

**CHAPTER III**  
**812. SUNDAY SCHOOL AND DISCIPLESHIP**  
**MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL BYLAWS**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries International (SDMI) is to carry out the Great Commission to children, youth, and adults in preparation for a lifetime of being and making Christlike disciples in the nations.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries International is:

- A. To be a people of prayer, engaged in the Word, making Christlike disciples.
- B. To intentionally develop relationships with unreached people so that they become Christlike disciples making Christlike disciples.
- C. To teach the Word of God to children, youth, and adults so that they are saved, sanctified wholly, and maturing in Christian experience that results in a life of compassion, evangelism, Christian education, and disciple making.
- D. To encourage everyone to faithfully engage in a discipleship ministry such as Sunday School/Bible studies, small groups, and other disciple-making ministries.

**ARTICLE I. SDMI MEMBERSHIP**

**Responsibility List**

Each local church should assume responsibility for reaching all unsaved persons in the community. Each SDMI ministry shall have a Responsibility List. A Responsibility List should include each person for whom the name and contact/follow-up information has been obtained. Once a person is added to the Responsibility List, the local church should actively seek to minister to that person as he or she is brought into the fellowship of that church. Teachers/leaders of each ministry shall facilitate regular communication and connection between group members and those on the Responsibility List.

The total of all individuals on the SDMI Responsibility List is to be reported in the Annual Pastor's Report, APR. The Responsibility List includes all age groups for Sunday School, discipleship meetings, Bible studies, and all SDMI ministries.

**SECTION 1.** Participants in the following ministries shall be included on the Responsibility List:

- a. Cradle Roll: Children under four years of age who, along with their parents, do not attend any SDMI ministry may be enrolled on the Responsibility List as Cradle Roll.

- b. Home Department: Any person physically or vocationally unable to attend a regular SDMI ministry may be enrolled in the Home Department and listed on the Responsibility List.
- c. Nursing Home/Convalescent Center/Health Care Facility, etc.: Any resident confined to one of these centers who participates in a regular study of approved curriculum.
- d. Church-Type Mission: Any group sponsored by the local church or district who meets weekly for at least a half hour to study biblical principles and/or approved curriculum with the goal of becoming an organized local Church of the Nazarene.
- e. Childcare/Schools: Any group of students in a Nazarene childcare/school (birth-secondary) sponsored/operated by a local Church of the Nazarene.
- f. Child Development Centers (CDC): Sponsored/operated by a local Church of the Nazarene.

**SECTION 2. Removal of Names**

Removing names should be done only with the approval of the pastor when the person:

- a. moves out of town.
- b. joins another Sunday School class, discipleship group, or church.
- c. specifically asks to have his or her name removed.
- d. dies.

**ARTICLE II. SDMI ATTENDANCE**

The purpose of counting and reporting SDMI attendance in the local church is to help measure the effectiveness of that church's effort to make Christlike disciples. All SDMI efforts should lead each participant to become a disciple of Christ, a member of the church, and a disciple maker.

SDMI attendance includes Sunday School sessions and Discipleship Groups. These categories shall be counted each week by the local church according to the guidelines listed below and in Article I, Section 1 above.

The regional SDMI office needs reports of the Responsibility List and average weekly SDMI attendance from each district in order to compile an accurate record of SDMI growth within the denomination annually.

**SECTION 1. Definitions and Reports**

The attendance of all Discipleship Groups shall be defined as persons involved in a study of the Bible and its application of the biblical principles for Christlikeness.

- a. For most churches, the number of Sunday School/Bible studies sessions held will be 52 and shall be reported. The District SDMI Board, in consultation with the district superintendent, shall determine any valid exceptions and

- b. A local church having more than one type of discipleship ministry group should combine weekly attendance figures and report a single annual average in the APR.
- c. Since discipleship ministries can begin or end any time during the church year, the yearly average should be determined by dividing accumulative figures by the number of weeks the ministries were conducted.

### **ARTICLE III. LOCAL SDMI BOARD**

Responsibilities of the local SDMI Board are defined in *Manual* 145-145.10 and include:

1. Work with the pastor and the local church board to develop/organize an SDMI Board.
2. Work with the pastor to develop and implement a strategic plan for discipleship in the local church that is in-line with the church's strategies/objectives and in harmony with the district vision and the mission of the Church of the Nazarene.
3. Research, create, develop curriculum consistent with the Church of the Nazarene theology and mission and published by Nazarene interests, coordinate and follow-up: training programs for intentional discipleship, leadership development for all church members for church advancement, training for ministry workers involved in all age group ministries, and special projects.
4. Evaluate and report at the annual meeting current local church education and discipleship ministries/projects clearly articulating their outcomes.
5. Approve curriculum consistent with the Church of the Nazarene theology and mission/resources/materials that the local SDMI ministries can use.

