

**West Essex YMCA**  
**2018-2019**  
**Swim Team Handbook**

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# Introduction

Welcome to the West Essex YMCA Swim Team, a professionally run program with a long-standing tradition of athletic success and personal development. The objectives of the program are not only to develop young athletes to maximize their swimming talents, but also to develop self-confidence and build respect for others. These aims are hallmarks of the YMCA philosophy.

This team handbook is designed to give the parents and swimmers an overview of the program and to provide a tool to keep organized during the season. It outlines practice and meet expectations, how goals are set, progress is measured, and requirements for parental involvement. As the season progresses, additional information will be distributed such as updated meet schedules.

All parents and swimmers on the team should review the contents of this manual to maximize the benefits and enjoyment of the program. Key points to remember for a successful season are:

## **Swimmers:**

- Be on time for practice
- Train hard and listen to your coach's instruction
- Bring a positive attitude
- Use good conduct
- Do your best in meets and competitions

## **Parents:**

- Get involved in supporting the team – become a timer or events coordinator
- Manage your child's invitational meet schedule
- Avoid scheduling conflicts to enable your child to attend meets – their teammates are counting on them
- **Check your e-mail regularly – this is the main form of communication**
- Provide your child encouragement and positive feedback

**Thank you for joining the West Essex YMCA Swim Team and best wishes on a successful season.**

# Program Objectives

## ***West Essex Y Philosophy***

Teaching the fundamental skills, encouraging lifetime involvement in physical activity, strengthening the values of fitness and health, self-respect, and respect for others are central themes in the YMCA's sports philosophy.

West Essex Y programs are based on the Judeo-Christian concern for human life and are designed to achieve common objectives for the individuals and families involved. YMCA programs help all people to do the following:

- Develop self-esteem and character
- Support families
- Appreciate the diversity of the community
- Promote leadership development through volunteerism
- Build life skills and fitness
- Have fun - enjoy life!

Sports programs have been one way that the West Essex Y has instilled ideals, values, and exemplary leadership behavior based on its purpose and goals. Sports at the YMCA have never been an end in itself, but rather a vehicle for achieving more far-reaching purposes. The West Essex YMCA promotes broad participation in sports, not just the fine-tuning of the elite athlete.

## ***Goal Statement***

### ***Goal Statement***

**The goal of the West Essex Swim Team is to provide a swim program of competitive swimming and professional instruction to swimmers ages 6 to 18.** It is designed to motivate and challenge youngsters to reach individual goals while still enjoying the benefits of a team sport.

The program aims to provide a balance of personal development combined with fun. Our coaches will teach swimmers sportsmanship, discipline, and commitment while learning how to engage in relationship building with his/her fellow teammates. Sports can bring out the best and the worst in people, as one sees often exhibited by the behavior of some professional athletes. West Essex YMCA Competitive swimming program desires to bring out the best of character in its athletes, **like being gracious winners and gracious losers.**

Relationship building has several dimensions. The first is having fun. Fun can mean different things to different people. But we view fun as enjoying the process of training to achieve fast swims and cheering on teammates to do their best. It is the self-satisfaction of success and the camaraderie

and the team spirit experienced in competitive swimming. The second is building lasting friendships. Many swimmers and coaches have best friends they met in age group swimming. The same is true of high school and college swimming.

## ***Competitive Swimming Approach***

Competitive swimming is one of the most popular participation sports in the United States. "Why?" Competitive swimming offers so much too each athlete, both in a team setting and under individual circumstances. It is a great way for each member of a team to experience success, whether it is against the clock or other swimmers.

In our program, the primary emphasis is on setting goals and developing a plan to achieve those goals. It is from that success of working towards and achieving goals that the swimmer can draw confidence and self-esteem.

But fundamentally, competitive swimming is a demanding sport for which **Success = Technique + Training**. Therefore the program is designed around providing practice groups the ability to enable the swimmer to achieve optimal conditioning and instruction.

## **West Essex Coaching Staff**

The coaching staff is committed to doing their best for each swimmer and the team as a whole. Each coach is a competent and experienced individual, dedicated to the sport and the swimmers. The staff is as follows:

<b>Paul H. Casazza</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> season</b>	<b>Director of Competitive Aquatics</b>
<b>Craig Doyle</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> season</b>	<b>Assistant Coach</b>
<b>Eileen Larney</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> season</b>	<b>Assistant Coach</b>
<b>Julie Thompson</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup> season</b>	<b>Assistant Coach</b>
<b>Danielle Kelly</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> season</b>	<b>Assistant Coach</b>
<b>Carlee Phillips</b>	<b>9<sup>th</sup> season</b>	<b>Assistant Coach</b>
<b>Kayla Yanga</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> season</b>	<b>Assistant Coach</b>
<b>Valeriya Lukonen</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> season</b>	<b>Assistant Coach</b>
<b>Bethany Miele</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> season</b>	<b>Assistant Coach</b>
<b>Chinnara Smith</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> season</b>	<b>Assistant Coach</b>

The head coach will be directly responsible for overseeing all training groups. An Assistant Coach will be put in charge of a group or a facet of each group. Each Assistant Coach will be reporting progress and overall group status to the Head Coach.

Every effort will be made by the coaching staff to become the best coach he/she can be. This includes staying current on the latest ideas and techniques within the coaching community. There will also be several West Essex YMCA Coaches' Meetings to discuss problem solving and the ever-changing team dynamics.

