

# LCY Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQs”)

## Communications

*How will information be communicated to me throughout the year?*

- We will circulate a weekly newsletter every Friday, which will advise you about deadlines, new events, etc. The Communications Chair will circulate the newsletter each week during the winter season.
- Our coaches and Swim Team Parent Association (“STPA”) Board members will send you emails about upcoming meets and events.
- We will update our TeamUnify website with information about new meets and events.
- We have a Facebook page – “**Lionville Community YMCA Riptides.**” Please join this page if you have not already done so. We frequently publish updates on Facebook. It is also a great forum to pose questions, share photos, etc.
- We have the LCY Handbook, which provides a wealth of information. The LCY Handbook is found on our TeamUnify website.
- We have family folders where we will leave awards, caps, t-shirts, and other important items.
  - The family folders are located on the far right of the reception desk as you walk in the main entrance of the Lionville YMCA. In the corner near the door to a stairwell, you will see a metal filing cabinet which will contain a folder for each LCY swim family.
  - We will update the family folders during the first few weeks of the winter season to include newly registered swimmers. You should check them periodically. You are also free to use the family folders to leave notes or items for other team members.

*I have question? Who do I turn to?*

- Please adhere to the following LCY Communications Policy if you have a question:
  - First, consult the Team Handbook, these FAQs, and our TeamUnify website to determine if the answer can be found there. You should also feel free to pose the question on our Facebook page to other parents.
  - If you cannot find the answer after taking the actions listed above, please email the STPA President/Vice President (formerly known as the “Liaisons”) at [lcystpaliaison@gmail.com](mailto:lcystpaliaison@gmail.com) before reaching out to a coach. If they cannot answer your question, they will either consult with one of the coaches on your behalf or direct you to contact one of the coaches.
  - ***If you have a personal question/issue, please continue to reach out to the coaches directly.*** This policy is intended to apply only to questions about the team, the website, meets, and things of that nature.
  - If you have a personal issue that you would like to discuss with Coach Owen, he can be reached at [oedwards@ymcagbw.org](mailto:oedwards@ymcagbw.org) or by calling 610-363-9622 ext. 2917.

## Volunteer Expectations

*What are the parent volunteer expectations?*

- We are entirely volunteer-based. We cannot run or attend swim meets without parent volunteers. From timers to officials to STPA Board members, we need all parents to volunteer. Most positions require little, if any, training. For positions that require training (such as Officials and Meet Managers), we will ensure that you receive training prior to taking on the role.
- **Every parent is expected to volunteer for at least 2 meets, and sometimes more, depending upon how many meets – and which meets – your child is participating in. We reserve the right to increase this volunteer requirement if we find we need to do so to run a meet. In addition, all parents are expected to volunteer at LCY’s Blue & White meet and LCY’s Last Chance meet if your child is swimming in those meets. Some of us volunteer at all meets – it makes the time go by faster!**

*How can a parent get involved?*

- Attend a STPA meeting (formerly known as PAC and SPA). STPA meetings are generally held on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:00 pm in the LCY Community Room (the room to the left as you walk in the main entrance). Anyone is welcome to attend these meetings regardless of whether they want to listen or join a committee. A list of the STPA Board positions and the current members is found under the “STPA” tab on our TeamUnify website.
- Volunteer to help at meets and/or for social activities.

## The Season/League

*How long will the season run?*

- The season runs approximately 26 weeks.
- Your swimmer’s last practice depends upon whether they qualify for certain meets at the end of the season (for examples, District and States) and/or participate in the UMLY Mini Meet for our 10 & Under swimmers at the end of the season.

*What league does LCY belong to?*

- We are a member of the PennDel Swim League (<http://www.penndelswim.org>) and we compete in the Adams Division.
- There are seven teams in the Adams Division: LCY; Kennett; Jennersville, Brandywine-Delaware; Ridley (B); UMLY (B); and Western.
- The YMCA divides Pennsylvania into three Districts – East, Central, and West. We are a part of the East District.

## Practices

*Do I need to notify a coach if my swimmer cannot attend a practice?*

- No. Swimmers are expected to attend as many practices as possible, but we understand swimmers have other commitments and/or become ill. **The only time you need to notify a coach about an absence is the week leading up to Winterfest, Champs, Districts, or States.**

*Do I have to accompany my child in/out of LCY to attend practice?*

- You may drop off your child at the curb to enter the building (depending upon their age and capabilities, which we leave to your judgment unless we encounter a problem).
- However, you **MUST** enter the building to pick up your child from practice. Parking at the curb and waiting for your child to exit the building creates, among other things, congestion and a fire hazard.

