



South Dakota Swimming Athlete Representative Survival Guide

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A Letter to the Athlete Representatives

Congratulations on being selected to serve as an Athlete Representative for the SD LSC. This is an amazing opportunity for you to represent South Dakota Swimming, and you have been entrusted with an important and influential job. A few important things to remember: always communicate and work together as a team, as you are all working towards the same goal of making South Dakota Swimming the best it can be; use each others' strengths to compliment your weaknesses; and remember that Athlete Representatives have the duty of representing the views and desires of all the swimmers in South Dakota. Being an Athlete Representative for South Dakota swimming is truly a rewarding experience, so make the most of it! And remember, you were elected just like the non-athlete members and have all of the same rights and privileges - make the most of the experience!

Board of Directors Senior Athlete Representatives

It is your job to guide and train the Junior Athlete Representatives so that they have all the tools necessary to be Senior Athlete Representatives next year. Also, you should help lead the process of getting the ideas that the Athlete Committee wants to see instituted into South Dakota Swimming implemented.

Board of Directors Junior Athlete Representatives

Enjoy this time learning and watching from the Senior Athlete Representatives. Ensure that you stay involved and are very observant, as doing so will make you a better Senior Athlete Representative. Also, feel free to get involved in a project, and make the most of your term.

House of Delegates Athlete Representatives

Your time on the board is quick, so know what you want to do with your time as a House of Delegates Athlete Representative, and work to get it accomplished. If you wait to try and figure out the entire process, it will probably end up being too late for you to get your ideas implemented. The only exception to this is if you are a Sophomore or younger. In this case, feel free to work towards getting any ideas that you have implemented, but also consider using this as an extremely valuable learning opportunity to potentially run for a Board of Directors Athlete Representative position next year.

This document is designed as a survival guide to make your time as an Athlete Representative run smoothly. This is a continually evolving document. Therefore, Senior Athlete Representatives have full liberty to update this document as needed.

The electronic version of the survival guide can be found on the athleterep@sdswwimming.org gmail.

Structure of South Dakota Swimming

USA Swimming is made up of 59 Local Swim Committees (LSCs). Every LSC has a Board of Directors (BOD). The BOD in every LSC is the driving force behind everything from swim meets, to finances, and everything in between. The SD BOD has two in-person meetings (normally the same time as the HOD meeting), and has conference-calls every even-numbered month when it does not meet in-person. The HOD is comprised of representatives from every team in the SD LSC. These are larger meetings where proposals are voted on and all at the HOD are updated on the state of the sport in our LSC through financial statements and committee reports.

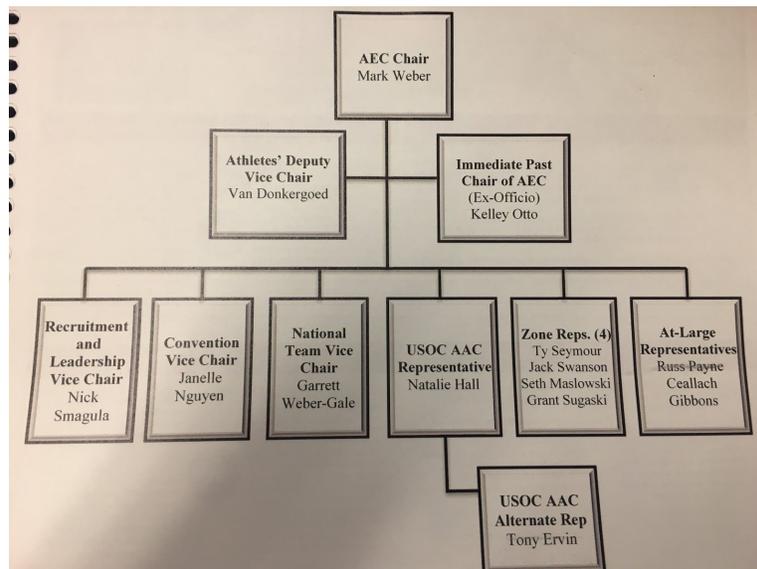
Why are Athlete Representatives on the BOD? Why do athletes serve on LSC committees?

Why can athletes vote at HOD?

- The Ted Stevens Amateur Sports Act, originally passed by the US congress in 1978 and updated in 1998, established the US Olympic Committee and established national governing bodies for swimming.
- 20% of the Board of Directors, House of Delegates, and committees are required to be Athlete Representatives.
- This act required that athletes contribute to the governance of their sport. Athletes serve on committees, boards, and have votes at HOD meetings because the Ted Stevens Amateur Sports Act requires it.