## ***Coach Bio's***

**Paul H. Casazza** – Paul is a member of the American Swimming Coaches Association and is currently a Level 3 certified coach. He began swimming at the age of 5 for a summer swim team. He then swam year-round from the age of 6 through 18 for Somerset Valley YMCA in Somerville. He was a 3 time YMCA National qualifier and placed in the Top 16. He became an All-American swimmer in 1984 while attending St. Joseph's high school in Metuchen. He then received a scholarship to attend Old Dominion University in Virginia. He received a B.S. Degree in Exercise Science and Sport Studies from Rutgers University. He coached boys' swimming at St. Joseph's high school for two years, where in his first season as the Head Coach, he led the team to a State Championship. He was awarded the 1991 Coach of the Year award by the Star Ledger and Courier News. He then went to Somerset Valley YMCA in Bridgewater, where he was Head Coach for 8 years. He then coached at the Westfield Area YMCA for 9 seasons. This is Paul's 11<sup>th</sup> season as the Director of Competitive Aquatics at the West Essex YMCA. Paul resides in Somerset with his wife, Lisa and their two sons, Andrew and Hunter.

**Eileen Larney** - Eileen Larney has worked for the YMCA for 37 years. Ten of these years were spent at the Summit Area YMCA. She was associate aquatic director for six years before changing back to a part time position. At that time, she became a partner in her karate school and ran her own personal training business out of the school. She was an AFAA certified personal trainer. This will be her fourteen year with the WEY swim team. She is a third degree black belt in Koei-Kan Karate and has competed internationally. Eileen has competed in 3 marathons and (2) 3-mile open water swims. She received a BA in Liberal Arts from Upsala College.

**Julie Thompson** – Is a member of the American Swimming Coaches Association and is currently a Level 1 certified coach. She swam for the Livingston Aquajets summer league, the West Essex YMCA, and Livingston High School. This upcoming season will be Julie's tenth season as Assistant Coach. She has a BA from Drew University (2010) and a MPH from Rutgers University (2016). She works at Morristown Medical Center in Cardiac Research.

**Danielle Kelly** – Danielle began to swim at the age of 5 on a swim team on Lake Hopatcong and continued swimming throughout high school. She started out coaching summer swimming on the lake for 3 years. She coached the boys/girls varsity swim team at Fair Lawn High school for 3

years. After having her 4 children, she started coaching for the Livingston Aquajets. This will be her eight year with the West Essex YMCA. Danielle lives in Livingston with her husband Brian and four children.

**Ron Madlinger** –Ron graduated from Livingston High School in 2013. During his time in high school, he completed the Big 3 (Squat, Bench, Clean) test developed by the U.S. Air Force Academy and Olympic Training center and lifted over the minimum 500lbs on the Schwartzman Index as a sophomore. Ron swam for 10 years and during high school played varsity football for 3 years. Ron worked with children with special needs through the Shining Star program and the Piranhas swim team. Ron is currently attending The County College of Morris studying Psychology. Ron plans on transferring to Rutgers University in January 2016 to pursue his undergraduate degree. Ron plans on continuing his education until he receives his doctorate.

**Valeriya Lukonen** -Val began her swimming career at the age of 11. She swam competitively on the West Essex YMCA Swim Team and Livingston Aquajets for many years. While attending Livingston High School Val swam on the team for three years, and went on to become the team manager her senior year. Val joined the Aquatics Staff at the YMCA and has worked as a lifeguard and swim instructor since September 2014. Additionally, she volunteered as a coach for WEY's Special Olympics team, the Piranhas. This will be Val's first full season as an Assistant Coach. Val recently graduated from George Washington University in DC, with a degree in International Affairs.

**Carlee Phillips** – Carlee began her swimming career at the age of 7. She swam competitively for 13 years spending 10 of those years at the West Essex YMCA. Eleven years were spent swimming for the West Orange Wave summer league where Carlee spent the past 8 years as an assistant coach. Carlee swam all 4 years on the varsity team for West Orange High School and was elected Senior Captain. Carlee recently graduated from York College of Pennsylvania and was a member of the swim team for two years. Her degree is in Business Marketing with minors in Advertising and Retailing.

**Kayla Yanga** – Kayla is certified as USA Swim Coach. She started her swimming career at the age of twelve on the Livingston Aquajets summer league. She later pursued her interest in the sport and joined the West Essex YMCA Swim Team and the Livingston High School Varsity Team. She swam for both the Aquajets and WEY for seven years and LHS for four years. In her fourth year at LHS, she was elected Team Captain. Recently, Kayla has worked with special needs children as a Volunteer Coach for WEY's Special Olympics team, the Piranhas. This upcoming season will be Kayla's fifth season as an Assistant Coach. She is currently attending Bloomfield College to pursue her Bachelor's Degree in Nursing.

# Team Requirements

## ***Swimmer/Parent Expectations***

To enable success in a program the size of West Essex's requires the involvement and cooperation of swimmers and parents.

Swimmers are expected to behave in a mature, responsible manner, at all times. They should conduct themselves with poise, sportsmanship and team spirit. Team members' actions reflect upon the entire team.