*Do I have to watch my child practice?*

- No. We invite, but do not require, our parents to stay and watch their swimmer practice.

*Are parents allowed on deck during practice?*

- No, except to drop off and pick up the younger swimmers. Parents may watch from the stands or by the tables in the lobby.

*What should my swimmer bring to practice?*

- Equipment depends upon your child's practice group. Please consult the Handbook on our TeamUnify website for a list of items. Ideally, your child should have two bags: (1) a bag for their towel, change of clothes, etc.; and (2) a mesh bag for their equipment (so the equipment can "air out" after use since it will be wet).
- In addition, your swimmer should bring a bottle of water and/or a sports drink.
- **PLEASE LABEL ALL EQUIPMENT.**
- Swimmer can store their mesh bags in the storage bins on deck (near the diving board) so they don't have to bring them back and forth to practice. **However, the YMCA/the team is not responsible for any lost or missing items.**

*Can I bring my swimmer to another practice group?*

- **No, unless you have the prior permission of one of the coaches.** Our practice groups are carefully constructed based upon the number of swimmers assigned to each group and their abilities. It can be disruptive to the flow of practice for swimmers to attend other practice groups.

*How does my child move from one practice group to another?*

- The practice groups are based upon age and ability. Movement from one group to another is based upon the coaches' recommendations. We ask that you respect the coaches' decisions. You will be notified if they believe your child should change their practice group.

### **Team Suits/Caps/Gear**

*Where can I purchase a team suit?*

- Online at the Toad Hollow website: <http://toadhollowathletics.com>. There is also a link to the Toad Hollow website on our TeamUnify website. Note: to find our gear, type Lionville in the search box on the Toad Hollow website. Please see the Toad Hollow website for current pricing.
- At the Toad Hollow store. If you are not sure of your swimmer's size, you can visit the Toad Hollow store and try on different suits. Here is their contact information: Toad Hollow North, 1590 E Lancaster Ave., Paoli, Pa 19301. Telephone: 1-800-322-TOAD (8623) or 610-640-0594. Facsimile: 610-651-0911. Hours: Monday – Thursday: 9:30 am – 6:00 pm; Friday: 9:30 am – 7:00 pm; Saturday: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm; and Sunday: 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm.
- All purchases are made directly from Toad Hollow, and not through your LCY account.
- Our suits are the same as last year.

*How can I purchase a team cap?*

- A team swim cap is required for athletes who wear swim caps.
- You can purchase plain swim caps (just bearing the LCY logo) for \$12 per cap at the beginning of the season. In addition, we will have a limited quantity of these caps available for purchase during the season should your child lose his/her cap, a cap breaks, etc.
- Personalized swim caps must be purchased at the beginning of the year. Personalized caps cost \$30 for 2 caps (a minimum of 2 caps must be ordered).
- All cap purchases will be billed to your LCY account.
- Our caps are the same as last year.
- Please contact the Spirit Wear Chair with any questions about swim caps.

*How can I purchase LCY merchandise?*

- Each swimmer who is part of the Winter swim team will receive a personalized short-sleeved team shirt. You do not need to pay anything extra for this shirt.
- We also have a Spirit Wear drive during the Fall when you can purchase sweatshirts, t-shirts, etc. with the LCY logo for both your swimmer and your family. Please contact the Spirit Wear Chair if you have any questions.

- In addition, we have some Spirit Wear items available for purchase year-round via The Lifeguard Store (a/k/a The Swim Team Store). Click on the “Shop” tab on the far right of our TeamUnify website. Then, click on the “Swim Team Store” option. LCY receives 10% of all purchases made from that website so it’s a great fundraising source too.

*Where can I buy practice suits?*

- You can buy practice suits anywhere you would like (for example, Toad Hollow or Dick’s Sporting Goods).
- Swimoutlet.com is also a great resource. SwimOutlet.com is the largest online specialty shop for swimming, water polo, fashion, beach, and surf products in the United States. Often times, items are offered at a discount. Free shipping is typically offered on orders over \$49. In addition, your purchase will earn an 8% donation to the team as long as you shop through the link provided on our TeamUnify website. The link is found under the “Shop” tab on our TeamUnify website (<https://www.swimoutlet.com/lcryptides>).

