



Minnesota Swimming Inc.

2013 Strategic Plan

Adopted June 18, 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In 2010, MSI leaders adopted a strategic plan ("Plan") to define the organization's mission, vision, and key issues. USA Swimming also required MSI to complete the Level 1 certification for its LSC Excellence and Achievement Program ("LEAP"). The Plan became a basis to complete the LEAP Level 1 certification as well as become more professional as an organization. The Level 1 certification was earned in late 2011.

New Strategic Planning Committee

In 2013, MSI General Chair Natalie Kuramoto appointed a new Strategic Planning Committee ("Committee"). The Committee included officers from the MSI Board of Directors, coach representatives, athlete representatives, parents from AAA, AA, & A clubs, and MSI staff. Tom Hodgson, Head Coach of the St. Thomas University Men's and Women's Swimming & Diving Team served as the Committee's facilitator.

Committee Charter and Process

The Committee worked with a big picture view of today's member issues and needs. They revisited the 2010 Strategic Plan and appended or created new recommendations to address different challenges or carry-over items.

The process included:

- Surveying swim club presidents, head coaches, and MSI board members;
- Identifying peer LSC's in the Central Zone based on similar or larger membership enrollment (Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan);
- Reviewing comparative peer LSC demographic and performance data;
- Meeting on an all-day basis in small groups and then as a large team to carve out themes and determine "high-level" issues and initiatives;
- Summarizing the all-day planning session with a sub-team of the Committee, which also set ways to measure each initiative and the (optimal) timing for implementation.

Summary Plan 2013

- There are six (6) categories in the Plan --- *Cultural Identity (new)*, *Club Development (new)*, *Business & Marketing Planning*, *Pool Facilities*, *Policy & Procedure*, and *Complementary Relationships*. Their order of listing reflects the priority as judged by the sub-team of the Committee.
- The detail on the Plan ends at the "strategy" level. Various tactical activities under the strategies, which may include specific new ideas discussed by the Committee, are recorded in the Committee's paperwork; however, this level of detail was left for the staff, volunteers, or committees as applicable to achieve the results.

Key Findings and Themes

1. The values expressed in the MSI mission – integrity, sportsmanship, and the pursuit of excellence --- were not always clear in the LSC's culture, philosophy, or programming. If these values were imperceptible or misunderstood, individuals may create their own interpretation of what was "important" and tell MSI this is what it should be for the LSC.
2. Education was not spelled out in the 2010 mission statement and the Committee felt it warranted a separate call out in the mission. The LSC is really a vital local link to information that helps develop and sustain swim clubs and assists individual stakeholders with their knowledge. In addition, sharing the "cultural identity" of MSI means educating members, helping them understand what is important and why.



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3. An updated business and marketing plan that considered the varied segments of MSI members and their needs, assesses gaps, and then provides guidance for investment back into the LSC must be updated and published.
4. In assessing peer LSC's, Minnesota's long-course pool availability was not the worst in in the Central Zone. MSI's proactive philosophy about pools was reaffirmed and the existing supplemental grant program for "real" pool projects should be sustained. The Committee also recommended an expanded strategy to ensure high use long-course facilities are maximized where capacity exists.
5. LEAP Level 1 recertification is due in 2015 and MSI must be positioned with updated policies and procedures to renew the certification. The Committee also recommended that the elective LEAP Level 2 certification be pursued to further professionalize the organization.
6. Lastly, broadened complementary relationships to include other organizations (beyond high school swimming) with common goals and willingness to strengthen the swimming community with MS were recommended.

What is Next?

The draft plan is ready for consideration by MSI Board of Directors. Even though the plan was developed by the Committee over many hours, it simply represents their best forecast at a point in time. It is a "living document" that must be adjusted as new challenges and possibilities occur. The Plan belongs to the members of MSI so, as always, comments and participation from the entire MSI community is welcome to help better serve and educate members.

Thank you's

Thanks go to the entire Strategic Planning Committee who spent many hours going over pre-meeting materials, working through an all-day planning session, and providing input following the session. And thanks to Tom Hodgson, the Committee's facilitator, who contributed his expertise as an educator, a swim coach, and a shared passion to build the character and life-skills of athletes involved in the sport of competitive swimming.

2013 Strategic Planning Committee

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John Bradley
Kelly Burroughs
Bob Crunstedt
Michael Gibbons
Jim Hanton
Patrick Hunter
Tom Kuzmich
Ashley Lancey
Lisa Lieberman
Sheryl McGuire
Terry Peterson
Kris Rouleau
Mike Rouleau
Cassy Shapley
Tom Hodgson, Facilitator



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MISSION

To serve and educate the swimming community by promoting our sport through opportunities that recognize our core values of integrity, sportsmanship and the pursuit of excellence

VISION

Increase visibility and develop resources to strengthen the swimming community



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○ **CULTURAL IDENTITY**

Define and publicize the cultural identity of MSI as a community committed to the values of integrity, sportsmanship, and the pursuit of excellence.