### **ARTICLE IV. SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES AND DEPARTMENTS**

**SECTION 1.** The Sunday School shall be divided into classes for children and youth on the basis of age or school grade. For adults the classes should be determined by common interests, mission, topic, etc. Where appropriate, intergenerational classes may also be considered.

**SECTION 2.** When the number of classes within the children's, youth, or adult age-groups increase, attention should be given to age level organization with a supervisor appointed by the local SDMI Board.

**SECTION 3.** The duties of the department supervisor shall be determined by the local SDMI Board. Suggested responsibilities are listed in the SDMI handbook.

### **ARTICLE V. SDMI MINISTRIES TEACHERS AND LEADERS**

**SECTION 1.** SDMI Ministries include Sunday School for all ages, small groups, marriage ministries, men's ministries, women's ministries, children's ministries, Vacation Bible School, interest groups, etc. The ministry/department supervisors and teachers/leaders shall be appointed annually according to *Manual* 145.8.

**SECTION 2.** The SDMI Board, in consultation with the pastor, may declare the position of any officer or teacher/leader vacant in cases of proven unsound doctrine, imprudent conduct, or neglect of duty.

**SECTION 3.** All teachers/leaders and substitutes should be persons of prayer, engaged in the Word, and intentionally being and making Christlike disciples.

#### **ARTICLE VI. SDMI MINISTRIES LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES**

**SECTION 1.** The local SDMI superintendent shall be elected each year according to *Manual* 113.10-113.11 and 127. The duties of the SDMI superintendent shall be to:

- a. coordinate the SDMI under the supervision of the pastor.
- b. plan regular meetings for ministry leaders and teachers.
- c. provide training opportunities for present and prospective teachers and leaders.
- d. annually evaluate, develop and implement with the SDMI Board a discipleship strategy to reach those on the Responsibility List.
- e. regularly report the SDMI statistics to the designated zone, district, or field office.
- f. encourage attendance at local, zone, district, field, regional, and global SDMI functions.

**SECTION 2.** The duties of the age-group directors are outlined in *Manual* 147.1-147.9 and 148.2.

**SECTION 3.** The SDMI Board shall elect a person to keep the SDMI records. He or she shall keep an accurate record of the Responsibility List, attendance, visitors, and other statistics as may be required for all SDMI ministries.

**SECTION 4.** Where appropriate, the SDMI Board shall elect a treasurer to keep accurate account of all moneys raised by SDMI each week and authorize the disbursement according to the direction of the board. A monthly report shall be given to the SDMI Board.

**SECTION 5.** All curriculum and other resources used in SDMI ministries shall be approved by the SDMI Board, or superintendent and pastor.

#### **ARTICLE VII. SDMI ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION**

**SECTION 1.** The SDMI is under the care of the pastor, accountable to the local church board, under the general

supervision of the SDMI Board and the immediate leadership of the superintendent and age-group directors.

**SECTION 2.** If a church who has employed a director of Christian education wishes that person to fulfill the responsibilities of the SDMI superintendent, the church should elect another lay person to represent the SDMI on the local church board as a voting member. We encourage all possible efforts be made to train and resource local lay leaders for leadership in SDMI.

**SECTION 3.** When a pastor/leader/director to children, youth, or adults is employed by a church, the pastor, in consultation with the church board, the SDMI Board, and/or NYI Council, assigns the responsibility for children, youth, or adult ministries to the age-level staff member. In that case, the staff member serving children, youth, or adult ministries carries out some of the duties otherwise designated to a local Children's Ministries (CM) director, NYI president, or Adult Ministries (AM) director. However, the responsibility of the local CM director, NYI president, or AM director remains to provide vital lay leadership, support, and representation for local age-group ministries. The pastor and age-group ministry staff member consult with the SDMI Board and NYI Council to define the roles and responsibilities of the three lay positions.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. SDMI CONVENTIONS**

##### **SECTION 1.** District SDMI Convention

It is important that each district plan a District SDMI Convention annually in order to provide inspiration, motivation, training, and the business of reports and. The promotion of Sunday School & Small Group Disciple making ministries should be a highlight of each convention.

- a. Ex-officio members of the District SDMI Convention shall be: the district superintendent; all pastors, assigned ordained ministers, assigned district licensed ministers, retired assigned ministers, full-time associates; district SDMI chair; district directors of CM and AM; district NYI president; district NMI president; all local SDMI superintendents, local CM and AM directors, local NYI presidents; elected members of the District SDMI Board; lay members of the District Advisory Board; any Nazarene full-time professors of Christian education with membership on that district; and field, regional, and global SDMI officers.
- b. In addition to the delegates listed above, each local church in the annual meeting shall elect additional SDMI delegates to the Convention. This number shall be 25 percent of the number of officers, teachers, and leaders of

the local SDMI ministries. In case elected delegates cannot attend the convention, alternate delegates shall be designated in the order of the votes received.