### **Meets – General**

*What are the different types of meets?*

- Dual meets – this term refers to meets within the YMCA PennDel Swim League in which one team competes against another. We typically have 5 dual meets each season. The dual meet season runs from approximately mid-November through January. The meets are held on a Saturday, and some meets are home and some meets are away. There are two sessions for each dual meet – the boys compete separately from the girls. The dual meets culminate with a league championship meet in February (called “Champs”) and then Districts and States in March. The PennDel Swim League also holds a Long Distance Championship meet each year. Swimmers are expected to attend dual meets and Champs.
- YMCA Invitationals – a YMCA swim team sponsors these meets, in which many YMCA teams attend. These meets are “closed” to YMCA teams only. These meets typically offer a greater variety and number of events to swim. YMCA Invitationals are divided into different sessions based upon age. Attendance at these meets is optional. Some – but not all – YMCA Invitationals are sanctioned by USA Swimming (which means USA Swimming will recognize the swimmers’ results and will put them in their SWIMS database; USA Swimming does not recognize swimmers’ results in dual meets). You must consult each meet packet to determine if the meet is sanctioned by USA Swimming.
- USA Swimming meets (“USA meets”) – these meets are sanctioned by USA Swimming (see the description of USA Swimming below). Many teams (both USA teams and YMCA teams) attend these meets, provided they are USA Swimming members. USA meets typically offer a greater variety and number of events to swim. USA meets are divided into different sessions based upon age. Attendance at these meets is optional. *You cannot register for a USA meet unless you sign up to be a USA Swimming member at the beginning of the season and pay the \$70 yearly fee.*

*Are parents allowed on deck during meets?*

- No, unless you are volunteering for a position at the meet (for example, as a timer or as an Official).

*What does SCY, SCM, and LCM mean?*

- There are three types of competitive swimming pools:
  - Short Course Yards (“SCY”) – A 25 yard pool. Most high school and college competitions, as well as the majority of our YMCA meets, take place in this type of pool (including LCY).
  - Short Course Meters (“SCM”) – A 25 meter pool, which is slightly longer than a SCY pool.
  - Long Course Meters (“LCM”) – A 50 meter pool. Most big national and international competitions, such as the Olympics, take place in a LCM pool. We participate in some LCM swim meets during the summer season.

*Do we host any meets?*

- Yes. We hold an intra-squad meet (the Blue & White meet) at the beginning of the season in which everyone swims each of the four strokes to get a base time (except for some of our mini swimmers who cannot yet legally swim breaststroke or butterfly).
- We host two or three dual meets each season.
- We hold a “Last Chance Meet” in late February/early March, which gives swimmers one last chance to achieve a qualifying time for Districts (see the description of Districts below). All parents are expected to volunteer in the Last Chance meet if your child is swimming in that meet.

*How do I sign up for swim meets?*

- Log into our TeamUnify website (***please note that you cannot see the entirety of our website unless you are logged in***). Click on the “Events” tab at the top. Then select the “Attend/Decline” button (or “Edit Commitment” if you already committed to the event) under the swim meet in question. Click on your swimmer’s name. There will be a drop-down menu under “Declaration.” This is where you will indicate whether your swimmer is (or is not) attending the meet.
  - If you select “No, thanks, [Swimmer] is NOT attending this event,” you simply need to click on the “Save Changes” button on the bottom right and you are done.
  - If you select, “Yes, please sign up [Swimmer] for this event,” a field will appear below where you select the events that your swimmer would like to swim. After you check the boxes for the appropriate events, click on the “Save Changes” button on the bottom right and you are finished. Please note that every meet has a limitation on the number of events that a swimmer can enter. The limitation is found either: (1) in the meet packet; (2) click “View” next to the “Maximum Event Entry Limitation notation

above; or (3) on the blue heading for each session (it will say “Max Entries this Session” – “IE” means “Individual Entries and “Rel” means “Relays”).

