request made less than 72 hours before the start of the Saturday business meeting by the pre-registered individual, or a club representative, may be allowed by the District Governor if there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., death or hospitalization of a family member). No refunds of partial

registrations shall be honored. The content of this section shall appear on all pre-registration forms.

## **C8. GIFTS AND MEMENTOS**

It shall be the policy of the District Administration to present a gift or memento to the retiring District Governor and to the official Optimist International representative to the District Convention, the cost of which shall not exceed \$200.00 for each.

The Immediate Past Governor shall be responsible for the selection of such gifts or mementos to the retiring Governor and the Governor shall be responsible for the selection of a gift or memento to the Optimist International representative.

## **C9. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION**

With due respect to the location and duration of the International Convention, the Governor, Governor-Designate, District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Secretary and District Treasurer), and District Secretary-Treasurer Designate (or District Secretary-Designate and District Treasurer-Designate), shall receive an amount, to be budgeted annually, towards the reimbursement of expenses to attend the International Convention. To qualify for this amount, each must attend and be registered at the full International Convention and show evidence thereof when submitting his/her expense voucher.

## **C10. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION HOSPITALITY ROOM**

The District Administration may maintain a District headquarters or hospitality room at the International Convention. The room rental and reasonable expenses for food and refreshments shall be budgeted and chargeable to account 560 of the standard District chart of accounts, with expenditures not to exceed amounts budgeted and collected specifically for that purpose, and credited to account 180A, International Convention Hospitality.

## **C11. RESTRICTED RESERVE FUND**

There shall be established a Restricted Reserve Fund to be maintained by the District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Treasurer) for the accumulation of certain funds separate and apart from the general operating funds of the district. The Restricted Reserve Fund shall be for the sole purpose of:

- the purchase of capital equipment for the District.
- emergency operating funds.

The Restricted Reserve Fund may be accessed only by action of the District Finance Committee when requested by the Governor. All expenditures from the fund shall be subject to approval by the Executive Committee.

The Restricted Reserve Fund shall not be allowed to accumulate more than \$10,000; any excess amount will be returned to the general fund of the District.

## **C12. CHILDHOOD HEALTH AND WELLNESS FUNDS**

Two Club Campaign accounts have been established at the Optimist International Foundation for all deposits and distributions to be made. One account is the Childhood Cancer Account and the other is the Childhood Health and Wellness Account.

Any money raised that is specifically designated to Childhood Cancer must be deposited into the Childhood Cancer Campaign Account as they are restricted funds. All other money shall be deposited into the Childhood Health and Wellness Campaign Account.

Only the authorized party on record with the Foundation can request in writing to the Foundation that distributions from the account can be made.

On an annual basis the Michigan District Childhood Health and Wellness Committee will provide a written report to the District Finance Committee, the District Executive Committee and the District Board of Directors showing the revenue, the distributions and what the balance is in both Club Campaign accounts.

## **C13. DISTRICT ALLOTMENT PROCEDURES**

Optimist International pays the district allotments semi-annually including the May allotment (November through April) and the November allotment (May through October). The District must meet certain criteria before Optimist International can pay the semi-annual allotment. Districts have one year to submit all requirements in order to receive an allotment for that period, after which time the allotment will be forfeited. The required documentation and due dates are as follows:

- Due by January 31 from fall of current fiscal year, Michigan District First Quarter Board Meeting Minutes, Michigan District First Quarter Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, and Michigan District Budget for the administrative year.
- Due by February 15, IRS Form 990 for the previous administrative year.
- Due April 30 from January/February/March of current fiscal year, Michigan District Second Quarter Board Meeting Minutes and Second Quarter Executive Committee Meeting Minutes. If the district does not hold a second quarter board of directors meeting or executive committee meeting, Optimist International will be sent an email communication stating no meeting was conducted. The email communication will suffice for confirmation of the allotment requirements.

- Due July 31 from spring of previous fiscal year, Michigan District Third Quarter Board Meeting Minutes and Third Quarter Executive Committee Meeting Minutes.
- Due October 31, Michigan District Third Quarter Financial Statements, Michigan District Convention Board Meeting Minutes, and Michigan District Fourth Quarter Executive Committee Meeting Minutes.
- Due by December 31, Michigan District Policies as approved by the International Board of Directors.

The documentation required for the November allotment must be submitted within one year from the end of that period or the allotment will be forfeited. The documentation required for the May allotment must be submitted within one year from the end of that period or the allotment will be forfeited.

## **D - ACTIVITIES**

### **D1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the District Activities Programs is to generate interest and reward for members and District youth to participate in District programs, which will ultimately grow the District.

### **D2. DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT-AWARDS PROGRAM**

The District may budget, maintain, and conduct an annual achievement and awards program which shall be prepared and evaluated by the chairperson of the District Achievement and Awards Program and which shall be presented to the District Executive Committee for final approval at the first quarter board meeting.

The final standings for the District Achievement and Awards Program shall be published for the first quarter District Conference of the following administrative year.

