



## Local Optimist Club to Sponsor Oratorical Contest for Students

The Platteville Optimist Club is encouraging students in Platteville and other area community schools (public and private) to speak their minds on the 2023-24 Optimist International Oratorical Contest topic, “How to Change the World with Optimism.”

### Application Information

- This information only highlights *some* contest rules. All the rules are fully explained on the actual application and should be read thoroughly and carefully by student and parent.
- The oratorical contest is open to students under the age of 19 as of October 1, 2023.
- Completed applications should be sent to Platteville Optimist Club, % Charles Clark, 875 W Main St, Platteville, WI 53818, OR emailed to <[clarkcf875@icloud.com](mailto:clarkcf875@icloud.com)>.
- Although a copy of the speech is not handed in until the time of the competition, the applications must be submitted (postmarked or email “date sent”) by Friday, March 8, 2024.
- Contest application forms can be obtained from school teacher, school office, or downloaded from the Platteville Optimist homepage, <[www.plattevilleoptimists.org/](http://www.plattevilleoptimists.org/)>. Click “Events” at top of page.
- A copy of the speech should not be sent with the application form, but brought to the competition.
- Entrants must bring a copy of a birth certificate, passport or other government document to the contest to verify his/her age.
- Entrants will be notified of the local contest date, time, and place, tentatively set for March 25 at the Wisconsin Bank & Trust Community Room (lower level, west entrance) in Platteville.

The speeches will be judged on content and presentation as described on application.

There are five levels to this year’s competition as follows.

- 1) Local Club Contest: The top 3 winners of the Local contest win cash prizes as follows: 1st, \$150; 2nd, \$100, 3rd, \$50. The top two local winners will advance to Zone competition.
- 2) Zone Contest is where they will compete with other area students in early to mid-April. 1st and 2nd place winners are typically awarded a plaque and advance to the...
- 3) District Oratorical Scholarship Contest: The Zone Contest winner will compete against other Southern Wisconsin speakers for college scholarships. This will be held in early May in Milwaukee, where contestant and parents are guests of the Optimist District. The 1st Place winner will be awarded a \$2,500 scholarship and be eligible to advance to the Regional Contest. While the 2nd Place winner receives a \$1,500 scholarship, and the 3rd Place winner receives a \$1,000 scholarship, they do not move on in competition.
- 4) Great Plains Regional Competition: This will be held in St. Louis, MO, July 18-19, 2024, to compete for a \$5,000 scholarship. Winners of the Regional Contest will compete in the...
- 5) World Championship, also held in St. Louis, MO, in July. Contestants at this final level will have the chance to win scholarships in these amounts: 1st Place, \$15,000; 2nd Place, \$10,000; 3rd Place, \$5,000.

Questions about the local contest can be directed to Charles Clark at <[clarkcf875@icloud.com](mailto:clarkcf875@icloud.com)>, or 608-778-8435. Thank you for your support! We look forward to meeting and hearing this year’s speakers!

Platteville Optimist Club

# Application for 2023-2024 Optimist International Oratorical Contest

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province/Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Have you participated in any other Optimist Club's Oratorical Contest this school year?  Yes  No

## Contestant Agreement:

*I have studied the rules of the contest, and I will be bound by all the requirements.*

*I understand entries will be run through plagiarism and AI detection software.*

Contestant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

## Parent or Guardian Permission:

*I give my permission for my child/ward to participate in this contest.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

*I, \_\_\_\_\_ grant the Optimist Club/International my permission to use a picture/video of my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ for their public relations purposes. Optimist Club/International may use the photo/video in any publication they see fit.*

Sponsoring Optimist Club Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring Optimist Club Number \_\_\_\_\_

Language speech will be spoken in:  English  French

**For more information contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Topic: "How to Change the World with Optimism"

### Official Rules

#### Section I — General Rules

1. The Optimist International Oratorical contest will begin at the Club level, proceed to the Zone and District level and end with a contest at World Championships level.
2. Contestants must enter through a local Optimist Club.
3. The official application must be completed by each contestant and submitted to the sponsoring Club's Contest Chair.
4. Clubs, Zones and Districts **will** have a combined gender contests.
5. No Zone, Regional, or District level contest shall have fewer than 3 or more than 20 contestants competing.
6. Optimist International has the right to edit, publish and record any speech used in any contest without payment to the author.

