

Strategic Plan

Leadership and Development

Objective:

To proactively promote personal and professional development of future District leadership.

Recommendation #1:

Fill each District leadership position with a qualified individual.

Rationale:

A main issue facing the District is difficulty in securing qualified people willing to accept leadership positions and perform the accompanying responsibilities.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Provide more guidance and assistance in securing leaders beginning with Club **Officers**.
- Develop a method for promoting leadership responsibility/accountability.
- Require elected/appointed leaders to sign a “Letter of Commitment”.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Leadership and Development Committee and Candidate Qualifications Committee

Recommendation #2:

Establish a mentoring program for Lieutenant Governors.

Rationale:

A mentor-mentee relationship will support and encourage Lieutenant Governors in successfully carrying out their duties.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Establish a pool of former Lieutenant Governors and Governors to assist current Lieutenant Governors in carrying out their duties.
- Mentors would serve as trainers and general “sounding boards” throughout the year.
- These mentors assist the Lieutenant Governors in coordinating and communicating with Optimist International, District, Zones and Club administration, marketing, activities, events and programs.
- The Past Governor could coordinate this initiative.
- Create a checklist to guide the mentor program.
- Members meet on a regular basis.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Leadership and Development Committee

Recommendation #3:

Establish and implement a succession plan for Governor of the Nebraska District.

Rationale:

The succession plan will help to identify and prepare individuals who have leadership potential and have expressed an interest in serving as District Governor in the future.

Suggestions for implementation:

- Candidate Qualifications Committee maintains a record of qualifications for all potential candidates.
- Potential candidates are encouraged to define a timeframe for service.
- Elect Governor Candidate who is expected to serve as Governor in two years.
(Additional considerations: Requires change to District Policies to add the new position.)

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Candidate Qualifications Committee

Recommendation #4:

Zones will provide the name of their next Lieutenant Governor to the Candidate Qualifications Committee by April 15.

Rationale:

This process is needed to encourage the selection of Lieutenant Governors in a timely manner and reinforce compliance with District policies.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Zones will start the selection process immediately after a Zone realignment decision has been made by the District Board of Directors or by March 15.
- Encourage Lieutenant Governors to identify future leaders within their respective Zones.
- Modify our District Policies to allow for a larger pool of candidates by including past and current Club Executive Officers.
- Zones consider selecting Lieutenant Governors from each Club annually on a rotating basis.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Candidate Qualifications Committee

Recommendation #5:

Actively promote Club and Member participation in existing and new learning opportunities for continuous improvement offered through Optimist International.

Rationale:

Participation in learning opportunities offered by Optimist International will result in more knowledgeable Members and stronger Optimist Clubs.

Suggestions for implementation:

- Actively promote participation in the Personal Growth and Involvement (PGI) and/or Professional Development Program (PDP) along with attending webinars, tech talks, and other learning opportunities offered by Optimist International or the District.
- Include at least one leadership development or continuous improvement workshop/session at each District Conference/Convention along with at least one hands-on, how-to workshop or skills development module from the PGI or PDP programs.
- Develop a series of incentives and awards to recognize Member participation and accomplishments.
- Develop a traveling team to provide leadership training throughout the District.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Leadership and Development Committee

Club Growth and Fitness

Objective:

To foster healthy, growing Clubs across the District.

Recommendation #1:

Clubs designate a Club Member as the Club's Growth Chairperson.

Rationale:

This is a Club position within the structure of the Nebraska District.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- District Growth Team, in conjunction with the District Leadership and Development Committee, develops a description for the position.
- Lieutenant Governors encourage Clubs to identify a Member for this position.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

District Growth Team, Lieutenant Governors, and District Leadership and Development Committee

Recommendation #2:

Develop, implement, and maintain a "sister club" program.

Rationale:

This program would provide opportunities for interaction, encouragement, and fellowship among Clubs across the District.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Establish general guidelines for the program.
- Determine each Club's level of interest in participating in the program and possible sister Club options.
- Lieutenant Governors and Growth Team encourage Club's participation in the program.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Growth Team and Lieutenant Governors

Recommendation #3:

Develop more interclub partnerships for programs, projects, and fundraising activities within the Zone and District.

Rationale:

This concept would provide additional opportunities for interaction (more hands), new projects/activities, and a greater community impact with the possibility of recruiting members.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Develop and strengthen relationships with nearby Clubs with regular communication and interaction using face-to-face, virtual, telephone and email contact.
- Attend Zone meetings, District Conference/Convention and other virtual and in-person events to meet members from other Clubs.
- Use Social Media, District newsletter, and other marketing methods to advertise, promote and reinvigorate existing activities and/or creating and implementing a new activity.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Growth Team and Lieutenant Governors

Recommendation #4:

Clubs pursue and develop more collaboration with other community organizations.

Rationale:

Collaboration among community organizations has a greater impact on the youth and community resulting in additional funds and volunteers for new or larger projects/activities.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Partner with other service clubs, churches, businesses, and local organizations to conduct joint projects or activities in order to reach a wider, more diverse audience. (Ex: Chamber of Commerce, United Way, Habitat for Humanity, YMCA, Neighborhood Associations, etc.).
- Seek funding and grants from the Optimist International Foundation, other community foundations and local businesses for additional revenue for Club and District projects.
- Offer a “how-to” find and/or grant writing seminar at a Zone Meeting, District Conference/ Convention, or training event.
- Consider forming a Club within a Club to meet a specific need within the community or incorporate members of an existing group/club under the Optimist umbrella.
- Treat every activity or event as a member recruitment opportunity by having an information table or booth with membership applications.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Growth Team and Lieutenant Governors

Recommendation #5:

Use the Honor Club Tracking Form, Optimist Club Goal Setting Plan, Club Fitness Assessment, and other tools to foster strong, healthy Clubs.

