



**USA Swimming Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
Committee Meeting  
(08/22/2022)  
10 am PT / 11am MT / 12 pm CT / 1 pm ET**

**USA Swimming Mission:** USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming. We administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Olympic & Amateur Sports Act. We provide programs and services for our members, supporters, affiliates and the interested public. We value these members of the swimming community, and the staff and volunteers who serve them. We are committed to excellence and the improvement of our sport. We are committed to providing a safe and positive environment for all members.

**USA Swimming Priority Results:**

1. USA Swimmers achieve sustained competitive success at the Olympic Games and other high-level international competitions.
2. Members have and use resources for sustainable success.
3. There is growth in swimming participation and interest.
4. USA Swimming is recognized as the “Best in Class” National Governing Body.

**5. ATTENDANCE**

Name	Attended Mtg
Wade Atkins	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Leland Brown III	x
Tina Dessart	x
Jennie Shamburger	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Jim Peterfish	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Tommie Jackson	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Michael Fuji	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Ruth-Ann Bode	
Sophia Elliott	x
Zoe Summar	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diya Ackerman-Vallala	x <input type="checkbox"/>
Emily Murray	x

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome - Wade
2. ~~Check In exercise - Wade~~
3. Overview of USA Swimming Mission/Priority Results- Wade
4. Volunteer Meeting Minutes (Wade Atkins) – No volunteer
5. 120 Day Rule (Noah and guest Topher Bishop)

“The decision to decrease from 120 Days to 30 Days was made after we presented our rationale on amending the 120 Day Rule at the 2022 Zone Workshop. At the Legislative Review Session, we presented several ideas we had for amending. Based on verbal and Google Form feedback, 30 Days was the most favorable. I've attached a graphic from the form, exemplifying the different options we had presented. Here is also a recording of the [Legislative Review \(120 Day Rule 1:25.00-2:01.00\)](#).”



The AEC is proposing this amendment because we acknowledge that the 120 Day rule has negative consequences to the athletes. It is currently causing more harm than good to the athlete population, who is not usually at fault for the club move. Examples of these situations include club folding, moving due to military transfer, and discomfort due to team alienation. While the 120 Day Rule allows athletes to swim and compete, there is harm in being unattached. Athletes are being alienated as soon as they join a new club. With not being able to participate on relays or score points, they are not a true member of the team. This can lead to an unwelcoming environment for the athlete. Due to the 120 Day Rule preventing athletes from fully participating in the sport, we are proposing a decrease to 30 Days to minimize this penalty. Based on the discussion we had on Article 203.3, we decided to mirror that amendment to Article 203.9.2. Attached below are the official proposals submitted for both Article 203.3 and Article 203.9.2.” – Quote from AEC Chair Juli Arzave

Topher- Great summarization of the proposed change to the 120 Day Rule. The penalty is affecting athletes who have to move to their ideal club environment.

Wade- Thank you Topher. The 120 Day rule can be found in the legislation packet under R-17 and R-18.

Jennie- Was there a discussion on the limit of 30-day periods and athlete can have in a year or within a season? I ask this because there is a lot of club hopping that goes on within my LSC.

Topher- That is a very good question that we get a lot. When we [the AEC] crafted this legislation, one of the main committees that we worked with was the registration and membership committee. What they told the AEC when they initially presented this legislation with clauses and stipulations, the Registration and Membership Committee stated that the AEC should go simpler because there would be no oversight of waivers, clauses, of enacting a certain number of 30-day transfers. The Registration and Membership Committee said that it would be next to impossible to monitor those or sign to monitor those, it would be added stress to the LSC registrars. The AEC worked with the registration and membership committee to do a clear-cut policy at 30 days.

Wade- I believe that the LSC and registrar could pass a policy or procedure in the LSC on how frequently they would process the club transfers. Especially around championship time.

Topher- Yes, that is correct.

Wade- In the new SWIMS 3.0 the athlete or parent can submit this request online. The responsibility now falls on the member to initiate this request.

Topher- If an LSC wants to bear the load of adding stipulations they are allowed to do so. However, the AEC along with the Registration and Membership Committee did not want to mandate additional work for the registrars due to this rule.

Wade- It is not a Rules and Regulations requirement but could be a local policy and procedure.

Topher- Yes, that is correct.



6. Introductions of new committee members (Emily and Tommie) – Wade

Wade- Talk a little about your background, why you are passionate about DEI, and why you wanted to join our committee. Are there any topics you would like to work on?

Emily- Hi, I am Emily. I coach up in Pacific Northwest Swimming and I've been the Pacific Northwest Swimming DEI Chair for two years, and I wanted to be more involved on the USA Swimming level.