- c. The District SDMI Board shall appoint a nominating committee to select twice the number of nominees for the elected positions of district SDMI chair and the three elected members of the District SDMI Board, which are then to be elected by plurality vote at the District SDMI Convention. These nominees must be members of the Church of the Nazarene, actively involved in one of the ministries of SDMI, and should be selected from the various age-groups (children, youth, and adult teachers/workers).
- d. The delegates to the District SDMI Convention may elect the district SDMI chair (*Manual* 239) and the three elected members of the District SDMI Board and delegates to the Global SDMI Convention.

#### **SECTION 2.** Global SDMI Convention

In conjunction with each General Assembly, SDMI shall observe a Global Convention with delegates in one or more locations around the world. Elected delegates (and guests) shall meet for the purpose of inspiration, motivation, and training to equip and enrich involvement in fulfilling the mission and purpose of SDMI globally.

The Global Convention shall also include regional forums composed of the Regional SDMI Council, the regional director, the regional SDMI coordinator, and the elected district SDMI delegates from that region. The forums shall meet for the purpose of electing a nominee for consideration to serve as the SDMI representative on the General Board. The Global SDMI Council and Global SDMI director will then select one name from those nominated, and submit that one name to the General Assembly for approval (*Manual* 332.6).

- a. Ex-officio delegates to the Global SDMI Convention shall be: district superintendents, district SDMI chairs, district directors of CM and AM; SDMI regional coordinators, SDMI field coordinators, CM and AM regional coordinators; and directors and staff of the global SDMI office. In addition, professors of Christian education at Nazarene colleges, universities, and seminaries may attend as delegates.
- b. In addition to the ex-officio delegates, each district should elect four additional delegates or a number equal to ten percent of the organized churches on the district, whichever is greater.
- c. The following guidelines should be followed in elections for the Global SDMI Convention delegates:

1. The Nominating Committee shall be comprised of the district superintendent, district SDMI chair, and at least three others appointed by the District SDMI Board. They shall select three times the number of nominees to be elected.
2. The District SDMI Convention shall elect an equal number of delegates and alternates representing the various SDMI ministries (including teachers/workers of youth). Those elected should be persons who are presently and actively involved in the respective area from which they are elected. The number of alternates elected should include alternates for ex-officio district officers. Persons should not be elected who will serve as delegates to the Global Nazarene Missions International Convention or the Global Nazarene Youth International Convention, because the three conventions run concurrently.
3. Delegates shall be elected by ballot in the District SDMI Convention within 16 months of the meeting of the General Assembly or within 24 months in areas where travel visas or other unusual preparations are necessary.
4. As nearly as possible, elect an equal number of laity and clergy—50 percent laypersons and 50 percent assigned ministers, elders, deacons, or licensed ministers. When the total number is uneven, the extra representative shall be a layperson.
5. District SDMI leaders elected prior to and holding office at the time of the Global Convention shall be the ex-officio members of the convention.
6. All elected and ex-officio delegates present in the District SDMI Convention shall be eligible to vote for Global SDMI Convention representatives.
7. A plurality vote shall be sufficient for election.
8. If any elected delegates cannot attend the Global SDMI Convention, alternate delegates shall be designated in the order of votes received. If elected delegates and alternates are unable to attend, the district superintendent and district advisory board are authorized to fill such vacancies.
9. At the convening of the Global SDMI Convention, each delegate shall reside on and be a member of a local Church of the Nazarene on the district he or she was elected to represent.
10. Delegates who attend the convention should have financial assistance from the district comparable to expenses provided from the district for NMI and NYI Convention delegates.

11. If the election of delegates for the Global SDMI Convention does not take place at the District SDMI Convention, delegates shall be elected at the District Assembly.

#### **ARTICLE IX. GLOBAL SDMI COUNCIL**

##### **SECTION 1. Purpose**

To promote the total program of SDMI by working with regional, field, district, and local SDMI leaders in connecting global strategies for effective disciple making.

##### **SECTION 2. Composition**

- a. The Global SDMI Council shall meet at least annually, either in person or by electronic media, and consist of the regional SDMI coordinator from each global mission region and the Global SDMI director, who chairs the meeting.
- b. The regional SDMI coordinators are to be appointed by the respective regional director in consultation with the global SDMI director.

##### **SECTION 2. Duties of the regional SDMI coordinators shall be:**

- a. To represent and champion the purposes of SDMI on their region.
- b. To provide vision and inspiration related to the implementation of strategies and tools consistent with the regional vision for the church.
- c. To research, create, develop, coordinate, and follow-up: training initiatives for intentional discipleship leadership development for regional, field, and district church advancement, connecting all the ministries of the church to the task of making Christlike disciples.
- d. To attend and submit a report at the annual Global SDMI Council meeting.
- e. To bring the nominee(s) for SDMI General Board representative, selected by their regional forum, to the Global SDMI Council. The Council will present one name to the General Assembly for election as the SDMI representative to the General Board (*Manual* 332.6).

#### **ARTICLE X. SDMI AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the General Board members present and voting.