Strategy: Re-examine MSI & USA Swimming mission and values to ensure that MSI “cultural identity” is reflected

Strategy: Create “messaging” about cultural identity of MSI for members, prospective members, and families

Strategy: From within LSC enlist marketing specialists for expertise on messaging

Strategy: Determine how messaging themes are sustained after initial cultural identity publication

Strategy: Develop resources to implement and sustain publication of cultural identity messaging

Measures: The cultural identity “messaging” process is completed and disseminated to the membership prior to the winter 2014 championships.

○ **CLUB DEVELOPMENT**

Encourage and support all clubs to utilize resources to improve club management

Strategy: Seek club management methods/processes that are scalable and sustainable for club volunteers.

Strategy: Leverage existing USA Swimming Club Recognition resources that offer clubs a working blueprint for developing strong, stable, financially sound and athletically productive organizations.

Strategy: Explore incentives at MSI level

Measures:

1. Documented communication to all clubs, bi-annually, concerning their club management gaps/needs and plans.
2. A year-over-year increase in the number of clubs in MSI pursuing, earning or renewing “club recognition” status.
3. Report on potential MSI level incentives by 2014-15 budget cycle.



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○ **BUSINESS AND MARKETING PLANS**

Create, publish, and implement business and marketing plans

Strategy: Analyze roles, accountabilities and resources, then identify gaps, which then become the basis for supporting and directing efforts by staff and volunteers.

Strategy: Bring together marketing specialists from within the LSC to help develop a marketing plan

Strategy: Continually recognize the varied segments of MSI membership and their needs, which becomes a foundation for the business and marketing plan.

Strategy: Link business and marketing plans to drive “sport investment” that financially support initiatives that are mission/vision focused.

Measures: Business and marketing plan completed to reinforce the 2014-15 budget and subsequent annual budgets

○ **POOL FACILITIES**

Maintain awareness of future programming and development of local competitive pool facilities

Strategy: Continue to develop MSI’s standing as a leading point of contact for those interested in competitive pool development in our LSC territory.

Strategy: Encourage better utilization of existing facilities, with emphasis on 50-meter pools

Strategy: Sustain internal grant resources/program to support development of pool facilities

Strategy: Solicit and assemble expertise in grant writing to prepare publishable guidance for clubs seeking grants to build or renovate pools

Measures:

1. Documented communication to developers of pool facilities in our LSC territory to offer input and expertise for competition pools that meet the needs of MSI members.
2. Documented communication in 2013-14 with managers at high use pools within our LSC territory to explore additional ideas to utilize existing resources.
3. Update the MSI Pool Facility Development Grant Application by Q3 2013 to set expectations and grant ranges for requesting member clubs.
4. The Multi-Year Pool Facility Development Fund is sustained by action of the MSI House of Delegates in 2014 and 2015.
5. Compile a set of resources in 2013-14 that will assist clubs in grant writing.



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○ **POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Address the management, sustainability, and mission focus of policies and administrative procedures for our MSI community.

Strategy: Initiate LEAP 2 process, identify gaps to complete process, and implement milestones that add value for members, are sustainable and lead to achieving LEAP 2 recognition.

Strategy: Implement use of "Ted Stevens" compliant committees that include 20% of the voting committee members as athletes.

Strategy: Leverage technology in the compilation, maintenance, and publication of policies

Strategy: Review, update, and publicize volunteer job descriptions (board, committees, meet directors, meet volunteers)

Strategy: Continue to define and document key policy and administrative areas for disaster recovery, crisis management, and business continuity.

Measures:

1. LEAP 2 status achieved prior to year-end 2014
2. "Ted Stevens" compliant standing and ad hoc committees are designated and utilized
3. As part of the business plan process accessibility and sustainability of policies and procedures are addressed.
4. Volunteer job descriptions are updated and publicized (board, committee, meet directors and volunteers) by year-end 2013
5. All Form 990 policies, disaster recovery, crisis management and business continuity policies are adopted by year-end 2013.

○ **COMPLEMENTARY RELATIONSHIPS**

Develop and improve relationships with complementary swimming organizations locally and regionally.

Strategy: Executive Director will initiate LSC-level connections and foster relationships with complementary competitive swimming organizations as appropriate.

Strategy: Encourage local clubs to reach out to complementary organizations in their local area

Measures:

1. Regular reports by Executive Director including how these relationships are benefiting members of MSI.
2. An "inventory" of existing relationships at the club-level is compiled and published for the benefit of clubs to learn from one-another, by 2014 MSI House of Delegates.