

Board for International Mission Policies

Preamble

The Board for International Mission (BIM) is charged with developing and determining policies in support of mission and ministry in foreign mission areas of the Synod (Bylaw 3.1.4.3) for the Office of International Mission (OIM). These policies shall establish boundaries, parameters, and principles that guide the OIM in determining present and future activities and programs (Bylaw 1.2.1 [n]) and shall embrace and apply the mission and ministry emphases adopted by the Synod in convention (By-law 3.8.3). Under the leadership of the President of the Synod, the Board assists in identifying goals for the OIM (Bylaw 3.8.3). The BIM is the only sending agency of Synod through which ordained, commissioned, and other church workers and funds are sent to foreign mission areas of the Synod.

Foundation for work of Board for International Mission and Office of International Mission

The work of the BIM and OIM shall always be guided by and remain true to the Synod's confession and objectives set forth in Articles II and III of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church -Missouri Synod.

The BIM and OIM also consistently work within and under triennial mission emphases and priorities established by the Synod in Convention and in compliance with policies established by the Synod Board of Directors (BOD).

I. Strategic Plan and Budget:

Two critical planning documents explain and drive the work of the OIM on an ongoing basis: the **OIM strategic plan** and the **OIM annual budget** (revenues, operating and capital expenditures).

- A. The **OIM strategic plan** comprehensively reflects overall objectives and goals, contextual environment and influencing factors, key performance measures and other important matters for BIM and BOD consideration.
 - a. The OIM strategic plan should take into consideration, but not be limited to, the following topics and operational categories:
 - i. Strong mission leadership
 - ii. Training of missionaries
 - iii. Ministry for all of the Synod's military personnel
 - iv. Safeguarding the rights of partner churches
 - v. Ministry for all civilians and their dependents overseas
 - vi. International human care
 - vii. Liaison with the colleges, universities, and seminaries of the Synod
 - viii. Liaison with the chief ecumenical officer of the synod

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- ix. International schools
- b. The OIM, under the supervision of the CMO, is responsible for the preparation of an updated OIM strategic plan in accordance with the BIM's annual work plan.
 - i. The BIM shall have the opportunity to provide thorough review and input to proposed updates to the OIM strategic plan.
 - ii. Following appropriate revisions by OIM, the BIM shall provide an endorsement of the completed OIM strategic plan per the BIM annual workplan.
- B. The **OIM annual budget** summarizes anticipated revenues, and sets operating and capital expenditures over a defined time horizon to execute the OIM strategic plan.
 - A. The OIM, under the supervision of the CMO, is responsible for the preparation of an OIM annual budget proposal in accordance with the BIM and BOD annual work plans.
 - i. The BIM shall have the opportunity to provide advance review and commentary to the OIM annual budget proposal, prior to its formal consideration and approval by the BOD.
 - ii. The BIM Chair shall consolidate the BIM's review and commentary and report accordingly to the BOD during its formal consideration and approval of the OIM annual budget proposal per the BOD work annual plan.
- C. The BIM shall receive regular reports from the CMO and OIM unit executive on the status of progress against goals and objectives set forth in the endorsed OIM strategic plan and financial performance targets set forth in approved OIM annual budget.

II. **Call or Appointment of Missionaries:**

- A. The OIM will provide a recommendation for the call or appointment of a missionary and provide sufficient background information for all calls or appointments within a reasonable time for the BIM to thoroughly and prayerfully consider the issuance of a call or appointment for every missionary. Required background information, mutually agreed upon between the BIM and OIM, may include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Call or position description.
 - b. Candidate's application, including recommendations.
 - c. Evaluations of the missionary candidate and family for overseas service; and
 - d. Any other information deemed necessary by OIM or BIM in presenting a recommendation for a missionary candidate's service.
- B. All background information provided by the OIM to the BIM in the calling and appointment of a missionary shall be confidential and limited to appropriate and necessary Synod executive leadership, OIM and Human Resources staff and BIM members.

