Dear Group 1, 2, and 3 Parents:

The policy of the team regarding technical suits has been consistent to swimmers over the history of the team. The team doesn’t want swimmers in Groups 1, 2, and 3, wearing high cost technical suits until at least a State Championship level meet or higher. This policy is something the coaches believe in very strongly. If a mistake was made, it was that this policy has not been in writing and not explained in detail to parents on a regular basis. Many teams in Arizona allow their swimmers to wear any suit they wish at any time. The team does not support this policy; in the same way we are probably tougher on attendance at practice and meet attendance for older swimmers than some other teams that don’t want to lose families to strict rules. These are some of things that set the team apart from other teams. The foundation of this team is that coaches, coach the athletes, and the parents don’t coach the athletes.

The reasons why we don’t support the younger groups wearing technical suits include:

1. We want the swimmers to learn that improvement comes from hard work, good attendance, and good technique and is not a temporary thing that you just get by buying an expensive suit and wearing it at meet.

2. We want the swimmers and parents to learn that as you get older in the sport of swimming, improvements are harder to achieve. Best times might be only achieved in your best events when you have been rested or tapered for a meet. This is due to the higher workload and the larger muscle mass of older swimmers. As part of their preparation for these taper meets, the swimmers wear the technical suits to give themselves an additional mental and physical boost. Younger swimmers can do best times at almost any meet with or without a suit.

3. As a swimmer progresses and gets older the meets for which they try to qualify have time standards that are based on other swimmers wearing the technical suits at championship meets. At the highest levels of swimming where everyone is wearing a technical suit, it would be very hard for swimmers below the most talented, like Michael Phelps, to make time standards without a technical suit. This is currently not true in the 12 and under age groups in Arizona.

4. We want to keep the swimmers motivated over the longest period of time possible. We want the swimmers to swim at least through high school and stay excited about swimming during this whole period of time. Adding things such as technical suits, more structured dry land training, and out of state travel, as they get older contributes to them staying excited about swimming for the long term. If they get everything at age 10 or 11, there is not a lot to keep them excited, unless they are that very rare kid.

5. When a swimmer qualifies in a non-technical suit for the State meet, they have an extra edge going into the State meet. Knowing they did a best time without a suit and then going to the State meet and wearing one, will contribute to them swimming faster at the State meet. The goal is to swim fast at State Championship meets and higher, not just go to the meet and swim.

6. Finally, other lesser reasons we don’t support technical suits at a young age are the cost, which is way too high and the sizing is not geared to smaller bodies.

We make decisions with the best interest of the swimmer in mind. The easiest thing to do is let everyone do what they want and not have a hassle. Swimmers will probably swim fast with a technical suit, but they can make State cuts without a suit. They will only swim slower than they want, if they have been convinced by outside influences that they can't swim fast without a suit. If we didn't care about the best interest of the swimmers on the team we would move them all to the Senior group so we could charge more money. We wouldn't worry about who went to what meet or who came to practice. We could make short term decisions that make the team more money or might let someone swim a little faster in the short term versus long term improvement and continued motivation. If you have questions about this policy please feel free to talk with Mike Chasson.