

BLACK
HLINE
aquatics

2018-19
Team Handbook

1. Welcome to Blackline

Our team is a member of USA Swimming and Minnesota Swimming, Inc (MSI). The team is designed as a stepping stone process, providing for swimmers of all ages and abilities. In our younger groups, stroke technique and fostering a love of the sport are the primary focus. As swimmers progress through the program, physical conditioning is added to their daily routine. Our goal is to provide for all members of the community who have a desire to swim.

Blackline Aquatics is a non-profit organization serving Minnesota School District 196 and surrounding south metro communities. Blackline Aquatics is a team for the beginning swimmer to the experienced swimmer. Our mission is to have a program where every swimmer is able to strive for their personal excellence. This is done by providing a consistent environment that will allow every swimmer to systematically progress from novice to the elite levels of competition. To attain this goal, we believe that the coaches have the responsibility to teach the skills that are needed. United we stand. Divided we fall.

Blackline Aquatics swimming programs will provide quality educational experiences in an aquatic environment. Recognizing the wide range of interests, needs and abilities represented in our population, it will be the goal of these programs to accommodate those needs and interests. In addition, Blackline Aquatics will cooperate fully with various agencies in our community to promote competitive swimming in the Community. All levels of instruction, competition and recreation will be aimed at promoting a safety conscious attitude while fostering an enjoyment of aquatic activities as a lifetime physical fitness alternative.

2. Benefits of Swimming

Swimming is an excellent participation sport, which develops responsible citizens in a safe and positive environment. It also teaches many valuable life skills, such as time management, self-discipline and sportsmanship. Swimming uniquely develops the cardiovascular system to the maximum, which makes it an ideal sport for children since an efficient cardiovascular system is the key to lifelong health. In addition, children run little risk of injury in swimming. Swimming is a sport in the true sense of the word. It is a pursuit for excellence. Its very nature demands self-discipline and great strength of purpose. Swimmers, more than most, learn early the relationship between hard work and results. Most successful Elite and High School swimmers participate in year-round club swimming.

3. Competitive Seasons

Competitive Seasons: There are two seasons of competition each year. The fall/winter season usually begins in mid-September and runs through mid-March. This season is usually referred to as the short course season, meaning that all major meets are held in a short course (25 yards) pool. The spring/summer season begins in early April and usually runs through early August. This season is referred to as the long course season, meaning that all major meets are held in a long course (50 meter) pool.

4. Group Descriptions

Age Group Developmental Programs:

Age Group 3- Yearly Cost of \$1265 or monthly payments of \$115

AG 3 is for swimmers that are 6-12 year-old and can swim freestyle and backstroke. This group is mainly instructional in nature, but will consist of a very small amount of interval training and endurance work. There will be intensive work done on starts, turns, finishes, stroke drills and techniques. Swimmers are expected to compete in one competition per month, Novice or USA Swimming meets. Although there are no practice attendance requirements for this group, two to three practices a week are recommended.

Age Group 2- Yearly Cost of \$1485 or monthly payments of \$135

AG2 is for 9-12 year-old swimmers with B and below times, plus advanced 8-year-old swimmers. Age Group 2 will concentrate on developing a solid technical background while learning to do consistent interval training and endurance work. There will be a major focus on the techniques for each of the four competitive strokes including turns and IM transitions. The basic concepts of this group will also include developing good racing fundamentals and strategies for a variety of distances and events. Swimmers are expected to compete in one competition per month, Novice or USA Swimming Meets. Although there are no practice attendance requirements for this group, three to four practices a week are recommended.

Age Group 1- Yearly Cost \$1705 or monthly payments of \$155

AG1 is for 10-12 year-old swimmers with B+ or above times, and 12-13 year-old swimmers that do not meet the time standards or requirements to be in the Junior squad. Swimmers in this group also need to show a certain degree of commitment to the sport of swimming. Age Group 1 will have a high emphasis on stroke and technique work, starts and turns work as well as IM and distance training. Age Group 1 will also do consistent interval training and endurance work. Swimmers are expected to compete in at least one competition per month. There are no attendance requirements for this group, but four to five practices a week are recommended.