**Conduct unbecoming to the team will not be tolerated.**

Parent support is expected, as it is critical to the success and positive development of each child in the program. We strongly advise parents to foster an enthusiastic and encouraging attitude towards their child's swimming, as well as the advancement of our team. Parents' actions are a reflection on the West Essex Y swim team, and the town. Behavior unbecoming to the above will not be tolerated.

Once on the team, swimmers and parents are responsible for meeting the criteria listed below. Fulfilling these responsibilities is required for a swimmer to maintain good standing for 2018-2019 season. The criteria are as follows:

1. Each swimmer must be in good standing with the YMCA (Current YMCA membership and program fees paid on 10/15 and 11/15/18)
- 2. Each swimmer should attend all scheduled YMCA dual meets.**
3. Each swimmer is encouraged to compete throughout the season, including championship meets for which they qualify.
4. Each swimmer is expected to attend practice on a regular basis.
5. Each swimmer must display a positive attitude, an ability to listen and a desire to learn.
6. The parents are expected to volunteer as outlined in the Family Volunteer Program.
- 7. Parents must make payment of all fees on time or have made alternate arrangements with **Betty Pietrangelo**  
**Bpietrangel@metroymcas.org****

## **Swimmer Conduct**

All members of the West Essex YMCA swim team are expected to observe the following rules:

1. Swimmers must conduct themselves properly throughout the entire season. They are representing the West Essex YMCA as well as their parents, the coaches, and the team.
2. There will be no willful destruction of property. If such occurs, the swimmer and their parents will be held responsible. We encourage all swimmers to report any damage to the coaches immediately.
3. At all swim meets - home and away dual meets and both YMCA and USA organized events - all people associated with the West Essex YMCA swim team, including swimmers, coaches, and parents, are expected to behave in a manner that is reflective of the YMCA philosophy and the West Essex YMCA Competitive Aquatics philosophy. Competitive sports participants learn by example. Therefore parents, coaches, officials and administrators should set the best possible example.
4. Smoking, drinking, use of illegal substances and use of foul language will not be tolerated.
5. Swimmers, coaches and parents should exemplify the Y's four character development points of **Caring, Honesty, Responsibility and Respect**.

A failure of anyone associated with the West Essex YMCA to follow these rules may result in probation, suspension, and termination of employment or expulsion from the team or YMCA.

## **Equipment Needs**

To properly operate as a team in practice and at swim meets, there are certain equipment items that are required for each swimmer. Some of the required and suggested equipment will be available at the Team Suit Fitting.

### **Practice Equipment Requirements**

1. 2 pair of goggles, 1 pair for the deck and the other pair in your swim bag
2. 2 Swim caps will be provided for each swimmer with their last name imprinted on the cap. The caps will be handed out around October 15<sup>th</sup>. Swimmers don't have to wear a team swim cap in swim meets.
3. Water Bottle. This will keep the athlete hydrated during practice without having to get out of the pool (**suggested**).
4. 1 pair of swim fins for 12/U swimmers, I would recommend the Speedo brand. I want each swimmer to have a pair of fins that fit them and are not too long.

**Ultimate Swim Shop can help with this item on Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup>.**

5. Practice Suits. These suits are large nylon suits that will last a long time. They are durable and will create the optimal drag during

practice. Usually the previous year's team suit turns into your practice suit for the next season.

### ***Competition Equipment Requirements***

1. Competition Team Suit. It is up to each parent/swimmer to determine if his/her suit from previous years is in good enough condition to use for the next season. **This suit is not to be worn at practice because excessive use will wear the suit out.** The swimmers should 'look sharp' in their team suit at the competitions. The team suits are also more expensive and less durable than the practice suits.
2. Team Swim Cap. Swimmers don't have to wear a team swim cap. Each swimmer will be provided with 2 competition caps imprinted with their last name. These caps are to be used for competition or practice sessions; however they will not be available until **October 15, 2018.**
3. 2 pair of Goggles
4. Team T-shirt, which will be provided for each swimmer by the **October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018.**

### ***Suggested Practice/Competition Equipment***

1. Team Travel Bag or Back Pack
2. Team Sweat Suit
3. Team Jacket
4. Water bottle or Gatorade

**All of this equipment can be purchased at:**

**Ultimate Swim Shop  
463 Main Street,  
Metuchen, NJ 08840  
1-800-628-7946**

## **Communication**

**E-mail is the primary form of communication.** There are other methods that are employed as well. All of the communication methods are described below. **Website:**

[www.metroymcas.org/](http://www.metroymcas.org/)

Click on West Essex YMCA

Click on Youth Development

Click on Swim, Sports and Play

Click on Competitive Swimming

### **E-mail**

The Director of Competitive Aquatics will e-mail practice groups regarding any team news, meet information, dual meet schedule, practice changes, meet updates and other upcoming events.

## **Phone**

If you need to get in touch with me (Paul Casazza), please call **(973) 992-7500 Ext. 111**

## ***Cancellations of Practice and Swim Meets***

Please call the YMCA at **(973) 992-7500** or e-mail me [pcasazza@metroymcas.org](mailto:pcasazza@metroymcas.org) to find out about practice or meet cancellations due to inclement weather. I will usually e-mail out to the team changes in practice status.