Rationale:

Honor Club recognition represents the basic level of activity all Optimist Clubs should strive to achieve.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Club Presidents along with their Board of Directors will develop annual goals.
- Lieutenant Governors meet quarterly with each Club to review the Honor Club Tracking Form and Club’s annual goals.
- Lieutenant Governors submit a Club Visitation Form to the appropriate District leaders after each Club visit.
- The Governor will report any issues to the Growth Team for follow-up and support.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Executive Committee

Communication, Marketing and Technology

Objective:

To utilize current marketing and technology tools to meet Club and District objectives while improving member participation and engagement.

Recommendation #1:

Improve frequency and effectiveness of communication among Clubs, Zones, District, and Optimist International.

Rationale:

Effective communication is key to the success of each Club and the District.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Clubs quarterly update the contact information for their members on the official Optimist International club roster.
- Maintain up-to-date, accurate contact information for Clubs and Committees on the District website.
- Determine and use the desired method of communication (email, text message, phone call, etc.) for each Member and Club.
- Develop an evaluation tool to assess the effectiveness of communication.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Communication, Marketing, and Technology Committee

Recommendation #2:

Market Club and District activities using available communication tools.

Rationale:

Stop being the best kept secret – let others know what Optimists are doing in their communities.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Clubs promote programs, projects, activities, fundraisers, and/or events using social media, print media, radio, television, signage, and word of mouth.
- Clubs use official branding logos created by Optimist International.
- Increase knowledge about using the marketing resources (logos, press releases, public service announcements, etc.) available from Optimist International.
- Clubs develop marketing materials and presentations that can be shared at Club and/or community events.
- Members wear Optimist International branded apparel/accessories in public when appropriate.
- Offer more “how-to” training sessions related to social media and marketing at Zone Meetings and District Conferences/Convention.
- Clubs submit programs, projects, activities, fundraisers, and/or events to the District for the website and newsletter.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Communication, Marketing, and Technology Committee

Recommendation #3:

Continuously review the effectiveness of the website to verify that it is meeting the needs of the District.

Rationale:

An up-to-date website is an important communication tool for the District.

Suggestions for implementation:

- Analyze statistical reports to assess usage of the website.
- Use periodic Member surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of the website in their needs.
- Review and update the website on a regular basis.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Communication, Marketing and Technology Committee

Recommendation #4:

Utilize available technology for virtual and hybrid meetings.

Rationale:

Current technology allows an enhanced ability to meet on a District-wide basis, which promotes geographic diversity on District Committees, and reduces travel time and expenses.

Suggestions for implementation:

- Maintain a District Zoom account or other appropriate and available virtual tool.
- Encourage Clubs and Committees to utilize available virtual technology.
- Add a hybrid component to Zone Meetings, District Conferences/Convention and other District activities and events.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Communication, Marketing and Technology Committee

Recommendation #5:

Provide contact information for all committees and committee members in the District directory.

Rationale:

Identifying committee membership broadens opportunities for communication.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Governor and Governor-Elect collaborate to develop committees before October 1.
- District Directory Editor collaborates with the Governor to see that all Committee members are included in the directory.
- The District Directory will be available to Optimist Members on the website upon request of a password.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Communication, Marketing and Technology Committee

Financial Accountability

Objective:

To improve internal controls over the District's finances and physical assets.

Recommendation #1:

Ensure the timely completion of key financial reports (990 form, annual financial review), as well as compliance with Optimist International, state and federal filings.

Rationale:

Non-compliance with these requirements results in financial loss to the District.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Finance Committee meets at least quarterly to carry out its duties in accordance with the District policies and reports to the Executive Committee.
- Maintain a checklist of key dates and signs-off on completion of each activity as it occurs.
- Complete the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year no later than the fourth quarter meeting of the current fiscal year.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Finance Committee

Recommendation #2:

Maintain a current inventory of supplies and equipment.

Rationale:

District leadership must be good stewards of the District assets.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Perform a periodic inventory of the District's supplies and equipment.
- Maintain a list of supplies and equipment as part of financial records.
- Evaluate the cost effectiveness of the inventory storage facility.
- Establish controls (a sign out sheet/log) over the use of supplies and equipment.
- Ensure that only authorized persons have access to storage units, passwords and other security risk assets.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Finance Committee

Financial Stability

Objective:

To provide financial support for new or on-going District activities.

Recommendation #1:

Increase District dues and find additional funding sources.

Rationale:

Additional funding supports more District scholarships, activities, and events while increasing participation and awareness of Optimist opportunities.

Suggestions for Implementation:

- Consider establishing a grant writing committee.
- Conduct fund raising activities at Club, Zone, and District events.
- Develop parameters for determining the amount of a District dues increase.
- Increase mileage and lodging allowance for District leadership in their performance of District duties.

Committee Responsible for Implementation:

Finance Committee