### **D3. DISTRICT ORATORICAL CONTESTS**

The District shall conduct a non-gender oratorical contest each year. The District finals will be held at the time of the third quarter District Conference. The preliminary area contests will be held by April 30.

Pursuant to the policies of Optimist International, all phases of the District and area contests shall be conducted in strict compliance with International oratorical rules.

The District is divided into five areas composed of the following zones.

- AREA I - North/Northeast
- AREA II - Central/West/Southwest
- AREA III – East
- AREA IV – Oakland
- AREA V - Wayne

Should an area not have enough clubs participating (minimum of 3 clubs), the club will send the participants to the closest area hosting an area contest.

The specific counties contained in each area may be specified by the Governor-Designate at the District Convention if changes are proposed for the upcoming year. Counties are used to make it easier to determine which “Area Contest” an entrant should be attending, regardless of the zone number of the sponsoring club. It shall be based on the sponsoring club’s location.

Below are specified counties allocated to each area:

Area I - consists of the following 25 counties: Alcona; Alpena; Antrim; Arenac; Bay; Benzie; Charlevoix; Cheboygan; Clare; Crawford; Emmet; Gladwin; Grand Traverse; Iosco; Kalkaska; Leelanau; Midland; Missaukee; Montmorency; Ogemaw; Oscoda; Otsego; Presque Isle; Roscommon; Saginaw

Area II - consists of the following 29 counties: Allegan; Barry; Berrien; Branch; Calhoun; Cass; Clinton; Gratiot; Ionia; Isabella; Kent; Lake; Manistee; Mason; Mecosta; Montcalm; Muskegon; Newaygo; Oceana; Osceola; Ottawa; Wexford, Eaton; Hillsdale; Ingham; Jackson; Kalamazoo; St. Joseph; Van Buren

Area III - consists of the following 12 counties: Genesee; Huron; Lapeer; Lenawee; Livingston; Macomb, Monroe, Sanilac; St. Clair, Shiawassee; Tuscola; Washtenaw

Area IV - consists only of Oakland county

Area V - consists only of Wayne county

Entry fees for the area and District contest may be charged only to cover the costs involved in operating the contest payable to the Michigan District Optimist. Other costs including transportation, food and lodging while at or in route to the said contests shall be the responsibility of the sponsoring club.

The costs of all District and area plaques shall be budgeted and reviewed under accounts 140 and 370. Such items shall be supervised by the District Oratorical Chairperson and accountable to the District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Treasurer) who shall make all purchases and expenditures and record all revenue and expenses.

It shall be the responsibility of the chairperson to submit the required materials and information on contest winners to the International office by May 15.

#### **D4. STUDENTS WITH NO ORATORICAL CONTEST IN THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL AREA**

If a student does not live in an area where there is a local club that is conducting an oratorical contest, or has limits on the number of participants, the District Oratorical Chairperson will let the student know of other Optimist clubs in their geographic area that are running an oratorical contest. The student can request that the club allow them to participate in the club contest. The cost of participating in the club contest would be borne by the participant.

#### **D5. DISTRICT ESSAY CONTEST**

A District Essay Chairperson shall be appointed by the District Governor to administer all details of the contest in compliance with Optimist International rules.

All clubs sponsoring an entrant shall pay an entry fee if applicable. The fee shall be payable to the Michigan District Optimist and given to the District Essay Chairperson in an amount sufficient to cover all expenses incurred by the District in the conduct of the contest.

#### **D6. DISTRICT JUNIOR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP**

A District Junior Golf Chairperson shall be appointed by the District Governor to administer all details of the Junior Golf Competition in compliance with Optimist International rules. The chairperson shall also establish the District's standards for conduct of the tournament, although such standards may not supersede the International rules and must be approved by the District Governor.

All clubs sponsoring an entrant shall pay an entry fee, payable to the Michigan District Optimist, in an amount sufficient to cover all expenses incurred while conducting the contest by the District.

The District Junior Golf Chairperson shall raise enough funds through registration fees, club donations and outside contributions to cover all District Junior Golf Championship Tournament expenses. If any excess receipts are received, they will be carried forward for necessary pre-tournament expenses and earmarked specifically Junior Golf for the following year.

## **D7. ADDITIONAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS**

The District shall annually offer scholarship awards for the 2nd and 3rd place winners of the Essay Contest and Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH) should a contest be held. These scholarship awards can only be used to assist the recipient in the pursuit of further education at a college, university, trade school, and other type of post-secondary educational institution.

Optimist International Foundation (OIF) provides the scholarships for the 1st place winners of these contests along with the Oratorical Contest. OIF provides scholarships for the 2nd and 3rd place winners in the Oratorical Contest, but not the Essay and CCDHH contests. The scholarship awards provided by the District are not to exceed the scholarship amounts provided by OIF for the Oratorical Contest. These District scholarship awards will be accounted for in the proposed balanced budget for the new administrative year.

A club campaign fund titled the Michigan District Scholarship Fund has been established with OIF to hold the scholarship funds in escrow until the winners claim their funds. Procedures established by OIF for club campaign funds will be followed. This includes the designation of an executor for the fund. District scholarship awards will be deposited in the campaign fund in the Optimist year of the event.