- **If you do not register for a swim meet, the coaches will assume that the swimmer is NOT attending the meet and the swimmer will NOT be entered in any events.**

*If I miss the deadline for registering for a meet, can I still attend?*

- No. Deadlines are put in place for a reason and we will not impose upon other teams/coaches/volunteers with late entries. Adding swimmers to a line up creates additional work and sometimes a reshuffling of heats and relays.

*Who picks which events my child will swim?*

- Coaches pick which events your child will swim in dual meets and at Champs. In addition to trying to win as many points as possible for our team, coaches sometimes pick events that your child does not typically swim to determine how they will do in that event and/or to challenge them. We kindly ask that you respect our coaches’ decisions.
  - If your child is trying to make a qualifying time (e.g., Winterfest, Districts, or Charley Hartley), please make a note in the Comments section when signing up your child for a dual meet or for Champs. Coaches will try to accommodate requests, but cannot guarantee that your child will swim the requested event for various reasons that change from time-to-time.
- You will be able to choose which events your child will swim in YMCA Invitationals, USA meets, Winterfest, Charley Hartley, and Districts. However, the coaches will review the entries and reserve the right to make additions, changes, or deletions as they deem appropriate.

*How does my child get on a relay?*

- The coaches will determine which swimmers will be on relays. Their decisions are based upon a number of variables that change from time-to-time.
- Four swimmers make up a relay. There are two types of relays – a freestyle relay and a medley relay (a medley relay is one in which each swimmer swims one of four strokes in the following order: backstroke; breaststroke; butterfly; and freestyle).

*Is there a cost for entering meets?*

- There is no cost for entering dual meets.
- There is a cost for entering all other meets. Fees vary depending upon the meet. Please consult each meet packet to learn about the costs. Fees usually depend upon the number of events your child is swimming. Sometimes, a general fee is also charged.
- All meet fees will be billed directly to your LCY account.

*Can I change events after LCY submits the entries?*

- We would need to contact the host team to determine if they are willing to let you switch events. An alternative is to try to “deck enter” at the meet (which means that you can enter an event on the day of the meet *as long as* there is an open lane and you haven’t exceeded the maximum number of events; there is typically an extra charge to deck enter at a meet).

*What happens if my swimmer is entered in a meet and can no longer attend (i.e., you need to “scratch”)?*

- You need to notify the coaches (or the designed STPA Board Member) immediately so they know your swimmer will not be attending the meet and can notify the host team. However, once meet entries have been submitted, all meet fees are non-refundable. Host teams do not reimburse LCY for any missed events and/or for swimmers who do not show up at the meet.
- We highly discourage scratches (unless, of course, your child becomes ill) as the host team can sometimes get annoyed. **If you need to scratch, please notify the coaches (or the designated STPA Board Member) as soon as possible.**

*What is a qualifying time?*

- A handful of meets require swimmers to achieve a certain time to participate in them. These meets include the following:
  - Winterfest
  - Charley Hartley (they have minimum and maximum times)
  - Districts/States
  - Speedo Classic (this is a USA meet in December; if you attend, you will likely do so without a LCY coach)
  - Junior Olympics (“JOs”) (this is a USA meet in March; if you attend, you will likely do so without a LCY coach)
- Qualifying times vary from year-to-year. We will post them under the “Qualifying Times” tab on our TeamUnify website as soon as they are available. Qualifying times are also found in the meet packets.

*Does my swimmer have to attend every meet?*

- Attendance at dual meets and Champs is expected; however, we understand that conflicts and illnesses arise from time-to-time.
- It is up to each family to determine whether they want to attend YMCA Invitationals and USA meets. These meets are beneficial because they offer swimmers opportunities to swim more events during a meet (sometimes up to four or five events) and/or longer-distance events. These meets also offer another opportunity to obtain a qualifying time. However, attendance is not required at these meets.

*Do I need to reserve a hotel room at any point during the season?*

- Overnight stays are not required. However, you are free to book a nearby hotel if you would like to do so. The only meets for which LCY blocks rooms is for Winterfest (at the University of Maryland in College Park) and for States (at Penn State University in State College). However, you are not obligated to stay in these hotels.