Structure of USA Swimming

- USA Swimming is run by a Board of Directors.
- Under the BOD is the Athlete Executive Committee (AEC). The AEC is designed to lead and direct the voice, opinions, and viewpoints of the AEC, Athlete Committees, and ultimately all athletes within USA Swimming. The AEC's Vice Chair also serves on the Board of Directors, the USA Swimming Executive Committee, and the National Team Athlete Committee.
- The members of the AEC are essentially a version of LSC Athlete Representatives, but for the entirety of USA Swimming.
- The AEC is set up like this:



- In addition to the AEC, there are USA Swimming National Committees, much like South Dakota Swimming's committees. You can apply to sit on one of these committees after the conclusion of convention your senior year.

Cluster Contact:

- To ensure that the athlete voice is strong in LSCs throughout USA Swimming, the AEC Leadership Committee has assigned each AEC member a cluster of 5-6 LSCs. AEC members are responsible for regularly communicating with the Athlete Representatives

from their assigned LSCs, and serving as a mentor for the Athlete Representatives serving in their assigned LSCs.

- Your discussions with your assigned AEC mentor could be to ask for advice regarding the LSC athlete committee that you are working to form, a service project that you are working to lead, your LSC Athlete Representative Election Procedure, or anything else you are currently working on or that you would like to ask about regarding your LSC.

It is encouraged that you be proactive about reaching out to your cluster mentor whenever needed. Please, take advantage of your cluster mentor's experience and expertise!

South Dakota Swimming's cluster mentor:

Name: Janelle Nguyen

Email: rjanellenguyen@gmail.com

Working With Non-Athletes

Just like you, the adults in South Dakota Swimming are volunteers. They are working towards the same goal of bettering South Dakota Swimming. Never be afraid to use your athlete voice. You were elected into this position to represent all of the swimmers in South Dakota Swimming, and you have as much influence as the adults. While using your athlete voice, always remember to be respectful of the talents and knowledge that the non-athletes are bringing to South Dakota Swimming.

How to ensure your athlete voice is heard during your time as an Athlete Representative:

- Communicate (answer emails, respond to text messages, contribute to group discussions, etc.)
- Ensure that what you say is succinct, respectful, and well thought-out
- Listen (do not repeat questions that have already been asked, and do not repeat ideas that have already been stated. Ensure that what you say is contributing to the conversation and moving it forward)
- Feel Free to ask questions during a meeting or outside of a meeting if you want more information
- Dress professionally for meetings
- Attend all possible meetings
- Stay organized
- Come prepared and participate
- Be punctual

Athlete Committees

Athlete Committees are ultimately overseen by the Senior Athlete Representatives. They have the power to decide what committees are created, who is on what committee, etc. Creating Athlete Committees is advisable as it allows Athlete Representatives to use their talents to serve SD Swimming better.

Social Media

- The SD Social Media Committee is responsible for posting on the SD Swimming Instagram Page.
- As an athlete committee, we should try to post regularly. When SD Swimming is at a big meet (Sectionals, Futures, etc.), or an exciting event (convention), feel free to post frequently.
- The Instagram page is used to promote statewide events and spread information. Additionally, our page is used to recognize significant achievements of athletes and clubs in our LSC. Examples of significant achievements include, but are not limited to: committing to college; attaining a Futures cut or higher; a club winning percentage award, spirit award, or overall high point; and a club being recognized in USA Swimming's Club Excellence Program.
- Athletes running social media is a privilege; ensure that it is used appropriately.

Athlete Development and Retention

- Created in 2019, this committee focuses on generating ideas on how to improve athlete performance in SD Swimming and how to get more people involved in the sport of swimming in South Dakota.

Leadership Summit

- Created in 2019, this committee is responsible for helping coordinate and plan Leadership Summits hosted by the LSC.

Expanded Athlete Committee

- Created in 2019, the Expanded Athlete Committee is composed of the BOD Athlete Representatives, the HOD Athlete Representatives, and the Athlete Liaisons from each

team in SD Swimming. In order to be an Athlete Liaison, one must be at least 13 years of age. The Expanded Athlete Committee was designed to improve communication throughout the LSC. This committee should be used to generate ideas, receive feedback on proposals, and communicate important information.

Convention

Convention is an opportunity for Athlete Representatives from all LSCs to gather and share ideas on how to make each others' LSCs better. Additionally, it allows the Athlete Representatives to meet with their cluster leader. This is an invaluable opportunity, as the cluster leaders have a lot of experience and wonderful ideas.

Athlete Meetings

Athlete meetings should be held frequently. They are run by the Senior Athlete Representatives, and should be used to check on the progress of the Athlete Committees and ensure that the Athlete Committee is working towards meeting its goals and objectives.