

USA Swimming Club Recognition



Why Promote it?

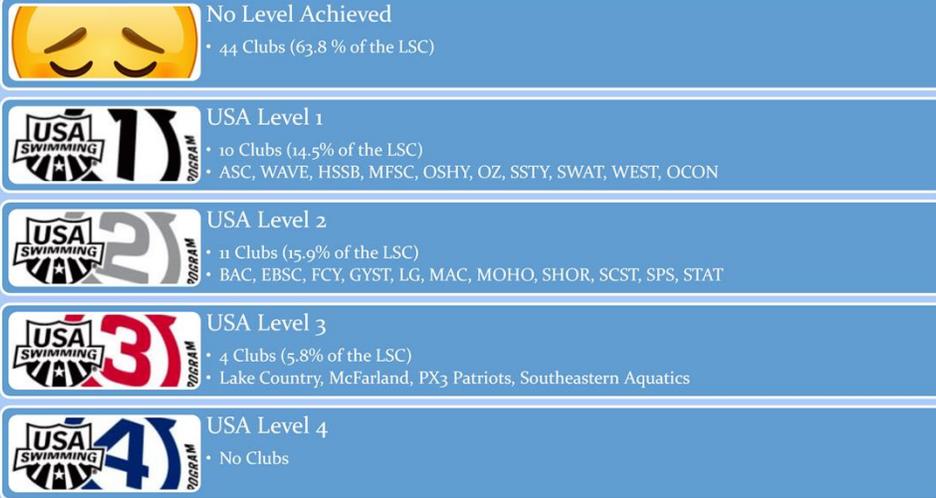
- More clubs at a higher level = more LEAP points
- It strengthens the club system by working on the four main aspects of the club:
 - Business & Organizational Success
 - Parent & Volunteer Development
 - Coach Development & Education
 - Athlete Development & Performance
- Stronger clubs = a stronger LSC
- Stronger, more stable clubs = more coach stability!

Most clubs are aware of the Club Excellence, which gives out Gold, Silver, and Bronze levels to the top performing clubs in the pool. This provides great publicity for a high performing club, but is only designed to reward the top 10% of all clubs.

On the other hand, the Club Recognition program gives all clubs the ability to work on every aspect of their club: business organization, parents, coaches, and in-water performance. The tasks involved start fairly easy to complete level 1 and get extremely challenging in level 4. Level 1 requirements are all things a club SHOULD be doing. If they aren't, these are red flags for future problems.

Promoting Club Recognition will help make sure our clubs are stronger and balanced. It keeps clubs thinking about things like their mission, and keeping a balanced budget, and plans for finding & retaining volunteers—things that oftentimes get overlooked in the process of making kids faster. Whether we like it or not, our clubs are businesses and must be thought of in that light.

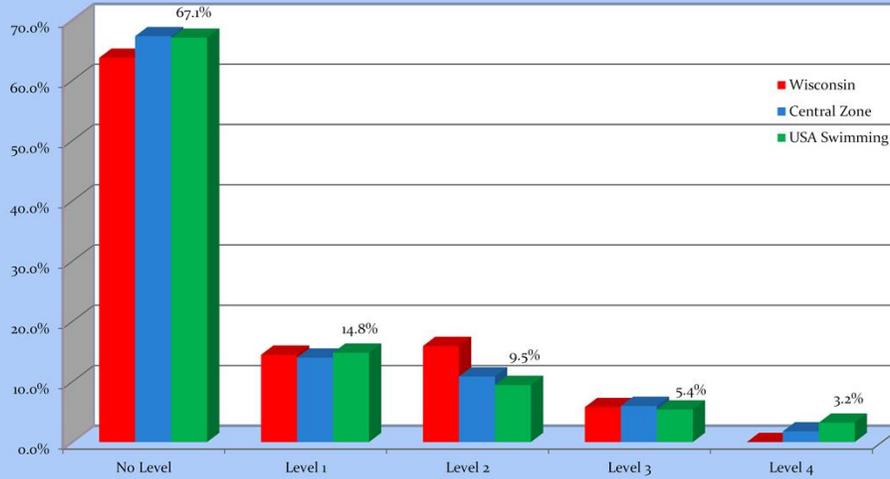
Numbers as of Season Start



As of this fall, the majority of our clubs had not completed level 1. I'd presume some don't know about the program, and others don't see the importance in it. Items for level 1 include the most basic of things. For parent run clubs, examples include: having by-laws, screening employees, registering the club name with the state, having a contract for the head coach. For clubs run with different models, there are different sets of requirements too.

I'd presume that at least half a dozen clubs COULD be level 3, maybe 2-3 level 4. But it takes a lot of effort (and incentives to pull that work together).

How We Compare



Wisconsin Swimming clubs have done a good job of getting started on the process. Less teams with no level, with lots of Level 1s & 2s. Most clubs have Stopped after level 2. Providing incentives may help keep clubs progressing.

Looking at the numbers, Wisconsin has done extremely well getting teams started. Wisconsin ranks 10th in LSCs that have had clubs get through at least level 1. Level 2 is fairly easy as well, and we've had a good number of teams get that far. However, it takes hard work to get to Level 3 (that's where we're stuck), and a nationally recognized team to get to Level 4. That's where Wisconsin needs work. I don't think simply offering the challenge would be enough to get people moving, it needs to be incentivized.

