



Dickinson High School Swimming Team Handbook

Dickinson Swim Team

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Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
Vision and Mission Statement	3-4
Coaching Philosophy	4-5
Communications	5-6
Practice Groups	6
Policies on Practice Behavior	7-8
Policy for Lettering and Parent Behavior	9-10
Practice Schedule and Equipment	10-11
Attendance Policy, Out-of-Water Policy	11
Inclement Weather	11-12
Swim Meet Information and Policies	12
Team Travel	13-14
Meet Entries and Parent Volunteer	14
Parent Responsibilities	15-16
Photography and Video	16-17
Consent and Acknowledgement	17
Photo Release and Handbook Acknowledgement	18-19

Introduction

My name is Jillian Anderson and I am thrilled to be able to be the head coach of Dickinson High School Swimming. I started competitive swimming when I was 5 years old and continued to do so through college. Even after graduation, I participated in master's swimming and swam at the local YMCA during my pregnancy. I have an absolute passion for swimming and believe it is like reading; every child has the opportunity to learn and have the skills to be successful! I will be pushing your student-athletes to new limits, and they will be setting new personal goals that they will work hard to achieve all season long. There will be lessons that will be taught in and out of the pool setting; it is my goal that students take these lessons and apply them to their everyday lives.

This will be my 9th year at Dickinson ISD, and my 15th year as an educator. I am originally from Philadelphia, PA, and spent the first 5 years of my teaching career in the inner city. I taught for 1 year in Huntsville, TX, before moving to Dickinson ISD. I spent 4 years teaching 4th grade at San Leon before transferring to my current campus, Lobit Middle School. I am a dyslexia interventionist and am just as passionate about reading as I am about swimming.

This handbook will outline my expectations of both student-athletes and parents, where to find information, and hopefully answer any questions that families may have. I am excited to see what the future holds for this swim team and can't wait to be a part of an exciting transition.

Swimming and Diving

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Dickinson High School Swimming and Diving program is to develop student-athletes' positive attitudes, learn how to work in a team environment, set short and long-term goals, and better themselves through discipline, accountability, and responsibility. The expectation is that all team members always represent Dickinson High School positively. **Have fun!**

Vision Statement

Cultivating strong student-athletes, leaders, and competitors through superior instruction, modeling, and coaching

Coaching Philosophy

My philosophy has many different components. I have worked with many great and memorable athletes and coaches over the years. I have also worked with many forgettable coaches and athletes. There are aspects of both that have shaped who I am as a person and a coach. There is excellence that each student-athlete brings to the team, and I am willing to go the extra mile to have that excellent potential shine.

For each student-athlete's potential to be met, I am dedicated to planning specific practices. Practices will consist of wetland, dry land, drills, sets, and increasing yardage throughout the season. There will be no shortcuts taken from me, I only ask that student-athletes return the same amount of energy every day in and out of the pool.

For students to reach new personal levels, student-athletes must fine-tune their basic body position and core body movement in all four competitive strokes. It is my job to work with the fundamental skills that student-athletes already possess to assist with their individual rapid growth. I feel that swimmers must train all four strokes and feel confident enough to swim each in a meet if needed. Although I will always identify as a “breastroker,” I swam nearly every event to meet the needs of my team and coach.

Practices will always be made up of a warm-up, a drill set focusing on technique, and a main set with a focus on time, speed, or endurance. The yardage of each practice may change due to the severity of the practice, if we are preparing for an upcoming swim meet, or if we have just competed in a meet. It is my goal that your student-athlete is physically and/or mentally exhausted by the time they leave the pool. I hope your student-athlete is developing an appreciation for the self-discipline, personal accountability, goal setting, and self-esteem journey they are taking part in as a member of the Dickinson High School swim team.

I hope that each student-athlete has the hunger to reach regionals and state. As a model and coach, I will communicate with student-athletes the goals I am setting for the team, both short-term and long-term. I want student-athletes to understand that there is a process of chasing these goals, and it is just as beneficial as achieving them.

