1) **WHEN WILL MY CHILD SWIM THEIR FIRST MEET?** The coaches are watching your child and will be telling them (and or you) when they can expect to swim their first race. You will know ahead and your child will be encouraged to swim a stroke they feel they are able to compete in. Typical first time swimmers will compete in backstroke or freestyle. **8yrs and under only swim 1 length of the pool.**

2) **Does my swimmer have to dive from the blocks for free/fly/breast strokes?** If your swimmer feels uncomfortable with the height of the blocks, they can start from a standing position at the edge of the pool beside their lane block. Backstroke starts in the water. When entering the water, it is preferable that the swimmer pencil dive in for their safety. Inching into the water while holding a part of the block can result in injury.

3) **PARENT MENTORS:** For the first couple of swim meets, parents who have been with the team for a number of years will volunteer to answer your questions. They will wear a “Parent Mentor” sticker and can help you while the coaches are working with the swimmers.

4) **THE SUIT:** Your swimmer needs to wear their competition swimsuit for meets. Jammers for boys and one piece performance suits for girls. Please do not have your swimmer wear their competition suit to practice so the suit holds up well for Conference meet. Also, swimmers should be aware of where they are sitting. If they sit on rough concrete, their suits may snag or tear.

5) **BE ON TIME:** Seasoned families know that Coach Kerman believes everyone is late if they are not 15 minutes EARLY. Being “on time” will save everyone some stress. If you are a working parent, please let a Coach know so arrangements can be made, if possible, to assist your swimmer.

6) **YOUR TEAM DONATION:** Our team president, Kimberly Gleason, runs concessions and asks that you sign up to bring an item for the concession stand. Bottled Gatorade, water, and pre-packed food sale are an important way we keep our swim team afloat. See the sign-up sheets in the hall to know what to bring or talk with Kimberly.

7) **PRIORITIZE FOR YOUR SWIMMER:**
   - **SWIMMER:** will need to report to the deck, check in with a coach and be ready to warm up.
   - **PARENTS:** can find a seat, get settled and then check the final heat sheet. This final race roster is posted along the upper seating area on the steps, families should check the order as coaches are forced to make last minute changes that affect the order. (Note: this is the primary reason why informing the Coaches that your swimmer will be absent as soon as possible is imperative. The sooner your coaches know about an illness, planned vacation etc., the easier it is on the coaches and the team.)

8) **WARM-UPS** -Warm-ups occur for the first hour. Each team gets ½ hour- home team gets the water first, then our opponent. Warm ups are called by swimmer category, i.e., advanced, intermediate and beginner. Be ready to hit the water and pay attention for when your section is called to warm up. Your swimmer should report to warm ups before tending to which races they are in.

9) **OUR COACHES, OFFICIALS & COMPETITORS COACHES:** Coaches do an amazing amount of work with swimmers during a meet. **After your child swims, they should report to a coach for a check in.** Take time to notice the coaches giving feedback. On that note, the deck is a lively place and should remain free of non-swimmers and parents. DQ’s or Disqualifying happens. Mistakes made by swimmers do not disqualify a swimmer unless they are age 9 and over in this Conference.

10) **GOAL TIMES:** Each swimmer is racing against their last best time. Help your child know their swim times are and celebrate with them when they improve and have a PB (Personal Best)!

11) **DURING A RELAY RACE:** When your swimmer swims in a relay or 4 person race against other lanes, they should remain with their relay team, cheering on their teammates until the final person swims. The swimmers form important bonds when encouraging their fellow Otters. If your swimmer comes back to see you, they may be in a state of great excitement etc. Please encourage them to go back to their relay team until the last swimmer is done. **A note about the lead off swimmer on any relay:** When a swimmer is lead off in a relay, their time counts towards their personal bests. (Sweet!)
12) **POOL ORGANIZATION:** the swim meet has an organized system for competitive racing;
   a. **CLERK OF COURSE:** Located at the Southwest side of the pool (by boys locker room) – the first level of bleachers is used to line up swimmers prior to their race. The Clerk of Course will change the Race Line-up Flip board to the race # which is being called to LINE UP. The Clerk will hand each child a race card with their name on it. The child will stay in line up at clerk of course until their race is up on the block.
   b. **BENCH SUPERVISOR** – moves the swimmers from the Clerk of Course to their position behind the blocks. This position is key in keeping the flow of the races moving smoothly.
   c. **ANNOUNCER** – The announcer will make periodic announcements throughout the meet. One important note: In order for the starter to do their job for the swimmers, the pool will need to be **QUIET** for any start of a race. This is especially true for the youngest swimmers – who need extra concentration to know when to start.
   d. **SCOREBOARD & COMPUTER TABLE:** The computer table handles race results that appear on the scoreboard. Our scoreboard is in use every meet. It does not display swimmer names, but does track times accurately when swimmers finish strong by hitting the underwater time pad. If a swimmers stop time does not register, the announcer will call for stop watch times taken by lane timers. Lane hand timer’s scores are only used in the event of a malfunction.
   e. **AWAY MEETS:** For any meets at competitor’s pools, this system should remain the same for the most part. What can be different?
      i. **CAMPS:** Swimmers in other pools may have to sit away from their families in a designated “camp” area. Other pools have a limited bleacher seating. Having swimmers in camp allows for additional seating for swim fans. If there is a camp, pleas know that you should bring a blanket for swimmers to spread out and sit on, a card game or other quiet play board game and make sure they have a sealed drink. No electronics, balls or rowdiness is allowed.

   **Note: directions to away meet locations are sent by email days before the meet.**

13) **WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING:** This is up to the family, and every family has its own routine and bring differing items to the pool. This is a culminated list of ideas for new families – again it is up to you.
   a. A **blanket to pad the bleacher seats with.** The Otters also sell a NSST Bleacher Seat later in the season. Watch for a sign sheet.
   b. A **couple of dry fresh towels.** Especially as the season gets colder, having a dry towel can make a big difference.
   c. An **extra or back up pair of goggles.** Straps break, goggles take on water etc. Help your swimmer avoid panic by having a spare.
   d. Some **money for concessions.** All home meets and most away meets have a concessions stands where you can purchase typical concession food, pizza, tacos, and hotdogs. We try to also include veggie snacks, fruit and snack bars.
   e. The **meets Heat Sheet** (see item #12 in the Parents meeting agenda) to know who is swimming.
   f. Several **SHARPIE markers.** When you and your swimmer have confirmed their race numbers, you can write on their forearm so the swimmer can read it their events. Swimmers arms should be DRY or Sharpies will not work. We prefer that the child does not write all over themselves or others. And dark color Sharpies work the best.
   g. Additional **snacks or hydration drinks.**
   h. **Something to videotape or capture candid shots of your swimmers races.**
   i. **Dress in LAYERS** – as it gets hot with a large crowded pool.
   j. **Are you noise sensitive?** Think on what works for you.

14) **WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT BRING:** Do not have your swimmer bring electronics, phones etc. without accepting the fact they could be broken or stolen. Anything glass, goes without saying. Flip flops as they are slippery and can be dangerous on a wet pool deck.

   **A NOTE ABOUT SMOKING:** ALL DMPS school grounds are non-smoking campuses. You should set a good example for all athletes and refrain from breaking this rule.

15) **WHEN YOU GET HOME:** Swimmers are tired when they get home. Depending on your swimmers age, you may want to make sure the suits are rinsed in cold water and left to dry out. No wringing of suits as it wears them out faster.

**THANKS FOR BECOMING A PART OF THIS AMAZING TEAM – WE CAN’T WAIT TO GET TO KNOW YOU!!**

**GO OTTERS!!**