

Philosophy

The number one mission of the Northwest High School swimming and diving team is to create a unified, team environment where all athletes have the opportunity to reach their full potential as students and as athletes. As part of the Northwest swimming and diving team, athletes will be taught responsibility and accountability to themselves, to other students and athletes, to the team, to the school, and to the community. This is a mission that can only be achieved with the commitment of the athletes, parents, and coaches.

Varsity Expectations

The varsity team has high goals, high expectations, and a high level of commitment. Varsity is the primary competition team and trains at an advanced level. Training will include drylands and weight room. Understand that varsity is not a learn to swim program.

Varsity swimming and diving practice will be held before school Monday through Friday 6:45 am – 8:40 am. Swimmers and divers are responsible for their own transportation to the pool for practice. After practice, the athletes will then be given time to change at the facility before heading to Northwest in time for 2nd period.

Varsity swimmers and divers are expected to attend all Varsity meets and maintain 90% attendance for all required practices. Every 9-weeks, the attendance will be evaluated. Any varsity athletes not meeting the required 90% attendance may be moved to junior varsity at the 9-week mark.

Junior Varsity Expectations

The junior varsity team is designed to develop strokes, skills, and an aerobic base. This team is a developmental program with the goal of reaching the varsity level. Emphasis will be with in-water skills, and there will be no dryland or weights for the junior varsity team. There will be limited competition opportunities for junior varsity.

Junior varsity practice will be held from 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm. Swimmers will need to walk or drive over to the Aquatic Center after 7th, and after practice swimmers are responsible for their own transportation home.

Junior varsity swimmers are expected to attend junior varsity meets and maintain 80% attendance for all required practices. Every 9-weeks, attendance and performance will be evaluated. Any junior varsity athlete not meeting the required 80% attendance may be removed from the team. Any junior varsity athlete meeting the required 80% attendance and making varsity performance standards may be eligible to move up to varsity.

Any roster moves will consider all aspects of the athlete and will take place at semester. Training performance, maintaining eligibility, and behavior are some of the factors taken into account. At the end of the day, all roster moves will be made at the coach's discretion.

Holiday Practices and Off-Season Activities

There will be swimming and diving practices during school recognized holidays. I will post a copy of the Thanksgiving and Christmas practice schedules on the Northwest Swimming and Diving Canvas page well in advance, so please make every effort to attend these practices. That may mean scheduling vacation time during other parts of the calendar year so that we can best prepare for District, Regionals, and State.

There will be off-season training a week after our team's last meet. Practice times will remain the same (6:45 am – 8:40 am for varsity swimmers and divers / 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm for junior varsity swimmers). All divers and swimmers are expected to attend off-season training. Senior attendance is optional with required paperwork. We will take off for the STAAR test, PSAT test, spring break, and the last two weeks of school.

Training and Injuries

Our competitive season will last from the end of August to the end of February. We will begin the first 9 weeks with a special emphasis on stroke development and refinement while steadily increasing the volume and the intensity of our sets.

During the swim/dive season, your ability to handle a higher workload will increase. A certain amount of discomfort and soreness might well be the result of you putting in an outstanding run of practices. While you are building good muscle, endurance, and speed, there is a difference between soreness and a searing pain. If you feel actual PAIN, it needs to be communicated to me AND our athletic trainers sooner rather than later. We do not want you sitting out due to an injury that could have been prevented.

Training room: If it has been determined that you need some physical therapy, it is available at our school. Please, report to the training room at the high school at 7:00 am for treatment. I will receive a daily report from the trainer to see how you are progressing and to confirm you were there.

Pre-existing injuries: If you have a pre-existing injury that could limit your ability to do certain activities, I need to know about the situation as soon as possible. Stay on your physical therapy exercises. Just because it feels fine does not mean you can stop; you feel fine because you are doing the exercises. Once again, good communication can solve these problems before they get worse.