Wade- Welcome! We will be going over our five projects we have for this year, if one resonates with you let me know and we will get you added to that group. Thank you, next up we have Tommie.

Tommie- My name is Tommie Jackson. I am the DEI chair of Georgia swimming. I have been coaching for 40+ years and I have been the DEI Chair of Georgia Swimming for 15 years or more. We have a very new administration in Georgia Swimming and because of that we are able to do things now that we have not been able to in the past. I think that right now one of the main goals is to establish a Georgia Swimming diversity swim meet. The first one was in February of last year and we are getting ready to have another one this February. We had a swim camp in April of last year that was very successful, and we had another one this year. I just have a passion for working with young people and I wanted to be more involved on the national level a to try to see what impact I could have. I would also like to bring some of the things from the national level to Georgia Swimming.

Wade- As a side note, I have a very good friend who would love to come to your February meet and talk with your athletes. She happens to be the first African American female swimmer to win a medal for the U.S. She is in your area and anxious to come to your meet. Her name is Maritza Correia McClendon.

7. Updates from USA Swimming – Leland and Noah

a. Committee Openings – Non-Athlete – Noah

Noah- There were two positions that were open on the committee for non-athlete members. These positions have effectively been filled by Tommie and Emily. Thank you both very much.

b. Committee Opening – Athlete-Noah

Noah- We are currently in the process of adding another athlete onto the committee, at this time they will remain unnamed. Hopefully they will be able to attend the next committee meeting.

c. DEI Educational Programs (required) – Leland

Leland- We are going to start education once a month that will be on the second Thursday of every month starting on October 13. This will be DEI education and we will have our communications team help send that out. When we are at DEI Committee meetings you all will know what is coming up in that month regarding the education. This is open to all membership as well as those in the DEI Community.

Sophie- What time will these be held?

Leland- Currently they are scheduled for 5pm Mountain Time.

Sophie- If we are not available will the session be recorded and distributed?



Leland- Yes, they will be made available.

Noah- The recordings will be posted on the USA Swimming webpage. We are working on getting an events calendar made and this will be where the recordings live.

Wade- Will our committee meeting be on there as well?

Noah- Yes, they will be.

Jennie- Just to clarify, these (the educational sessions) will be on the second Thursday of every month?

Leland- Yes, at 5pm Mountain Time. The next thing is that we are going under some renovations on the DEI Webpage. If you go to it right now, you will see that the webpage has undergone a huge renovation to make it more user friendly. Starting with the values, then moving to the committee and seeing where the minutes and information is, programming, partnerships, and then the resources that we created or collected over time. Then there are DEI articles and FAQs. If you have ever been to the website before you will be able to see the changes, but more are to come. Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions.

**d. Athlete Mentoring Program (APM) – Noah**

Noah- The athlete mentorship program is a program that we are hoping to roll out in 2023. The update for this is fairly short. There are going to be four sub-sections that athletes can choose to be mentored in; they are officials, coaches, LSC General Chairs, and Athlete Advocates. We are currently working with the officials' and coaches' committees to garner their support for this program. Rollout of this program has been delayed slightly however progress is being made.

Wade- When you say you are trying to reach out to coaches and officials, are you asking them to sign up to be mentors, will it be like an application to be a mentor and then be matched with a mentee? Can we get some more information on that?

Noah- Yes, I will be on the officials and coaches committee call to garner support and gauge participation for this program. I also want to use these entities as tools to get the program in front of athletes and potential mentors. For this program the mentor application will open first to give us an idea about participation, then based on that we will open the application up to athletes.

Wade- Tina do you have any updates for us since we are rounding out the USA Swimming updates.

Tina- The only update that I have at this point, and I have talked to Jim about this, is that the webpage within the new SWIMS registration is currently under the advisement of an ADA lawyer. We are working with them to make sure that the language is appropriate before that gets launched in the new SWIMS platform.

**8. Review of Legislation for ABM – focus on DEI related issues and Q&A about other items**

Wade- For the proposed legislation, I will go over the topic, introduce it, and then pause for a moment to see if anyone has questions or concerns about that or why we are supporting it. The



first is R-5, which is to require a starting light for swimmers who are deaf or hard of hearing to be positioned so that the swimmer can see the starting light while in the competitive starting position. This addressing rule 103.23 and the recommendation from rules and regs is to reject that. Now just a little bit about that is that we are not opposed to that but better proposed in another section. That would be R-7 and 8. As background for this, there is already some requirements that you make a visible strobe with a sound but not at every lane. That could be very cost prohibitive to LSC type meetings. There was a lot of conversation on how this came up. There was a national level event where some deaf and/or hard of hearing swimmers were videoed as not having an equitable start. This led to a lot of conversation but the outcome of it is that every LSC officials committee work to develop better training and repetition so that all starters are competent in making sure the equipment works and that the hand signals are accurate and adequate.