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- C. The OIM is responsible for the establishment of procedures to ensure proper funding and support of all called and appointed missionaries in foreign mission areas of the Synod.
- D. The OIM shall provide missionary and staff care to all personnel, including:
 - a. OIM missionaries and staff, including family members, shall receive regular pastoral care (necessarily including Word and Sacrament ministry) while deployed and upon return from deployment.
 - b. All deployed OIM missionaries and staff, including family members, shall receive education and information on safety, security, social media use, and emergency evacuation/repatriation plans.
 - c. OIM missionaries and staff shall receive adequate stateside travel opportunities for vacation, network and relationship development.
 - d. OIM missionaries and staff shall receive adequate benefits consistent with LCMS Human Resource unit policies.
- E. The OIM shall provide orientation, continued professional development, and post-deployment care.
 - a. The OIM shall provide regular orientation and training for new missionaries to promote success in the field, and as is practical, provide unique training for each missionary. Such orientation and training may include, but not be limited to, missiology, spiritual and personal care, and skill development.
 - b. OIM shall provide ongoing training for missionaries in missiology, spiritual and personal care, and skill development.
 - c. OIM shall provide regular re-orientation programs for missionaries returning from the field, including programs for debriefing/exit interview, spiritual, mental health, and financial care.

The OIM shall report to BIM, at a minimum on a semi-annual basis, on the status of missionary and staff care.

III. Calling and Endorsement of Military Chaplains

Calls of military chaplains are coordinated through the Ministry to Armed Forces (MAF) unit of the OIM.

- A. For the calling of chaplains to the United States Armed Forces,
 - a. The BIM and MAF shall follow the policies established by the appropriate Synod supervisory authority for the calling of ordained and commissioned ministers of religion.
 - b. MAF shall follow the established LCMS Human Resources unit policies of the Synod in the recruitment and selection process for all missionaries and other workers for mission and ministry work in the foreign mission areas of the Synod.

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- c. MAF shall provide a recommendation for the call of a chaplain and provide background information for all calls within a reasonable time for the BIM to prayerfully consider the issuance of a call. Background information may include, but not be limited to:
 - i. Call or position description.
 - ii. Candidate's application, including recommendations.
 - iii. Evaluations of the chaplain candidate and family for overseas service; and
 - iv. Any other information deemed necessary by OIM in presenting a recommendation for a chaplain candidate's service.
- B. Calls issued to military chaplains shall comply with all applicable BOD policies and federal government policies and regulations.

IV. Reports on Missionary Activities:

To fulfill the requirements of developing and determining policies in support of mission and ministry in foreign mission areas of the Synod under Bylaw 3.8.3, the OIM shall provide to the BIM regular reports on mission activities and needs to include, but not be limited to, number of missionaries and families deployed, an analysis of the number of called and appointed missionaries, status of funding under the Network Supported Missionary (NSM) advancement model, year-to-date grants disbursed, balance in designated funds available for grants, disaster relief funds available and disbursed, summary of regional activities since last report.

V. Reports on Liaison with LCMS Agencies and other entities

- A. Annually the OIM shall request information on behalf of the BIM, from colleges, universities, seminaries, auxiliaries and RSOs of the synod, a report on international activities undertaken during the past year by the institution.
- B. Annually the OIM shall request on behalf of the BIM information from districts of the synod, a report on international activities undertaken during the past year by each district.
- C. Annually, the OIM and BIM shall jointly review these reports.

VI. Joint Mission Assessment Committee

The BIM shall appoint over each triennium two BIM members to serve jointly with two members of the Board for National Mission on the Joint Mission Assessment Committee (JMAC). The purpose of the committee is to fulfill Bylaws 3.8.2.2 and 3.8.3.2 by gathering pertinent and sufficient information from the Synod's members that will facilitate the boards' assessment and evaluation of the Synod's

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triennial mission emphasis and mission priorities. The JMAC shall prepare a draft joint report for approval by both mission boards. The approved joint report shall be provided to the Synod's districts prior to district conventions.