As parents, I want you to be aware of the ladder of success in and out of the pool as well. I will be depending on you to instill the importance of goal setting, working towards goals, and celebrating every milestone with your swimmer. Having parents who are committed to their students' sport will never hinder their success, it will only increase the likelihood of success. As a parent myself, I know that our children are our most valuable possessions. Thank you for trusting me to care for your student-athlete. I want every swimmer in the 2025-2026 season to hit their personal best times, and every milestone, no matter how big or small, to be celebrated in the biggest way possible. The 2025-2026 swim season will be a huge year for growth and development for the individual swimmers, me as a coach, and as a sports program in Dickinson ISD. We reached new heights in 24-25 and I can't wait to continue the path we are on and continue to make history!

Communications

Website: <https://www.dickinsonisd.org/page/ath.swimming>

The website will be updated regularly and will contain information such as:

Schedule: practices, meets, and holidays. If there is ever a cancellation of practice, it will be communicated through the Remind app, the website, and social media.

Newsletter: Families will receive a weekly newsletter. It will have highlights, updates, coaching information, activities, or any changes that will need to be made.

Meet Information: Swim meet directions will be shared, as well as parking information, entrance fees for spectators, and heat sheet sales.

Social Networking

To keep up with the latest communication technology, Dickinson Swim will have an Instagram account. Those who have Instagram are invited and encouraged to follow using the handle @ Disd.GatorSwim. There should not be any other page connected to Dickinson's swimming and diving team. No student-athlete will be the host of a social media page regarding Dickinson swimming and diving.

In addition, there is a Facebook page that can be followed using the handle: Dickinson High School Swim.

Lastly, for any last-minute information, emergencies, cancellations, etc, there is a Remind 101 that you can be linked to. Text @disdgat to 81010.

Student social networking pages will also be closely monitored by the coach. The integrity of a student-athlete is reflected both in and out of the pool. If there is any suspicion of inappropriate behavior by the student-athlete, there will be a meeting to investigate. A student-athlete could be let go from the team if inappropriate behaviors occur. An athlete's behaviors are not just reflective of themselves, but also of their parents/guardians and coach.

Students who report any behaviors that threaten the safety of others will go through the following steps:

1. Keep the involved students separate
2. Get the story from all parties involved
3. Listen without blaming, getting just the facts
4. Determine if the behavior is bullying, either social or cyber
5. Involve the parents and/or principal to discuss the situation

Policy on Behavior

It is the goal that each swimmer conducts themselves in and out of the pool with the thought that they are a true reflection of their families and their coach. Student-athletes will train their minds and bodies at all times and will be conscious of their extracurricular activities. If a student-athlete participates in multiple sports during the swim season, they must communicate with the coach. If a student-athlete experiences an injury of any type while not in the care of the coach,

they communicate the injury, have clearance to participate in practice, and take the required recovery time to heal. It is the expectation that all student-athletes adhere to the following behavior guidelines:

1. All swimmers must encourage and support their teammates at practices, as well as in competition. Swimmers may not conduct themselves in a manner that is disruptive to the success of their teammate(s).
2. Swimmers are expected to, at all times, follow the coach's instructions. At no time will there be disrespectful attitudes, back-talk, or arguments.
3. All swimmers using the locker room should exhibit proper behavior. Rough-housing, yelling, touching, or taking of any items that belong to another swimmer will not be tolerated.
4. Abusive language, racial slurs or discrimination, lying, and/or stealing are intolerable and grounds for immediate expulsion from the team.
5. Vandalism will not be tolerated. Any property that is vandalized by a swimmer will be repaired and/or replaced by the swimmer or his/her family.
6. Bullying, teasing, hazing, harassment, or any behavior that leads to a teammate being uncomfortable will not be tolerated.
 - a. A swimmer is to report immediately if they feel they are experiencing any of these behaviors.

Violation of any of the above-mentioned will be disciplined as follows:

1. The first violation will result in a warning
2. The second violation will result in a phone call/meeting with the parent(s) and swimmer. The swimmer will also be expelled from practice that day.
3. Third violation, the swimmer will be expelled from the team.

