

## Questions Concerning the New Group Structure

1. How often will swimmers be evaluated for group transitions?  
Constantly! One of the best parts of our new group structure is that coaches will be constantly evaluating and re-evaluating athletes. As athletes become prepared for the next level, coaches will work together with the athletes and their families to transition seamlessly.
2. If my swimmer meets the time cut criteria for a higher level group, but can't commit to the attendance expectation due to other sport commitments, can they still be in the higher level group?  
Athletes and families must be willing and able to meet the expectations of their groups. Meeting time cuts, opens the door for athletes/families to have the conversation and be invited to the next level. Athletes and families can find group requirements on our website under "Swim Groups".
3. Will swimmers be reevaluated after each meet during the season to see if they achieve cuts for moving groups, or will there only be specific times during the season for group transitions?  
Coaches will be constantly evaluating groups, so as athletes achieve standards, coaches will work with families to best determine the next step.
4. Will there really be a difference in training between groups within an age group if they have practice at the same time?  
From time to time, groups will train together. This will allow coaches to evaluate athletes across the age group. This is also a fantastic opportunity for athletes within the same age group to spend time and engage their peers. However, just because two groups of the same age are scheduled simultaneously, it does not mean that they will necessarily complete the same practice.
5. If my swimmer meets the cut point for a higher level group, but would rather swim down one level, can they?  
Yes! Athletes/families can always opt to train in a lower level group- whether it is because of conflicting schedules or inability/lack of desire to commit to a more competitive schedule, athletes/families can always be accommodated to meet their interests.
6. What happens if my child ages up in the middle of the season?  
Athletes' group placements are based on their age as of March 12th, 2020, the first day of Age Group State, so no athletes will age up mid-season. This allows for coaches and athletes to pursue goals appropriate to the athlete's age at the end of the season.

7. How does this affect my child's ability to swim with his friends?  
We hope that all of our athletes share friendship and competitively motivated. With that said, sometimes the most conducive training environment for one athlete is not for another, so friend-groups or cliques will be superseded by appropriate training environment.
8. Can my child "pop in" to any practice within his age group if he misses his normal practice?  
No, athletes who need to make-up a practice will need to work with their lead-coach to find an appropriate make-up option. In general, we will ask athletes to make-up practices with the group one skill level down.
9. I don't like my child's placement can I have him/her moved?  
Unfortunately, no, our coaching staff took several months to map out and place athletes. Athletes were placed based on age, competitive times, meet participation, and practice habits from past seasons. Athletes will be evaluated regularly as the season progresses and may be moved up at any time, dependent on their performance in meets and practices.
10. Does my child's placement affect what meets he/she can attend?  
No, aside from meets with qualifying times, groups will be offered to meets based on age.
11. Is this the session my child will swim in meets? (For those 12 year olds that may be aging up mid season)  
Athletes will still compete with their age group- for instance, a 12 year-old who turns 13 mid-season will compete as a 12 year-old until they've aged up. The biggest difference is that our coaches and these athletes will still be striving towards age-appropriate goals for the season. Which is why he/she is swimming in that 13-14 group now.
12. Why did Lyons change the levels or groups?  
After evaluating our program over the past year, our staff felt we could better serve our athletes and community by downsizing groups and creating a better coach to athlete ratio and utilizing our pool space in a better manner.
13. Where did Lyons get this information to change the groups (research based)?  
Our professional coaches have spent the past year evaluating our current group structure and researching other successful programs in Illinois and Nation-wide. Our new group structure is based on what we felt has served others well, coupled with what we feel best serves our community.

14. Have other teams changed to this type of format and have their swimmers been more successful?

Yes, creating a more competitively based group structure has served other programs well. We noted that within programs where time and attendance standards were implemented, athletes were more goal oriented, motivated, and accountable to themselves and their teammates. We feel that these traits will serve our athletes long beyond their years in the pool!

15. How will attendance be monitored?

Attendance will be tracked on the TeamUnify app, OnDeck. Coaches will take attendance each day at practice.