VII. **International Schools:**

- A. The BIM, among its policymaking role and its responsibility to assist the President, the Chief Mission Officer and the OIM in its review/endorsement of the OIM strategic plan and review/input to the OIM annual budget, shall exercise oversight of the Synod's international schools pursuant to Bylaw 3.8.3.
 - a. The Synod's international schools shall establish and utilize educational, religious, and other programs that advance the spread of the Gospel and Lutheran Confessions, in particular *Luther's Small Catechism*, within their respective mission fields.
 - b. The faculty, administration and local governing bodies of the Synod's international schools shall establish and strive to reinforce and strengthen the Lutheran identity and ethos of the international schools, working in conformity with the Synod's confession and objectives set forth in Articles II and III of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church -Missouri Synod
 - c. Because we live under two kingdoms, the Synod's international schools will be subject to the civil governmental authority given to them by God (Matthew 22:1; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14; Romans 13:1-7; Small Catechism Table of Duties) insofar as such required subjection does not disobey God's Word in the spread of the Gospel (Matt 22:1; Acts 5:27-30).
 - d. The Synod's international schools shall be established and operated under the policies and procedures and with the approval of both the BIM and the BOD.
 - i. International schools obtain their authority under the Synod and BIM. [Bylaw 3.8.3 and 3.3.4.6, 3.3.4.7,]
 - ii. International schools at the time of their formation shall submit to the Synod their proposed constitution, bylaws, memorandum of association (MOA), articles of association (AA) operating agreement (OA) and all other related governance, planning and operating documents for approval by the BIM and BOD in accord with the Synod's established policies and procedures.
 - iii. International schools shall regularly submit any amendments or renewals of their constitution, bylaws, MOA, AA, OA and all other related governance, planning and operating documents to the BIM and BOD for approval in accord with the Synod's established policies and procedures.

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- iv. International schools shall operate in accord with their Synod-approved constitution and bylaws, MOA, AA, OA and all other related governance, planning and operating documents.
- e. The Synod's international schools shall be governed within the requirements of the LCMS as an extension of the Synod in their locality.
 - i. International schools operate under their own governance structure, including an approved constitution and bylaws, board of directors and staff, which are recognized by both the Synod and BIM within the limitations placed on them by all other applicable governing documents, including MOA, AA, and OA.
 - ii. International schools and the boards, staffs and faculties shall follow, implement, and promote the triennial mission emphases and priorities established by the Synod in convention.
 - iii. International schools shall function under the leadership of an LCMS rostered church worker-grounded administrative leadership team, staff and faculty.
 - 1. The Head of School or senior executive administrator with similar title, wherever feasible, shall be a rostered LCMS church worker. At minimum, this senior executive administrator shall be appointed from current membership in good standing in an LCMS or LCMS church partner congregation.
 - 2. A majority of the senior administrators of the school, wherever feasible, shall be rostered LCMS church workers.
 - 3. There shall be a strong nucleus of Lutheran Christian teachers, with as many positions as possible filled by graduates from LCMS universities who are trained as Lutheran educators.
 - 4. In the event there are faculty, staff or administrative job vacancies, an international school shall demonstrate meaningful solicitation of candidates from among rostered church workers of the LCMS.
 - 5. Rostered church worker ordained minister candidates, nominated to serve in any capacity in an international school, compensated or otherwise, shall be submitted to the OIM for regular vetting, evaluation and issuance of call from the BIM per established routine procedures for all LCMS missionaries sent to work in the foreign mission areas of the Synod.
 - 6. Rostered church worker commissioned minister candidates, nominated to serve in any capacity in an international school, compensated or otherwise shall be submitted to the BIM for prior approval prior to signing employment documents.

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- B. International schools shall follow established laws in their respective countries regarding non-religious matters.
- C. Each International School shall submit an annual budget accompanied by a three-year pro forma business plan for review and approval by the OIM and the Chief Mission Officer, with subsequent report to the BIM. The package submitted to the OIM and Chief Mission Officer shall include, but not be limited to, enrollment, staffing, statements of financial activities, position and cash flows and capital expenditures.

VIII. BIM Self-Governance

A. Scope of Activities

- a. The BIM, its officers, committee(s), and members shall conform to the specific responsibilities of the board as provided by bylaw and as adopted at board meetings and in accordance with the *Handbook* of the Synod. Board members are disciplined by this principle.

B. Group Action

- a. The BIM shall exercise its authority as a whole. No individual board member may exercise such authority except as instructed by the BIM. No individual may speak for the BIM except the chair and then only in consultation with the chief mission officer and the president of Synod.

C. Policy Development

- a. The BIM policies are to be active and dynamic. They may be changed and refined regularly.

D. Policy Review and Revisions

- a. Any board member, the president of Synod, the Chief Mission Officer, or appropriate governing body may ask for a review of specific policies. However, never does the responsibility for effective and appropriate policies rest with anyone other than the BIM.
- b. The BIM shall review at least annually the range and scope of the policies of the BIM to determine their appropriateness and relevance to changing conditions and needs. The BIM shall conduct an in-depth review of its policies in accordance with its annual review calendar.
- c. The board will request the Commission on Constitutional Matters to examine policies in advance to ascertain whether the policies are in harmony with the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the Synod.