After the AG level swimmers will join one of these groups:

Senior Prep – Yearly Cost \$1980.00 or monthly payments of \$180

The Senior Prep group is a select group of 12-15 year old athletes committed to reaching their full potential. Group members must show the ability to train IM and distance freestyle on rigorous cycles. They must have the ability to handle the physical demands to uphold a rigorous training regimen to allow them the opportunity to move up to the Senior High Performance group. The coaching staff will make invitations into this group after evaluating training performance, attitude and time standards attained during the course of the previous season. Swimmers will be required to compete in at least one competition per month. This group has base interval of 10×100 on the 1:30 and 5×200 IM on the 3:45. For a swimmer in this group to swim in the State or Sectional meet they MUST have a practice attendance of at least 90%.

High School Prep-Monthly only option of \$200

This group is for 13 and older and high school swimmers who wish to stay in shape. This is the group for MULTI-SPORT athletes. This group will have 5 practices per week. This is the group for athletes who also play other sports, but still want to stay in shape. This group can swim all meets except for Sectionals and Travel Meets. This group will swim in ISD 196 pools and the STA pool.

Senior High Performance Group—Yearly Cost \$2365 Or monthly payments of \$215

The SHPG group is a select group of athletes committed to reaching their full potential. This group is NOT for the High School swimmer who just wants to stay shape or think that High School swimming is the most important part of the season. This group will be for the athlete who is 100% committed to their training both in and out of the pool. Athletes must have coach's permission to join this group. Year-round training is required. This is a high-level training group with both practice and meets requirements. Training will be geared toward preparing the swimmer for national competition and a collegiate career. Swimmers will be required to compete in at least one competition per month. 18 hours per week during the school year and 22 hours per week in the summer are required to stay in this group. This group has base interval of 20×100 on the 1:20 and 10×200 IM on the 3:15.

5. Practice locations and rules

Saint Thomas Academy	949 Mendota Heights Road, Mendota Heights, MN 55120
Falcon Ridge Middle School	12900 Johnny Cake Ridge Rd Apple Valley, MN 55124
Black Hawk Middle School	1540 Deerwood Dr., Eagan, MN 55122
Scott Highlands Middle School	14011 Pilot Knob Road, Eagan, MN 55124
Dakota Hills Middle School	4183 Braddock Tr. Eagan, MN 55123
Rosemount Middle School	3135 143rd Street West. Rosemount, MN 55068
Richfield Outdoor Pool	630 East 66th Street Richfield MN 55423
Valley Middle School	900 Garden View Dr. Apple Valley MN

Members and non-members are allowed to watch all practices but are asked to follow the following guidelines:

- All attendees are asked to stay in the designated watching areas.
- All members and non-members are asked to follow all facility and BLA/DAT rules. These rules have been set for the safety of all patrons.
- Only USA coaches are allowed on the pool deck during practice.
- If any patron needs to speak to the coach please email them to set up a meeting time.
- Coaches may restrict viewing of practice only if it is deemed necessary in order to gain access to a facility.

6. Swim Meet Guidelines & Overview

Swim meets are classified according to the time standards that they offer, A meets (swimmers with A and faster times), ABC Open meets (swimmers with A, B, C and some Pre-C times), BC Open meets (swimmers with B, C and some Pre-C times) etc. The time standard tells you what class your swimmer's events fall. If their times are not yet on this sheet, they are considered Pre-C swimmers and should start out with Quad meets. Swimmers must compete in the appropriate classification and age for each event. Swim meets are also divided into short course (SC), 25 yards, and long course (LC), 50 meter. The 50-meter competitions are usually in the summer. The coaching staff enters swimmers in all swim meets. Coaches will put swimmers in the events they would like them to swim, not always in their best events. Requests may be placed in the comment section on the registration; however, coaches will always have the final say. The classifications for swim meets are as follows:

Quad Meets: The Quad meets are smaller meets design for new swimmers.