OIF provides quarterly statements of a fund including deposits received, withdrawals processed, interest paid and current balance. The executor of the club campaign fund will maintain a record of the scholarship award winners held in escrow. This record will be reconciled to the statements provided by OIF. This record and latest OIF statement will be provided annually to the District Finance Committee.

All scholarship award winners held in escrow will be notified of any change in the executor of the club campaign fund.

A District scholarship award winner must enroll in an approved institution and utilize their award by the time they turn the age of 25. After that time, all obligations on the part of District to pay the stipulated scholarship for that winner shall be null and void. That abandoned award can then be used towards the next year's scholarship awards.

## **D8. DISTRICT HALL OF FAME**

The District Hall of Fame was established to reward good and effective leadership and to motivate good leaders to continue in a leadership capacity within the District of Optimist International.

The District Hall of Fame Committee will be comprised of a least three District Optimists in good standing. The Governor will appoint at least two members to the committee and

the Immediate Past Governor will appoint at least one member. The Immediate Past Governor will chair the committee. The committee may select any number of District Optimists to receive the award annually based on the qualifications. If no qualified candidate(s) is selected, no award will be given.

The committee will evaluate nominations based on the following criteria:

- Ten years of service as a member in good standing of an Optimist Club in the District;
- The nominee will have held the position of Club President;
- The nominee will have served at least twice as a District committee chairperson;
- The nominee will have served on two or more District committees other than as chairperson; and
- The nominee has demonstrated personal demeanor that is in keeping with the philosophy and goals of Optimist International and the District.

Optimists may nominate themselves or be nominated by another optimist. All nominations must be received by the committee chair by June 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. In either case, the nominee's club president must certify the nominee's good standing with the club. The selection of candidates is accomplished by evaluating the criteria. The District Hall of Fame award will be presented at the District's annual convention.

## **D9. DISTRICT CORPORATE PARTNER OF THE YEAR**

The District Corporate Partner of the Year award was established to recognize corporate partners who advance the purposes of the District Optimists and Optimist International. Any District Optimist club may choose to nominate an individual business partner or corporation, which in the judgment of the club provided services, facilities, funds, personnel, etc. to help the club fulfill their goals and objectives as an Optimist organization.

The District Corporate Partner of the Year Committee will be comprised of at least three District Optimists in good standing appointed by the Governor annually. If no qualified candidate is selected, no award will be given.

The committee will evaluate nominations based on the following criteria:

- Degree to which the corporation is involved with the youth of the community;
- Degree to which the corporation helps to promote Optimism;
- Sponsorship of an Optimist activity or project in the community; and
- Financial grant(s) or assistance to the local clubs in the area.

All nominations must be received by the committee chair by June 1 of the current year. The committee chair will present the District Corporate Partner of the Year award at the District's annual convention.

## **D10. DISTRICT OPTIMIST OF THE YEAR**

The District Optimist of the Year award was established to recognize members in good standing who advance the purposes of the District Optimists and Optimist International. Any District Optimist club may choose to nominate an individual annually for this District award.

The District Optimist of the Year Committee will be comprised of no more than three District Optimists in good standing appointed by the Governor. The committee may select no more than one District Optimist to receive the award annually based on the nominee's qualifications. If no qualified candidate is selected, no award will be given.

The committee will evaluate nominations based on the following criteria:

- A member in good standing;
- An active participant with local club activities;
- Sponsor at least one new member during the last twelve months; and
- Leadership in at least one local project or creative design of a new program or project.

All nominations must be received by the committee chair by June 1 of the current year. The nominee's club president must certify the nominee's good standing with the club. The selected member is awarded District Optimist of the Year status at the District's annual convention.

## **E - JOI PROGRAMS**

### **E1. PURPOSE**

The purposes of Michigan District JOI Administration shall be to provide in cooperation with the Michigan District Administration opportunities for members, individually and collectively, to participate in communities by providing activities, developing leadership abilities and preparing the youth for responsible roles in society.

### **E2. JOI DISTRICT CONFERENCES**

A planning committee comprised of the JOI District Chairperson, District Governor, JOI Clubs Board of Directors and JOI club sponsors and advisors, as the committee deems necessary, shall be responsible for organizing all phases of the conference.

Elections for JOI District officers must be held in accordance with guidelines in Optimist International Bylaws.

Finances shall be under the control of the District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Treasurer) and JOI District Chairperson. Income and expenses shall be handled as a pass through to the District Secretary-Treasurer (or District Treasurer).

All moneys returned to the District as rebates for holding a JOI District Conference or raised through sponsorships are to be used to support JOI District activities. Any excess funds will be carried forward and earmarked for JOI District activities in account # 143 A.

Funds will be budgeted to assist the JOI District Chairperson(s) with travel expense and housing for both the JOI District Conferences, and JOI District Convention and JOI International Conventions. The chairperson of the JOI clubs shall be included under the line item: Committees; and funded appropriately.