E. Monitoring

- a. The board shall establish effective and regular ways of monitoring compliance with the established policies, as well as determining monitoring indicators for its policies.

F. BIM Members Code of Conduct

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- a. They shall regularly attend board meetings and, when unable to attend, notify the board chair. If a board member has two consecutive unexcused absences, the board chair will contact the board member to determine if the member desires to continue on the board.
- b. They shall be prepared for board meetings, familiarizing themselves with the issues to be considered.
- c. They shall exercise diligence to ensure that all actions of the board comply with the *Handbook* of the Synod and this policy manual.
- d. They shall participate in board meetings, special briefings, ad hoc committees, and policy decision-making.
- e. They shall make informed decisions by insisting on complete and accurate information and then respect all decisions once they have been fully discussed and resolved by the board (8th Commandment). A board member casting a “no” vote may request that the reason be included in the official minutes.
- f. They shall bring to the board issues for discussion and action, which may be of concern, interest, or importance.
- g. They shall invest personal energy, resources (including financial), and skills in the purposes and objectives of the OIM ministries, seeking opportunities to be advocates of the OIM mission and ministry.
- h. The board shall strive for 100% participation in the financial support of International Mission programs.
- i. They shall show respect for others and their opinions and respect the right of others to disagree.
- j. They shall actively discipline themselves and other members of the board by identifying board actions and conditions that run counter to these policies.
- k. They shall bring to the chair’s immediate attention any condition or action that they believe is in non-compliance with the *Handbook* of the Synod.
- l. Discussions at board meetings shall remain confidential. Official statements regarding board meeting discussions and actions will be documented in the minutes of the BIM meeting. Board members shall not disclose information about board meeting discussions or attribute comments to individual board members. Individual board members’ discussions during board activities shall not be disclosed. This does not include general information or otherwise publicly known.
- m. They shall make efforts to develop donors and active supporters of the BIM’s objectives in their own congregations, districts, and throughout the

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Synod by their own personal contact and advocacy, and to share these contacts with the Synod's mission advancement office.

- n. They shall disclose conflicts of interest and annually sign a conflict-of-interest statement in accord with the Synod's Bylaws and the policies of the Synod's Board of Directors. Conflicts of interest are usually understood as circumstances in which certain financial considerations may influence or appear to influence a board members discussion of or decisions on certain policies. Conflicts of interest may also involve membership in, advocacy of, or financial contributions to, organizations or groups whose activities contradict or contravene policies of the Board for international Mission.

G. Board Agenda Structure

- a. The board intentionally establishes a basic structure for its board meetings. The structure's purpose is to assist the board and Office of International Mission Staff in processing information in a way that allows them to maintain an orderly manner to their considerations. Additional items can be added as needed.
- b. The Board Chair is responsible for determining the agenda for each board meeting.
- c. Annually at the fall meeting of the BIM, the board will adopt a work plan that outlines the matters to be discussed and considered at each board meeting for the next year.
- d. The board agenda shall typically include but is not limited to the following sections:
 - i. Theological presentation and discussion
 - ii. President of Synod/chief mission officer report
 - iii. Discussion issues with President, CMO, OIM unit executive and others as appropriate
 - iv. Governance issues / policy review
 - v. Strategic Plan and financial review
 - vi. Regional director reports
 - vii. Calls
- e. The Agenda and materials for regularly board meetings shall generally be published one week before the meeting date.

H. Types of Board Sessions

- a. The board shall have three types of board sessions:

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- i. Open sessions that allow board members, the president of Synod or his representative, the chief mission officer, and non-board members to be in attendance.
- ii. Executive sessions that allow only board members and the president of Synod or his representative and those invited to be in attendance. They serve for board discussion only on personnel and other sensitive matters. There shall be no reporting of these sessions, and no actions will be taken during them.
- iii. The National and International Mission Boards may hold a joint meeting triennially to provide coordination between national and international ministries.

I. Regular Board Meeting Schedule

- a. At or soon after the first meeting of the triennium, the board shall approve a regular meeting schedule for the balance of the triennium.
- b. Board members should make every effort to attend all regularly scheduled board and other activities that conflict with the established schedule.

