



Team Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is two-fold: to explain to members just what Mid-Cities Arlington Swimming (MARS) is about, and to outline various policies and procedures that affect all swimmers and parents, year after year. It should be read by all families so that they may become familiar with important facts and policies of the club.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVE

Mid-Cities Arlington Swimming (MARS) is known throughout the state as a first-class, year-round swim program. We offer a guided age-group youth program for children age 5 and up, from the beginning swimmer to the most competitive and skilled athlete. When a young person becomes a member of the MARS team, he/she learns the values of sportsmanship and teamwork. Swimming through MARS, provides physical, emotional and intellectual skills that will last a lifetime.

MISSION STATEMENT

Provide a positive environment for athletes to develop life skills and achieve their highest potential in competition.

TEAM PHILOSOPHY:

Mid-Cities Arlington Swimming believes that our philosophy prepares the individual for the challenges they will face in life.

The words **COURAGE, PERSEVERANCE and COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE** outline the keys to the Team Philosophy.

COURAGE is the willingness to accept risk and endure failure. **COURAGE** does not exist unless there is a situation that presents the opportunity for success. We encourage our athletes to embrace these opportunities and not fear the outcome.

PERSEVERANCE is the backbone of success in the endeavors of life. Success at all levels of performance is achieved through persistent efforts to overcome all obstacles. **PERSEVERANCE** is a quality that converts obstacles into the attributes of confidence, self-respect and enthusiasm. Our athletes are encouraged to persevere to find true strength of character.

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE is the desire and dedication to continually improve our performance. **COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE** allows superior accomplishments to be realized in all aspects of competitive swimming and life.

HISTORY

Mid-Cities Arlington Swimming, LLC. (MARS) is a result of the 1997 merger of Swim Team Arlington (STAR) and Mid-Cities Swim Team (MCST). STAR began as Tarrant County Aquatic Team (TCAT); over time, TCAT evolved to AIR (Arlington Irving Swimming) and ultimately to STAR. MCST was founded to serve the communities of the Dallas-Fort Worth mid-cities of Hurst, Euless and Bedford. Both clubs' primary purposes at the time they were formed were to develop age group swimming and prepare swimmers for the area's high school teams. These remain the club's major purposes today. However, the club goals today include establishing a comprehensive competitive program for our communities. MARS has not only become recognized as one of North Texas's finest programs, but we also participate at the state and national level by virtue of our age-group champions, Junior National Finalists, National finalists, and Olympic Trials finalists.

COMMUNITY EFFORTS

MARS is a leader in our community by providing assistance, both financial and otherwise, to those families that need assistance. MARS families are ambassadors for the team and can frequently be seen volunteering throughout the community in a variety of ways. The MARS Foundation is a non-profit

foundation that provides financial assistance to those unable to afford swim lesson or team tuition. MARS is recognized as one of the first local partners of USA Swimming's Make-A-Splash national initiative, providing swim lessons and water safety instruction to the community. MARS remains committed to ensuring all families have access to quality instruction.

WHY SWIM?

The USA Swimming age group program is America's largest program of guided fitness activity for children. Age group swimming builds a strong foundation for a lifetime of good health by teaching healthy fitness habits. Competitive swimming programs are one of the few sports where children receive training from professional coaches from the very first experience with the sport. Swimming supports physical development, intellectual competence, and "preparation for life".

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Swimming is considered the ideal activity for developing muscular and skeletal growth by many physicians and pediatricians. Why do doctors like it so much?

- Swimming develops high quality aerobic endurance, the most important key to physical fitness. In other sports, an hour of practice may yield as little as 10 minutes of meaningful exercise. Age group swimming teams use every precious minute of practice time developing fitness and teaching skills.
- Swimming does a better job in proportional muscular development by using all the body's major muscle groups. No other sport does this as well.
- Swimming enhances children's natural flexibility (at a time when they ordinarily begin to lose it) by exercising all of their major joints through a full range of motion.
- Swimming helps develop superior coordination because it requires combinations of complex movements of all parts of the body, enhancing harmonious muscle function, grace, and fluidity of movement.
- Swimming is the most injury free of all children's sports.
- Swimming is a sport that will bring kids fitness and enjoyment for life. Participants in Masters Swimming programs are still training and racing well into their 80's and beyond.

INTELLECTUAL COMPETENCE

In addition to physical development, children can develop greater intellectual competence by participating in a guided program of physical activity. Learning and using swimming skills engages the thinking processes. As they learn new techniques, children must develop and plan movement sequences. They improve by exploring new ideas. They learn that greater progress results from using their creative talents. Self-expression can be just as much physical as intellectual. Finally, their accomplishments in learning and using new skills contribute to a stronger self image.

"PREPARATION FOR LIFE"

BY PHIL HANSEL,
Borrowed and Reprinted from
Swimming World magazine, February 1988

Not everything we do in life is a pleasant experience. Not everything we do is beneficial. Not everything is productive. Not everything is a nurturing, loving experience. Life is full of negative, destructive experiences. Rejection, defeat and failure surround all of us. The trick is to be prepared to deal with this side of life and learn to overcome discouragement.

I have always felt that the great value of swimming as a sport is that it prepares one for life. The total swimming experience is made up of people, attitudes, beliefs, work habits, fitness, health, winning and losing, and so much more. Swimming is a cross-section of lifetime experiences. It can provide so many learning situations. A swimmer learns to deal with pressure and stress, sometimes self-imposed, sometimes applied by others. One learns to deal with success and failure. One learns teamwork and

discipline.

Swimming becomes a self-achievement activity. There is only one person in the water in a given lane in any race. The responsibility for performance ultimately lies with the individual. How well the individual has prepared physically and mentally to a large degree will determine the performance level.

Many swimming experiences can be of the disruptive, discouraging type. But at least a young swimmer learns that this is part of life, and the swimmer must learn to cope.

By learning how to handle frustration and disappointment, the young swimmer gains confidence. The swimmer learns dedication and commitment. Through perseverance, a swimmer learns to overcome adversity. All of these experiences tend to develop an individual who is better able to handle life's hardships and face problems.

As coaches and parents, we tend to preach that hard work will lead to victory. We preach that clean living and proper training such as diet, sleep and regular attendance at workouts will lead to winning. Though in the long run for a productive successful life, these are probably truthful concepts that don't always work in short term situations.

We have all been in situations where a bigger, more gifted person with poor work habits is the victor in race after race. Or we've known others who never seem to study, yet get good grades. We've known business people who never seem to lift a finger, yet for one reason or another, they close deal after deal.

These things just are not fair. Yet this is one of the valuable lessons that swimmers learn: "Life is not fair." We don't all start out in life with the same physical, mental, emotional and financial resources. In that respect, "Life is not fair."

A swimmer must learn what is fair for one is not necessarily fair for another. A swimmer learns we are all different and each individual controls his or her own destiny. A swimmer learns to emphasize given talents and skills. A swimmer learns to improve on a regular basis. By not setting limits and restrictions, this improvement will surely lead to success. A swimmer learns if he or she does their best, then there are no failures. A swimmer learns to set realistic goals. Once a goal is reached, then new goals must be established. A swimmer learns that effort becomes an individual crusade. If the ultimate goal is an Olympic gold medal, then with the proper talent, dedication, belief and support, all swimmers believe it can be done.

This is the positive achievement side of swimming that I like so much. Through experience in swimming, our young people learn attitudes and habits that will remain with them throughout the rest of their life. Most swimmers learn to be "can do" people.

Generally, these positive attitudes, belief in self and solid work habits will produce a terrific adult. Our society and our world are enriched by these former swimmers as they become adults. Because of their training, they handle life with a smile. They contribute time and energy to others in every way imaginable.

We can be proud of what swimming contributes to this world. Though "life is not fair," a swimmer knows how to deal with that and can achieve a balance. For the most part, former swimmers grow up to be ordinary people, but they always have that extra plus from the swimming experience.

We are different and can be proud of it. It's a pity and truly "unfair" that thousands and thousands of young people are missing the swimming experience. We must open our programs to everyone. We must find ways to share our fantastic sport.

USA SWIMMING

USA Swimming is the national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. Headquartered at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, the USA Swimming staff interacts with Local Swimming Committees (LSC's), athletes, coaches and volunteers to provide a variety of services to nearly 250,000 registered athletes, 20,000 non-athletes and 2,500 swim clubs. MARS

belongs to the North Texas LSC.

US Swimming (USS) was conceived in 1978 with the passage of the Amateur Sports Act which decreed that all Olympic sports would be administered independently. Prior to this Act, USAS was the Competitive Swimming Committee of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) located in Indianapolis, Indiana. USS headquarters were moved to Colorado Springs in 1981. USS changed its name to USA Swimming (USAS) in 1998.

Today, with its headquarters at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA Swimming is a Group A member of the United States Olympic Committee. Independent, and a model for all amateur sport national-governing bodies, USA Swimming is in the vanguard of the Olympic movement around the world.

As the national governing body for the sport, USA Swimming is charged with the responsibility to: formulate rules; conduct national championships; disseminate safety and sports medicine information; select competitors to represent our country in international competition; and insure the development of its' member clubs and age group swimmers.

USA Swimming hosts several major swim meets each year — the Phillips 66/USA Swimming Spring and Summer National Championships, and the US Open, sponsored by Speedo America, as well as others. Additionally, USA Swimming holds Junior National Championship meets each year.

The majority of the revenues of the USA Swimming budget come from registration dues from athletes and membership fees from non-athletes and clubs. Without the support of its membership, USA Swimming could not offer quality programs to its members. The remaining revenues are generated through corporate sponsorship, United States Olympic Committee development funds, event income, publications and promotional merchandise.

Year-round athletes pay an annual registration fee of \$69 (for 2015). Athletes receive a membership card and have both liability and supplemental medical insurance coverage.

MARS is a club member of USA Swimming and pays a national fee annually. Membership benefits include USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, membership certificate and certificate of insurance. Clubs joining USA Swimming have liability insurance coverage for approved insured activities.

USA Swimming is the ruling body of sanctioned swimming meets in the United States. USA Swimming meets are designed to protect the swimmer, provide fair and equitable conditions of competition, and promote uniformity in the sport so that no swimmer shall obtain an unfair advantage over another.

The International Center of Aquatic Research, dedicated in 1988, provides the opportunity for state-of-the-art research and testing in the sport. The information gained through this facility, which includes a swimming treadmill, will be applied to improving swimming performances.

Obviously, the “wet” side of the sport receives a tremendous amount of money and attention, but the “dry” side of the sport receives considerable study as well.

Coach and athlete education plays an important role in USA Swimming. Programs such as the successful Coaches College, presenting the most current coaching and scientific literature, assist coaches in their efforts to provide optimal training conditions for their athletes.

USA Swimming National Headquarters strives to educate and inform its' membership through continued communication. Once a year USA Swimming publishes an updated version of the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, the final word in technical swimming rules. *Splash* is a bi-monthly publication providing current and timely information of interest to all USA Swimming members. *Coaches Quarterly*, the USA Swimming coaches newsletter, is also included in *Splash*.

The USA Swimming Headquarters provides a variety of services and programs for its membership. Some of the additional services provided by USA Swimming are fund-raising activities, sports medicine

programs, video resources and general information about swimming related activities. The USA Swimming staff is available to assist in answering questions or providing additional information about USA Swimming. For information or assistance, contact:

USA Swimming National Headquarters
One Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5770
(719) 578-4578

PROFESSIONAL COACHING STAFF

Nothing has a greater influence on the quality of children's sports than the excellence of the coach. The MARS staff consists of professionally trained coaches. Certified coaches in USA Swimming programs possess training and experience in the physiology, biomechanics and psychology of adolescent development. Our coaching staff provides the assurances that the time your children spend in swimming will be quality time.

COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES

The coaches' job is to supervise the entire competitive swim program. The MARS coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for youngsters that will enable them to learn the value of striving to improve oneself--"to be the best you can be." Therefore, the coaches must be in total control in matters affecting training and competition.

1. The coaches are responsible for placing youngsters in practice groups. This is based on the age and ability level of each individual. When it is in the best interest of a swimmer, he/she will be placed in a more challenging training group by the coach.
2. Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rests with the MARS coaching staff. Each group's practices are based on sound scientific principles and are geared to the specific goals of that group.
3. The coaching staff will make the final decision concerning which meets MARS swimmers may attend. The coaching staff also makes the final decision concerning which events a swimmer swims.
4. At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmers performance. (It is the parent's job to offer love and understanding regardless of their youngster's performance)
5. The building of a relay team is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff.

