

DONNER SWIM CLUB

PARENT & ATHLETE STANDARDS

2026–2027 Membership Year

Donner Swim Club is committed to building an environment where athletes can develop, compete, belong, and grow over time.

Our culture is not defined by slogans alone. It is built through the behaviors we repeat, the standards we reinforce, and the way athletes, families, and coaches interact every day.

The Donner Way provides the framework for that development:

Belong → Believe → Build → Become → Beyond

These stages describe more than training groups. They reflect how athletes grow within the program: first through connection, then confidence, skill development, ownership, and eventually leadership.

Membership in Donner Swim Club requires athletes and families to contribute positively to that environment.

PART I: ATHLETE STANDARDS

1. BELONG: Respect People and the Environment

Every athlete deserves to feel safe, respected, and valued within Donner Swim Club.

Athletes are expected to:

- treat teammates, coaches, officials, volunteers, competitors, and facility staff with respect;
- include and support teammates across different ages, ability levels, and training groups;
- protect the physical and emotional safety of others;
- respect team facilities, locker rooms, equipment, and personal property; and
- avoid bullying, harassment, hazing, discrimination, intimidation, retaliation, or intentionally harmful behavior.

Strong teams are built when athletes know they belong and help others feel the same.

2. BELIEVE: Be Curious and Coachable

Development requires athletes to actively participate in the learning process.

Athletes are expected to:

- listen and engage when instruction is provided;
- ask questions when clarification is needed;
- experiment with movement and technical solutions;
- respond constructively to feedback;
- communicate what they are feeling or experiencing;
- remain open to different ways of solving problems; and
- take increasing responsibility for their own improvement.

Coachability does not mean passive compliance.

Athletes should become increasingly capable of understanding their own swimming, asking useful questions, identifying problems, and working with coaches to find solutions.

Athletes should always speak up about pain, injury, safety concerns, inappropriate behavior, or situations that make them uncomfortable.

3. BUILD: Train With Purpose

Not every practice, set, or repetition has the same objective.

Athletes are expected to understand the purpose of the task and commit to executing that purpose well.

Depending on the training objective, this may require:

- technical precision;
- exploration;
- speed;
- rhythm;
- controlled intensity;
- decision-making;
- recovery;
- sustained effort; or
- competitive execution.

The standard is not maximum effort on every repetition.

The standard is **appropriate intent, attention, and execution for the task being performed.**

Athletes should arrive prepared, use training time responsibly, and avoid behavior that unnecessarily disrupts teammates or practice.

4. BECOME: Take Ownership

As athletes progress through Donner Swim Club, they should become increasingly responsible for their own development.

Athletes are expected to develop ownership of:

- preparation;
- communication;
- attendance within the expectations of their training group;
- equipment;
- recovery habits;
- goal setting;
- race preparation;
- learning; and
- personal conduct.

Athletes are also expected to communicate honestly, accept responsibility for their choices, and avoid misleading coaches, teammates, or families about matters affecting participation, safety, or team operations.

Older athletes should increasingly communicate directly with coaches when appropriate rather than relying exclusively on parents to manage their athletic experience.

Ownership does not mean athletes are expected to manage everything alone. Coaches and families remain important sources of support.

The goal is progressive independence.

5. BEYOND: Elevate Others

Leadership is not limited to captains, senior athletes, or the fastest swimmers.

Athletes demonstrate leadership when they:

- model team standards;
- help younger or newer swimmers;
- support teammates during difficult training or competition;
- demonstrate sportsmanship;
- contribute positive energy;
- hold themselves accountable; and
- leave the environment better than they found it.

As athletes mature, they should move from simply benefiting from the Donner culture to actively strengthening it.

PART II: PARENT / GUARDIAN STANDARDS

Parents and guardians are essential partners in athlete development.

The strongest athlete environments are created when coaches, athletes, and families understand their roles and work in alignment.

1. SUPPORT THE ATHLETE

Parents should support the development of the whole athlete.

This includes encouraging:

- effort;
- curiosity;
- resilience;
- responsibility;
- healthy relationships;
- sportsmanship;
- enjoyment of the sport; and
- long-term development.

Parents should avoid creating unnecessary pressure around race times, rankings, qualifying standards, group placement, or comparison with other athletes.

The athlete's relationship with swimming should increasingly become their own.

2. TRUST THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Athletes develop at different rates.

Technical ability, physical maturation, emotional readiness, training history, competitive experience, and individual goals all influence development.

Parents are expected to allow coaches to make technical and developmental decisions involving:

- training design;
- technical instruction;
- group placement;
- advancement;
- meet recommendations;
- event selection;
- relay assignments; and
- competition preparation.

Parents should not coach athletes from the pool deck, spectator area, or other locations during Donner-supervised practices or competition.

Questions are welcome. Parallel coaching is not.

3. COMMUNICATE CONSTRUCTIVELY

Clear communication is necessary for athlete development and organizational trust.

Parents are expected to:

- communicate directly and respectfully;
- address athlete-specific concerns with the appropriate coach;
- avoid resolving concerns through other parents, athletes, or informal rumor;
- provide accurate and relevant information that may affect athlete participation, health, scheduling, or development;
- communicate in good faith;
- allow reasonable time for coaches to respond; and
- avoid confronting coaches during active practice supervision or immediately before or during competition.

Disagreement is not misconduct.

Parents may question decisions, ask for clarification, or raise concerns. The expectation is that those conversations remain respectful, direct, and productive.

Repeated harassment, threats, abusive language, intimidation, or refusal to follow established Club procedures may constitute misconduct.

4. STRENGTHEN THE COMMUNITY

Parents help shape the environment athletes experience.

Families are expected to:

- demonstrate sportsmanship;
- support Donner athletes and teammates appropriately;

- treat officials, volunteers, coaches, competitors, and other families with respect;
- fulfill applicable volunteer and membership responsibilities;
- follow facility and meet rules;
- comply with Safe Sport and MAAPP requirements; and
- represent Donner Swim Club appropriately at team activities.

Parent involvement and volunteer service do not change the respective roles of families, coaches, staff, or the Board in Club decision-making.

PART III: SAFETY, CONDUCT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

These standards apply during:

- practices;
- competitions;
- team travel;
- team functions;
- electronic communications;
- social media interactions connected to the Club; and
- other activities officially associated with Donner Swim Club.

Athletes and families must comply with applicable:

- Donner Swim Club policies;
- USA Swimming requirements;
- Indiana Swimming requirements;
- Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP);
- Safe Sport requirements; and
- facility rules.

Conduct that threatens athlete safety, significantly disrupts the training environment, violates applicable governing requirements, or repeatedly fails to meet Club standards may result in corrective action.

Depending on the seriousness and circumstances, responses may include:

- coaching correction;
- parent or athlete conference;
- temporary removal from an activity;
- participation restrictions;
- suspension; or
- termination of membership.

Responses should consider:

- seriousness of the conduct;
- athlete age and maturity;
- prior behavior;
- safety considerations;
- opportunity for learning or correction; and
- applicable Club or governing-body requirements.

Immediate action may be taken when reasonably necessary to protect athlete safety or comply with mandatory reporting or Safe Sport requirements.

REGISTRATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The acknowledgment presented in Commit should state:

I certify that I have read and understand the 2026–2027 Donner Swim Club Parent & Athlete Standards. I have reviewed the athlete expectations with my swimmer and understand that participation in Donner Swim Club requires compliance with applicable team, facility, Safe Sport, USA Swimming, and Indiana Swimming requirements. I understand that entering my full legal name constitutes my acknowledgment of these standards.

Required Response: Parent/Legal Guardian Full Legal Name