A student-athlete is always a student first. If a swimmer must attend tutorials, the swimmer must inform the coach before missing practice. If a swimmer misses the bus or must miss practice for any reason, the swimmer must contact the coach immediately. The swimmer's swim grade is calculated weekly. There will be 20 points daily: 10 for participation and 10 for proper attire.

The coach will monitor student-athlete grades. If a student-athlete has a failing grade or is in jeopardy of failing, they will be temporarily suspended from

the team. If a swimmer is having difficulty in a specific class, they may communicate to the coach their needs in a private meeting.

Practice Behavior

When a swimmer is assigned to a specific practice group, a number of variables are considered. Some of these variables include age, speed, technique, work ethic, and attitude. The most important piece of training is maintaining proper stroke technique. Distance is not a component of well-trained athletes. A swimmer may not argue with the coach when placed into a practice group. Swimmers are expected to put forth their best efforts in practice so that they are pushing themselves to reach new personal bests during meets. Circle swimming is always a requirement to eliminate the possibility of injury. Students may not push, pull, or use physical force on another swimmer in their lane while swimming. Proper passing techniques will be taught and practiced at all times.

It is the responsibility of the swimmer to be prepared with any equipment that may be used. This includes but is not limited to a suit, cap, goggles, buoys, paddles, tennis shoes, appropriate dry-land attire, and appropriate wet-land attire. If swimmers need to purchase equipment, they may do so through using the website SwimOutlet.com.

Dry land has a huge impact on swimmers. It can improve swimmer performance by 2-2.5%. It is the responsibility of the swimmer to follow the coaching staff's dryland workouts correctly and efficiently. Combining dry land into competitive swimming practices is more effective than a swim-only approach. Dryland is to be completed before entering the water, it is a way for the body to become "warm." Swimmers will be required to complete their dryland logs daily and submit them to the coaching staff.

Students who miss practice without proper documentation and communication to the coaching staff will receive a verbal warning. If the behavior continues, parents will be notified, and a discussion of removal from the team may occur. If a student leaves practice without notifying or communicating with the coaching staff, they can be removed from the team.

Dressing out for 7th-period athletics is considered part of swim team practice. If a student does not dress out appropriately, they will be removed from the team after 3 repeated offenses. Wetland requirements are that students will practice in long, drawstring pants and a long-sleeved t-shirt. Students who do not comply with these expectations will receive a verbal warning, a written warning, and then be removed from the team. Uniformity and expectations are a large part of a team sport.

Lettering

A student-athlete will be eligible to receive their varsity letter under these conditions:

1. Student-athletes attend all practices unless otherwise discussed with the coaching staff. Proper paperwork for illnesses and injuries must be submitted to be excused. If a student is absent from practice for any other excuse, the student and coaching staff will discuss making up any missed practices.
2. Student-athletes will be present at all swim meets and will be an active member of the team.
3. Student-athletes will maintain a passing grade point average in all of their classes.
4. Student-athletes who have been active members of the swim team for at least two consecutive years.
5. Student-athletes who qualify for regionals in an individual event or a relay. Student-athletes who are also entered into an event at regionals as an alternate will be considered to receive their varsity letter.

Parent Behavior

Dickinson ISD swimming and diving coaching staff encourages parents to watch their swimmers practice occasionally. It is not healthy to never come to the pool or to not take an interest in your student-athlete's journey. The reality of transporting young athletes is that many parents are present every day. However, parents do not need to watch practice. Here are some important guidelines to keep in mind when spectating a practice:

1. Swimmers still want and strive for their parents' approval. If a swimmer is aware that a parent is at practice, it is natural for the swimmer to turn their attention to the parent.
2. For swimmers to be as successful as possible, it is important that the swimmer's time, energy, and focus stay with the coach at all times.
3. The coaching staff asks that no communication be conducted between parent and swimmer during practice or compete with the coach for his/her attention.
4. Parents will not interrupt the coaching staff while on deck. Spectating a practice will be done from the stands; not from the deck.
5. If you need to communicate with the coaching staff, please do so by phone, e-mail, or request a conference before or after practice.
6. The coaching staff spends quality time planning practices and training sessions. Each training session and drill has a purpose. There will be times when one practice will build on another throughout the week. If a swimmer has not attended the recommended practice sessions, they will not understand the progress or progression of the practices. If you have questions regarding the practices, please contact the coaching staff.
7. Please do not try to coach your student-athlete. There will be times when teaching stroke skills, the coaches ask that swimmers do things that may not look correct or could be illegal according to disqualification rules. These are important and serve a purpose in teaching proper techniques and skills.