BC-Open: Swim meets for swimmers with B times or below. Some swimmers with no times can also participate. Swimmers without B or C times must have their coach's permission to enter these meets. The cost depends on the meet and the number of events swum. A deposit is required to enter this meet.

ABC-Open: Swim meets for swimmers with A, B, C or below times. Some swimmers with no times can also participate. Swimmers without A, B or C times must have their coach's permission to enter these meets. The cost depends on the meet and the number of events swum. A deposit is required to enter this meet.

A: Swim meets for swimmers with A times or faster times. The cost depends on the meet and the number of events swum. A deposit is required to enter this meet.

Championship Final Meets: Swimmers must have the time standard the Final meet is intended. MRC for A/B swimmers, MAC for C swimmers/Pre-C etc. Olympic Trials, Grand Prix, Senior Nationals, Junior Nationals, Section, Zones and State meet: These are all meets that have their own standard for swimmers to achieve before they can participate.

Invites: Teams sometimes host meets in which the time standards are not set by Minnesota Swimming. The host team can then invite any team and any level of swimmer they want.

RELAYS: The coaching staff will invite swimmers to represent BLA on relays. The coaches will inform the swimmers of the selection criteria, which is the four fastest swimmers. If your swimmer is selected for a Championship relay, we expect the swimmer to participate.

7. Blackline Coaching Staff

Program Director/Head Senior High Performance Group – John Barnes

John will be starting his 21st year with BLA. John is an ASCA (American Swimming Coaches Association) Level 5 coach. This the highest level that a USA coach can attain. John believes in a solid IM/distance based training program. He feels that with this type of training, the BLA swimmers can swim any event that is offered. He is also a firm believer in the long-term development of all swimmers. In his 30 years of coaching John has coached three swimmers to USA National teams, 15 swimmers to Senior Nationals, 50 swimmers to Junior Nationals, and has had over 100 T16 swims. John is also the Director of Aquatics and a P.E. Teacher at Saint Thomas Academy. John's teams at STA have won 15 State Titles, which gives John the most State Titles of any High School coach in Minnesota History. In his swimming career, John was a 4-time high school All-American and a 12-time college All-American. John has been married to Ann since 1988 and they have two children, Tyler and Ryan.

Associate Program Director/Head Senior Prep – Eva Kremer

Eva joined BLA/Dolphins in the fall of 1998. Eva shares John's belief in a solid IM/distance based training program. She enjoys coaching swimmers and teaching them work ethic and commitment. One of her goals is to develop well-rounded swimmers for a long-term career in swimming. Eva has been one of the directors of Minnesota Swim Camps since the summer of 1999. Before moving to Minnesota, she was an Age Group coach with Mission Viejo Nadadores, CA, one of the most successful teams in the country. Her coaching philosophy and ideas were developed as a part of the Nadadores' staff. Eva has been coaching since 1991 and she is an ASCA (American Swimming Coaches Association) Level 3. In her swimming career, Eva was a Swedish Junior National Champion and a member of the Swedish Junior National Team. In college, she was a 13 time NAIA National Champion and a 32 time All-American. She was also an Academic All-American, a Team Captain and a Outstanding Senior Finalist at Drury University. Eva was inducted into Drury University's Hall of Fame in 2004.

Head Age Group Coach and Age Group Program Director – Jason Oberg

Jason joined the BLA coaching staff in the fall of 2010 and has been coaching since 2004. He previously coached as Barracuda Aquatics Club Head Age Group/Junior Coach. Jason swam for (DAT) Blackline when John Barnes took over the program in the 90's along with other numerous clubs in the Twin Cities. With over 15 coaches to learn from he was able to use their knowledge and define his coaching style. In High School he swam for Apple Valley and Rosemount and was a 4-time All-American and State Champion and Record Holder. Jason qualified for USA Swimming's Junior Nationals and was National Top 16 qualifier in the 200 Free, 500 Free, 800 Free and Mile.

Age Group Assistant - Krystal Carlson

Krystal joined BLA coaching staff fall 2017 and has been coaching since 2014. She swam for BLA, Richfield High School, and Morningside College.