### **What To Expect At A Swim Meet**

*What does a swimmer need to bring to a meet?*

- Your swimmer should always bring multiple towels, 2 pairs of goggles (in case one breaks), 2 caps (for the same reason), an extra swim suit (for the same reason), water/sports drinks, and some snacks. **PLEASE DO NOT BRING ANY NUTS ON DECK BECAUSE SOME SWIMMERS HAVE NUT ALLERGIES.** In addition, there is usually a snack bar at the meets so you may want to give your child a few dollars if you are comfortable doing so. Your child may also want to pack a sweatshirt or a deck coat to keep warm between events. *Finally, we highly encourage our swimmers to wear their LCY Spirit Wear at all meets to promote team spirit.*
- If we are attending a YMCA Invitational meet (and some USA meets – please consult the meet packets), you should also pack bag or folding chairs (for both you and your swimmer) because we are often in a gymnasium between events. You should also pack warm clothes and/or blankets because the gymnasiums can sometimes be cold.
- Swimmers must wear a LCY swimsuit at all meets; however, they are free to wear a tech suit or a kneeskin if they are trying to achieve a qualifying time. Swimmers must also wear their LCY swim cap (if they wear a cap) at all meets.
- For parents, you may want to pack some drinks and snacks for yourself. Dress in layers – even though it is often cold outside, the viewing balconies can get hot. If you have a “bad back,” you may want to bring a bleacher seat for more support. In addition, some meets (but not dual meets) charge a small admission fee so bring a few dollars with you. You may also want to bring a highlighter, so you can highlight your child’s events on the heat sheets. The heat sheets are like the program for the meet – they will list each event, the heats for each event, and which lane each swimmer is assigned to. Heat sheets are not available at dual meets, but they are typically available at other meets for a few dollars. You are not obligated to buy them. Finally, you may wish to bring a portable charger for your phone/personal device as swim meets can be long and your battery may run out.

*What are “warm-ups?”*

- Each team is assigned a time period and lanes to swim laps prior to the actual meet. The idea is to warm up the muscles to prevent an injury and to be ready to race. Warm-ups also allow the swimmers to learn the intricacies of each pool (for example, to confirm a backstroke count).

*How long are meets?*

- The length of each meet depends upon how many swimmers are entered and if any technical issues occur (for example, a touch pad is not working).
- As a rule of thumb, dual meets last about three hours. USA meets cannot be longer than four hours. The length of YMCA Invitationals are generally the same as USA meets.

*How will my child know when to line up for his/her event during the meet?*

- The coaches (and sometimes the older swimmers) will make sure swimmers are where they need to be. In addition, we require a “mini parent” at dual meets to assist with lining up the 8 & Under swimmers.
- Please remind your child not to wander from the pool deck as coaches cannot leave the team to search the building for your child.

*Can we leave after my child swims his/her last event?*

- You must stay for the entire dual meet and for Champs unless you notify the coach in advance of a conflict.
- With respect to YMCA Invitationals and USA meets, you are free to leave after your child’s last event. However, you may sometimes find that your child wants to stay to support his/her teammates.

### **Meet Results**

*How are results posted?*

- Results are typically posted to a wall. In addition, results for YMCA Invitationals and USA meets are often posted electronically on an app called “Meet Mobile,” which can be accessed on your smart phone/personal device. As stated in their advertisement, “Get swim meet results in real-time from anywhere, at any time” (assuming the meet host is sending results contemporaneously). An annual subscription is currently \$5.99. Please see your app store for more details if you are interested in purchasing this app.

*What does an X mean next to my child’s name?*

- This term stands for Exhibition. This occurs when a swimmer participates in an event, but the coach does not select them to score points (a coach can pick only a limited number of swimmers to score points at dual meets). However, the swimmer’s time is official and can count as a qualifying time for a meet.

*What does a NS mean next to my child’s name?*

- This term stands for “No Show.” It means your child did not show up for the event.

*What does a DQ mean next to my child's name?*

- This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of a rule – for example, a one-handed touch in butterfly or breaststroke. If your swimmer receives a DQ, their time does not count. Relays can also be DQ'd.

*Do they hand out ribbons or awards at meets?*

- Awards vary from meet to meet. Please review each meet packet to determine whether awards will be given. Please note, however, that awards are not given at dual meets.
- Coaches will collect any awards at the conclusion of the meet. If your child wins an award, we will typically place them in the family folders during the week following the meet.

### **USA Swimming**

*What is USA Swimming?*

- USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming in the United States. USA Swimming divides the country into regional bodies called Local Swimming Committee (“LSCs”).
- Although LCY is a YMCA team, we are also a USA Swimming member. Our LSC is MidAtlantic Swimming (<http://www.maswim.org>).