The coaching staff is constantly updating and improving the MARS program. It is the swimmers' and parents' responsibility to make the most out of the excellent opportunity this program provides for success in swimming.

TEAM LEVELS

MARS uses a "progressive" age group program designed to develop the child physically, mentally and emotionally in a systematic fashion. A well-defined, long-term approach of gradually increasing degrees of commitment is essential to reach peak performance levels. The emphasis in the early stages of participation must be placed on developing technical skills and a love for the sport. In the later years, more emphasis is put on training the athlete for the rigors of competitive swimming. Training sets are always designed with the needs and abilities of the swimmers in mind.

Senior Team: This group of athletes belongs to the highest level within the MARS program. Swimmers in

this group typically have been in the sport for several years and compete regularly at the state and national level. Most of the swimmers in this group also represent their high schools concurrently. Senior level swimmers must maintain a very high standard of attendance, training volume and competition. Most of these swimmers are looking towards scholarship opportunities at universities and colleges. This program is designed to ready the swimmer for the rigors of collegiate swimming.

Pre-Senior Team: These swimmers are experienced athletes, typically 13-15 years of age. They have made a commitment to competitive swimming and train at least 5-6 times per week. At this level swimmers are competing at local and state meets on a regular basis. Coaches are preparing these swimmers for participation on their respective high school teams. Athletes are expected to maintain at least 80% attendance in the Pre-Senior group

Age Group 2: Swimmers in this group train 5 days per week for 90 minutes per session. While there is still a large emphasis on stroke mechanics, swimmers here begin to understand the physiology of training and how training affects their performance. Training sessions are rigorous and begin to emphasize speed and power. Most swimmers in AG2 are 11-14 years old. Attendance requirements at practice and swim meet are fairly stringent in AG2. Athletes are expected to maintain at least 75% attendance in the AG2.

Gold: This is a competitive group with a major emphasis on stroke mechanics, and starting and turning techniques. These swimmers will be introduced to group practice skills and competitions. Gold swimmers swim four times a week for one hour each day. Although the emphasis in Gold is on the mechanics of swimming, in this group the teaching of competition also begins. The fitness component of competitive training begins to be emphasized in the Gold Group. Swimmers in Gold are encouraged to attend all meets in which they are eligible to compete. The coaching staff can assist swimmers and parents as to which events are appropriate for their swimmer. Athletes are expected to maintain at least 75% attendance in the Gold group.

Silver: The Silver Group is also a competitive group, but has an increased emphasis on technique and mechanics. Silver Group swimmers practice three days per week for 60 minutes per day. Silver Group swimmers compete at the Level 3 (B/C) meets, and other meets recommended by their coaches. The coaching staff can assist swimmers and parents as to which events are appropriate for their swimmer.

Pre-Competitive and Bronze Groups: These are introductory groups in which swimmers are taught the fundamentals of the four competitive strokes. Emphasis is entirely on developing proper stroke technique. Swimmers in Pre-Competitive swimmers practice 2 days per week for 40 minutes. Swimmers in Bronze Group practice 3 days per week for 40 minutes.

Learn-to-Swim Lessons: This program is strictly learn to swim with a goal of preparing the swimmers to join the Pre-Competitive group at the end of one or more sessions. Classes are held twice per week for four weeks (8 classes). All classes are 40 minutes per day. These swimmers are typically the youngest on our team, beginning at age 4-5, but there is no upper age limit. Coaches in this group focus on mechanics, safety and fun.

TRAINING SESSIONS

Training sessions are the most important aspect of competitive swimming. Consistent training is needed to progress through the team levels. Training schedules are designed to provide only slightly more time than is required for a swimmer to accomplish this. Therefore, it is important that each swimmer attends as many practices as possible in order to derive the full benefits of the program. Pool availability is our most limiting factor. Don't waste it. Training schedules for each group and location are published at the end of the previous season.

PRACTICE AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

The following guidelines are to inform parents and swimmers of the coaches' policies regarding practice. These policies have been developed over many years and are designed to provide the best possible practice environment for all.

1. Each training group has specific attendance requirements appropriate for the objectives of that group. Generally, the least possible interruption in the training schedule will produce the greatest amount of success. However, the club does encourage younger swimmers to participate in other activities in addition to swimming. The expectation level from the coaches to attend practices increases as swimmers move to higher groups.
2. For the swimmers protection, they should arrive at the pool no earlier than 15 minutes prior to their workout time. Swimmers should be picked up at the end of each class, but no later than 10 minutes after their practice is over. Swimmers should be ready to swim five minutes prior to the start of their practice.
3. In case a youngster is late for practice, it is our hope that the parents will send a note with the child, or text to the coach explaining the reason for tardiness.
4. Plan to stay the entire practice. The last part of practice is very often the most important. Announcements are made at the end of each practice. In the event that your child needs to be dismissed early from practice, a note from the parent for each dismissal is requested.
5. Occasionally, most of a practice group may be attending a meet, in which case practice will be cancelled. In the days preceding a group's championship meet the practice may finish early to help the swimmers prepare physiologically for the meet.
6. Swimmers are to enter the building and go directly to the pool area. Swimmers that are found in any other part of the building(s) could damage our relationship with the pool management and may face disciplinary action.
7. While on school grounds, the swimmers are the responsibility of the coaching staff. During practice sessions, swimmers are never to leave the pool area without coach's permission.
8. The club has an obligation to act as guests while in the pool facilities (both swimmers and parents). Every member of the club needs to do everything possible to respect this privilege. Any damages to host property may result in financial liability of the swimmer's parents. Any damage may also result in the swimmer being asked to leave the team permanently.
9. Parents are not allowed on the pool deck during practice unless it is an emergency.
10. Parents are allowed to observe practice from the bleachers at each location.
11. Please be considerate and keep conversations at a low volume level. Do not try to communicate with any swimmer from the seating area. This is distracting to the swimmer and staff.

GROUP CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

Coaches take very seriously the timing of progression from one group the next within the team. There are several factors involved in this decision; none of these are social factors. The final decision always lies with the coaching staff.

Ability to Train – The consistent ability to hold repeat times and intervals in all aspects (swimming, kicking, etc.) is the primary consideration for promotion. The swimmer must demonstrate they will be able to handle the training load of the next practice group before they are promoted. This is important for the self-image of the child. We won't put a child into a situation where they may be "over their head". We will always be sure that the swimmer is ready for promotion, both physically and psychologically.

Attendance – This factor shows the swimmer's ability or desire to handle the level of dedication required to be in the next level. Each level has more stringent attendance levels associated with it.

Attitude – Is the swimmer "ready" for the challenges of the next level? Can they handle difficult situations and learn to deal with them?

Stroke Mechanics – Does the swimmer have the level of mastery of their strokes to warrant promotion?

Competition level – This is probably the least important factor in the decision to promote a swimmer. Our training groups are designed for training, not meets.

The following is an outline of the expectations from each of our training groups. Coaches will use these expectations as a guide to determine promotion to the next group. These are only guidelines. The final decision lies with the coaching staff.

Senior Team

- Achieve one or more USAS Sectional time standard, or other national level time standard
- 90% attendance requirement
- Attendance is required at all meets unless absence is approved by coach.
- Senior Team swimmers are MARS “ambassadors” and are expected to be present at all team functions as either participants or to assist the staff.

Pre-Senior Team

- Achieve a minimum of three “A” times from the 13-14 age group (swimmer may be older or younger than 13-14).
- 80% attendance requirement
- Attendance is required at all meets unless absence is approved by coach.

Age Group 2

- Test set: 6 x 100 FR @ 1:40
- 10 x 50 kick @ 1:00
- 4 x 200IM @ 3:45 or 8 x 100IM @ 1:45
- 80 % attendance requirement; make-up day Saturday mornings.
- Attendance required at all meets unless absence is approved by coach.

Gold

- Test set: Legal mechanics in all four strokes
- 6 x 50 FR 1:00
- Ability to complete 200IM legally
- 80% attendance requirement; make-up day Saturday mornings
- Attendance required at all meets unless absence is approved by coach.

Silver

- Test Set: Demonstrated ability to complete multiple 50s swim in 3 of 4 strokes
- Ability to perform racing dive from blocks
- Demonstration of correct turn mechanics for all strokes
- Demonstrated progression in off stroke
- Basic understanding of clock use for swim sets
- Commitment to meet attendance

Bronze

- Test Set: 25 freestyle with side breathing, high elbows and proper kick
- 25 backstroke with proper body position and kick
- 25 dolphin kick
- Ability to perform the above confidently on a repeated basis

Pre-Competitive

- Test Set: Ability to confidently perform a face-in front stroke for 25 yards without stopping
- Ability to kick 25 yards on back

ILLNESS AND INJURY

Whenever possible, the coach should be informed in advance of an illness or injury. If your swimmer will be out of the water over a long period with an injury or illness, please notify MARS at so the coaching staff is aware of the problem. Long-term medical issues need also to be addressed with the team office. It is the parents' responsibility to notify the office of an extended absence due to a medical issue.

In the event of a long-term illness or injury that prevents the swimmer from participating in training parents should notify the office as soon as possible so that the swimmer's account may be immediately suspended. The normal team policies regarding withdrawal or leave of absence typically do not apply in these types of cases.

SWIMMER'S TRAINING RESPONSIBILITIES

As a swimmer's level of swimming ability increases, so does his/her responsibility. The program is designed to encourage all swimmers to advance to the next level. As swimmers improve and advance, there is a deep commitment requiring a great effort from all. A swimmer has responsibilities to the team, the coach, his/her parents, and most importantly to themselves. Swimmers need to prepare themselves for a 100% effort each time they come to practice.

Swimmers will be required to bring specified training accessories (i.e., caps, goggles, fins, etc.) to workouts. Each swimmer is responsible for ensuring these items are properly adjusted and that spares are readily available. Equipment adjustment and repair is not accepted as an excuse to miss part of a training session.

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Any swimmer who is known to use alcohol, drugs, or tobacco is subject to suspension or dismissal from the team.
2. Never interfere with the progress of another swimmer, during practice or otherwise.
3. At all club functions, whether practice, meets, or social gatherings, we expect each swimmer's conduct to reflect positively on the team.
4. All members of the club, whether parents or swimmers, protect and improve the excellent reputation the club has throughout the swimming community.
5. All Pre-Senior and Senior team members and other swimmers traveling without parents will be required to sign the "Honor Code". A copy of this is given in Appendix B for parents and swimmers to sign and return to the coach.

PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Please make every effort to have your swimmers at practice on time. Realize that your child is working hard and give all the support you can. Encourage good diet and sleeping habits. They will serve your children well.

1. The greatest contribution you can make to your swimmer's progress is to be a loving, supportive parent. At the end of this section is a reprint of an article called, 'The Ten Commandments for Swimming Parents'. It offers some very useful and sound advice on relating to your swimmer.
2. MARS has a reputation in the area of hosting swim meets of the highest caliber. A large part of our operating budget is generated from hosting swim meets each year. One of the commitments made when you joined MARS was to help work our own swim meets. We normally host between three and five swim meets per year.

COMMUNICATION

The primary means of communication on the team is via e-mail. Nearly all team information is available to MARS members via the team website (marswim.org). Families can access all account information, make payments, enter into swim meets, and find the team calendar. Families should enroll themselves via the link on the MARS team website.

The MARS team website is maintained as an additional information point and should be reviewed periodically by all members.

The team also utilizes a phone tree system to contact members quickly in the event of a pool closure or other short-notice event. Please provide your primary day-time contact phone numbers during the on-line registration process.

Coach Contact — When contacting the coaches, please be considerate. Please avoid approaching a coach while they are on deck during a practice; the best way to speak with the coaches is to meet them after practice. They usually make themselves available for 10 minutes to answer questions, provide information, etc. Sending a note to the coach with your swimmer is a good way to get information to them or let them know you would like to talk to them.

Another method is to contact the coach via e-mail. E-mail addresses for the coaching staff are available on the MARS website.

PROBLEMS WITH THE COACH?

One of the traditional swim team communication gaps is that some parents seem to feel more comfortable in discussing their disagreements over coaching philosophy with other parents rather than taking them directly to the coach. Not only is the problem never resolved that way, but in fact this approach often results in new problems being created. Listed below are some guidelines for a parent raising some difficult issues with a coach:

1. Try to keep foremost in your mind that you and the coach have the best interests of your child at heart. If you trust that the coach's goals match yours, although his/her approach may be different, you are more likely to enjoy good rapport and a constructive dialogue.
2. Keep in mind that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of the team or a training group that can range in size from 20 to more than 400 members. On occasion, an individual child's interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of the group, but over the long run the benefits of membership in the group compensate for occasional short term inconvenience.
3. If your child swims for an assistant coach always discuss the matter first with that coach, following the same guidelines and preconceptions noted above. If the assistant coach cannot satisfactorily resolve your concern, then ask that the head age group coach or head coach join the dialogue as a third party.
4. If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach's performance or policies, listen empathetically, but encourage the other parent to speak directly to the coach. He or she is the only one who can resolve the problem.

“THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR SWIMMING PARENTS”

by Rose Snyder, USA Swimming

(Adapted from Ed Clendaniel's 10 Commandments for Little League Parents)

1. THOU SHALT NOT IMPOSE YOUR AMBITIONS ON THY CHILD.

Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes, and don't push them based on what you think they should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do his or her personal best.

2. THOU SHALT BE SUPPORTIVE NO MATTER WHAT.

There is only one question to ask your child "Did you have fun?". If meets and practices aren't fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

3. THOU SHALT NOT COACH YOUR CHILD.

You have taken your child to a professional coach; do not undermine that coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to support, love and hug your child no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique of race strategy. That is not your area. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent that swimmer/coach bond from forming.

4. THOU SHALT ONLY HAVE POSITIVE THINGS TO SAY AT A SWIM MEET.

If you are going to show up at a swim meet, you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child or the coach.

5. THOU SHALT ACKNOWLEDGE THY CHILD'S FEARS.

A first swim meet, 500 free or 200 IM can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if your child was not ready to compete in it.

6. THOU SHALT NOT CRITICIZE THE OFFICIALS.

If you do not have the time or desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can.

7. HONOR THY CHILD'S COACH.

The bond between coach and swimmer is special; one that contributes to your child's success. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child, it will serve to hurt your child's swimming.

8. THOU SHALT NOT JUMP FROM TEAM TO TEAM.

"The water is always bluer at the other team's pool." This is not necessarily true. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team are often ostracized for a long time by the teammates they leave behind. Often swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought bluer water.

9. THOU SHALT HAVE GOALS BESIDES SWIMMING.

Giving an honest effort no matter the outcome, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, "My goal was to set a World record. Well, I did that, but someone else did too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. This does not make me a failure, in fact, I was very proud of that swim."

10. THOU SHALT NOT EXPECT THY CHILD TO BECOME AN OLYMPIAN.

There are 400,000 athletes in United States Swimming. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are 1 in about 6,300. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Ask your coach why he coaches. Chances are, he was not an Olympian, but still got enough out of swimming that he wants to pass that love for the sport on to others. Swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self-esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships and much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these

intangibles far outweigh any medal they may have won. Swimming builds good people and you should be happy your child wants to participate.

TEAM MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Mid-Cities Arlington Swimming, LLC is a limited liability corporation, registered in the state of Texas.

BOOSTER CLUB

To assist the MARS management and strengthen the support structure of the organization a parent booster club has been established with the purpose of supporting the team mission and ensure team success. The booster club is a parent-run committee that is self funded through proceeds from concession sales at the team hosted swim meets. The booster club is responsible for organizing team social functions, including our two awards banquets each year. Participation in the booster club is voluntary, but strongly encouraged, for the support of the club and swimmers.

PRACTICE GROUPS & FEES (rev 2014)

Learn-to-Swim	\$90.00 FOR EIGHT LESSONS
Pre-Competitive	\$60.00 PER MONTH
Bronze	\$71.00 PER MONTH
Silver	\$79.00 PER MONTH
Gold	\$88.00 PER MONTH
*Age Group II	\$100.00 PER MONTH
*Pre-Senior Group	\$110.00 PER MONTH
*Seniors/National Team	\$127.00 PER MONTH

* All swimmers in AG2 and above will be charged "Long Course" tuition for additional pool time. Long Course tuition is \$66 (\$22 in June, July and August) for the season for AG2 and \$75 (\$25 per month) for the season for P/S and Senior Groups. The Long Course tuition fee is for the additional practices for these groups. Swimmers in these groups are charged for the long course fee regardless of attendance at the additional practices.

TEAM FEES AND FAMILY PARTICIPATION

(A) MARS REGISTRATION: A \$100 annual team registration fee is due at the time of joining of the team for all new families. Renewing families will pay \$75. The team registration fee is non-refundable.

(B) USA SWIMMING REGISTRATION: Each athlete must also pay annually to register with swimming's governing body (currently \$69 for 2016). MARS does not retain any of this fee and 100% is passed along to USA Swimming. This fee includes insurance, newsletters and access to USA Swimming programs. The USAS registration fee is transferable to another USAS team, but non-refundable.

(C) ENTRY FEES: Entry fees are charged to each swimmer's account at the time the fees are sent to the host team. The average entry fees for area meets are \$3.75 to \$4.50 per event. In most meets, swimmers can swim up to five events per day. The North Texas LSC also charges each swimmer a \$3 surcharge at each meet entered. Entry fees are not refundable, even if the swimmer does not attend the event.

(D) FUNDRAISING: The team will typically participate in one or two fundraisers per year. Although participation in these fundraisers is voluntary each family is strongly encouraged to participate. Fundraising efforts goes to several areas within the team including equipment, coaches' and officials' professional fees, and other periodic expenditures not covered by the cost of tuition.

(E) MONTHLY DUES: You will be billed for monthly tuition on the 1st of each month for the following month's classes. Invoices are sent out via email on the 1st of the month and are due to the P.O. Box, or

by electronic credit card or automatic check handling (ACH) on or before the 5th of the month, and are considered late after the 7th of the month. Late fees are \$20. For example – April tuition is charged and invoice sent via email on April 1st. April tuition is due April 1st, late after April 7th. Each family's financial information and payment options are handled through the MARS website.

(F) VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT: Volunteers can be a great asset to any organization and help enrich all aspects of our program. Family participation is necessary to ensure the continued success of the team. Throughout you and your family's association with MARS, we ask you support the team through volunteer activities. One of the main events that require many volunteers are our swim meets that we host about 5 times per year. According to USA swimming, successful swim meets require approximately 60 volunteers. It is therefore easy to see, a successful MARS meet requires a multitude of volunteers.

Every family is required to complete their volunteer points by December 31st. The number of annual volunteer points varies slightly from year to year based upon the projected needs of the team and volunteer opportunities for the year. **The required number of volunteer points for 2016 is 16.** This requirement is per MARS family not individual swimmer. Points can be earned by any person representing a MARS family (relative, friend, etc.). Please see Appendix A for a list of volunteer jobs. An up-to-date cumulative accounting of Volunteer Points earned is available on the MARS website on each swimmer's account. Families that join the team during the middle of the year will be responsible for a pro-rated number of points based upon the date they join.

Volunteer points do not rollover from year to year. Parents must also sign in during events where points are offered in order to receive credit. If a parent signs up for a job, service, food or other volunteer opportunity and then fails to provide these services without reasonable notice to the team, their account will be charged for the points associate with this opportunity at \$20 per point.

If a family chooses to not support the team by volunteering their time during the calendar year their account will be billed for the unearned points at \$20 per point at the end of the year. These volunteer points fees collected are donated to the MARS Foundation for their efforts supporting our communities.

(G) SWIMSUIT AND EQUIPMENT POLICY: MARS is a Speedo sponsored team. As such, it is our responsibility to support the Speedo brand in as many ways as possible. We have selected the **Speedo Launch in navy/red/white as our competition suit.** These suits are designed to fit tight and to be worn at Swim Meets only.

Swimmers in Silver and above need to purchase a Speedo suit ASAP in order to compete in swim meets. Meet suits, practice suits, caps, goggles, swim bags and other swimming equipment can be purchased through our local Speedo distributor, D&J Sports. D&J Sports would be more than happy to assist you with sizing and shipping information. The MARS website has a special link to a "MARS Store" at D&J Sports. The physical location of D&J Sports is:

**D&J Sports INC.
3060 B Stemmons Freeway
Dallas, Texas 75247
1-800-460-7946
www.djsports.com**

(H) WITHDRAWING MEMBERSHIP: There is a 30 day notice of withdrawal from the team required of all swimmers. All Parents need to advise the MARS office in writing concerning withdrawal. The withdrawal notice can be sent via the P.O. Box or via email. All accounts need to be current before they will be inactivated. Withdrawals need to be received on or before the 1st of the month. For example, swimmers wishing to withdrawal by May 1st need to send written notification by April 1st. Any unpaid balances will be included on the account's final invoice. Included are charges for meet entry fees and volunteer points.

(I) REJOINING THE TEAM: If your swimmer plans to rejoin MARS after a leave of absence they will need to rejoin as a new member and new registration fees paid (MARS registration is required; USAS registration is required if not current).

(J) REGISTRATION: MARS uses an online registration program to make registering easier. The program is very easy to use and only has a few steps. Online registering also has the added benefit of allowing you to pay with a credit card or by check. All families must register online to join the team.

1. Click on the red start registration link on the left hand side of the website for new families.
2. Renewing families should select either you are logged in or that you have a log in. New families select I am not sure if I have an account.
3. Fill in your email that you would like all invoices and notifications sent to, billing information, guardian information and insurance information.
4. Renewing member need to select their swimmer(s) to register.
5. New families will have to enter their child(ren)'s information. This includes first, middle, and last name, birth date, etc.
6. Select either renewing or returning/new families as your group. Renewing families are classified as swimmers that were registered the previous year and have stayed with the team.
7. The final step is to review your information and select your payment option.
8. **The MARS office does not have the ability to manage or cancel your credit/debit card, for your security. Account holders must manage these accounts themselves.**

**Credit cards are immediately charged if selected.

ABC's OF SWIMMING

Competitive Strokes

The four competitive strokes are (1) freestyle, (2) backstroke, (3) breaststroke, and (4) butterfly. Events are held in all of the competitive strokes at varying distances depending on the age group of the swimmer. In addition, there is a combination of the strokes swum by one swimmer called the individual medley (IM). Other swimming events include relays, which are a group of four swimmers who either all swim freestyle (freestyle relay) or each swim one of the competitive strokes in the order of backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle (medley relay).

Swim Seasons

The swim year is divided into two seasons. The winter, or "short course", season runs from mid-September to mid-March. The meets are held in a 25-yard pool. The summer, or "long course", season runs from early April to mid-August. Meets are generally held in 50-meter pools (Olympic size). Some 50m pools are indoor, others are outdoor.

SHORT COURSE - MARS trains at multiple locations during the short course season. UTA, GCISD Swim Center, Hugh Smith Rec. Ctr. and Tarrant County College SE Campus both have indoor 25 yard pools. Pre-Competitive through Senior teams have been established at each pool and they practice at their "home pool". MARS rents these spaces at considerable expense to the team. We are fortunate to have facilities like these available to accommodate the large size of the team.

LONG COURSE - Starting each spring the Senior, Pre-Senior and AG2 teams train at the 50-meter pool outdoor pool located at The University of Texas at Arlington. Senior and Pre-Senior swimmers train each morning, Monday - Friday. AG2 swimmers also train 5 mornings per week (M-F), with an altered afternoon schedule. In the afternoons all swimmers train at their "home pools". Long course training is very important to swimmers in these groups. All of the swim meets for this level swimmer are at long course pools during the summer season. Long course practice time is designed to supplement the swimmers' afternoon training, not replace it. All swimmers in AG2 and above will be charged "Long Course" tuition for the additional pool time.

And the winner is...

The MARS staff does not see the first place person as the only winner. We'd rather look to see who behaves like a winner. There are certain characteristics of a winner, and every swimmer, no matter where they place, has the opportunity to emulate those characteristics: concentration, listening skills, and working toward goals.

Sports are not an end in and of themselves, but a vehicle we use to teach children life skills and how to reach their potential. We use sports as organized play to demonstrate and measure one's abilities. Seen in this light, winning without learning is not MARS' desired intention. In competition, the important measure is not who collected the most medals, or even who improved the most seconds. The real critical measure is who learned the most from the competitive experience.

Swimmers quickly forget the medals, records, and other material benefits. They will however, remember the development of interpersonal skills, discipline, listening skills, time management, goal setting, and enhanced self-image. These things make the swimmer a more successful person with a better chance of living a life closer to their peak potential with the ability to contribute to the world they live in.

Levels of Achievement

There are seven different age group classifications recognized by USA Swimming:

8-Under, 10-Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18, and Senior. The Senior classification includes any age registered swimmer who has achieved the prescribed qualifying time for an event. Not all age group classifications are offered at every swim meet. The swimmers age on the first day of a meet will govern the swimmers age for the entire meet.