#### Section II — Qualifications for Contestants

1. The contest is open to contestants under the age of 19 as of October 1st of the current Optimist International contest year (October 1 – September 30) and who have not yet completed secondary school or its equivalent, including CEGEP students in Québec, Canada. There is no minimum age.
2. A contestant is eligible to enter/compete in only one Optimist Oratorical contest during a contest year. Once a contestant wins first place at the Regional level of the Optimist International Oratorical World Championships, they are ineligible to compete in the Optimist International Oratorical Contest at any level again.
3. Each contestant shall prepare his or her own speech. The contestant may receive advice in the preparation of the speech and may make minor changes or improvements in the speech at any time.
4. All contestants at each level of the contest must show proof of age before competing. Optimist Clubs may require a copy of birth certificate or passport if offering a

club scholarship separate from Optimist International. District winners must provide a copy of the birth certificate or passport with District entry documentation

5. A printed copy of the speech must be furnished either before or after the speech.

#### Section III — Contest Rules

1. All contestants must speak on the official topic.
2. A speech may be delivered in English or French.
3. All contestants must state the official topic in the first sentence of the speech. Timing will begin with the first spoken word. A 3-point penalty is automatically assessed by the timekeeper for failure to state the official topic in the first sentence.
4. Any quotation, copyrighted, or largely paraphrased material used in the speech must be identified verbally during the presentation and in the written copy of the speech with the original author's name. The contestant shall be fully responsible for the use of any quoted material and Optimist International shall assume no responsibility. Failure to identify non-original material will result in up to 10 penalty points.
5. The use of props, special costumes or clothing, will result in 10 penalty points
6. The use of audience prompters will result in disqualification
7. Notes and lecterns can be used if the contestant desires.
8. The time allowed will be not under 4 minutes or over 5 minutes. Contestants going over or under will not be cautioned, and will be penalized one point for each 15 seconds or fraction of over or under the allotted time. This penalty will be determined by the official timekeeper.
9. Timing will begin at the first word spoken. Timing will stop when the contestant finishes.
10. No reference can be made that identifies the contestant, parents, school, community, sponsoring Optimist Club or District. This will result in a deduction of up to 5 points. Contestants shall not be identified by name or sponsoring Clubs until after the last oration has been presented and

the judges and timekeeper have started deliberations.

11. Any protest in the conduct at any level of this contest must be made immediately after the condition is noted. Protests received after the next contestant has been introduced, or in the case of the last contestant, after the judges leave to total the scores, will not be accepted under any circumstances.
12. The Contest Chairperson will decide all protests in accordance with the official rules. The decision of the Contest Chair is final and no higher appeals will be recognized. In the case of Club contests, the Club Contest Chair has this authority. In the case of Zone and District contests, the final authority is vested in the District Contest Chair. The Zone Chair has the authority to handle protests that may arise during the Zone competition with the District Chair having the final authority.

#### Section IV — Scoring

Scoring in all Club, Zone, District, and World Championships contests will conform to the following criteria.

1. Poise – appearance and personality: 10 points
2. Content of Speech – subject adherence, theme, content, logic and color: 40 points
3. Delivery & Presentation – voice, volume, pronunciation, gestures, eye contact, sincerity and emphasis: 35 points
4. Overall Effectiveness – appeal, impression, attitude and effect: 15 points

#### Section V — Penalties

1. Failure to announce the official topic in the first sentence – 3 points
2. Failure to identify non-original material – up to 10 points
3. Use of props, costume, etc. - 10 points
4. Time penalties – 1 point for each 15 seconds or fraction of over or under the allotted time.
5. Self-identification – up to 5 points

6. Failure to complete speech – disqualification
7. Use of audience prompters – disqualification

#### Section VI — Awards

1. Club Level – Medallion
2. Zone Level – Plaque
3. District Regional Level – Plaque
4. District – Plaque and Scholarship

Each winner of the District level contest will receive a scholarship for use at a college, university or trade school only. Three winners awarded scholarships of \$2,500, \$1,500 and \$1,000 respectively for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place. All scholarships will be payable to the educational institution of the recipient's choice, subject to the approval of Optimist International. All scholarships will be administered by Optimist International Winners of an Optimist International scholarship must claim their scholarship by the age of 25.

5. World Championship Optimist Oratorical Contests – Plaque and Scholarship
  - A. Each winner of the World Regional level contest will receive a scholarship for use at a college, university or trade school only. There will be one winner awarded a \$5000 scholarship at the World Regional Level. All winners of the World Regional Contests will be eligible to compete in the World Championship Contest with awards for first, second, and third place of \$15,000, \$10,000, and \$5,000 respectively at Saint Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri.
  - B. All scholarships will be payable to the educational institution of the recipient's choice, subject to the approval of Optimist International.
  - C. All scholarships will be administered by Optimist International.
  - D. Winners of an Optimist International scholarship must claim their scholarship by the age of 25.