## **Goal Setting & Performance Measurement**

### ***Parent/Swimmer/Coach Meetings***

Early in the season, November Parent/Swimmer/Coach Meetings will be scheduled for all swim team members. They will be done by phone with the parent and coach. During the conference call the parent and the coach will review the swimmers past performance and desires for developing reachable goals for the upcoming season. The goal setting process is tailored to the age and ability of the swimmer. For younger swimmers their goal may be to swim all 4 strokes legally; for a mid-level swimmer their goal may be to achieve a Silver time; or for a talented high-school age swimmer it may be to qualify for Junior Olympics.

### ***Plan for Achievement***

In the Goal Meeting a plan for achievement is discussed. Once the plan is agreed upon, we ask the parents to support their child in executing that plan.

One of the fundamentals of the plan for achievement is slotting the swimmer in the appropriate practice group. Please see the appropriate section of this manual to find out the process for how this is accomplished.

### ***Time Trials***

Time trials will be held on **October 16<sup>th</sup> and October 18<sup>th</sup>**. Time Trials are used to establish a starting point in events in which a swimmer does not have an established time or improve an existing time. **Time Trials will be held for the Boys on Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>. Time Trials will be held for the Girls on Thursday, October 18<sup>th</sup>. If you child can't attend their schedule time, let me know and I will assign you to the other date.**

# Practices

## ***Training Groups***

Competitive swimming is a demanding sport for which **Success = Technique + Training**. The primary avenue for developing a well-conditioned athlete is to provide them a **competitive practice group** – one that keeps them challenged and interested.

Each swimmer is assigned to one of the below listed **practice groups**, based primarily on the swimmer's ability and age, but commitment is factored in as well. As the swimmer progresses and becomes more accomplished, they move up to a more challenging practice group. Each successive training group builds on the skills developed in the previous group.

The emphasis in the beginner groups is on basic **stroke mechanics** and **technique**. The emphasis in more advanced groups is expanded to **include training the different energy systems** (endurance and sprint), learning **race strategy** and maintaining **advanced stroke technique**.

In August each swimmer is assigned to practice group based on the swimmer's try-out/evaluation in June/July. During September and October the coaching staff monitors each swimmer's practice performance and will re-evaluate the swimmer's practice group assignment on **October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018**. Shortly thereafter, we will contact the swimmers who we recommend should be moved to a different practice group, however, it will be the choice of the individual swimmer to move or remain in his/her current group.

**Parents – you are welcome to attend practices and observe from the stands. However, please refrain from distracting your child during practice.**

*Note: The minimum practice requirement is designed to give the swimmers some latitude during busy weeks. On an average each swimmer is expected to attend the target number of practices for their particular practice group.*

**Remember, proper conditioning correlates with success in meets.**

**Senior 2** The **Senior 2 Group** is generally comprised of 12-18 year olds. Six practice sessions are offered for this group. **Each swimmer should try to attend 3/4 practices a week.**

- Senior 1** The **Senior 1 Group** is generally comprised of 12-18 year olds. Six practice sessions are offered for this group. **Each swimmer should try to attend 3/4 practices per week.**
- Junior 3** The **Junior 3 Group** is generally comprised of 9-12 year olds. Five practice sessions are offered for this group. **Each swimmer should try to attend 3/4 practices a week.**
- Junior 2** The **Junior 2 Group** is generally comprised of 9-12 year olds.  
Five practice sessions are offered for this group. **Each swimmer should try to attend 3/4 practices a week.**
- Junior 1** The **Junior Group 1** is comprised of 8 and Unders. Four practice sessions are offered for this group. **Each swimmer should try to attend 3 practices a week.**

**Swimmers should only attend practice sessions that pertain to their assigned practice group, unless discussed with the Competitive Aquatics Director. Practice schedule grid can be viewed on the West Essex YMCA website.**

### ***Training Guidelines***

Practices underpin the competitive swim program. To maximize practice, adhering to the following guidelines is critical to maximizing enjoyment and success.

1. Be on the pool deck 5 minutes prior to the start of practice, ready to swim.
2. Bring your equipment – goggles, and fins when required.
3. Get in the water promptly at the start of practice.
4. Warm up at a moderate pace using the specific warm-up for the workout.
5. Follow the coach’s instructions for each “set”. There are some sets in which the coach may want you to swim fast and other sets in which the coach wants a more controlled activity to enable a focus on technique.
6. Always try hard on the activity the coach has assigned.
7. Circle swim. Pass up the middle of the lane when possible and safe to do so.
8. Faster swimmers should lead the lane and slower swimmers should follow.

9. Leave 5 seconds apart unless instructed otherwise. From time to time coaches will be timing your swims, so leaving on the right interval is required.
10. Be courteous to the other swimmers in your lane.

The workouts are broken into a series of **"sets"**. A set is a string of swims with a specific goal, such as technique, aerobic, or anaerobic training. The majority of sets are based on interval training, which involves completing swims on a fixed time interval. For example, a set could be 8 x 200 free on 3:00. This means each 3:00 the swimmer will start a 200 free. If they finish on 2:40 they then get: 20-second rest before starting the next swim.

## Swim Meets

The West Essex Y is fortunate to participate in both YMCA swimming and USA Swimming. Under **YMCA Swimming**, our team competes in dual meets and "Y" sponsored invitational meets against other YMCA teams. Under **USA Swimming**, our team competes in invitational meets against both YMCA teams and club teams. Having access to meets for YMCA and USA swimming provides our swimmers the opportunity to engage in a variety of competition formats and swim in a lot of races. This in turn enables them to test their skills often and provides diversity of competition that appeal to different interests.