Within each age group there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. All swimmers begin as “C” swimmers. As they improve, they advance from “C”, to “B”, “BB”, “A”, “AA”, “AAA”, and ultimately “AAAA”. The times required for each ability level are published each quadrennium (four-year cycles based on Olympic years) by USA Swimming. This permits fair, yet challenging, competition on all levels.

In many cases, a swimmer may be in a different class in each stroke. An example: a “C” breaststroke time, a “B” freestyle time, and a “BB” backstroke time. When a swimmer has achieved three or more times in any classification they are considered to be in that classification in all events.

Some swim meets set certain qualification standards for entry. In order to swim in a certain classification, a swimmer must have achieved the qualifying time for that particular classification.

Meet Information and Scheduling

Each season’s meet schedule and individual meet information can be found on the North Texas website (www.ntswwim.org).

The meet schedule has been established with the expectation that swimmers will attend every meet available at their classification level. In other words, an Age Group swimmer with “A” times should participate in all “A” level meets; swimmers with “BB” times should participate in all “BB” level meets, etc.

On an average, we want all Age Group swimmers and above to compete once every three or four weeks. The meet schedule and training schedule is established with this philosophy in mind.

The coaching staff reserves the right to make the final decision concerning meets MARS swimmers may attend. MARS generally competes in all meets in which we are eligible to compete in our LSC.

“Team Effort Meets” — Championship meets are indicated on the meet schedule. Since the coaching staff places the most emphasis on these meets, MARS swimmers who are qualified are required to attend. The B/C Champs, BB Champs, A Champs, TAGS Championships, and Sectionals are always considered “Team Effort Meets”.

SURVIVING COMPETITIVE SWIMMING

Create Good Habits

1. **Proper nutrition** is the foundation for excellent athletic performance. As a rule of thumb, a balanced diet is ideal for your athlete; as hard as it may be, keep the junk food at a minimum. A balanced diet usually provides all the needed vitamins and minerals for your athlete. Check with your child’s doctor for individual needs concerning vitamins and minerals.

Your swimmer’s appetite will grow not only as he/she physically grows but also as the amount of time he/she spends training increases. An overweight athlete cannot reach his/her full swimming potential. A well developed athlete is healthier and experiences fewer health instances such as cold or flu.

Avoid processed sugars such as...sugary cereals and pastries, candy, soft drinks. This causes the blood sugar to rise sharply and quickly and plummet just the same, giving the swimmer a sense of tiredness. You can help your swimmer by avoiding these types of foods prior to practice/meets and during meets.

“Swimmers’ ear” is very common for swimmers. It can be very painful. The best way to avoid this is by using ear drops sold over the counter each and every time after your child swims.

2. **Children’s swimming performance** will go through “ebb’s and flow’s”. Meaning your swimmer will have high points and low points in his/her career. When the child first begins competitive

swimming you may see “huge” improvements such as significant drops in time. This occurs because many stroke deficiencies are beginning to be corrected. While this is wonderful, keep everything in perspective. The swimmer will level off and the process of dropping tenths of a second begins. Many parents and sometimes the swimmers set expectations based upon the early performances of “huge” improvements.

Leveling off happens in every aspect of life including swimming. Some parents accuse their swimmer of slacking off in practice or not trying hard enough. Then some parents protect their swimmers by offering excuses such as “your arms are short so you will not be able to swim as fast as your teammates”. Parents pressuring their swimmer to perform both increase the swimmer’s anxiety, and hinder performance.

Remember adolescents are constantly undergoing both physical and emotional changes; it would be detrimental to pressure them to consistently perform well. Avoid bringing undue attention to the “leveling off”. Always find something to congratulate your child’s performance even if you feel your child did not do as well as you had expected. Good effort is always something to be proud of and your child should receive praise for this.

3. **Your child’s coach** is a good coach who is dedicated, knowledgeable, organized, and caring and chose this profession over all other professions. Coaches need the money but are not in it for the money. The main reason they coach is doing something worthwhile for not only the sport they love but the children who are drawn to swimming. They want to pass the same enthusiasm they have for the sport to their swimmers.

Help us instill in your swimmer the same love for the sport of swimming. Show your swimmer that you trust the coach’s ability to make good judgments. Do not “tear down” the coach to your swimmer. We all make mistakes, so give the benefit of the doubt to the coach if he/she misjudges at times. If you feel that something needs to be addressed with your coach, ask to speak with them to resolve the situation. Also see the section concerning communication with coach.

Philosophy of Competition

MARS engages in a multi-level competition program with USA Swimming that, like our training program, attempts to provide challenging yet success-oriented competitive situations for swimmers of all ages and abilities. Swimmers are taught to set realistic, yet challenging goals for meets, and to relate those goals at practice to direct their training efforts.

Swimmers are prepared and encouraged to compete in all swimming events, distances, and strokes. This philosophy promotes versatility and encourages the swimmer to explore his potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming. Oftentimes, a swimmer’s “best” stroke changes as they mature and his or her body goes through physical changes.

1. **We emphasize competition with oneself.** Winning ribbons, medals, or trophies is not our main goal. If the swimmer finishes first, but has swum poorly in comparison to his or her own past performances, he or she is encouraged to do better. The individual’s improvement is our primary objective.
2. **Sportsmanlike behavior is of equal importance to improved performance.** All the coaches teach swimmers how to behave like a champion when the swimmer has both “good” and “bad” swims. Respect for officials, congratulations to other competitors, encouragement to teammates, determined effort, and mature attitudes are examples of behaviors praised and rewarded by the MARS coaching staff.
3. **A swimmer is praised for improving his or her stroke or time.** It is the coach’s job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer’s performance. It is the parent’s responsibility to provide the love and the encouragement along the way that bolsters the swimmer’s confidence.

**EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SWIM
MEETS...BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK
(or DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO ASK):**

Swim meets are a great family experience! They are place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are some very in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific and as detailed as we possibly could.

PRIOR TO THE MEET

1. To enter any USA meet, you must be a USAS registered swimmer. When you register each year your child should receive his/her USAS ID card.
2. Signing up for meets may be done in 2 ways pre-entered and late entered. Pre-Entered: This is easiest and is done through MARS. Please enter your child on the MARS website no later than the date posted on the EVENTS section of MARS website. Typically, the meet entries need to be turned in to the coach 2 weeks prior to the start of the meet. If you miss the deadline for turning your child(s) entry into his/her coach you can sign up the day of the meet. This method is not always offered at every meet and usually costs twice the price. Swimmers late entering meets must bring a copy of their USAS card and a copy of the most current SWIMS database printout. The SWIMS database can be found on the USAS website. Your child's coach can help you find this information prior to the meet.

AT THE MEET

1. **Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins.** This time will be listed in the meet information handed out to all MARS swimmers. This is very important and ensures the swimmer adequate time to check in for his/her events, change into his/her suit, and be ready on time for warm-up.
2. Warm-up is mandatory. Do not skip warm-up. This is for the safety and well-being of the athletes and the rest of the MARS team.
3. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags and/or sleeping bags. The team usually sits together in one place so look for some familiar faces.
4. Make sure the swimmer checks in for his/her events. Check-ins are required everyday a swimmer swims a pre-entered event. This is usually around the area marked "Clerk of Course". Check for special posted instructions in the area. Usually one will need to place a check mark next to the swimmer's name. If this is not done, the swimmer will not be allowed to swim that event that was not appropriately checked-in. Every swimmer must check themselves in for every race they were pre-entered unless otherwise specified by the MARS coach.
5. Some meets allow for late entries, but some do not. Please check with the MARS coach on deck with any questions concerning adding additional entries to a pre-entered swimmer. Late entries are usually twice the price of pre-entered events. Late entries need to be completed and turned in to clerk of course 30 minutes prior to the start of the meet. Make sure the late entered swimmer notifies the MARS coach on deck of all events late entered.
6. Please make sure your swimmer is wearing the Speedo MARS swimsuit and the MARS swim cap each and every day.
7. Scratching an event is only allowed under exceptional circumstances. Only the coach has the authority to allow a swimmer to scratch. Parents and swimmers should talk to the coach if they believe they will be unable to swim an event. Swimmers may be subject to disciplinary actions if they scratch an event without permission from the coach on deck.

Appendix A: TEAM VOLUNTEER SERVICE COMMITMENT

Every family is required to complete 16 points by December 31st, annually

- Each volunteer assignment is assigned a certain number of points.
- Some volunteer assignments require experience and/or training.
- **You will not be given credit for any point without your signature on a sign-in sheet.**
- There is no carry-over of points from year to year.
- **There will be a \$20 charge for every uncompleted point.**
- **Points are NOT given for timing at away meets.**

Point System SAMPLE CHART (non-exhaustive list)

		2 Point s	3 Point s	4 Point s	5 Point s	6 Point s	8 Point s
Swim-a-Thon - Chairing Event							X
	Volunteering during actual event			X			
Special Events							
	Directing a Special Team Clinic - under supervision of Head Coach		X				
	Chairing a Social Event				X		
	Chairing a Summer Social Outing				X		
MARS Meets		X					
	Friday Set-up	X					
	Sunday Clean-up	X					
	Friday Session - Timer, Runner, Safety Marshal, Concessions, Hospitality			X			
	Saturday Session (8 and Under) - Ready Bench and all of the above	X					
	Saturday PM Session - All of the above positions except ready Bench			X			
	Sunday Session - All of the above positions except ready Bench			X			
	Working as a certified Hy-Tek, Colorado or a US Official at any session				X		
	Working as an assistant certified Hy-Tek, Colorado at any session			X			
Chairing Hospitality for 1 full meet (Planning and shopping for all hospitality food for an entire meet)							X
Chairing Concession Stand for 1 full meet (Planning and shopping for all concession food for an entire meet)							X
	Attending a LSC Clinic (Hy-Tek, Colorado or US Official) Attendee must have instructor sign attendance sheet and turned into volunteer chair			X			

ANNOUNCER

- Volunteer(s) Needed: 1 per session
- Arrival Time: 15 minutes before warm-up
- Age Requirement: minimum 18 years old
- Make all necessary announcements over the PA system as requested by the Referee/Official, Clerk of Course, or the Meet Director.
- Announce event information (event, heat, stroke, and distance).

AWARDS

- Volunteer(s) Needed: 1-2 per session
- Arrival Time: At the start of the meet
- Age Requirement: minimum 12 years old At least one adult required.
- Place preprinted labels on ribbons for swimmers.
- Prepare certificates for swimmers achieving a new time standard.
- Distribute ribbons/certificates to swimmers during the meet.
- Distribute remaining ribbons/certificates to Teams at the end of the meet.
- ** May involve some time after the meet to complete ribbons/certificates, depending on the Hy-Tek system.

CLERK OF COURSE

- Volunteer(s) Needed: 2-3 per session
- Arrival Time: 15 minutes before warm-up
- Age Requirement: minimum 18 years old
- Accept late entries prior to the start of the meet.
- Collect fees for late entries
- Confirm positive check-in of swimmers prior to the event being seeded by Hy-Tek Computer Operators.
- Sell heat sheets
- Work with the Runner(s) to post heat/lane assignments and post final results.

COLORADO TIME SYSTEM

** Training is required for this position **

- Volunteer(s) Needed: 2 per session
- Arrival Time: 30-45 minutes before the start of the meet.
- Age Requirement: minimum 18 years old
- Responsible for operating the automatic timing equipment.
- Test equipment for proper operation before the start of the session.

CONCESSIONS

- Volunteer(s) Needed: 2 per session
- Arrival Time: At the start of warm-ups.
- Age Requirement: minimum 12 years old, at least one adult required.
- **Food will be arranged by the Hospitality Coordinator.
- Selling refreshments from concession stand
- Must be able to make proper change.
- Setup, Ice down drinks, and unpack items from storage.
- Daily Cleanup - Clean area for the next session/day.
- End of Meet - Pack all remaining items to return to storage.

HEAD TIMER

** Experienced Timer is required for this position**

- Volunteer(s) Needed: 1 -2 per session, depending on size of meet
- Arrival Time: 30 before the meet starts.
- Age Requirement: minimum 18 years old
- Provide training to all NEW Lane Timers.
- Designate one timer on each lane to be the recording timer for that lane.
- Operate multiple back-up stopwatches.