Practice Schedule

Practice schedules will be posted on the website and social media pages. Any changes to these schedules due to personal circumstances, weather, facilities, etc. will be communicated ahead of time. Please follow the social media pages, remind, and check e-mail frequently.

Practice Equipment

All swimmers need their own swimsuit, goggles, and cap.

Swimmeet suits and caps will not be acceptable as practice equipment. Please keep meet suits and caps dry and ready for meets only. If a swimmer wears

meet-only equipment during practice, there will be a point penalty for daily participation and preparation.

Attendance Policy

Consistent attendance is important in the development of all swimmers. The coaching staff understands and recognizes the value of other activities, including other sports. Please discuss with the coaching staff any other activities in which you plan to participate. It is ideal and your responsibility to attend all practices. As the season progresses, it is the responsibility of the swimmer to communicate about extended absences from the pool. If a swimmer is going to miss more than 1 consecutive practice due to illness, a doctor's note with a return to activity will be required.

Out-of-Water Policy

If a swimmer experiences an injury or an illness that requires them to be out of the water and off of dry land for 30 days or more, there must be a submitted doctor's note. The doctor's note must state the reason, the period to be out, and the clear to return to the activity date. This notice must be submitted to the coaching staff at the earliest possible. Any swimmer who experiences a head injury in or out of the water must also report to the coaching staff as soon as possible.

Inclement Weather

If Dickinson ISD swimming and diving practices must be canceled for any reason, it will be communicated as early as possible through social media and e-mail. If a swimmer is unable to attend a practice or a meet due to inclement weather debris, power outage, flooding, etc. at their home, please communicate with the coaching staff as soon as possible. Dickinson ISD swimming and diving is a team and will conduct themselves accordingly. If for any reason, a swimmer and their family needs assistance in clean up, materials, or belongings, assistance will be provided as best as possible.

Swim Meet Policy

All swimmers and their parents should understand that the swimmers are under the direction of the coaching staff at all times during the meet. Any questions regarding this should be directed to the coach. The following policies are expected to be followed by all Dickinson ISD swimmers:

1. Be on time for all sessions and team meetings
2. Team suits and caps are to be worn by all Dickinson ISD swimmers. No gear from other teams may be worn. Swimmers not wearing the team suit and cap will be asked to change before the competition. This is so that swimmers are easily distinguished as members of the Dickinson ISD swimming and diving team.
3. Swimmers are expected to swim all events entered unless it has been discussed with the coaching staff.
4. Swimmers are not allowed to attend an out-of-town meet with another team during the season without the coach's approval.
5. Good sportsmanship and courteous behavior are expected from all swimmers.
6. Swimmers are expected to clean their sitting area at the end of each session. All trash, water bottles, and personal items must be discarded correctly.
7. Swimmers are expected to cheer, celebrate, and support one another during events.
8. Swimmers will travel to all swim meets wearing team warm-ups.

Swim Meets

One of the rewards of competitive swimming is participating in swim meets. Meets are opportunities for a swimmer to measure his/her progress by competing in a formal competition against other swimmers. Meets can serve as motivation for swimmers to improve their performance and practice the skills taught at practice. Swimmers should be prepared to spend long hours at a pool during a swim meet. They can bring with them any activities (book to read, kindle, etc.), water bottles, and healthy snacks (clementines, granola bars, bananas, apples, etc.).