USA Swimming is a national organization in which all swimmers are eligible to join and compete. **The fee for being a member is \$69.00 for the 2018-2019 swim season.** This fee is included in your WEPO fee. The New Jersey swim site address is [www.njswim.org](http://www.njswim.org)  
The YMCA swim site address is [www.njymcaswim.org](http://www.njymcaswim.org)

## Competition Formats

**Dual meets** are head to head competitions between two teams. In each race points are awarded – 6 for first place, 4 for second, 3 for third, 2 for fourth and 1 for fifth. Relays count 8 for first place, 4 for second and 2 for third. At the end of the meet the team with the highest total points wins the meet.

**Invitationals** are meets where many teams come together to compete in a time-seeded format. "Y" Invitationals and USA Swimming Invitationals are conducted in the same manner. Times for each swimmer are submitted in advance, typically two weeks. The meet committee then sorts each entry and seeds swimmers by heat. It is common to have ten heats for a particular event, with each successive heat having faster seed times. Some Invitationals require swimmers to meet a time standard in order to compete.

**Championships** are end-of-season meets conducted in an invitational format; the only difference is the approach to these meets. Since they occur at the end of the season, our training is geared to taper the swimmers so they can achieve peak performances.

**"Y" Nationals** is the end of season national championship meet for accomplished swimmers. Cut times are required to be eligible for the meet. The meet takes place in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Many Invitational and championship meets are organized by **Bronze**, **Silver**, or **Gold** time standards. The Executive Committee of the New Jersey Swimming Board establishes the specific time standards. The time standards for each category are published for each event at the beginning of the season.

### ***Dual Meets (& Dual Meet Teams)***

The West Essex "Y" competes in the North Jersey Swim League against other teams in our division. The divisions are based on the team standings from the previous year, with teams moving up or down in accordance with their performance in dual meets and New Jersey State championships.

This season we will be fielding a Girls Team and a Boys Team. The Girls Team will compete in the Girls' F Division, and the Boys Team will compete in the Boys' C Division.

Each team will participate in four or five YMCA dual meets, all of which will occur on Saturdays. The home team will determine the time of the dual meets. **Our home meets have warm-up at 2:15pm and start at 2:45pm.** The dual meet schedule will be available by the beginning of October.

Each swimmer can expect to swim twice in a dual meet. This may be accomplished twice in an official individual event or twice in an unofficial event. Only the first heat of every event is the official heat and the points can only be earned in this heat. All additional heats are unofficial; however the swimmer's time is official as long as he/she does not have a swimming infraction. 8 and Unders are not included in the dual meet scoring.

**If a swimmer cannot make a dual meet**, send an email **a minimum of three days prior to the meet to Paul Casazza at [pcasazza@metroymcas.org](mailto:pcasazza@metroymcas.org)**. Since swimmers are slotted into individual events and relays prior to the meet, failure to notify Paul in advance could impact other swimmers' races, so please take this responsibility seriously.

**If a child gets sick the day of the dual meet**, please text the designated Head Coach for your child's dual meet.

### ***YMCA and USA Invitational Meets***

There will be certain Invitationals that we will compete in as a team. Invitationals give every swimmer a great opportunity to compete in events in which they are not able to compete in dual meets. Some Invitationals require a time standard in order to compete.

There are a good number of invitational meets in which a swimmer can participate. The West Essex team organizes the participation in approximately eight Invitationals each season. The schedule will be published by the beginning of October.

When team members swim at invitational meets, our team is usually required to provide timers for the duration of the meet for one or more lanes. Since the meet will not run without us meeting our timing obligation, *if your child swims, you will be called up and expected to time for a portion of that meet.* The Director of Competitive Aquatics will e-mail you 1 to 2 days before the date of the meet.

For an Invitational meet (YMCA or USA) there is a confirmation process for participation.

1. Approximately 4 weeks prior to the meet, the Director of Competitive Aquatics will **e-mail an eligibility report** to all parents and swimmers regarding the upcoming meet.
2. If your child's name is listed in the eligibility report he/she has meet the qualifying standards for the events that are listed next to his name. If you don't see your child's name listed, then he/she is not qualified for the meet and you can go ahead and delete the e-mail.
3. Parents or swimmers will have **one day** to decide on their child's participation and which events they will swim. If you do not an e-mail response within the one-day period, the D.C.A. will assume your child has decided not to participate in this competition.
4. Shortly after the one-day period, the D.C.A. will e-mail the list of swimmers competing, with their event selection.
5. Within one day, the parent or child should only **e-mail D.C.A.** if he/she has noticed a mistake with their child's entry list. This step is necessary to catch clerical errors, so review the information carefully.
6. Following the one-day turnaround from sending confirmations, the entry list is emailed to the meet director of that meet and at which time entries are final.
7. The D.C.A. will contact you regarding the parent timing assignments. If your child swims, you must be prepared to time.

*Please note: In order to participate in some meets, your child will need to meet the qualifying standards set for that meet.*

## ***YMCA and USA Championship Meets***

Championship meets occur at the end of the winter season in February/March and are usually operated in an invitational format. The real difference between championship meets and regular invitational is that our training is geared to deliver peak performances at championship meets. Several weeks before the championship meet, practices are modified to reduce total yardage and increase speed work.