HOSPITALITY

- Volunteers) Needed: 1-2 per session
- Arrival Time: 15-30 minutes before warm-ups.
- Age Requirement: minimum 18 years old
- **Food will be arranged by the Hospitality Coordinator.
- Setup refreshments (food and drink) for coaches, officials, and meet volunteers (NO Swimmer allowed).
- Morning sessions - Start coffee, ice down drinks
- Afternoon sessions - Prepare coffee for the next AM session, ice down drinks.
- Every Session - setup, keep food fresh, cleanup.
- Final session - inventory and pack up supplies to return to storage.

HY-TEK COMPUTER OPERATOR

** Training is required for this position**

- Volunteers) Needed: 2 per session (one seasoned volunteer, one new)
- Arrival Time: 15 minutes before warm-up
- Age Requirement: minimum 18 years old
- Update database with all scratches/changes/additions provided by the Clerk of Course.
- Using Hy-Tek software, provide heat/lane assignments.
- Record all official swim times.
- Generate (print) official results for posting.
- Print award labels.

LANE TIMERS

- Volunteer(s) Needed: 16 total per session (2 timers per lane)
- Arrival Time: 15 minutes before the meet starts.
- Age Requirement: minimum 10 years old experienced swimmer with parent timing in same lane.
- **No experience required. Training will be provided by the Head Timer.
- Check the name of the swimmer before the start of the each race. Notify the Head Timer of any Conflicts.
- Operate stopwatch and touch pad button used for the entire session. If stopwatch fails, notify the Head Timer for a replacement stopwatch for that race.
- Record times from both stopwatches on the lane/timer sheet for each swimmer.

MEET SET-UP

- Volunteer(s) Needed: 2
- Arrival Time: 2:00 pm on Friday, time commitment will be 1 to 1 1/2 hours.
- Age Requirement: minimum 16 years old
- Assist the Meet Director with setting up on Friday afternoon before the swim meet.
- Assist with transporting from the storage unit. Must be able to lift boxes to and from a vehicle.
- Assist with setup of the following:
 - PA System
 - Tables
 - Computers
 - Concession Supplies

- Hospitality Supplies
- Chairs for Lane Timers
- Timing/Touch Pads in the pool.
- Towels at the end of lanes for the 8 & under session
- Ready Bench area for the 8 & under session

MEET TEAR-DOWN

- Volunteer(s) Needed: 2
- Arrive Time: At the end of the meet, time commitment will be 1 to 1 1/2 hours.
- Age Requirement: minimum 16 years old
- Assist the Meet Director dismantling and packing all equipment to return to storage.
- Assist with putting away all items used by MARS at the pool for this meet.
- Assist with delivering items to the storage unit. Must be able to lift boxes to and from a vehicle.

SAFETY MARSHALL

- Volunteer(s) needed: 4-6 per session, depending on the size of the meet.
- Arrival Time: 15 minutes before the start of warm-ups.
- Age Requirement: minimum 18 years old or certified lifeguard.
- ** Must be present by warm-ups or the meet cannot start/continue.
- Role is to maintain a safe environment during the swim meet.
- Must wear the provided orange vest at all times.
- Must not leave your position until substitute is provided or until excused, (must finish the session)
- Monitor the entire pool area including the pool deck, spectator area (keep people off the railing), locker rooms, and restrooms.
- Ensure that swimmers behave in a safe manner. (No running, abusive behavior, etc.)
- Closely monitor the diving well. Swimmers must enter the water feet first only. ABSOLUTELY NO DIVING!!!!
- Notify the coach of any swimmer who is behaving/acting in an unsafe manner.
- Only coaches, swimmers, officials, and registered volunteers are allowed on the pool deck. Parents may be on deck only in the positive check in area before the start of the meet.

READY BENCH

- Volunteers) Needed: 4-6 for the 8 & under session depending on the number of swimmers.
- Arrival Time: 15 minutes before warm-up.
- Age Requirement: minimum 14 years old, at least one adult required.
- Organize swimmers into their heat/lane assignments for each event (working from computer generated list).
- Take swimmers to their assigned lanes.

RUNNER

- Volunteer(s) Needed: 2 per session
- Arrival Time: at the start of warm-ups.
- Age Requirement: minimum 14 years old
- **This position works actively with the Clerk of Course and the Hy-Tek Computer Operators.
- Collect lane/timer sheets from each lane at the end of each event.
- Post event results in the pool lobby.
- Post heat/lane assignments in three places:
 - On the deck wall by the diving well
 - On the deck wall under the clock
 - In the pool lobby by the concession stand

Appendix B: HONOR CODE

The following code is in effect throughout the year. Some of the items refer specifically to team travel. Additionally, anyone who, in the opinion of the coach or coaches, acts in a manner that would interfere with the travel objectives listed below, will be subject to immediate return home (at the expense of the parent and/or swimmer) and other punishments including barring from future travel meets or other competition or dismissal from the team.

The Mid-Cities Arlington Swimming will seek out of town swimming competition for the following reasons:

- A) different individual competitions;
- B) a higher quality of competition;
- C) experience in trial/finals competition;
- D) conditions conducive to exceptional performances.

1. MARS may travel as a team to these meets and everyone is expected to behave in an exemplary manner. The reputation of MARS is dependent on swimmer's behavior.
2. The coaching staff holds the final word on any rules, regulations, or disciplinary action.
3. The consumption or purchase of alcohol, smoking or chewing tobacco, or use of any other illegal drug or substance of any kind will not be allowed. In addition, any team member found or suspected to be in the presence of others, regardless of team affiliation, partaking in any of the above activities will be subject to the same punishments and probable expulsion from MARS. Any swimmer suspected of such activity will appear before a review committee composed of the head coach, the head age group coach, and an athlete representative.
4. At no times will male and female athletes be in the same room together with the door closed. This applies to MARS members or members of any other team.
5. No team meetings may be missed. Be punctual to all meetings and warm-up times.
6. No team member may be out of their room after the assigned bed time. Permission must be obtained from the coach to leave the room past this time.
7. Any damages or thievery incurred at a motel will be at the expense of the swimmers assigned to that room, and further disciplinary action will be taken. No loud or boisterous behavior will be tolerated in the hallways or public areas, and such behavior should be kept to a minimum in your rooms. Make all long distance calls on a credit card or collect.
8. All team members will be polite in restaurants. If there has been a problem with the service, see the coach. All team members are expected to attend all team functions.
9. Failure to comply with the Honor Code as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action. Such discipline may include, but may not be limited to:
 - i. Dismissal from the trip and immediate return home at the athlete's expense;
 - ii. Disqualification from one or more events, or all events of competition;
 - iii. Disqualification from future team travel meets;
 - iv. Financial penalties;
 - v. Dismissal from the team; and/or
 - vi. Proceedings for a LSC or USA Swimming National Board of Review.
10. Swimmers are to refrain from inappropriate physical contact at team activities and events.
11. Swimmers are to refrain from use of inappropriate language.
12. Agree to follow the rules about practice and meet behavior in the team handbook.

I recognize my responsibility to abide by the rules and requirements of the Mid-Cities Arlington Swimming I am representing and I acknowledge that I have received and read such.

Revised August 2015

Swimmer (print) _____

(signature) _____ Dated _____

Parent (print) _____

(signature) _____ Dated _____

Appendix C: MARS Locker Room Monitoring Policy

PURPOSE

The following guidelines are designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas.

FACILITIES

The following is a description of our practice and competition facilities to allow athletes and their families to plan their use.

We practice at: Tarrant County College SE Campus, University of Texas at Arlington, Grapevine-Colleyville Swim Center, Trinity High School, and Hugh Smith Recreation Center.

Location Descriptions: Each location has separate male and female locker rooms. Entrances to these locker rooms (except UTA) is from the pool deck. At UTA, the locker room entrances are within a few meters from the indoor pool entrance. UTA and TCC are open campuses. Adult students, staff and faculty have access to the locker rooms during the MARS practice times.

MONITORING

Coaches and staff make every effort to recognize when an athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, we will check on the athlete's whereabouts.

We discourage parents from entering locker rooms and changing areas unless it is truly necessary. In those instances, it should only be a same-sex parent. If this is necessary, parents should let the alert a coach about this in advance.

If an athlete needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear (for example, a child under the age of eight), or an athlete's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach know beforehand that their athlete needs assistance.

Deck changing is prohibited (USA Swimming Article 102.8.4).

Locker Room Policy

MARS has staggered practices, with different groups arriving and departing throughout the practice day. It is therefore not practical to constantly monitor locker rooms, and changing areas over this extended course of time. While we do not post coaches inside or at the doors of the locker rooms and changing areas, we do make occasional sweeps of these areas. Coaches conduct these sweeps, with women checking on female locker rooms, and men checking male locker rooms.

USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE RECORDING DEVICES

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. The USA Swimming Athlete Protections Policies prohibit the use of such devices in the locker room or other changing area:

Article 305.3 Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms.

Appendix D: MARS Anti-Bullying Policy

Action Plan of the Mid-Cities Arlington Swimming (MARS) to Address Bullying

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at MARS and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. MARS is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach or other responsible adult.

Objectives of the MARS's Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that MARS will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that MARS takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

- i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
- ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).

REPORTING PROCEDURE

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents;
- Talk to a MARS Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Write a letter or email to the MARS Coach;
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED and SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED using the following approach:

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. First, we get the facts.

- a. Keep all the involved children separate.
- b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
- c. Listen without blaming.
- d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
- e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.

2. Then, we determine if it's bullying. There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.

- a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
- b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:

- What is the history between the kids involved?
- Have there been past conflicts?
- Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not

limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.

Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?

- c. Remember that it may not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
- d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

3. Support the kids who are being bullied

- a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
- b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:

- Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe.

Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.

- Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between MARS and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.

- Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

4. Address bullying behavior

a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.

b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.

c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:

- Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.

- Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.

d. Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:

- Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.

- Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for MARS, or for others in your community.

- Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.

e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:

- Zero tolerance or “three strikes, you're out” strategies don't work.

Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.

- Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.

f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

5. Support bystanders who witness bullying. Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.

a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;

b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or club board member;

c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. “Let's go, practice is about to start.”

d. Set a good example by not bullying others.

e. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

Appendix E: MARS Whistle Blower Protection Policy

Mid-Cities Arlington Swimming forbids any form of retaliation against individuals for providing truthful information to a law enforcement official relating to actual or potential unlawful conduct. Such actions can result in immediate removal from the program or termination, if employed by MARS. MARS will establish procedures for handling complaints, including anonymous ones, about accounting and financial matters.

Appendix F: Team Travel Policy for Mid-Cities Arlington Swimming

Purpose: Athletes are most vulnerable to misconduct during travel, particularly overnight stays. This includes a high risk of athlete-to-athlete misconduct. During travel, athletes are often away from their families and support networks, and the setting – new changing areas, locker rooms, workout facilities, automobiles and hotel rooms – is less structured and less familiar.

Team Travel is defined as overnight travel to a swim meet or other team activity that is planned and supervised by MARS.

Section 1 - USA Swimming Required Policies

MARS travel policies must include these policies. These items are Code of Conduct stipulations in the USA Swimming Rulebook.

- a. Club travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches and other adults traveling with the club. (305.5.D)
- b. Team managers and chaperones must be members of USA Swimming and have successfully passed a USA Swimming-administered criminal background check. (305.5.B)
- c. Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that particular athlete). (305.5.A)
- d. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his/her parents' (or legal guardian's) written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach. (305.5C)

Section 2 - MARS Policies

- a. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings and/or other activities, two-deep leadership and open and observable environments should be maintained.
- b. Athletes should not ride in a coach's vehicle without another adult present who is the same gender as the athlete, unless prior parental permission is obtained.
- c. During overnight team travel, if athletes are paired with other athletes they shall be of the same gender and should be a similar age. Where athletes are age 13 & over, chaperones and/or team managers would ideally stay in nearby rooms. When athletes are age 12 & under, chaperones and/or team managers may stay with athletes. Where chaperones/team managers are staying in a room with athletes, they should be the same gender as the athlete and written consent should be given by athlete's parents (or legal guardian).
- d. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, at the competition the coach and athlete should attempt to establish a "buddy" club to associate with during the competition and when away from the venue.
- e. To ensure the propriety of the athletes and to protect the staff, there will be no male athletes in female athlete's rooms and no female athletes in male athlete's rooms (unless the other athlete is a sibling or spouse of that particular athlete).
- f. A copy of the Club Code of Conduct must be signed by the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian.
- g. Team officials should obtain a signed Liability Release and/or Indemnification Form for each athlete.
- h. Team officials should carry a signed Medical Consent or Authorization to Treat Form for each athlete.
- i. Curfews shall be established by the team or each day of the trip.
- j. Team members and staff traveling with the team will attend all team functions including meetings, practices, meals, meet sessions, etc. unless otherwise excused or instructed by the head coach or his/her designee.
- k. The directions & decisions of coaches/chaperones are final.
- l. Swimmers are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Swimmers are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, a restaurant, or any other place at which the team has gathered without the permission/knowledge of the coach or chaperone.
- m. When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theaters, etc. swimmers will stay in groups of no less than three persons. 12 & Under athletes will be accompanied by a chaperone.
- n. The Head Coach or his/her designee shall make a written report of travel policy or code of conduct violations to the parent or legal guardian of any affected minor athlete.

