

# Mesquite I.S.D. Swim Team Handbook

## *Overview*

The Mesquite I.S.D. Swim Team is a combination of swimmers from the five high schools within the school district: Mesquite, North Mesquite, West Mesquite, Poteet, and Horn. The competitive swim season begins the first week of school and ends approximately the middle of February. Off-season swimming begins approximately the middle of February and ends the last week of school. All swimmers practice together, and compete as one team in non-district swim meets. In the district, regional, and state meets (held in late January through mid-February), each school competes separately: Mesquite, North Mesquite, and Horn compete in the 5A category, while West Mesquite and Poteet compete in the 4A category.

As with other sports, swimming is a double blocked activity, which means that it is scheduled for both “A” and “B” days. Practices are held each school day at Town East pool from the first day of school until approximately the week after Thanksgiving, when they are moved to White Rock pool until the end of the competitive season. Busses pick up swimmers from their schools at the beginning of 4<sup>th</sup> period and transport them to the practice site. Practices are normally over by 6:00 PM, and parents/guardians are encouraged to pick up their students from Town East pool at that time. (When practices are held at White Rock pool, swimmers will be returned by bus to Town East pool by 6:00 PM). Off season practices are normally over by 4:30 PM, and parents/guardians are encouraged to pick up their students from Town East pool at that time.

## *Participation*

Swimming is an athletic competition requiring proper technique, strength, and endurance. As such, regular, progressively intense practices are required. If a student cannot attend full practices on a consistent basis (minimum of every “A” day and/or every “B” day during the fall AND spring semesters), he/she should not try out for the swim team.

As a sport under University Interscholastic League Rules, swimmers fall under the same “No Pass, No Play” policy as other student athletes. Therefore, swimmers who fail any subject for a 6-week period are not allowed to participate in swim meets (or ride the bus to the meets) until they have a passing grade in all subjects for the next grading period. Ineligible swimmers will still be expected to practice with the team; however, a portion of their practice time will be used for homework.

## *Tryouts*

The Mesquite I.S.D. Swim Team is an elite group, and tryouts are required. Tryouts for the swim team will be conducted during the first two weeks of school, and will be based on athletic ability, attitude, conflicting activities, and academic success. Swimming experience is not mandatory. Students not making the team will be dropped from the swim class and placed in another class.

## *Diving*

Diving is an event at every swim meet which requires an above average amount of gymnastic ability, strength, and flexibility. As such, the tryouts for diving are much more stringent, and only the most qualified swimmers will be allowed to practice and participate in diving.

## *Required Equipment*

Each swimmer must provide his/her own pair of swim goggles, practice swimsuit, and meet swimsuit for non-district meets. The meet swimsuit must be a black Nike suit, and may also be worn during practices. For boys, the suit may be either a brief or a jammer. Swimmers should also bring athletic shoes, athletic shorts, and a T-shirt to each practice for dryland workouts. **Swimmers who are unable to practice more than twice in a semester because they forgot to bring a swimsuit will be removed from the swim team and the swim class.**

## *District Swimsuits*

Prior to the district meet, a team suit with school letters will be issued to each eligible swimmer who has earned the right to wear their team's lettering. Each eligible swimmer will also be issued a team warm-up jacket, which must be returned at the end of the competitive season.

## *Grading*

Swimmers' grades are based predominately on participation in practices and meets. Meets are considered major grades and account for approximately 30% of the grade for each grading period, with the remaining 70% coming from daily grades for participation in practice and the submission of student grade reports. If a swimmer knows that he/she will not be able to attend a meet, Coach Pottorff must be notified in writing at least two weeks prior to the meet. Otherwise a zero will be given for that major grade. Unexcused absences and showing up to practice without a swimsuit will result in a zero for that daily grade. We will have some pre-owned team suits that the swimmers can use during practice for a 50. Swimmers without a practice suit will be required to work on homework during practice time. **Swimmers who are unable to practice more than twice in a semester because they forgot to bring a swimsuit will be removed from the swim team and the swim class.**

## *Injuries*

If a swimmer is unable to participate in practice due to an injury, he/she will be required to work on homework during practice time. The swimmer should see the athletic trainer at their school for treatment every day prior to practice. Notes from the trainer verifying treatment should be given to Coach Matthews every day. Otherwise, a zero will be given for that daily grade.

### ***Illness***

If a swimmer is unable to participate in practice due to an illness, he/she will be required to work on homework during practice time. Doctors' notes for illnesses should be given to Coach Matthews. Otherwise, a zero will be given for that daily grade.

### ***Rules for Non-Practicing Swimmers***

If a swimmer is unable to practice for any reason, he/she will be required to do homework during regular practice time. Non-swimmers will work individually – no group work will be allowed. School district policies will be enforced during this time. Use of cell phones, iPods, and other electronic devices will not be allowed, and these items will be taken up by Coach Matthews if they are observed.

### ***Transportation to/from Practices***

Transportation to practices will be provided for swimmers by district busses. However, transportation home after practices is the responsibility of parents/guardians. Coaches cannot give swimmers rides home, and should not be asked or expected to do so.

### ***Transportation to/from Meets***

Unless prior arrangements have been made with the swim coaches, eligible swimmers must ride the team bus to each swim meet. Eligible swimmers include those members of the team who are not able to swim due to injury. For Saturday meets, team busses normally leave Horn High School early in the morning – exact times will be given prior to each meet. If a swimmer misses the team bus, he/she cannot participate in the meet, and a zero will be given for that major grade. Swimmers who ride the team bus back to Horn High School should have rides waiting for them when the bus arrives.

### ***Conduct and Appearance at Meets***

Swimmers represent not only their individual high school, but also the Mesquite I.S.D. at swim meets. Therefore, proper appearance and conduct is required. District dress code is relaxed only to include jeans, shorts, T-shirts (must be school T-shirts or solid color) and sandals or flip-flops. Male and female swimmers cannot wear any jewelry. Swimmers (and non-swimmers) at the meet should not decorate themselves or other swimmers in any way with sharpies or markers, other than to write their event information. Conduct on the bus, at the swim meet and at any public place following the meet should reflect the high integrity of the swim team, high school and school district, which each swimmer represents.

### ***Personal Property***

Students' items of personal property (clothing, backpacks, electronic devices) left or lost at practices or meets are not the responsibility of the school district, the swim coaches, or the practice facility. Lockers are available at each practice site, and the purchase and use of a reliable combination lock is recommended to safeguard these items. Items left at the practice sites are subject to being thrown away by site maintenance workers.

### ***Public Displays of Affection***

Public displays of affection (PDA) are not allowed at practices or meets. Inappropriate behavior will result in the offending students being barred from swim meets, which may result in a failing grade in swimming for that grading period. Repeat offenses will result in the offending students being expelled from the swim team.

### ***Off Season Activities***

Off season activities will begin shortly after the end of the competitive swim season, and will include strength and conditioning exercises and water polo. Participation in the strength and conditioning activities and in water polo practices and intra-squad games is required of every member of the team. Participation in water polo matches against other teams is not required, but strongly recommended. (Lots of fun!!) Off season practices are normally over by 4:30 PM, and parents/guardians are encouraged to pick up their students from Town East pool at that time.