Team Travel Information

Some meets are designated team travel. For team travel, swimmers will travel to and from the meets with the coaching staff. Swimmers will travel in their team warm-ups to maintain a team mentality and unity. Any swimmer who qualifies for meets such as regionals/finals, etc. will be made aware of travel information ahead of time. If parents attend swim meets and would like to take their child home with them, they may do so. Parents and/or swimmers **MUST** communicate with the coaching staff that swimmers will be going home with parents/guardians before leaving. This is a safety issue, and we want all swimmers accounted for at all times.

Meet Entries

The coaching staff will determine the events a swimmer will be entered into at each meet. Swim meets are an integral part of a swimmer's development, and the coaching staff will be entering swimmers according to his/her readiness and progression in practice. If there are special considerations that a swimmer would like to bring to the coach's attention, please e-mail them before the meet deadline. **Please do not e-mail a list of events for your swimmer. Those decisions are to be made explicitly by the coaching staff.**

Preliminary relay assignments will be posted at the meet. The relay participants are subject to change at the meet. Who swims on a relay, and who swims which stroke on a relay, is the sole decision of the coaching staff. The coaching staff will use such factors as attitude, best time, performance under pressure, and how individuals are swimming on that particular day. Swimmers may not leave a meet early, as they may be pulled to swim a relay at the last minute.

Some of the meets the Dickinson High School swim team attends require a payment per swimmer and relay. These fees are due ahead of time, so please do not tell the coaching staff the day of a meet you will not be attending. This money comes out of the swim team budget and will hinder future events.

Parent Volunteer

The support from parents and guardians is the only thing that can ensure practices and meets are a success. Everyone is expected to participate in some

way. It is the goal of Dickinson ISD swimming and diving to have a reputation for having high-quality swimmers and parents. The coaching staff will communicate with the parents if parent volunteers are required. Each family will be requested to provide workers to meet session requirements. If a family can not attend a meet, it is their responsibility to make arrangements ahead of time. There will be a signup sheet for an event posted on social media.

Parent Responsibilities

Competitive swimming programs provide many benefits to young athletes. They develop self-discipline, good sportsmanship, and time management skills. The competition allows the swimmer to experience success in how to deal with defeat while becoming healthy and physically fit. As a parent, your major responsibility is to provide a stable, loving, and supportive environment. This positive environment will encourage your swimmer to continue in the sport. Show your interest by ensuring your swimmer's attendance at practices and by coming to meets. Parents serve as role models, and their attitudes are often emulated by their children. Be aware of this and strive to be positive models. Have your swimmer at the pool on time, ready to swim. Write with a permanent, waterproof marker your swimmer's name on all suits, goggles, warm-ups, caps, towels, fins, snorkel, swim bag, etc. Newsletters and other items are emailed out frequently. Check your email daily. You are responsible for the information that is communicated. The newsletter and social media pages are the biggest forms of communication. Your role as a swim parent can be difficult, but also very rewarding. Your attitude toward your swimmer's successes and failures, your swimmer's coaching staff, and your swimmer's experience will have a major impact on their performance, enjoyment, and ultimately long-term development in the sport. The swimmers are expected to be responsible for all aspects of their swimming. Most communication at this level is between the swimmer and the coaching staff. Some helpful observations to help as a swim parent include:

1. Every swimmer experiences success and failure, each is important in the swimmer's long-term development. Failure is one of life's greatest learning experiences. Winning seems to just happen, while overcoming setbacks requires determination and mental toughness. Your swimmer needs support

and encouragement during the hard times, not just during the victories. Teach them to be humble in victory, and a good sport in defeat.