I hereby agree to each of the MARS Travel Policies, as listed above, and understand the consequences associated with my failure to comply with any of these policies.

Athlete's Printed Name

Athlete's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Appendix G: Electronic Communication Policy

PURPOSE

MARS recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today's world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While MARS acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, MARS also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

GENERAL CONTENT

All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection.

For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- drugs or alcohol use;
- sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity
- the adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; and
- inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures
- Note: Any communication concerning an athlete's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: "Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?" or "Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient's parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?"

With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is **T**ransparent, **A**ccessible and **P**rofessional.

Transparent: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the MARS's records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

Professional: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of MARS. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the **T.A.P.** criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES

Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of MARS join their personal page as a "friend." A coach should not accept any "friend" request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "private message" each other through Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "instant message" each other through Facebook chat or other IM method.

MARS has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can "friend" for information and updates on team-related matters.

Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

TWITTER

MARS has an official Twitter page that coaches, athletes and parents can follow for information and updates on team-related matters. Coaches are not permitted to follow athletes on Twitter. Likewise, athletes are not permitted to follow coaches on Twitter. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Twitter.

TEXTING

Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 7am until 9pm. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

EMAIL

Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 7am and 9pm. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach must also be copied.

APPENDIX H: Parent Pledge of Conduct



March 22, 2015

Dear Parents and Members:

As our organization grows and we continue to expand our programs, we seek to establish or clarify our policies. Our policies help to guide the organization and ensure continued success. An area we have not ever addressed is parent behavior, specifically, what type of behavior is expected of sports parents.

Our organization is fortunate to have highly experienced, professional coaches working to develop our children into better athletes and more importantly, disciplined people. As parents, it is absolutely essential that we give our coaching staff the respect and authority they deserve to run our team. Our coaches are hired for that purpose.

We as an organization highly encourage the following parental behavior:

- Open communication between parents, athletes and coaches emphasizing goal-setting and focusing on the performance expectations of both the athlete and the parents
- Meeting with the coaches/athletes/parents during normal operating hours to discuss issues
- Positive reinforcement of all athletes in all situations; team spirit, team loyalty
- Parental involvement on the Booster Club and in organizing and running of competitions and other team events

We as an organization will not tolerate the following behavior from parents:

- Coaching your children at practice or during competitions: that is the coach's job
- Interrupting or confronting the coaching staff during practice or competitions
- Abusive language towards coaches, athletes, parents, officials and your own children
- Any behavior that brings discredit or disruption to our athletes and our organization

Enclosed is a Parent Pledge of Conduct. The Code was developed as a standard to emphasize our organization's commitment to making everyone's involvement with our club a positive experience.



Parent Pledge of Conduct

Each parent or guardian must read and sign this MARS Parent Pledge and return to the club prior to the start of practice. Once a parent has signed the Parent Pledge, the terms of the Parent Pledge will remain in force as long as that parent has a swimmer active with the club.

I PLEDGE TO GET MY CHILD TO PRACTICE AND MEETS ON TIME. I understand that being on time allows my child to fully participate and allows coaches and teammates to plan and execute practices and warm-ups.

I PLEDGE TO POSITIVELY ENCOURAGE MY CHILD AFTER EACH PRACTICE OR MEET. I understand that the top three reasons kids participate in sports are 1) to have fun, 2) to make new friends, and 3) to learn new skills.

I PLEDGE TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR MY CHILD. No matter what others may do, I will show respect for all involved in the sport including coaches, swimmers, opponents, opposing fans and officials. I understand that anyone can make a mistake and if an official makes a “bad” call against my swimmer, I will Honor the Sport and be silent.

I PLEDGE TO REFRAIN FROM YELLING OUT INSTRUCTIONS TO MY CHILD. I understand that this is the coach’s job. I understand that practices and meets are chaotic times for all involved and my communicating with my child during a practice will only hurt the coach’s ability to run an effective practice. I will limit my comments during a meet to encouraging my child and others involved in the meet.

I PLEDGE TO REFRAIN FROM ATTEMPTING TO COACH MY CHILD AT PRACTICE OR MEETS. I acknowledge this is the job of the coaching staff to do. If I have a question regarding a coaching decision during practice or meets I will first direct my question to my child’s coach.

I PLEDGE TO REFRAIN FROM MAKING NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT MY CHILD’S COACH IN MY CHILD’S PRESENCE. I understand this plants a negative seed in my child’s head that can negatively influence my child’s motivation, behavior and overall experience.

I WILL RESPECT THE COACHES AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CLUB AT ALL TIMES. I realize they have a difficult job and that their actions reflect their attempts to do what is in the best interests of the swimmers and the club. No matter how I feel about any coaching decision, including decisions related to group assignments, lane assignments, meet entries or other matters, and no matter how I feel about any decision made by a representative of the Club, under no circumstances will I in any way mistreat or confront a coach or representative of the Club in a verbally or physically inappropriate manner.

Communication is essential to the efficient operation of our Club. We encourage parents to get to know their coaches and pool supervisors, and to establish a constructive dialogue with them. If a conflict arises, however, we ask that you wait 24-hours before contacting your coach. We suggest you discuss any conflict in person or over the telephone rather than email. If you do not feel you want to discuss a matter directly with your child’s coach, we ask you to consider first contacting the Pool Supervisor, then the Head Coach, if necessary.

MID-CITIES ARLINGTON SWIMMING VIEWS ANY VIOLATION OF THE PARENT PLEDGE AS A SERIOUS MATTER. I acknowledge by signing this Pledge that any violations of the Pledge can be subject to sanctions by the Club, to be determined at the sole discretion of the Program Director. Such sanctions can include, among others, banishment from the stands at practices and meets and, in extreme circumstances, eventual ejection of the family from the Club.

I will honor the MARS Parent Pledge in my words and actions.

Swimmer Name(s) _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian signature(s) _____

Appendix I

Glossary of Terms (from USA Swimming)

A Glossary of those strange and wacky words we use in the sport of swimming. You may or may not find these words in the English Dictionary, and if you do, their definitions will probably be radically different than the ones listed in this Glossary. Relax and take your time reading. Soon you'll be understanding and maybe even speaking some "SWIMSLANG".

"A"	Time classification for a swimmer. National Age Group Time Standard "A". "A" time is .01 seconds faster than the "BB" time standard and .01 slower than the "AA" time standard. See the NAGT published chart.
"AA"	Time classification for a swimmer. .01 faster than "A" time standard.
"AAA"	Time classification for a swimmer. .01 faster than the "AA" time standard.
"AAAA"	Time classification for a swimmer. .01 faster than the "AAA" time standard. This is the fastest time standard listed on the NAGT chart. Times faster than this are approaching National cuts or Top Times consideration.
A-Meet	Swim meet which requires swimmers to have previously achieved an "A" time standard in the events they wish to enter.
A-B Meet	Swim meet that offers separate competition for both "A" swimmers and "B" swimmers, usually with medals for the "A" swimmers and ribbons for the "B" swimmers. Swimmers compete in separate brackets against other swimmers of their own ability. Usually only "A" swimmers can score individual event team points.
A-B-C	Swim meet similar to the A-B meet except that there are 3 divisions. This type of meet includes every ability level of swimmer from Novice to very experienced. All swimmers "A" time or faster compete in the "A" division, and all swimmers "C" and down compete in the "C" division. The "B" division is the most limited with both top (.01 slower than "A") and bottom (.01 faster than "C") limitations.
Achiever Card	A recognition card or certificate proving the swimmer has made a specific time in an event. The card lists the distance, stroke, swimmers time, date and place of meet, swimmers name, and meet referees signature.
Add Up	Aggregate Time - times achieved by 4 swimmers in individual events which are added together to arrive at a provable relay entry time.
Admission	Certain swim meets charge for spectators to view the meets. These are usually the larger more prestigious meets. Sometimes the meet program (heat sheet) is included in the price of admission.
Age Group	Division of swimmers according to age. The National Age Group divisions are: 10-under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. Some LSCs have divided the swimmers into more convenient divisions specific to their situations: (i.e.) 8-under, 13-Over, 15-Over, Junior, Senior.
Alternate	In a Prelims/Finals meet, after the finalist are decided, the next two fastest swimmers other than the finalist are designated as alternates. The faster of the 2 being first alternate and the next being second alternate. If a finalist cannot participate, the alternates are called to take their place, often on a moments notice.
Anchor	The final swimmer in a relay.
Approved Meet	A meet conducted with sufficient USA Swimming officials to certify conformance to USA Swimming rules. The meet may include competitors who are not USA Swimming members. The meet may be a competition sanctioned at the LSC level with the added approval of USA Swimming because both member and non-member athletes will be competing.
ASCA	The <u>American Swim Coaches Association</u> . The professional organization for swim coaches throughout the nation. Certifying coaches and offering many services for coaches education and career advancement.
"B"	Time classification for a swimmer. National Age Group Time Standard "B". "B" time is .01 seconds faster than the "C" time standard and .01 slower than the "BB" time standard. See the NAGT published chart.
"BB"	Time classification for a swimmer. National Age Group Time Standard "BB". "BB"

	time is .01 seconds faster than the "B" time standard and .01 slower than the "A" time standard. See the NAGT published chart.
B-Meet	Swim meet which requires swimmers to have previously achieved a "B" time standard in the events they wish to enter. Some meets have no bottom cut time allowing "C" swimmers also to compete.
B-C Meet	Swim meet that offers separate competition for both "B" swimmers and "C" swimmers, usually with ribbons for the "B" swimmers and smaller ribbons for the "C" swimmers. Swimmers compete in separate brackets against other swimmers of their own ability. Swimmers are not allowed to enter an event that they have an "A" time in.
Backstroke	One of the 4 competitive racing strokes, basically any style of swimming on your back. Backstroke is swam as the first stroke in the Medley Relay and second stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter. (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd back)
Banner	A team sign that is displayed at swim meets. Banners are usually made from nylon material and carry the Team Logo and possibly the name of a popular team sponsor. Some size restrictions are enforced at certain meets.
Beep	The starting sound from an electronic, computerized timing system.
Big Finals	The top 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. Big Finals is the fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held.
Blocks	The starting platforms located behind each lane. Some pools have blocks at the deeper end of the pool, and some pools have blocks at both ends. Blocks have a variety of designs and can be permanent or removable.
BOD	Board of Directors of the Local Swim Committee (LSC) or USA Swimming (USA-S).
Bonus Heat	The heat held during the finals session of a Prelims/Finals meet, that is slower than the swimmers participating in Big Finals. The Bonus Heat may refer to Consolation Finals or and extra heat in addition to Consolation finals.
Bottom	The floor of the pool. Bottom depths are usually marked on the walls or sides of the pool.
Breaststroke	One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Breaststroke is swam as the second stroke in the Medley Relay and the third stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter. (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd back)
Bull Pen	The staging area where swimmers wait to receive their lane and heat assignments for a swimming event. Area is usually away from the pool and has rows of chairs for the swimmers to sit. The Clerk of the Course is in charge of the Bull Pen.
Bulletin	One of the most important communication devices for a swim club. Bulletin boards are usually in the entrances of pools and have timely information posted for swimmers and parents to read.
Butterfly	One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Butterfly (nicknamed FLY) is swam as the third stroke in the Medley Relay and first stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter. (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yard back)
Button	The manual Timing System stopping device that records a back-up time in case the touch pad malfunctioned. The button is at the end of a wire, plugged into a deck terminal box. There are usually 3 buttons per lane. It is the timers

responsibility to push the button as the swimmer finishes the race.