J. Quorum

- a. A majority of the duly elected or appointed voting members of the board shall constitute a quorum at any properly called or scheduled meeting

K. Conference Calls

- a. The board may conduct business and act between regular board meetings by telephone or digital conference call provided a regular quorum of the board participates.

L. Electronic Ballots

- a. The board may conduct business and take action between regular board meetings by use of electronic ballot (i.e., email, internet-based voting, etc.) in accordance with the Missouri Nonprofit Corporation Act, provided all voting members of the board cast a vote and the result of the voting is unanimous.

M. Board Self-Appraisal

- a. In order to discipline itself and its efforts, the board under the guidance of its chair shall each triennium conduct a self-appraisal.

N. Officers of the Board

- a. Officers of the board shall be a chair, a vice chair, and a secretary.
- b. The board shall elect its own officers by affirmative majority vote at its first meeting following the national convention of the Synod. Such officers shall hold office until the first meeting following the next national convention of the Synod.

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- c. The officers of the board shall not assume any part of the management of the OIM. Their focus shall be on coordinating and assisting the board to do its work.
- d. Responsibilities of Officers shall be:
 - i. Chair
 1. To be the chief governance officer of the board, interpreting and guiding to fruition policies created by the board about its responsibilities.
 2. To establish the agenda for board meetings, in compliance with the policy calendar established by the board and in cooperation with the chief mission officer.
 3. To set the time, place, and agenda for executive committee meetings.
 4. To call special board meetings after consultation with the chief mission officer of Synod or upon request of at least six board members.
 5. To preside at all meetings of the board and its executive committee.
 6. To discuss with individual board members any alleged violations of their responsibilities and possible corrective action. When resolution cannot be obtained with an individual board member the chair will lead a full review by the board of the violation of the policy and discussion of corrective action to be taken.
 7. To maintain an open, proactive, and forthright communication pattern with the president of Synod and chief mission officer to facilitate the coordination of activities between the board and the Office of International Mission.
 8. To ensure that all discussion, deliberation, and ultimate action in all areas listed above are consistent with and informed and motivated by the mission and ministry emphases as adopted by Synod in convention.
 9. To act in all areas of board management left unstated within these policies without first having to gain board approval.
 - ii. Vice Chair
 1. Preside at meetings of the board in the absence of the chair.
 2. To carry out responsibilities as may be assigned by the chair or by the board.

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3. To discuss with the chair any violation of policy on the part of the chair and possible corrective action.
 4. To help the board chair ensure that all discussion, deliberation, and ultimate action in all of the areas listed above are consistent with and informed and motivated by the mission and ministry emphases as adopted by Synod in convention.
- iii. Secretary
 1. To ensure an official record of the minutes of the board meeting are recorded and direct their distribution to the members of the board and the president and secretary of the Synod.
 2. To record executive committee minutes and distribute them within two weeks to the board members.
- e. The following shall guide the format of minutes of board meetings. They shall:
 - i. Be kept as simple as possible.
 - ii. State all motions in explicit statements.
 - iii. Add contextual statements to motions only when needed to clarify motions.
 - iv. State all actions agreed upon by consensus.
 - v. Contain highlights of the management report if they are not contained in the written report.
 - vi. Record negative votes or abstentions, upon the request of the members.
 - vii. Be cross-referenced to the agenda.
 - viii. Be transmitted to the Concordia Historical Institute along with all supporting documents through the chief mission officer.

O. Executive Committee of the Board

- a. The chair, vice chair, secretary, and one other board member as appointed by the board shall constitute the executive committee of the board. The executive committee may act on behalf of the board between meetings of the board in times of emergency in all matters delegated to it by specific action of the board or by board policy. The executive committee shall not perform acts specifically required by law or by the Constitution, Bylaws, and regulations of the Synod to be performed by the board itself, nor shall the executive committee overturn actions of the board. Actions of the executive committee shall be reported to the board immediately after such actions.

P. Committee Process

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- a. The board may from time to time use committees, but always consistent with the following principles:
 - i. Committee responsibilities shall flow directly from the board's description of its job, shall be set forth in a formal written charge with an appropriate period for existence, and shall not impinge upon responsibilities delegated to the chief mission officer.
 - ii. Committees shall be appointed by the chair.
 - iii. Committees shall not do Office of International Mission work.
 - iv. Committees shall have no decision-making authority except when authorized by the board.
 - v. Committees shall not manage any part of the Office of International Mission ministries.