Alex- So what you are saying is that the suggestion is to have a light below every block?

Wade- Yes, it was to have them at every block, not positioned on the side at the start.

Alex- If this was adapted into rules and regs, what would LSCs do in the case of not having the money to provide that?

Wade- Their meets might not get sanctioned.

Alex- So they would have to figure it out. Essentially, they would have to budget for this no matter what.

Wade- Yes. Are there any more questions on this legislation. Next is R-7 which was also withdrawal because it has better language in R-8. To modify Figure 1 in rule 105. It is missing the second picture for the command “stand”. R-7 was to modify the figure to signal “standup” and there is no command to “stand up”, it is “stand” or “relax”. Moving down to R-8 which is in companion with R-7. R-8 is to modify Figure 1 to add an additional hand signal for swimmers who are deaf or hard of hearing to indicate the “stand” command from the starter. It would be a picture of the second “stand”. For R-7 and R-8 are there any questions or concerns? Moving on to R-9, it is similar to R-7 and R-8, R-9 has been withdrawn due to better articulation in R-10. R-9 is to modify the Figure to indicate the signal to “relax”. R-10 replaced R-9 to modify Figure 2 to add an additional hand signal for swimmers who are deaf and hard of hearing to indicate the “stand” command from the starter, a command commonly verbalized during the starting sequence. There would now be a hand signal to “relax”. Any questions about R-10? Moving to R-11, to require the use of both a strobe light and the starter arm signals, there is no recommendation for Rules and Regulations about this. Any questions on R-11? Moving to R-12, to specify the use of arm signals throughout the entire event in which the swimmer who is deaf or hard of hearing is entered. The Rules and Regulations do not have any recommendations for this.

Alex- When you say during the entire event, the starter would use hand signals the entire session for every single heat?

Wade- I believe we defined the event as the event number, so if it was number 18, the 50 free, it would be every heat of the 50 free. It's ambivalent enough there, would it be for both genders?



Alex- So this would the starter?

Wade- yes, having to do the hand signals for every heat in those events. Jim or Tina, any comments or anything from the community that you have heard so far

Jim- On this particular thing, there was a major proposal that was made that encompassed many different things for the hearing impaired. As we whittled it down, it came down to the education for officials. That is what we are truly advocating, that there is more education at the LSC level. To go to the extreme, other than the additional hand signal to “stand” or “relax” that is as far as we are going with that. The emphasis not being that it is not important, but it seems slightly overkill to require the starter to do hand signals for every heat at a meet in which there are no deaf or hard of hearing athletes present. I think it makes sense that within that heat or event that a swimmer who is deaf or hard of hearing that needs hand signals, that everybody in that event gets the hand signals. On those that are not, they are focused on the verbal signals, so I don’t think it makes too much difference there. On this disability side we are in favor of the intent but practically it seems like a bit much.

Wade- Thanks Jim. Moving to R-12. There is concern that if you start putting that kind of rule in and someone breeches it, what is the penalty? Do we have to swim everything over because there was a heat or event that missed the hand signals? Right now, to echo Jim’s sentiment, what we are trying to focus on is that the rulebook describes what you are supposed to do in these situations and what to offer to those athletes and have education and training of officials to consistently do it when it is needed. Moving to R-13. To allow a personal assistant to be on the pool deck for the purpose of conveying all or part of the start commands or any other directions to a swimmer who is deaf or hard of hearing. The recommendation from Rules and Regulations is to reject and not support this legislation. This is because we don’t want any distraction from the official starter who is doing that same motion. Any questions or concerns? Moving to R-14. To eliminate the ambiguity of the phrase in rule 105.2 that it is not “judged” and replace with the proactive direction that is a necessary accommodation to be applied by a meet referee for a part of the body that is absent or cannot be used by a swimmer with a physical disability to assure that all of the body parts are judged accordingly to the rule. Right now, the way that it is worded is ambiguous about if you have a differently abled swimmer, do you ever judge their swim technique or their stroke. It has always been intended that if there is a disability and cannot perform the function described in the rulebook, that it is not held against them. This is a way to allow differently abled swimmers to declare to the meet officials what their disability is, and for the meet director to know this information. Anytime there would then be an infraction for that swimmer, it would be noted and if it pertains to what was disclosed about their disability then the disqualification would be returned. The Rules and Regulations committee is recommending approval. Any questions or concerns? That covers all of the legislation pertaining to DEI.