Swimming Highlights:

Captain of the Morningside Swim Team

National All-American Honorable Mention

2 time Morningside College Outstanding Swimmer of the Year Award

3 time NAIA Academic All American

Krystal graduated Summa Cum Laude from Morningside College with Bachelors of Science in both Biology and Chemistry.

Age Group Assistant - Frank Gaertner

Age Group 2 Coach - Breanna Schlegel

Breanna started swimming when she was 9 as a member of Dolphin Aquatics before it was renamed Blackline Aquatics. In high school Breanna swam for Eastview. Finally, she went on to swim in college where finished up her collegiate career representing Gustavus Adolphus College at the conference meet and was able to help the Gustavus Women's Team win their sixth conference title in a row. At the MIAC Championships Breanna also earned the Sportsmanship Award. She graduated from Gustavus in January with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Health Fitness. As an athlete Breanna has always been committed to an active lifestyle and promoting sportsmanship. She hopes to instill those same values and love for the sport in the young members of Blackline. She is excited for the opportunity to be back as a coach on the team that was responsible for sparking her own lifelong passion for the sport of swimming.

8. Team Fees and billing

Registration Fee is \$160 in the fall: your club registration of \$85, your USA swimming Fee of \$65, you will receive a team cap and team suit. With your USA Swimming Membership you will enjoy the following benefits: an extensive Times database, top tips and training advice, and the opportunity to enter the nation's most prestigious events. The USA Swimming membership is a must for any competitive swimmer or coach. The Registration fee is \$110 starting April 1: your club registration \$72, your Seasonal USA Swimming registration of \$38, you will receive a team cap.

Payments are due on the first day of each month (September – July) and will be delinquent on the 10th of each month. If payment is not received by the 15th of each month, a late fee of \$15.00 will be charged to your account.

If you are 30 days behind you will be locked out of signing up for swim meets

Members with balances over 30 days old may not be permitted to participate in training sessions or competition until the account is brought current.

Alternative payment plans are available and must be submitted to the team office before the family's account becoming delinquent.

The multi-family discount will be as follows. The multi-family discount will be based on the lower level swimmer.

- Families with 2 swimmers, 1st and 2nd child gets 5% discount off the team fees.
- 3rd child gets 10% discount off the team fees.
- 4th child gets 20% discount off the team fees.

If your child moves up during the season, you will be responsible for the new monthly payment

If an athlete drops off the team for one month during the year and then rejoins, they will be required to pay a \$50.00 re-startup fee in addition to their team fees. If a high school swimmer takes additional time off, they will also have a start up fee. Example: If a high school girl waits until January or later to rejoin, they will have a start up fee. If a high school boy waits until April or later to rejoin, they will have a start up fee.

Blackline Aquatics Billing Policies (Effective 8/09/05)

All billing questions should be addressed to BLABUSINESS1@GMAIL.COM. Coaches do not have access to billing information

INCLUDING BILLING, GUIDELINES FOR REGISTRATION AND SEPERATIONPRORATING OF DUES, DROPPING, CREDITING OF DUES AND OVERDUE ACCOUNTS

1. The BLA Swimming registration fee is \$160 yearly. Members who join after June 1st will be charged a prorated registration fee of \$110. All members will pay the \$160 fee each year. Members are required to pay The Blackline Registration fee before participation and at the beginning of each year.
2. Each member is required to pay the appropriate monthly training dues in a timely fashion as set forth in this billing policy. Dues for the 2017-18 swim year covers September 1, 2017 -August 31, 2018: Eleven (11) monthly payments: The first month's payment is due with the family's registration form. The remaining ten (10) payments are due the first of each month. Late Fee: A Fee of \$15 will be added to the Account if the Account is carrying an invoice balance (not fully paid) by the 10th at 12 am of the billing cycle.
3. All account statements for each month will be emailed on or before the 1st of the month. Full payment of account balances is due on or before the 10th of the month for which the dues are payable.
4. There will be \$15.00 late fee charged for any payment received after the 10th of the month.
5. Entry Fees - The entry fees (set by the host team) are charged for each meet entered by a member. Entry fees are pre-paid and non-refundable in the event you do not attend the meet.
 - Metro Area meets \$5 BLA Fee
 - Rochester and other MN meets with coaches in hotels will have a \$15 BLA Fee
 - Bus Trips will have a \$25 BLA Fee
 - National Meets will have a \$50 fee

All meet fees will be billed as entries are sent in and paid with credit cards. Once entries are sent in no refunds will be possible must be paid prior attending the meet.

