USA Swimming
National Disability Committee
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ROAD MAP

ADDING TRIPLE ‘E’ TO DISABILITY
USA SWIMMING – DISABILITY COMMITTEE
ROAD MAP

EDUCATE  EMPOWER  ENGAGE

WHY USE A ROAD MAP?

• KNOW WHERE WE ARE GOING BEFORE WE START
• CLEAR & SPECIFIC GUIDELINES TO BENCHMARK ALL PROPOSED ACTIONS
• SHOWS EVERYONE WHERE WE ULTIMATELY WANT TO BE
• ENSURES WE STAY ON TRACK AND DON’T LOSE SIGHT OF THE GOAL
• IF ROAD BLOCKS ARE ENCOUNTERED:
  • ALLOWS DETOURS TO IDENTIFIED AND RECOGNIZED FOR WHAT THEY ARE
  • GUIDES THE CHOICE OF THE BEST ALTERNATIVE
WHO IS THE TARGET AUDIENCE?

- LSC DISABILITY CHAIRS
- LSC BOARDS
- COACHES
- CLUB BOARDS AND OWNERS
- OFFICIALS
- MEET DIRECTORS AND MEET ORGANIZING COMMITTEES
- ATHLETES
- PARENTS
- NEWS MEDIA
WHAT IS THE TOPIC OF EDUCATION?

• LSC DISABILITY CHAIRS
  • How do they advocate for the swimmers in their LSC
  • How do they change the mind set from “Disabled person” to “Athlete with an impairment”

• LSC BOARDS
  • Move from “doing the right thing” to “Inspirational leadership”
  • Think in terms of inclusion as a motivator for the athletes rather than the correct thing to do
WHAT IS THE TOPIC OF EDUCATION?

- **COACHES**
  - How do they coach “outside of the norm”
  - How can they utilize their lane time effectively
  - What does it take to be successful with an athlete who is an exception rather than an athlete who is disabled

- **CLUB BOARD AND OWNERS**
  - Many of the same concerns as the coaches – in some cases they are the same
  - Realize the benefits of inclusion and promotion of athletes with an impairment rather than the fear of the unknown
WHAT IS THE TOPIC OF EDUCATION?

• OFFICIALS
  • Move past the “feel sorry for” and “make exceptions for” and view the swimmers as athletes
  • Disability clause in the rule book is too often interpreted as “Don’t judge them too harshly” rather than “Hold them accountable for”
  • Change “Don’t judge what they don’t have” to “Judge them on ability”

• MEET DIRECTORS AND MEET ORGANIZING COMMITTEES
  • What does it take to make the meet successful and hold the timelines while still accommodating athletes who are exceptional?
WHAT IS THE TOPIC OF EDUCATION?

• ATHLETES
  • Kids are more accepting but they can also be cruel
  • Need to educate all the athletes on the benefits and opportunities of inclusion

• PARENTS
  • Two groups of parents
  1. Parents of swimmers with impairments can often be “in your face” because other approaches have failed – need to provide a support structure and a welcoming culture within USA-S
  2. Parents of swimmers without impairment often want only the very best for their children – can be intolerant and exclusive
WHAT DOES EMPOWER MEAN?

• DICTIONARY: TO GIVE POWER OR AUTHORITY TO
• WITH INCREASED KNOWLEDGE, IDEAS AND ACTIONS ARE GENERATED
• MOVE PAST THE ‘FEEL GOOD’ TO A ‘BENEFICIAL TO INCLUDE’ MIND SET
• CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE IT IS SAFE TO TRY NEW THINGS
• CREATE A CULTURE WHERE EXCEPTIONAL RESULTS ARE EXPECTED RATHER THAN DESIRED – FOR ALL ATHLETES IN USA SWIMMING – NOT JUST THE ELITE
• ENROLL PARTICIPANTS TO HELP DEFINE SUCCESS AND THEN RAISE IT TO NEW LEVELS
HOW DO WE ENGAGE?

- DON’T KNOW YET – HAVE NOT REACHED THIS PART OF THE JOURNEY
- IT IS WHERE WE WANT TO GO, BUT HAVE CHOICES ON HOW TO GET THERE
- AS WE JOURNEY THIS WILL BECOME CLEARER AS WE GATHER PARTICIPANTS
- WE HAVE UNCERTAINTY AND DECISIONS YET TO BE MADE
- IF WE DO NOT START THE JOURNEY – WILL NEVER REACH THE DESTINATION
- FULL ENGAGEMENT IS THE END OF THIS JOURNEY WE HAVE A MAP FOR
- IT WILL ALSO BE THE START OF A NEW ROAD MAP AND JOURNEY AS WE CONVERT POSSABILITY TO REALITY
USA SWIMMING – DISABILITY COMMITTEE
ROAD MAP

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE

- Memorize
- Recite
- Advocate
- If we are not committed to this being successful, who else will champion it?
USA SWIMMING – DISABILITY COMMITTEE ROAD MAP

EDUCATE     EMPOWER     ENGAGE

EDUCATE EMPOWER ENGAGE
A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS
BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY
A REALIZATION OF A COMMITMENT