The championship meets that the West Essex YMCA participates in are the following:

1. 8 & under Championships for both YMCA and USA Swimming
2. YMCA State Championships, Silver Championships, and Bronze Championships
3. USA Silver and Bronze Championships
4. NJ Junior Olympics (JO's)
5. YMCA National Championships - "Y-Nat" (Short Course-Spring, Long Course- Summer)

## ***YMCA National Championships***

The highest level of YMCA-sponsored swimming competition is the YMCA National Championships, or "Y-Nationals". There are two "Y-National" meets – short course Nationals are held in April and long course Nationals are held in August. These competitions are the largest competitive swimming meet in the world, with over 1,000 athletes participating. Each year coaches from colleges across the country come to view prospective student athletes.

To represent the West Essex YMCA at Y-Nationals a swimmer must first achieve a **qualifying time**, which is extremely fast. Because of the high cost of sending a swimmer to nationals and the time demands on the coaching staff, there are additional requirements for the WEY team to support sending a swimmer to Y-Nationals. The swimmer must be in good standing with the West Essex YMCA.

The cost of sending the swimmers and coaches to "Y- Nationals" is quite high, estimated at \$1,000 to \$1,200 per person. (The team may assist with some financial support of team members who qualify for YMCA Nationals.) The monetary support will be a set amount that will be divided among all swimmers who qualify and travel to the meet. The balance of the cost will have to be provided by the swimmers and their families.

## ***Competition Guidelines***

The below guidelines are required for each swimmer to follow at all competitions:

1. Arrive 10 minutes before the meets first warm-up session! For Invitationals, arrive at the pool with enough time to get dressed and situated with the team before warm-up is scheduled to begin. For all dual meets, parents are required to get their child to the meet.
2. Warm-up for all meets as a team. **A proper warm-up is crucial to the success of a meet.**
3. Arrive at the blocks at least 3 heats before your race.
4. Try your best and swim hard. It's ok to be nervous. Many swimmers have pre-race apprehension, especially for events they may not have swum often.
5. After your race, see a member of the coaching staff for feedback. Also, coaching feedback will be e-mailed to parent and swimmer. Learning what you did well and understanding areas for improvement will help you become a better swimmer.
6. Warm-down after each race, if a pool is available.
7. The coaches decide relay spots; generally, the fastest swimmers on a given day will be on a relay.
8. Sit with the team you are part of it. Short visits to the bleachers with family and friends are permitted, but longer visits are discouraged.
9. Support and encourage your teammates...before, during, and after their races.
10. Join in team cheers.
11. Wear West Essex YMCA team uniform at all meets. Caps and suits from other teams (high school, USA or YMCA) are not permitted.
12. **For dual meets** remain in your team suit until the meet is over and you have finished the team cheer. Since relays are at the end of the meets and are subject to change, do not leave as you may be called upon to swim. **For invitational swim meets**, please stay at the meet until you have received clearance from the coach to leave.

**For all meets parents are not allowed on the deck or in the swimmers' designated section.** The only exception is parents who are timing or officiating. This is a standard regulation for swim meets, and breaking this regulation can lead to removal from the meet.

### ***Conduct at Travel Meets***

Travel meets are meets that require an overnight stay

1. Swimmers are to stay with the team at all times. No one is to leave on their own without first checking with the coaches.
2. Swimmers are required at all practice sessions during the travel period, unless otherwise determined by the coach.
3. All swimmers must eat with the team, unless otherwise designated.

4. All swimmers must wear the team suit, cap and warm-ups at prelims/finals.
5. The coaches make all room assignments. These are to be adhered to with no switching unless approved by the coaches.
6. As with all situations involving this team, alcoholic beverages and illegal substances are prohibited. Swimmers caught with such items will be sent home on the next available flight at their own expense. Suspension or dismissal from the team would follow.
7. There is no sunbathing.
8. Curfew is strictly enforced. Swimmers are not permitted out of their rooms after a time designated by the coaches. In most cases that time would be 10:00pm.
9. Parents who wish to take a swimmer out to dinner must have the swimmer clear it with the coaches in advance. Swimmers are still required to adhere to the curfew. Please have them back on time.
10. Dress Code for flights (if applicable): Team warm-up jacket must be worn.

## Parent Involvement

### *Coach/Parent Relationship*

Parental support is crucial to the successful and positive development of each child in the program, and it is the key to the overall success of the program. One of the best ways for a parent to do this is by his/her assistance with team activities (Events Coordinator, meet official, timer, score keeper, etc) as described later in this section.

While there are many positive ways for a parent to contribute, we discourage parents from coaching their children. A parent who coaches a child or encourages behavior that may not be what the coach intends, may impair the swimmer's development. It also has the potential to undermine the extremely important coach-swimmer relationship. **If a parent disagrees with a particular coaching instruction or approach, please contact the coach directly.** The coaching staff has undergone training in swimming and practice techniques and may be providing advice to the swimmers that is not obvious to the parent. Therefore, if there are any questions, the matter should be discussed off-line between coach and parent. Discussion in front of the swimmer has the potential to cause confusion due to mixed messages.