6. Members with balances over 30 days old may not be permitted to participate in training sessions or competition until the account is brought current. You must contact the Business Office immediately to avoid termination of your membership. Balances 60 days overdue will result in termination of membership privileges.

7. Each member will be charged a full months dues for every month in which they compete or attend a training session. Training fees are not refundable for a partial month. Fees will not be prorated under any circumstance other than a documented medical condition that would prohibit physical participation. To receive the medical refund a note from your doctor must be sent to BLA office or email to BLABUSINESS1@GMAIL.COM. Telling a coach does not cover this. You must notify the BLA Business Office. Team members who do not participate in a specific month of training risk losing their spot in their respective practice group. They will be assigned a practice group by the head coach when returning, based on space availability and ability to fulfill practice requirements.

8. Any swimmer wishing to drop out of the program must notify Blackline Aquatics in writing by the 25th of the month in order to avoid being billed for the next month. All notifications must be emailed to BLABUSINESS1@GMAIL.COM. Verbal notice to a coach that one plans to discontinue participating in Blackline Aquatics is not proper notice. If notification is not received by the 25th the member will be billed for the next months dues. Notification must be emailed to BLABUSINESS1@GMAIL.COM.

9. If a member is unsatisfied with the Blackline Aquatics program and wants a refund, an investigation will be conducted to determine the cause of dissatisfaction. Requests of this type will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Members who are unsatisfied with the Blackline Aquatics program after only the first five calendar days of participation may withdraw their membership in writing and be eligible for a full refund of training fees but may forfeit the registration fee. Again, these refunds will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

10. A member may contact the Business Office at BLABUSINESS1@GMAIL.COM at any time with questions on the accuracy of any BLA bill. If it is determined that a member was incorrectly charged for a service, the member is entitled to a prompt refund of all incorrect amounts

9. Blackline Aquatics Code of Conduct

In order to conduct our organization in a manner that allows the completion of our mission and goals, it is necessary that all swimmers, staff and parents follow a few simple but needed rules of conduct. Membership with Blackline Aquatics is a privilege. Individuals that cannot abide by the following rules may be asked to leave the team.

As a Coach

- ❖ I will strive to make each swimmer's aquatic experience one of growth and personal rewards.
- ❖ I will strive to develop a relationship with each swimmer that is based on mutual respect.
- ❖ As a professional, I will continually improve my coaching technique and effectiveness as a leader.
- ❖ I will not use profanity or vulgarity when publicly representing this team.
- ❖ I will not tolerate misconduct or improper behavior by my swimmers.
- ❖ I will strive to create an environment of open communication for swimmers and parents.

As a Swimmer

- ❖ I recognize swimming is hard work and will make the most of every training session and competition.
- ❖ I will be a proud member of Blackline Aquatics.
- ❖ I will support my teammates' efforts at every opportunity.
- ❖ I will lead by example.
- ❖ I will respect and listen attentively to my coaches.
- ❖ I will respect the facilities and building in which I train.
- ❖ I will respect my fellow swimmers and their personal property.
- ❖ I will follow the Blackline Aquatics code of conduct with respect to bullying. [See link.](#)
- ❖ I will refrain from inappropriate behavior including but not limited to the following: stealing, lying, vandalism, foul or profane language, unnecessary roughness, inappropriate sexual behavior and language.
- ❖ I will not use or distribute alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, or performance enhancing substances.

As a Parent

- ❖ I will put the being of the team ahead of my personal desires.

