

Diversity and Inclusion Summit Report – Lindsay McMahon

It was a learning experience and I made many contacts from USA swimming and otherwise, also brought home some Diversity and Inclusion resource books from the summit to share at HOD.

Brief overview: Safe sport Mondays are being encouraged and there was much talk of getting all teams to comply with having policies such as code of conduct for parents and swimmers as well as anti-bullying and communication policies. Not only should the policies exist but an action plan for if the policies are broken should be included.

We talked about safe and inclusive language, how nicknames are not always best practice.

We talked about the best practice for inclusion of transgender athletes, and there is a two page PDF on the USA swim site. In short, swimmers can compete in the gender of their choice, and one must request the change of gender in swims. Suit exception has to go to Jay Thomas at USA swimming, (parents or coaches can call) and he sends to local officials. Complete confidentiality is implied in these situation and they can use the locker room consistent with their identity, as long as that is allowed within state laws and regulations. There are similar regulations for national team selection, except in male to female athletes testosterone levels must be at a certain number before allowed to compete.

We talked about a 2008 study of the key variable for kids not learning how to swim:

fear factor

parent influence

swim ability

role model/influences

physical appearance and

facility access issues (probably our biggest in Maine I would speculate)

We talked about monitoring social media, and how difficult that is. It is becoming a large issue. But the silver lining is using it for advertising.

We talked about D & I as it is related to the LEAP program. Guidelines come out in November

Level 1- all teams have to offer

Level 2 -Diversity mission statement specific to your LSC

Meet fee reimbursement and swim suit reimbursement.

There was also a brief outline for me on what and how I should do things as D and I chair, year to year. My goals right now are for us to have everyone report and do outreach and also to have a swim safety day that each pool hosts free to the community within the next year.

Because of our geographic location and the fact that Maine is very white, and also very different ethnically from end to end, our challenges are different than say Metro or New England or all of the other LSC in the East. One of the issues that I brought up with USA swimming was that there was nothing in place for rural development of swimming. They said that they would be working on that in the future, and you can be sure I won't let them forget.