## ***Approaching a Coach***

If a parent does have questions or concerns, please use the following guidelines:

1. For minor problems, encourage your child to discuss the issue with the coach. This will help foster the appropriate swimmer-coach relationship.
2. For minor problems that the parents wish to address, we request that parents wait 24 hours following an incident before bringing it up to your child's primary coach. Experience shows that this can help minor problems become clarified, leading to a more productive discussion.
3. For major issues, bring these to the attention of the coaching staff immediately. Such issues include swimmer misconduct, physical or verbal abuse, etc.
4. If the discussion between the appropriate coach and the parent does not resolve the issue, the matter should then be brought to the attention of the Head Coach/Competitive Aquatics Director.
5. If the discussion between the Head Coach and the parent does not resolve the issue, then the matter can be brought up to the YMCA Executive Director.
6. Unless there is a major issue for which time is critical (point 3 above), avoid discussing issues with coaches during practice or swim meets. The coaches are occupied during those times and more productive discussions can be pursued at other times.

## ***Parent Swim Team Volunteers***

The Parent Swim Team Volunteers provides administrative and general support to the swimming program. Activities include supporting and assisting the coaching staff with organizing communications, coordinating social events, purchasing equipment, management of equipment, setting up and running meets. For example, the Special Events Volunteer organizes and helps run the end of the year swim team banquet.

## ***Parent Volunteer Program***

As with many children's sports, parental involvement is critical to success. The same is true of swimming, where substantial support is required. To help facilitate parent involvement, we have implemented a **Parent Volunteer Program**. Essentially, all families are required to participate in the running of swim team meets and functions. The specifics of the **Parent Volunteer Program** are as follows:

1. Each family is required to work in the following areas:

- a. Dual Meets and Time Trials. Each family will be scheduled for at least one meet, depending upon the number of teams and number of families.
  - b. Invitational Meets. If your child swims at an invitational meet, you must be prepared to time at that meet. Timing assignments will be emailed once the swimmers are confirmed.
2. Family members can volunteer for Team jobs. These range from small to significant commitments. Calls for volunteers begin in September for the upcoming season.
  3. Work assignments for dual meets and Invitational meets are completed 3-5 days in advance of the event date.
  4. If you are unable to work, you are responsible for finding your replacement.

Listed below are the parent volunteer positions needed to run a successful season.

- Lane/Back-up timers
- Deck Officials – all fees are covered by the team, training required
- Stroke and Turn Judge
- Meet Starter
- Marshals
- Dual Meet Jobs Coordinator
- Meet runner
- Meet Set-up
- Meet Breakdown
- Welcoming Party Coordinator (September)
- Halloween Party Coordinator (October)
- Holiday Party Coordinator (January)
- Swim Team Banquet Coordinator (April)

## **Appendix**

### ***A – Fees and Scholarship***

### ***B – Glossary of Terms***

## **Program Fees**

The West Essex YMCA is a membership association; therefore all West Essex YMCA swimmers must have a current West Essex YMCA facility membership. **They must bring their swipe card to practice to gain building access.** This must be established prior to September 10th, 2018. Information regarding membership benefits may be obtained from the front desk.

Program fees are broken down into group fees and are established by the West Essex YMCA, prior to the start of the season. At the beginning of the season, parents will be informed of the practice group to which their child will be assigned.

### **Scholarship Information**

Scholarships for fees are available. Individuals wishing scholarship information or special payment schedules should contact Betty Pietrangelo. To avoid any problems, please do this early in September. **ALL SPECIAL PAYMENT PLANS MUST BE REQUESTED IN WRITING BY October 1st, 2018. All information is confidential. Your child's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> program fees can be paid online.**

### **Payment Schedules**

#### Youth Program Membership Payment Schedule

		<i>Jr. Group 1</i>	<i>Jr. Group 2</i>	<i>Jr. Group 3</i>	<i>Sr. Group 1</i>	<i>Sr. Group 2</i>
Installments	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,412</b>	<b>\$1,466</b>	<b>\$1,466</b>	<b>\$1,560</b>	<b>\$1,560</b>
WEPO (09/15/18)		\$370	\$370	\$370	\$370	\$370
1 <sup>st</sup> (10/15/18)		\$521	\$548	\$548	\$595	\$595
2 <sup>nd</sup> (11/15/18)		\$521	\$548	\$548	\$595	\$595

A 5% reduction in program cost for multiple family members will be applied towards any additional children.

Program fees have been broken up into three monthly payments. **The payments are due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month, starting in September and ending in November.** Any child who needs financial assistance will not be denied and a payment plan may be established, if needed. Please contact **Betty Pietrangelo** for more information at [Bpietrangelo@metroymcas.org](mailto:Bpietrangelo@metroymcas.org)

## ***Glossary of Swimming Terms***

**Age Group Swim Meet:** All USA registered swimmers 18 years old or younger who have met the qualifying time standard for specific events are eligible to participate in their age category. Age on the first day of the meet shall govern the entire meet.

**Bonus heat:** The first or slowest heat of finals, at swim meets where three heats of finals are swum.

**Bronze Time:** The qualifying time in a given events for USA Swimming bronze Classification Level.

**Circle seeding:** This is the seeding system used in prelims where the final three heats of events are arranged so that the fastest swimmers occupy the middle or fastest lane in their heat: the next three fastest occupy the next fastest lane, etc.