- ❖ I will speak positively of our coaches, swimmers and other parents.
- ❖ When I have a dispute, I will express my concerns in a positive manner.
- ❖ I will use the Coach and/or the Head Coach to resolve a conflict or I will privately resolve the conflict with the other party.
- ❖ I accept that I will volunteer time to help this team.
- ❖ I will pay dues and meet fees on time.
- ❖ I am committed to the long-term success of this team and I will not sacrifice this goal for personal gain.
- ❖ I accept responsibility for my child and will demand that he/she show respect to other parents, swimmers, and the coaches.

All swimmers are required to follow the Blackline Aquatics Code of Conduct. In the event of for inappropriate conduct, the coaches will have the initial responsibility to discipline swimmers. It is expected that the coaches will use their reasonable discretion when imposing appropriate discipline, and that any disciplinary action will take into account (1) the nature and severity of the conduct, (2) any prior disciplinary actions regarding the swimmer, (3) the adverse effect of the conduct on other swimmers, and (4) the application of the Code of Conduct.

Examples of disciplinary action include verbal warning, requesting of a change in behavior, removal from a practice, notification to the swimmer's parents, suspension from an upcoming meet, suspension from some or all Blackline activities, up to and including expulsion from Blackline Aquatics. These examples are not exclusive, and it is expected that the coaches will exercise their discretion to fashion an appropriate disciplinary action, including consultation with both the Head Coach and affected parents in the case of extraordinary disciplinary action. However, the coaches will take any immediate action that is both necessary and appropriate under the circumstances to insure the safety of swimmers.

10. Bullying

USA Swimming's Code of Conduct requires member clubs to have an action plan to address bullying. This plan must be reviewed with, and agreed to, by all athletes, parents, coaches, and other adults in the club. Blackline Aquatics, as a member club of USA Swimming, is required to implement such policy and the following shall serve as the Blackline Aquatics action plan.

Action Plan of Blackline Aquatics to Address Bullying

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Blackline Aquatics and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. Blackline Aquatics is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, parent or athlete/mentor.

Objectives of Blackline Aquatics Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

- ❖ To make it clear that Blackline Aquatics will not tolerate bullying in any form.
- ❖ To define bullying and give coaches, parents, and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
- ❖ To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
- ❖ To make the methods to report bullying clear and understandable.
- ❖ To spread the word that Blackline Aquatics takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

- ❖ causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property
- ❖ placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property
- ❖ creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity
- ❖ infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity
- ❖ materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).

REPORTING PROCEDURE

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied or has witnessed bullying of another athlete is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- ❖ Talk to your parents
- ❖ Talk to a Blackline Aquatics Coach
- ❖ Write a letter or email to a Blackline Aquatics Coach
- ❖ Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of Blackline Aquatics as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh, behaviors can be accurately recalled, and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we **STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT** using the following steps:

- ❖ We will intervene immediately. If necessary, we will get another adult to help.
- ❖ We will separate the kids involved.
- ❖ We will make sure everyone is safe.
- ❖ We will meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
- ❖ We will reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
- ❖ We will not call the act "bullying" while we are trying to understand what happened.
- ❖ We will avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences

If bullying is occurring or reported at Blackline Aquatics, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED, SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED,** and **IMPLEMENTING CORRECTIVE ACTIONS** using the following approach:

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. First, we get the facts.

- ❖ We will talk to all children involved separately.
- ❖ We will get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
- ❖ We will listen without blaming.

2. Then, we determine if it's bullying. There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.

- ❖ We will review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
- ❖ We will attempt to determine if the behavior is bullying or something else by consider the following questions:
 - What is the history between the kids involved?
 - Have there been past conflicts?
 - Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
 - Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?

SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED

3. We support the kids who are being bullied

- ❖ We will listen and focus on the affected child.
- ❖ We will learn what has been going on and assure the child that we want to help them. We will talk to the child, parents and others that may have valuable input to the situation.
- ❖ We will talk to the child and help them understand bullying is not their fault.
- ❖ We will work together with the parents and child to resolve the situation.
- ❖ We will develop a game plan and discuss steps that will be taken to address the bullying.
- ❖ We will be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight, but we will commit to make it stop and support the child at all times.