Incentive Program



Level 1
Achievement:
\$500

Level 2
Achievement:
\$750

Level 3
Achievement:
\$1,500

Level 4
Achievement:
\$3,000

This program would run in perpetuity for all clubs looking to advance their level. Teams may not receive money for any level they've already achieved, only for future steps. As the tasks get harder, the incentive gets better.

Additional Notes

Every club is capable of making Level 1, or likely even Level 2. However, Level 3 & 4 Recognition requires a level of program that not all will reach.



USA Level 1

- Requires: Mission & Vision, Basic Policies & Procedures, Written contract for Head Coach, Percentage of swimmers attending meets regularly



USA Level 2

- Requires: Annual Budget, Parent Education Meetings, USA Club Leadership 201, Competitors at LSC Champs



USA Level 3

- Requires: Annual Board/Club Review, Written contract for all coaches, Top 8 swimmer at LSC Champs

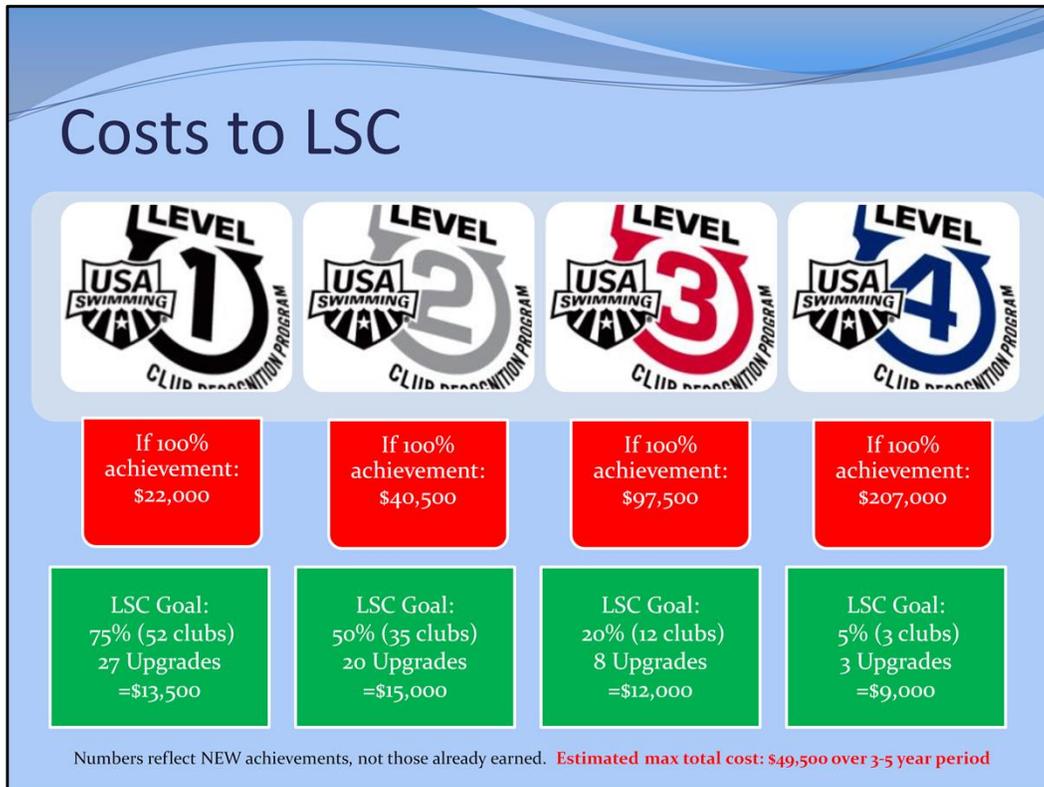


USA Level 4

- Requires: Strategic Thinking Missions, Top 8 swimmer at Zones, Sectionals, Jr Nats, or Nats

It's not possible for every team to be Level 4. It's nearly impossible to get everyone to Level 3. Some teams won't even do the legwork to achieve Level 1 or 2, despite those tasks being very easy to achieve. As you can see, the further the level, the faster the swimmers, the more officials and volunteers, the better business sense it requires.

The mere idea of teams looking at the list and saying, "how can we better ourselves?" is the goal. If this causes a head coach to get more involved with the LSC to get Coach Development Points, or causes a board to have to put together complete year-to-year financials to get the Business points, or even the setting up of a quad plan for Athlete Development Points, then the cost put onto the LSC is worth it, in my opinion. Which brings us to the cost...



The red box you see is if every single club decides to go wild and go after a level. Based on the numbers so far, it seems more likely that I'd do a 200 fly at state.

Requiring Level 1 for all clubs by, say, 2020 would be EXTREMELY interesting. It would force teams to look in the mirror and figure out shortcomings if they haven't already done so. But I digress...

What you see in the green box is what we should expect. I've set high, yet attainable goals for the LSC. So, the goal number of teams minus the number of teams who have already achieved the standard is the "upgrade" number. I'm an optimist, so the numbers are high. In reality, we probably won't achieve even these numbers. But it's a number to plan for goal-wise, and financially.