Transportation to/from Meets

The Northwest team travels to and from meets together. Unless prior arrangements have been made with the coach, eligible swimmers and divers must ride the team bus to and from each meet. Eligible swimmers and divers also include those members of the team who are not able to swim or dive due to injury. If a swimmer or diver misses the team bus, he/she cannot participate in the meet.

Conduct at Meets

Swimmers and divers do not only represent Northwest High School, but they also represent Northwest ISD at their competitions; therefore, constant reprimands, violations of school policy, and discipline referrals will result in suspension and/or expulsion from the team. Being a participating member in any Northwest ISD extra-curricular activity is a privilege, not a right.

All provisions in the Northwest Athletic Guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct handbook are applicable to our athletes at all times on and off campus. Both the Athletic Guidelines and Student Code of Conduct handbook can be found on the Northwest Swimming and Diving Canvas page.

Absences

If a swimmer or diver knows that he/she will not be able to attend a competition, the coach must be notified in writing (preference is email) at least 10 school days prior to that competition to avoid being entered into the meet.

Similarly, if a swimmer or diver knows that he/she will not be able to attend practice, the coach must be notified in writing at least one day prior to that practice. Ample opportunities for tutorials are available during iNvest and after school. **If you do not consistently train you run the risk of being removed from the team.**

Grading

As a sport under University Interscholastic League Rules, swimmers and divers fall under the same “No pass, no play” policy as other student/athletes. Therefore, swimmers and divers who fail any subject for a 9-week period are not allowed to participate in competitions (or ride the bus to the competitions). In order to regain eligibility, they will need to be passing all their classes at the 3-week grading period.

Lettering

Varsity level swimmers and divers are eligible to earn a team letter. In order to earn a team letter, athletes must:

1. Place in the top 8 at the district meet OR
2. Compete for two years at the varsity level

I also take into consideration the swimmer and diver’s attitude, attendance at practice, maintaining academic eligibility, and conduct in and away from school. Any violation of the district guidelines may result in an athlete not receiving his/her letter.

Required Equipment

Each varsity swimmer and diver will be provided with the following equipment:

1. One team swimming suit
2. One pair of sweats (top and bottom)
3. One parka
4. One athletic bag
5. Two team swim caps

For daily training, junior varsity and varsity swimmers will need to provide their own swimming suits, caps, and goggles. Varsity swimmers will need to also provide their own paddles, pull buoy, and fins. Divers will only need to provide their own swimming suits. *Understand that school issued equipment may only be brought to school on meet days; they cannot be worn at school or used at any other time.*

If any of these items is lost or severely damaged, it will need to be replaced at the swimmer or diver's cost. Most items will be numbered, but it is your responsibility to keep up with what amounts to \$400.00 worth of equipment.

Captains

The team captain must be a Junior or Senior who has been a member of the team for at least one year and maintained compliance with our Athletic Guidelines. A captain's responsibilities are many and varied. They include always being a positive influence on the team and in school, passing all classes, exemplary conduct in and out of school, and helping the coach lead the team in a positive manner by their actions and deeds. It is an elected position by your fellow teammates.

Buses and Locker Rooms

The locker rooms and buses used by the team must be kept clean. It is the responsibility of each swimmer and diver to ensure that their trash and belongings are removed from the locker room and bus. It is the team's responsibility to make sure the locker rooms and bus are clean when we are done using them (including removing trash and sweeping the floor). Our transportation and facilities are a privilege, not a right.

Communication

I'm a firm believer in open communication between athlete, parent, and coach. It's important we are all on the same page. My goal is to give your athlete the best environment and training regimen to be successful. I will always be honest about their progress, where they are at, and what steps it will take to improve. As a parent, you play an extremely significant role in keeping me informed of any developments that I may not be aware of. Whether it is emotional, mental, or physical, I need to know of any serious developments so I can help your athlete the best I can. Email and Remind are the best ways to get in contact with me since I check and respond daily. kpottorff@nisdtx.org.