*Do you require your swimmers to have a USA Swimming registration?*

- No. We are a YMCA team. Our primary focus is YMCA meets. However, we offer opportunities for swimmers to participate in USA meets if they wish to do so.

*How do you register for USA Swimming?*

- We submit registrations at the beginning of the Fall. We will notify you when we begin the USA Swimming registration process.
- There is a yearly fee (\$70) to become a USA swimmer.
- USA Swimming is typically for 9 & Over swimmers. Although 8 & Under swimmers can register for USA Swimming, we do not participate in any meets for 8 & Under swimmers (and most parents are not comfortable with their 8 & Under swimmer attending a meet on their own, although you are certainly free to do so).

*What is the difference between a YMCA meet and a USA meet?*

- A YMCA meet is a closed meet in which only YMCA teams participate. A USA meet is open to any YMCA team or non-YMCA teams affiliated with USA Swimming. USA meets typically offer a greater variety and number of events to swim. They are typically divided into different sessions based upon age. Attendance at USA meets is optional.

- The YMCA recognizes swimmers' times in USA meets (for example, a swimmer can achieve a qualifying time for Districts in a USA meet). However, USA Swimming does not recognize swimmers' times in dual meets (for example, you cannot qualify for the Junior Olympics – see the description of Junior Olympics below – during a dual meet). USA Swimming will recognize swimmers' times in YMCA Invitationals and put them in their SWIMS database ***only if*** the meet is USA-sanctioned (you will need to review each meet packet to determine if the meet is USA-sanctioned).

*Can my child swim in a meet that is not listed on the team's schedule?*

- **Yes, but you need the prior permission of Coach Owen before entering the USA meet.** In addition, the meet should not conflict with a dual meet and/or Champs.
- If permission is granted, you will be responsible for submitting your own entry and paying the host team directly.

*What are USA Swimming Motivational Standards?*

- Every four years, USA Swimming establishes time standards (or “cuts”) for swimmers of every age group that range from B to AAAA (the highest). These times allow swimmers to determine where they rank on a nationwide level and to set goals to achieve the next cut. USA Swimming also creates cuts based on the three sizes of pools (SCY; SCM; and LCM).
- Most USA meets are open to all swimmers, but some USA meets only permit swimmers who have achieved a certain cut to swim in a meet.
- The USA Swimming Motivational Times for 2017 – 2020 are found under the “Qualifying Times” tab on our TeamUnify website.

### **Information About Particular Meets**

*What is Winterfest?*

- Winterfest is one of the largest YMCA age-group meets in the country and is both a YMCA-sanctioned Championship meet and a USA-sanctioned meet.
- Winterfest takes place at the University of Maryland in College Park – typically, in mid-January of each year. Winterfest is divided into multiple sessions based upon age group.
- **A swimmer must achieve a qualifying time to attend Winterfest.** Qualifying times vary from year-to-year and we will publish them as soon as they are available.
- You select what events your swimmer will swim (subject to the coaches' approval).
- There are meet fees to enter this meet. You are also responsible for your travel and lodging costs.
- Each year, we block rooms for our team, although you are not required to stay at these hotels. Information on the blocked rooms will be posted under the “Meet Info” tab on our TeamUnify website.
- We will be forward our own Winterfest Informational packet as the dates approach. Information can also be found in the Winterfest meet packet itself.

- We typically hold a team and/or age group dinner for all Winterfest qualifying swimmers. We will also have Winterfest team shirts available for purchase.

#### *What is Champs?*

- All teams in the Adam Division compete in a Championship meet at the conclusion of the dual meet season.
- Champs usually takes place at a local YMCA in early February. Champs is divided into multiple sessions based upon age group.
- A swimmer does not need a qualifying time to attend Champs.
- Coaches will pick which events your child will swim. The goal is to win as many points as possible for the team.
- There are meet fees to enter this meet.
- The PennDel Swim League also holds a Long Distance Championship meet each year.