## 9. Project Assignment Review - Wade

### a. Overarching Goals:

#### i. Develop (3) Resources for Coaches, Athletes, and LSC Boards – Alex

Alex- The guide that is being developed for creating a DEI Task Force on your team is nearly finalized. I am working on finalizing it now and adding language that pushes this to be able to be used by athletes. There are a couple of items that I do need help figuring out. The first is putting



a glossary in this resource. I know that one of the other projects is to create a glossary to put on the website. I would like to develop the glossary and then link that with some additional resources in this resource. Does anyone have any feedback?

Jennie- I think that is a great idea to create a separate document and link it because then the glossary can serve more people.

Alex- That is what I was thinking. The glossary is lengthy and would most likely serve better as its own resource. The second is getting a representative from the Southern and Eastern zone to put as examples within this guide. Mainly looking for team guidelines and vision/mission statement to utilize as examples. Tommie would your team be open to this?

Tommie- If you go to the Georgia Swimming website in the DEI tab, you will find what you are looking for.

Alex- Thank you! Jim, do you have an update on the ASL Signs?

Jim- Yes, we now have the graphics for each of the signs and I have spoken with Tina about this, there are also some things on Teams under disability on this as well. The challenge that we now have is that we need USA Swimming create the graphics because I have been photocopying things that are already copyrighted. I have it all worked out as far as the different signs, now it is a matter of getting past legal and putting it into a form. This could also be something that we look at as a video rather than graphics so that we avoid the copyright.

Alex- Thank you! I think that is everything that I have been working on, does anyone have anything to add that I have forgotten?

ii. Hold (1) Webinar – Educational Event – Jennie

Wade- Ruth-Ann is currently traveling so Jennie will be delivering the report.

Jennie- I want to thank Ruth-Ann for stepping up and I want to thank all of you all for your patience. There have been many emails back and forth regarding questions for our first Round Table Discussion. We do have the topic and the questions formulated, so the next steps would be to give them to our speakers for feedback and find out if there is anything specific, they would like to talk about in the discussion. Is there anything that we need to do regarding rescheduling the Webinar?

Wade- We need to do it September 15 or we need to push it into October.

Jennie – Okay, I will get an email to the participants to see if September 15<sup>th</sup> still works for them, if it does not then we will push this to October.

Wade- I have a question for Leland and Noah. Since it is the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August, if we stick with the 15<sup>th</sup> of September, is that enough marketing time?

Noah- Yes.

iii. Create (1) Athlete Influencer Toolkit - Diya, Sophie and Zoe



Diya- We are currently off in two different directions; both are very good directions. We had a meeting with Noah and Leland where they introduced us to the #Swimclusion Campaign. That will now be the stem of the influencer toolkit. The campaign is a week in October. We are currently working on how we can blend what we have with the toolkit into the #Swimclusion Campaign. Right now, we are holding back on the applications, but we will be using the #Swmclusion Campaign to get traction for the toolkit so that we can then advertise the trainings. When we start to do the trainings, they will be quarterly DEI trainings like DEI 101. The purpose of these trainings is to train the athletes and give them our knowledge of DEI and be successful with the toolkit. The hope is that they would then take this back to their teams and LSCs.

iv. Develop and Disseminate (1) Membership Experience Survey – Wade

Wade- We have been working with Noah and Leland and currently have a draft of nine questions tht will be focused to the DEI Chairs this round, narrowing our audience to what their experience has been, what their relationship with their LSC is like, and what resources do they need to complete their objectives. We have some draft questions and finalize them by the next meeting. We will them circulate them through the group to look over. We will then be using Qualtrics to formulate the survey and send it out. The survey will then give us future goals and objectives for the committee.

v. Ad Hoc Assignments:

1. Reviews:

a. Children w/Challenges – Jim

Jim- This has been put on hold by USA Swimming.

b. Adaptive Coaching Guide resource-Jim

Jim- This is currently being developed but I would also like to get the opinion of athletes in the disability committee. Tis could possibly be another webinar for the committee.

vi. Next Quarterly DEI Trainings- Leland or Noah

Noah- We will be talking about this more later on when we meet again. We will be starting quarterly DEI trainings for the DEI Committee and DEI Chairs. These will be separate from the National Trainings happening once a month.

10. Other Business – ALL

Wade- Any other business that anyone would like to discuss?

Alex- The LSC Chairs will be voting on the rules and regulations, what is the date of that??

Wade- the ABM week is the 22-24<sup>th</sup> of September.

11. Next meetings - Wade

a. DEI Program September 15,2022 8 PM EST

b. ABM September 23, 24, 2022

c. NDEI October 24, 2022 1 PM EST

12. Closing – ALL 2:10 pm EST