Camp	A swimming function offered by USA-S, your LSC, or a USA-S coach. There are many types of camps for just about every level of swimmer. When selecting a camp, ask for your coaches advice as to what will be the best for the swimmer, or call USA-S swimming for details on the many camps they offer.
Cap	The latex or lycra covering worn on the head of swimmers. The colors and team logo's adorning these caps are limitless. National Caps, State Team Caps, award caps, plain practice caps, etc.
Car pool	The major transportation service provided by parents of a swim club, to shuttle swimmers to and from practices.
Cards	A card that may either be handed to the swimmer in the bull pen or given to the timer behind the lane. Cards usually list the swimmers name, USA-S number, seed time, event number, event description, and the lane and heat number the swimmer will swim in. Backup times are written on these cards. Each event may have a separate card.
Carbohydrates	The main source of food energy used by athletes. Refer to a Nutritional Manual for more information.
Championship Meet	The meet held at the end of a season. Qualification times are usually necessary to enter meet.
Championship Finals	The top 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. The fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held. Big Finals.
Check-In	The procedure required before a swimmer swims an event in a deck seeded meet. Sometimes referred to as positive check in, the swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host.
Check-Out	The parents job at the motel. This is listed here to remind parents to request "Late Check Out" times if offered at no charge by the motel. This makes the last day of the meet a little less hectic.
Chlorine	The chemical used by most pools to kill the bacteria in water and keep it clear and safe to swim in.
Circle Seeding	A method of seeding swimmers when they are participating in a prelims/finals event. The fastest 18 to 24 swimmers are seeded in the last three heats, with the fastest swimmers being in the inside lanes. (1e) Lane 4 in the final 3 heats. See rule book for exact method for seeding depending on the lanes in the pool.
Clinic	A scheduled meeting for the purpose of instruction. (1e) Officials clinic, Coaches clinic.
Closed Competition	Swim meet which is open to the members of an organization or group. Summer club swim meets are considered to be "Closed Competition".
Club	A registered swim team that is a dues paying member of USA-S and the local LSC.
Code	A set of rules that have been officially published.
Code of Ethics	A Code of Conduct that both swimmers and coaches are required to sign at

	<p>certain USA-S/LSC sponsored events. The Code is not strict and involves common sense and proper behavior.</p>
Colorado	<p>A brand of automatic timing system.</p>
Consolation Finals	<p>After the fastest 6 or 8 swimmers, the next 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. Consolations are the second fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held and are conducted before the Championship heat.</p>
Convention	<p>United States Aquatic Sports annual, week long, meeting where all rules changes are decided and working committees are established. Representatives are sent by each LSC to make up the voting body.</p>
Course	<p>Designated distance (length of pool) for swimming competition. (le) Long Course = 50 meters / Short Course = 25 yards or 25 meters.</p>
Deadline	<p>The date meet entries must be "postmarked" by, to be accepted by the meet host. Making the meet deadline does not guarantee acceptance into a meet since many meets are "full" weeks before the entry deadline.</p>
Deck	<p>The area around the swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials, and coaches. No one but an "authorized" USA Swimming member may be on the deck during a swim competition.</p>
Deck Entries	<p>Accepting entries into swimming events on the first day or later day of a meet.</p>
Deck Seeding	<p>Swimmers report to a bull pen or staging area and receive their lane and heat assignments for the events.</p>
Dehydration	<p>The abnormal depletion of body fluids (water). The most common cause of swimmers cramps and sick feelings.</p>
Developmental	<p>A classification of meet or competition that is usually held early in the season. The purpose of a developmental meet is to allow all levels of swimmers to compete in a low pressure environment.</p>
Distance	<p>How far a swimmer swims. Distances for short course are: 25 yards (1 length), 50 yards (2 lengths), 100 yards (4 lengths), 200 yards (8 lengths), 400 yards (16 lengths), 500 yards (20 lengths), 1000 yards (40 lengths), 1650 yards (66 lengths). Distances for long course are: 50 meters (1 length), 100 meters (2 lengths), 200 meters (4 lengths), 400 meters (8 lengths), 800 meters (16 lengths), 1500 meters (30 lengths).</p>
Disqualified	<p>A swimmers performance is not counted because of a rules infraction. A disqualification is shown by an official raising one arm with open hand above their head.</p>
Dive	<p>Entering the water head first. Diving is not allowed during warm-ups except at the designated time, in specific lanes that are monitored by the swimmers coach.</p>
Diving Well	<p>A separate pool or a pool set off to the side of the competition pool. This pool has deeper water and diving boards/platforms. During a meet, this area may be designated as a warm-down pool with proper supervision.</p>
Division I-II-III	<p>NCAA member colleges and universities are assigned divisions to compete in, depending on the schools total enrollment. Division I being the large universities and Division III being the smaller colleges.</p>

Double Dual	Type of swim meet where three teams compete in dual meets against each other, at the same time. Separate Meet scores would be kept for Team A vs. Team B, Team A vs. Team C, and Team B vs. Team C.
Dual Meet Draw	Type of meet where two (2) teams/clubs compete against each other. Random selection by chance.
Dropped Time	When a swimmer goes faster than the previous performance they have "dropped their time".
Dryland	The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water.
Dry Side	That part of the Code book (rule book) that deals with the "Administrative" Regulations of Competition.
Entry	An Individual, Relay team, or Club roster's event list into a swim competition.
Entry Chairperson	The host clubs designated person who is responsible for receiving, and making sure the entries have met the deadline, or returning the entries if the meet is full. This person usually will find discrepancies in the meet entries and notify the entering club to correct any errors.
Entry Fees	The amount per event a swimmer or relay is charged. This varies depending on the LSC and type of meet.
Entry Limit	Each meet will usually have a limit of total swimmers they can accept, or a time limit they can not exceed. Once an entry limit has been reached, a meet will be closed and all other entries returned.
Electronic Timing	Timing system operated on DC current (battery). The timing system usually has touchpads in the water, junction boxes on the deck with hook up cables, buttons for backup timing, and a computer type console that prints out the results of each race. Some systems are hooked up to a scoreboard that displays swimmers.
Eligible to compete	The status of a member swimmer that means they are registered and have met all the requirements.
Equipment	The items necessary to operate a swim practice or conduct a swim competition.
Event	A race or stroke over a given distance. An event equals 1 preliminary with its final, or 1 timed final.
False Start	When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn or gun. One false start will disqualify a swimmer or a relay team, although the starter or referee may disallow the false start due to unusual circumstances.
False Start Rope	A recall rope across the width of the racing pool for the purpose of stopping swimmers who were not aware of a false start. The rope is about 1/2 way on yard pools and about 50 feet from the starting end on meter pools.
Fastest to Slowest	A seeding method used on the longer events held at the end of a session. The fastest seeded swimmers participate in the first heats followed by the next fastest and so on. Many times these events will alternate one girls heat and one boys heat until all swimmers have competed.
Fees	Money paid by swimmers for services. (Ie) Practice fees, registration fee, USA-S membership fee, etc.

FINA	The international, rules making organization, for the sport of swimming.
Finals	The final race of each event. See "Big Finals", "Consolation Finals", "Timed Finals", etc.
Final Results	The printed copy of the results of each race of a swim meet.
Fine	The monetary penalty assessed a swimmer or club when a swimmer does not achieve the necessary time required to swim in an event, and cannot prove they have done the time previously.
Fins	Large rubber fin type devices that fit on a swimmers feet. Used in swim practice, not competition.
Flags	Pennants that are suspended over the width of each end of the pool approximately 15 feet from the wall.
Format	The order of events and type of swim meet being conducted.
Fund Raiser	A money making endeavor by a swim team/club usually involving both parents and swimmers.
Freestyle	One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Freestyle (nicknamed Free) is swam as the fourth stroke in the Medley Relay and fourth stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, 200 yards/meter, 400 mtr/500 yd 800 mtr/1000 yds, 1500 mtr/1650 yds. (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd free)
Gallery	The viewing area for spectators during the swimming competition.
Goals	The short and long range targets for swimmers to aim for.
Goggles	Glasses type devices worn by swimmers to keep their eyes from being irritated by the chlorine in the water.
Gun	The blank firing pistol that may be used by the starter to start the races.
Gun Lap	The part of a freestyle distance race (400 meters or longer) when the swimmer has 2 lengths plus 5 yards to go. The starter fires a gun shot over the lane of the lead swimmer when swimmer is at the backstroke flags.
Handbook	A reference manual published by teams/clubs and LSCs or other swimming organizations.
Hats	See "caps".
Headquarters	The motel designated by the meet host. Usually, hospitality rooms and meetings relating to the meet will beheld at this location. Many times this motel is one of the sponsors of the meet.
Heats	A division of an event when there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are compiled by swimmers time swam, after all heats of the event are completed.
Heat Award	A ribbon or coupon given to the winner of a single heat at an age group swim meet.

Heat Sheet	The pre-meet printed listings of swimmers seed times in the various events at a swim meet. These sheets vary in accuracy, since the coaches submit swimmers times many weeks before the meet. Heat sheets are sold at the admissions table and are used mainly to make sure the swimmer has been properly entered in all the events they signed up for. Parents enjoy looking at the seedings prior to the race plus swimmers can tell the order the events will be conducted and get a rough idea how long the meet sessions will last.
High Point	An award given to the swimmer scoring the most points in a given age group at a swim meet. All meets do not offer high point awards; check the pre meet information.
HOD	House of Delegates. The ruling body of an LSC composed of the designated representative of each club plus the board of directors (BOD) of the LSC. One vote per club and board member.
Horn	A sounding device used in place of a gun. Used mainly with a fully automatic timing system.
Illegal	Doing something against the rules that is cause for disqualification.
IM	Individual Medley. A swimming event using all 4 of the competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle. Equal distances must be swam of each stroke. Distances offered: 100 yards, 200 yards/meters, 400 yards/meter.
Insurance	USA Swimming offers "accident insurance coverage" which is automatic when swimmer, coach, official, pays their USA-S membership fee. Many restrictions apply, so check with your club for detailed information.
Interval	A specific elapsed time for swimming or rest used during swim practice.
Invitational	Type of meet that requires a club to request an invitation to attend the meet.
J.O.	Junior Olympics. An age group championship meet conducted by the LSC.
Jump	An illegal start done by the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th member of a relay team. The swimmer on the block breaks contact with the block before the swimmer in the water touches the wall.
Juniors	A USA-S Championship meet for swimmers 18 years old or less. Qualification times are necessary. This meet is scheduled to resume in August of 2005.
Kick	The leg movements of a swimmer. A popular word to "yell" to encourage swimmers during a race.
Kick Board	A flotation device used by swimmers during practice. A lightweight object used with great accuracy by coaches.
Lane	The specific area in which a swimmer is assigned to swim. (ie) Lane 1 or Lane 2. Pools with starting blocks at only one end: As the swimmers stand behind the blocks, lanes are numbered from Right (lane 1) to Left (Lane 6).
Lane Lines	Continuous floating markers attached to a cable stretched from the starting end to the turning end for the purpose of separating each lane and quieting the waves caused by racing swimmers.
Lap	One length of the course. Sometimes may also mean down and back (2 lengths)

of the course.

Lap Counter	The large numbered cards (or the person turning the cards) used during the freestyle events 500 yards or longer. Counting is done from the end opposite the starting end. The numbers on the cards are "odd numbers" only with the final lap being designated by a bright orange card.
Late Entries	Meet entries from a club or individual that are received by the meet host after the entry deadline. These entries are usually not accepted and are returned to sender.
Leg	The part of a relay event swam by a single team member. A single stroke in the IM.
Length	The extent of the competitive course from end to end. See lap.
Little Finals	After the fastest 6 or 8 swimmers, the next 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. Little Finals are the second fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held and are conducted before the Championship heat.
Long Course	A 50 meter pool (abbr. LC)
LSC	Local Swim Committee. The local level administrative division of the corporation (USA-S) with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries designated by the Corporation.
Lycra	A stretch material used to make competitive swim suits and swim hats.
Malfunction	A mechanical or electronic failure - not a human failure by the swimmer.
Mark	The command to take your starting position.
Marshall	The adult(s) (official) who control the crowd and swimmer flow at a swim meet.
Medals	Awards given to the swimmers at meets. They vary in size and design and method of presentation.
Meet	A series of events held in one program.
Meet Director	The official in charge of the administration of the meet. The person directing the "dry side" of the meet.
Meters	The measurement of the length of a swimming pool that was built per specs using the metric system. Long course meters is 50 meters, short course meters is 25 meters.
Mile	The slang referring to the 1500 meter or the 1650 yard freestyle, both of which are slightly short of a mile.
NAIA	National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics
NAGTS	National Age Group Time Standards - the list of "C" through "AAAA" times published each year.
Nationals	USA Swimming National Championship meet conducted in March/April and August.
Natatorium	A building constructed for the purpose of housing a swimming pool and related

	equipment.
NCAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association
Newsletter	A written communication published by a club or association.
NGB	National Governing Body
NCSA	National Club Swimming Association, Inc. is a private nonprofit organization for professionally coached swimming clubs and their coaches. The clubs are independently owned and operated and not under the direct control of any other institution.
Non-Conforming Time	
Novelty Meet	A short course time submitted to qualify for a long course meet, or vice versa. A meet that does not fall into a specific category because of limited events, sessions, or age brackets.
Novice	A beginner or someone who does not have experience.
NRT	National Reportable Time. A time list published once a year, which if a swimmer equals or betters the time on the list, they may submit their time in that event for consideration for national recognition.
NSSA	National Swim School Association.
NT	No Time. The abbreviation used on a heat sheet to designate that the swimmer has not swam that event before.
NTV	National Times Verification. A certificate verifying a national qualifying time achieved by a swimmer and issued only by a verification official of the location where the meet was held.
Nutrition	The sum of the processes by which a swimmer takes in and utilizes food substances.
Nylon	A material used to make swim suits.
Observed Meet	A meet that is not conducted according to USA Swimming rules (high school, YMCA) where a request for observation has been processed and approved in advance. Sufficient USA Swimming officials are present to certify that the athletes' swims are in compliance with USA Swimming technical rules.
Observed Swim	A swim observed by assigned USA Swimming officials for conformance with USA Swimming technical rules in a meet conducted under other than USA Swimming rules.
Officials	The certified, adult volunteers, who operate the many facets of a swim competition.
Olympic Trials	The USA-S sanctioned long course swim meet held the year of the Olympic Games to decide what swimmers will represent the USA on our Olympic Team. Qualification times are faster than Senior Nationals.
Omega	A brand of automatic timing system.
OT	Official Time. The swimmers event time recorded to one hundredth of a second (.01).