#### *What is Districts?*

- Each year, YMCA teams participate in a District Championship meet with the hope that their swimmers/relays advance to States (see the description of States below). Pennsylvania has three Districts (East, Central, and West). LCY competes in the East District.
- Districts are held at the Gloucester County Institute of Technology (“GCIT”) in Sewell, New Jersey. Districts are held in March. Districts is divided into multiple sessions based upon age group.
- **Swimmers must achieve a qualifying time to attend Districts.** In addition, swimmers must have participated in a minimum of three closed YMCA meets during the season. Qualifying times for Districts can be achieved in any competition from September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current season until the meet entry deadline. The qualifying times vary from year-to-year and can be found under the “Qualifying Times” tab on our TeamUnify website.
- You select the events your child will swim. *However, the coaches will review and possibly change the events that you select in an attempt to better position your swimmer to advance to States and/or to score as many points as possible for the team.*
- There are meet fees to enter this meet.
- We do not block hotels for Districts as Sewell, New Jersey is not that far away. However, you are free to book a room at a local hotel if you would prefer not to travel back and forth on one day, have multiple children competing in different sessions, and/or the weather forecast does not look good.
- We typically hold a team and/or age group dinner for all District qualifying swimmers. We will also have Districts team shirts available for purchase.

### *What is States?*

- The top swimmers and relays from all three YMCA Districts compete in a Pennsylvania State Championship meet.
- States are held at Penn State University in State College. States is held in March – typically, two weeks after Districts. States is divided into multiple sessions based upon age group.
- **To advance to States, a swimmer and/or relay must achieve the following:**
  - Individual events: a swimmer must finish in the top six of their District Championship (East, Central, and West) in order to advance to States. In addition, the next six fastest swimmers from across the three Districts (East, Central, and West) will advance to States. All individual events are Timed Finals.
  - Relay events: a relay must finish in the top six of their District Championship (East, Central, and West) to advance to States. In addition, the next six fastest relay teams from across the three Districts (East, Central, and West) will advance to States. All relay events are Timed Finals. Just because a swimmer swam on a relay team at their District Championship does not necessarily mean they will swim that relay at States.
  - With respect to both relays and individual events, the “next six fastest” times will be finalized after each District Championship meet is completed and we have a chance to look at the results. This final heat will be formally announced no later than the Wednesday after Districts.
- There are fees to enter this meet. You are also responsible for your travel and lodging costs.
- Each year, we block rooms for our team, although you are not required to stay at these hotels. Information on the blocked rooms will be posted under the “Meet Info” tab on our TeamUnify website.
- We typically hold a team and/or age group dinner for all States qualifying swimmers. We will also have States team shirts available for purchase.

### *What is Nationals?*

- Nationals is the top YMCA national competition.
- Nationals is usually held in Greensboro, NC. Short Course Nationals are usually held in April and Long Course Nationals are usually held in August.
- **Qualifying times must be achieved.** The qualifying times can be found under the “Qualifying Times” tab of our TeamUnify website. In addition, the minimum age requirement is 12 years old.
- There are fees to enter this meet and you are responsible for your own travel and lodging costs. If you qualify for Nationals, we encourage you to fundraise to defray your costs as attending this meet can be expensive.
- We typically hold a team dinner for all Nationals qualifying swimmers. National swimmers also receive gear, which varies from year-to-year.
- Please consult the Handbook on our TeamUnify website for more information about Nationals.

### *What is Junior Olympics (“JOs”)?*

- JOs are a championship meet held by USA Swimming. Each LSC holds its own championship meet. JOs are for 14 & Under swimmers. USA Swimming holds a separate meet – called Senior Champs – for 15 & Over swimmers.
- Short Course JOs are usually held in early March at the Central High School Natatorium and the Graham Aquatic Center (both in York, Pennsylvania). Long Course JOs are usually held in late July at Franklin & Marshall University.
- **You must achieve a qualifying time to enter this meet.** Generally speaking, JO qualifying times are faster than Winterfest and Districts qualifying times. **Please note that USA Swimming does not recognize swimmers’ times in dual meets as official times.**
- Because JOs is a USA meet (and we only participate in limited USA meets), if your swimmer wishes to attend JOs, he/she will likely do so without a LCY coach.

### **Social Activities**

#### *How can my child get to know other swimmers?*

- We have a Swim Sibs program, in which we create a “family” of two to four swimmers based upon gender and age. The high school seniors on the team, under the supervision of the Swim Sibs Chair, set up the program each year. Swim sibs are announced in the Fall, usually at or right before the Blue & White meet.
- We also have periodic team and/or practice group bonding events throughout the season.