4. We support other team members who witness bullying.

Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.

- ❖ Be a friend to the person being bullied.
- ❖ Tell a trusted adult – your parent or coach.
- ❖ Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. "Let's go, practice is about to start."
- ❖ Set a good example by not bullying others.
- ❖ Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

IMPLEMENTING CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

5. Address bullying behavior.

If Blackline Aquatics determines that the actions taken by a team member constitute bullying, Blackline Aquatics will implement a course of corrective actions.

- ❖ We will make sure the child who bullied knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- ❖ We will show kids that bullying is taken seriously.
- ❖ We will tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated.
- ❖ We will work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
 - a. Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
 - b. Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.
- ❖ We will look to involve the child who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
 - a. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
 - b. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for Blackline Aquatics, or for others in your community.
 - c. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property damaged.
- ❖ We will continue to follow-up after the bullying issue is resolved, and continue finding ways to help the child who bullied understand how what they do affects other people. For example, we will talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

6. Consequences for bullying behavior.

We will follow the same disciplinary methods defined in the overall Blackline Code of Conduct for any confirmed acts of bullying. Please remember membership in USA Swimming and Blackline Aquatics is a privilege.

John's Philosophy:

I love the sport of swimming and all that it has to offer. The fact that it is one of the most demanding sports only strengthens my love for it and plays a significant role in my philosophy in leading the young swimmers of the world.

TEAM – First and foremost, ever since I began my coaching career, I have believed that swimming is not an individual sport at all. In order to succeed to one's potential; they must believe in the TEAM approach and learn to be supportive of their teammates. From that point I believe in leading in a way in which swimmers learn to take ownership of their swimming. Coaches are there to guide them, support athletes in their quest for growth, but the athletes must decide what they want from their pursuit. That is as much in swimming as it is in life. In my opinion there are two major things that swimmers should get out of this sport.

1. Life long Memories – The experience that is gathered from the sport will often times lead to the strongest friendships and best memories. The memories come from the process, the day-to-day experiences that lead to those memories. Swimming is too tough a sport to not focus on making it fun as well.

2. Life Lessons – This is what the sport comes down to in the end. When the workouts are all over and the racing suits hung up, what the swimmer's have left are the life lessons learned through this sport. Those lessons will take them far in whatever their pursuits are in life.

a. Work ethic – There is no way around it, swimming is a demanding sport. The attempt here is to teach swimmers to enjoy the process of hard work and the rewarding feeling when they accomplish something that they didn't think they could.

b. Confidence – Once these swimmers have learned to push themselves to new levels, they will also build confidence that they can accomplish anything. Self-confidence will be a crucial component in succeeding.

c. Commitment – Swimming demands a level of commitment far beyond most sports. The great thing about commitment isn't just learning to make sacrifices, but rather believing in your commitments enough to not feel that you are making sacrifices.

d. Goal Orientation – You don't achieve great things without knowing what it is you want to achieve. Swimming teaches each individual the value of setting goals and learning how to then set the path needed to be taken in order to achieve those goals.

e. Time management – Only when athletes are challenged by their schedules will they learn to manage their time well. All too often people will waste time when they have time to waste. Swimming forces these athletes to be sure they manage expectations of school and swimming, and then fit their social lives in as well.

f. Adaptability – Learning how to take instruction and then change something that has become habit is needed to excel in swimming. This same approach is good for us all to remember as we grow and advance in our careers. Improvement and progress within our focused efforts is what keeps a drive within us. Developing young adults will be the main focus of my coaching.

Teaching them good sportsmanship will enable them to learn to work as a team moving forward in their lives. The key then is the consistency in which these athletes are able to learn each of these values. The more a swimmer can foster these values within themselves, the process of learning the sport of swimming becomes the easy part.

With all of that in mind, then comes the drive to succeed. I am led by a sense of competition as strong as any other, but I believe that things can be both fun and competitive.

You can have a fantastic TEAM environment surrounding a very competitive environment. While it takes focus and commitment from the leadership, I will strive to take these athletes to the highest competitive level and have fun in the process.