OTC Open Competition	Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Competition which any qualified club, organization, or individual may enter.
Parka	Large 3/4 length fur lined coats worn by swimmers. Usually are in team colors with logo or team name.
Pace Clock	The electronic clocks or large clocks with highly visible numbers and second hands, positioned at the ends or sides of a swimming pool so the swimmers can read their times during warm-ups or swim practice.
Paddle	Colored plastic devices worn on the swimmers hands during swim practice.
Plaque	A type of award (wall plaque) given to swimmers at a meet.
Pool	The facility in which swimming competition is conducted.
Positive Check In	The procedure required before a swimmer swims an event in a deck seeded or pre seeded meet. The swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host.
Practice	The scheduled workouts a swimmers attends with their swim team/club.
Prelims	Session of a Prelims/Finals meet in which the qualification heats are conducted.
Prelims-Finals	Type of meet with two sessions. The preliminary heats are usually held in the morning session. The fastest 6 or 8 (Championship Heat) swimmers, and the next fastest 6 or 8 swimmers (Consolation Heat) return in the evening to compete in the Finals. A swimmer who has qualified in the Consolation Finals may not place in the Championship Finals even if their finals time would place them so. The converse also applies.
Pre-seeded	A meet conducted without a bull pen in which a swimmer knows what lane and heat they are in by looking at the Meet heat sheet or posted meet program.
Proof of Time	An official meet result, OVC, or other accepted form. Swimmers/Coaches must supply proof of time with some meet entries, and other meets it is not required unless a swimmer misses a cut of time at the meet.
Psyche Sheet	An entry sheet showing all swimmers entered into each individual event. Sometimes referred to as a "Heat Sheet" or meet program. However, a "heat sheet" would show not only every swimmer in an event, but also what heat and lane they are swimming in.
Pull Buoy	A flotation device used for pulling by swimmers in practice.
Qualifying Times	Published times necessary to enter certain meets, or the times necessary to achieve a specific category of swimmer. See "A" "AA" (etc.) times.
Race	Any single swimming competition. (Ie) preliminary, final, timed final.
Ready Room	A room pool side for the swimmers to relax before they compete in finals.
Recall Rope	A rope across the width of the racing pool for the purpose of stopping swimmers who were not aware of a false start. The rope is about 1/2 way on yard pools and about 50 feet from the starting end on meter pools.
Referee	The head official at a swim meet in charge of all of the "Wet Side" administration

and decisions.

Registered	Enrolled and paid as a member of USA-S and the LSC.
Relays	A swimming event in which 4 swimmers participate as a relay team each swimmer swimming an equal distance of the race. There are two types of relays: 1.) Medley relay - One swimmer swims Backstroke, one swimmer swims Breaststroke, one swimmer swims Butterfly, one swimmer swims Freestyle, in that order. Medley relays are conducted over 200 yd/m and 400 yd/m distances. 2.) Freestyle relay - Each swimmer swims freestyle. Free relays are conducted over 200 yd/m, 400 yd/m, and 800 yd/m distances.
Rest Area	A designated area (such as a gymnasium) that is set aside for swimmers to rest during a meet.
Ribbons	Awards in a variety of sizes, styles, and colors, given at swim meets.
Safety	The responsible and careful actions of those participating in a swim meet. USA-S and each LSC now have a "Safety Coordinator" and each meet must have "Marshalls" in charge of safety.
Sanction	A permit issued by an LSC to a USA-S group member to conduct an event or meet.
Sanction Fee	The amount paid by a USA-S group member to an LSC for issuing a sanction.
Sanctioned Meet	A meet that is approved by the LSC in which is held. Meet must be conducted according to USA Swimming rules. All participants, including coaches, athletes and officials, must be USA Swimming members.
Schedule	USA-S or LSC list of meets with dates, meet host, meet location, type of meet, and contacts address and phone.
Scratch	To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate. Some meets have scratch deadlines and specific scratch rules, and if not followed, swimmer can be disqualified from remaining events.
Sectionals	Nickname for Speedo Championship Series (see below).
Seed	Assign the swimmers heats and lanes according to their submitted or preliminary times.
Seeding	Deck Seeding - swimmers are called to report to the Clerk of the Course. After scratches are determined, the event is seeded. Pre Seeding - swimmers are arranged in heats according to submitted times, usually a day prior to the meet.
Senior Meet	A meet that is for senior level swimmers and is not divided into age groups. Qualification times are usually necessary and will vary depending on the level of the meet.
Senior	A USA-S National Championship meet for swimmers of any age as long as the qualification times are met.
Session	Portion of meet distinctly separated from other portions by locale, time, type of competition, or age group.
Shave	The process of removing all arm, leg, and exposed torso hair, to decrease the "drag" or resistance of the body moving through the water. Used only by Seniors

	at very important (Championship) meets.
Short Course	A 25 yard or 25 meter pool.
Simultaneously	A term used in the rules of butterfly and breaststroke, meaning at the same time.
Speedo Championship Series	Open "senior level" meets held in the spring and summer. Each Zone may hold up to four meets. Meets are commonly called "Sectionals." Qualifying times, sites, dates and meet rules are determined locally.
Splash	The USA Swimming magazine that is mailed bi-monthly. A benefit of being a member of USA Swimming.
Split	A portion of an event, shorter than the total distance, that is timed. (ie) A swimmers first 50 time is taken as the swimmer swims the 100 race. It is common to take multiple splits for the longer distances.
STARS	Swimming Tracking and Recognition System. National Times Database of meet results provided by tabulators appointed by each LSC.
Stations	Separate portions of a dryland or weight circuit.
Start	The beginning of a race. The dive used to begin a race.
Starter	The official in charge of signaling the beginning of a race and insuring that all swimmers have a fair takeoff.
Still Water	Water that has no current caused by a filter system or no waves caused by swimmers.
State	A meet held twice a year (Short Course and Long Course) sponsored by the LSC. In larger LSCs it is common to hold a Championship Senior meet and Age Group meet separately. Qualification times are usually necessary.
State Qualifier	A swimmer who has made the necessary cut off times to enter the State meet.
Stand-up	The command given by the Starter or Referee to release the swimmers from their starting position.
Step-Down	The command given by the Starter or Referee to have the swimmers move off the blocks. Usually this command is a good indication everything is not right for the race to start.
Stroke	There are 4 competitive strokes: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle.
Stroke Judge	The official positioned at the side of the pool, walking the length of the course as the swimmers race. If the Stroke Judge sees something illegal, they report to the referee and the swimmer may be disqualified.
Submitted Time	Times used to enter swimmers in meets. These times must have been achieved by the swimmer at previous meets.
Suit	The racing uniform worn by the swimmer, in the water, during competition. The four most popular styles/types of suits worn are: Nylon, Lycra, Paper, and Fastskin.
Swim-A-Thon	The "Fund Raiser" trademarked by USA Swimming for local clubs to use to make money.

Swim America	The professional swim lesson program administrated by the American Swim Coaches Association licensed to coaches.
Swim-off	In a Prelims/Finals type competition, a race after the scheduled event to break a tie. The only circumstance that warrants a swim-off is to determine which swimmer makes finals or an alternate, otherwise ties stand.
<u>Swimming World</u>	The most popular of the paid subscription swimming magazines. All swimmers and parents who are interested in swimming should consider a subscription.
SWIMS	USA Swimming system that keeps track of every time swum by all swimmers. Available through the USA-S website.
Taper	The resting phase of a senior swimmer at the end of the season before the championship meet.
Team	USA-S Registered club that has the right to compete for points.
Team Records	The statistics a team keeps, listing the fastest swimmer in the clubs history for each age group/each event.
Timed Finals	Competition in which only heats are swum and final placings are determined by those times.
Time Standard	A time set by a meet or LSC or USA-S (etc) that a swimmer must achieve for qualification or recognition.
Timer	The volunteers sitting behind the starting blocks/finish end of pool, who are responsible for getting watch times on events and activating the backup buttons for the timing system.
Time Trial	An event or series of events where a swimmer may achieve or better a required time standard.
Top 16	A list of times compiled by the LSC or USA-S that recognizes the top 16 swimmers in each age group (boys & girls) by each event and distance. The number 16 was arbitrarily chosen because it would normally fill the finals and consoles heats at a swim meet.
Touch Out	To reach the touchpad and finish first in a close race.
Touch Pad	The removable plate (on the end of pools) that is connected to an automatic timing system. A swimmer must properly touch the touchpad to register an official time in a race.
Transfer	The act of leaving one club or LSC and going to another. Usually 120 days of unattached competition is required before swimmer can represent another USA-S club.
Travel Fund	A sum of money set aside for a swimmer to use for travel expenses and entry fees to specified meets.
Tri-meet	A meet with 3 team competing for points to see who places 1st-2nd-3rd.
Trophy	Type of award given to teams and swimmers at meets.
Unattached	An athlete member who competes, but does not represent a club or team. (abbr.

	UN)
Uniform	The various parts of clothing a swimmer wears at a meet. May include: Parka, Warm-up jacket, Team duffel bag, sweat pants, suits, hat, goggles, T-shirt, etc.
Unofficial Time	The time displayed on a read out board or read over the intercom by the announcer immediately after the race. After the time has been checked, it will become the official time.
USA-S	The governing body of swimming--USA Swimming.
USA Swimming	The national governing body of the sport headquartered in Colorado Springs.
USA-S ID Number	A 16 part number assigned to a swimmer after they have filled out the proper forms and paid their annual dues. The first 6 parts are numbers of swimmer's birthdate: Day/Month/Year using zeros as place holders. The next three spaces are the first three letters of the athlete's legal first name. The next letter is the middle initial, followed by the first four letters of the swimmers last name. For example: USA-S ID# for swimmer Suzanne Eileen Nelson and born Aug.27, 1976 = 082776SUZENELS.
USOTC	United States Olympic Training Center located in Colorado Springs, Colorado.
Vertical	At right angle to the normal water level.
Vitamins	The building blocks of the body. Vitamins do not supply energy, but are necessary for proper health.
Warm-down	The recovery swimming a swimmer does after a race when pool space is available.
Warm-up	The practice and "loosening" up session a swimmer does before the meet or their event is swum.
Watch	The hand held device used by timers and coaches for timing a swimmers races and taking splits.
Water	For the purpose of filling swimming pools and swimmers drinking to properly hydrate themselves.
Weights	The various barbells / benches / machines used by swimmers during their dryland program.
Whistle	The sound a starter/referee makes to signal for quiet before they give the command to start the race.
Work Out	The practice sessions a swimmer attends.
Yards	The measurement of the length of a swimming pool that was built per specs using the American system. A short course yard pool is 25 yards (75 feet) in length.
Yardage	The distance a swimmer races or swims in practice. Total yardage can be calculated for each practice session.
Zones	The country is divided up into 4 major zones: Eastern - Southern - Central - Western. At the end of the long course season (in August) the Zone Administration sponsors a championship age group meet.