**Classification of Meets:** A swimmer's ability level determines his or her class of competition at USA Swimming meets. Each class has a time standards for each stroke at each distance for each age group.

**Consolation heat:** The first or slower of two heats of finals at a championship meet.

**Course:** Designated distance over which the competition is conducted. Long course (LCM) is 50 M and short course is 25 YDS (SCY) or 25 M (SCM).

**Cuts:** Qualifying times for specific types of championship meets

**Deck seeding:** Heat and lane assignments are determined for the swimmers at the beginning of each meet session, after scratches are taken out.

**DQ-Disqualification:** A swimmer is usually disqualified when he performs a stroke, touch or turn incorrectly or when he enters the water before the start (false start).

**Dual Meet:** Meets conducted between two teams, usually with a limitation on the number of entrants from each team.

**Event:** Any race or series of races in a given stroke and distance. Usually a swimmer is allowed to enter up to three individual events per day at an invitational.

**False Start:** When a swimmer enters the water before a race or moves during the start, he may be charged with a false start. This results in disqualification, since USA Swimming has a "no false start" rule.

**Final:** The session of a meet where qualifying rounds were held previously to determine the finalists. Usually there are 1-2 heats of finalists and their order of finish determines the ultimate placement in a given event. Most trials-finals meets are on a championship level.

**Freestyle Relay:** Four swimmers on each team, each swimmer swims one fourth of the distance.

**Gold Time:** The qualifying time in a given events for USA Swimming Gold Classification Level.

**Heat:** A division of an event into a series of races. Each race is one heat. Heats are needed when more swimmers enter a race than there lanes available in pool.

**Heat sheets:** A list of swimmers entered each event with their respective entries times. Preceded meets will also list swimmers in preassigned heats and lanes. The host team of a meet prepares heat sheets and sells them to spectators for a nominal fee. These are also called the Meet programs or "Psych Sheets."

**IM.-Individual Medley:** The event where a swimmer swims butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and any other stroke in that order.

**LSC-Local Swimming Committee:** One of several regional groups such as New Jersey Swimming charged with the conduct of all USA Swimming activities in that region.

**Marshaling area:** A place where swimmers report at meets before their event to receive their entry cards and to be arranged into their heat and lane assignments.

**Medley Relay:** Four swimmers on each team each swim one fourth of the total prescribed distance in the order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and freestyle.

**OVC-Official Verification Card:** Issued by meet officials to swimmers achieving a Junior National or Senior National time.

**Prelims or Trials-** In certain meets the qualifying rounds for each event to determine the finalists.

**Referee:** The USA Swimming official who has the final authority over all other officials at the meet. He makes all final decisions and sees to the efficient running of the meet.

**Scratch-**The withdrawal of entry from competition.

**Seed Times -**The times a swimmer uses to enter a meet. These times appear on the heat sheet and the entry cards and determine the swimmers heat and lane assignment in a meet.

**Seeding-** The process of assigning swimmers to lanes and heats by time. In general the swimmers with the slower seed times swim in the earlier heats. The order of swimming in the final heats depends on the type of meet.

**Senior Meet-** A meet with only one age group called "senior." Swimmers of any age who have met the qualifying times may compete.

**Silver Time:** The qualifying time in a given events for USA Swimming Silver Classification Level.

**Split.** The time a swimmer achieves in one or more laps of his race. Coaches use these times to help instruct swimmers in pacing. For example, the time for the first 50 yds in a 100 yd race is the swimmers 50-yd split.

**Starter:** The swimming official responsible for starting each heat and calling the swimmers to the blocks.

**Straight seeding:** Swimmers are assigned to lanes in heats from slowest to fastest. In a given heat, the fastest swimmers swim in the middle lanes and the slower ones on the outer lanes.

**Stroke:** There are four official racing strokes – Butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle

**Stroke and Turn Judge:** A swimming official, who determines the legality of swimmers' strokes, turns and finishes and disqualifies those who do not conform to USA/YMCA rules.

**Swimming World:** Is a monthly magazine about competitive swimming and water polo. For a subscription, write Swimming World, PO Box 45947, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

**Time Standards:** A set of times developed to assist swimmers in performance planning developed by United States Swimming. They are based on percentiles of the 16th fastest time in each stroke in each age group.

**Top 16:** A tabulation of the top 16 times in the US in each age group and stroke. These are published annually in Swimming World. The "consideration" times that may be eligible appear in the USA rulebook.

**Touch Pad:** An electronic pad which stops a clock when the swimmer touches it at the end of the race. This is usually the official time, although corrections are made if the swimmer misses the pad.

**Unattached:** The status a swimmer receives when changing from one USA Club to another. A swimmer must swim unattached for 120 days from the date of the last USS meet he swam for the previous club. During this time they may compete individually, but may not be entered in relays. Connecticut high school swimmers compete unattached for their USA clubs during the high school swim season.

**USA:** Abbreviation for United States Swimming, the governing body for all amateur swimming in the US. National headquarters are in Colorado Springs, CO.

**YMCA States:** A meet conducted in March to determine the State Championship of "Y" swimming. You must have "Y" state qualifying times to compete.

**YMCA Nationals:** A meet held in Florida in April where the best "Y" swimmers from all over the country swim to determine the best team and best individual swimmers in each event, while the summer nationals (Long Course) are held in August and the location changes.