2. Performance is complicated. Sometimes swimmers do all the obvious things necessary to perform well, yet do not. It is not just going to practice, working hard, and doing what the coach says. There are many emotional and mental factors, as well as physical factors, that go into performance. Learning takes place at different rates for individuals. Be patient. The slower learner may have a greater potential than the faster learner.
3. The swimmer should be swimming for the right reasons. A swimmer's swimming career can be short-lived if a parent is the one inflicting their own goals or trying to relive their glory days.
4. Look at each season as a long-term process. The coaching staff at Dickinson ISD is training to create student-athletes beyond Dickinson. Swimmers will experience life lessons that will carry them beyond the right now. This involves an incredible amount of patience from parents, swimmers, and coaches.
5. Plateaus can, and will, occur. They occur for a variety of reasons. Some are physical, some are motivational, some are mental. The student-athlete will go through tremendous amounts of physical and emotional changes as they develop their swimming career. Successful athletes work through these temporary delays and work to achieve greater accomplishments.
6. It is the job of the coach to critique the swimmer's performance, not the parents. Conflicting advice from the parent and coach will only confuse the swimmer.

Photography and Video

While the majority of images taken of student-athletes are done so in good faith, it is a fact that images can be misused and students can be put at risk if procedures are not observed.

A parent or guardian has the right to refuse to have their student-athlete photographed. The exercise of this refusal cannot be used as grounds for refusing entry into a swimming competition. Therefore, any photo that may go to press or on a notice board, be it through a member of the team or an official photographer,

should receive parental consent before publishing/displaying the photo. A suggested form allowing parents to indicate refusal of consent will be provided.

In the case of open meets and competitions where the host club has an official photographer present, all parents attending should be made aware of this in your meet information. If photos are to be published anywhere, the individual parent should be allowed to withhold their consent. All photographs must observe generally accepted standards of decency:

1. Action shots should be a celebration of the sporting activity and not a sexualized image in a sporting context.
2. Action shots should not be taken or retained where the photograph reveals a torn or displaced suit.
3. Photographs should not be taken from behind the swimming blocks at the start of a race, or exhibiting the child climbing out of the swimming pool.
4. Photographs should not be taken in locker rooms or bathrooms.

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras, and video cameras, increase the risk of different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. The use of such devices in the locker room or other changing areas is prohibited. ***All athletes are required to leave phones, tablets, and any other device with a camera or recording ability outside of the locker room.***

Consent to Participate and Acknowledgement of Risk

I give consent for my child to engage and participate in the Dickinson ISD swimming and diving program. I consent to my student-athlete receiving transportation to and from athletic events. I also understand that participation in athletic activities creates risks normally associated with such activities and vigorous or involved bodily contact. I give my permission to the appropriate certified school or medical personnel to render emergency treatment, if required, when associated with athletic injury or illness. I also permit the certified school staff or medical personnel to confer or consult with the physician regarding the athlete's return to participation after an illness or injury.

Print Parent/Guardian Name

Date

Parent Signature

Student Name

Grade Level

Weight Room Usage Permission

I give permission to the above-listed student-athlete to use the Dickinson High School weight room when supervised by a member of the Dickinson High School coaching staff. I understand that there is always the possibility of some injury occurring when involved in any type of physical activity.

Photography Release Form (taken directly from Disd Internet Policy)

In a typical school year, there are numerous positive activities in the schools that merit news coverage. School yearbooks, newspapers, as well as outside news media outlets such as local newspapers, radio, and television news media, include student information and student pictures in their coverage. Additionally, Dickinson ISD has a website where district information is posted. The site is dickinsonisd.org. In addition, many times, teachers like to publish student artwork or other student work on the website.

☐ Yes ☐ No I give permission for information about my child(ren) (including name and photographs) to appear in the school yearbook and school newspaper/newsletter.

☐ Yes ☐ No I give permission for my child's name, photo, and work to be published in outside media publications, including the district's external newsletter, "Dialogue," the district's website at www.dickinsonisd.org, and other external media (such as newspapers, television news stations, and radio stations).

I understand that should my child's work or photo be chosen for publication, my signature on this form acknowledges my permission for such work or photo to be published. I hereby give the above permission and release the district from any liability resulting from or connected with the publication of such work or photo.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Athletic Handbook Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have read the Athletic Handbook for Athletes and Parents. I understand the risks involved with athletic activities and participation. I also acknowledge the rules and consequences as outlined in the Handbook and agree to abide by these rules and consequences. Failure to do so may result in being expelled from the athletic program.

X

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

X

Student Signature

Date