

PVSL Championships Information Summer 2024

DATES: Friday, July 26th and Saturday, July 27th

LOCATION: West Springfield High School

Address: 425 Piper Road, West Springfield, MA 01089

Champs Sessions are divided into the following age groups:

- **CHAMPS SESSION 1: Ages 11-12**

- Location: West Springfield High School
- Date: Friday, July 26th
- **Swimmer Arrival Time: 4:00 PM**
- Meet Start Time: 6:00 PM
- Admission: \$5
- Programs: TBD

- **CHAMPS SESSION 2: AGES 8 & Under and 9-10**

- Location: West Springfield High School
- Date: Saturday, July 27th
- **Swimmer Arrival Time: 7:00 AM**
- Meet Start Time: 9:00 AM
- Admission: \$5
- Programs: TBD

- **CHAMPS SESSION 3: AGES 13-14 & 15-18**

- Location: West Springfield High School
- Date: Saturday, July 27th
- **Swimmer Arrival Time: 12:30 PM**
- Meet Start Time: 2:30 PM
- Admission: \$5
- Programs: TBD

Please see the following pages for more Champs info and FAQs.

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IMPORTANT NOTES:

- The swimmer area will be **inside** at West Springfield High School. Swimmers will be housed in the gymnasium in between their events. Please bring a blanket/towel or chair to sit on as well as extra changes of dry clothes. Please also bring drinks and food to stay hydrated and fueled.
- Food will **not** be allowed inside the gymnasium. Swimmers will be expected to bring their food to the cafeteria to eat and then return to the gymnasium.
- There will be a spectator overflow area in the auditorium that will have a livestream of the swimming events to allow for timing for spectating your swimmer(s)'s events.
- Coach Teresa will NOT be present for the Champs sessions on Saturday (Session 2 and Session 3). Please give Coach Jerome, Coach Pat, and Coach Syd the same respect that you show Coach Teresa and please help them in keeping things running well at Champs this summer!
- If your birthday is BEFORE 7/17/24 and you will be "aging up" (e.g. you are 8 and will be turning 9, 10 and turning 11, 12 and turning 13, or 14 and turning 15), you will need to compete in that new age group at Championships (we have several July birthdays, so please be aware of this if it applies to you). HOWEVER, if you age up AFTER the date, you will remain in your original age group since you will not have any meets at the new age group. You can check this at the pool. If you have any questions about this, PLEASE CONTACT ME DIRECTLY!!!!

Preparation:

- As we head into Championships, please try to do what you can to help prepare your swimmers mentally and physically, ESPECIALLY if they are a first season swimmer, but this advice will benefit EVERYONE. My goal for the Sharks is to have **NO DAY-OF SCRATCHES** for Champs!
- Physical Preparation:
 - Getting Enough Sleep/Rest: please try your best to make sure that your child is able to rest leading up to Champs. Proper sleep leading up to Champs will make it more likely that a swimmer can perform to their best abilities (and less likely that they will become ill). This is especially important the night before Champs, which can be very exciting and nerve-racking for both swimmer and parent and it can be difficult to sleep. Deep breathing exercises and listening to quiet music in a completely dark room can be helpful to help a nervous swimmer relax the night before the competition.
 - Proper Fueling/Nutrition: please try to make sure your child is eating a balanced diet leading up into Champs. Limiting sugar and junk foods can help swimmers put the final touches on all the physical preparation that they have been doing this season (and help prevent illness). Swimmers should also be **HYDRATING PROPERLY** with **WATER** (please try to avoid sugary drinks). **This is especially**

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important in the summer with so many swimmers participating in camps and other outdoor activities. Please emphasize the importance of eating and drinking adequately in the summer heat!!

- Mental Preparation:

- Calming Nerves/Anxiety: This is a big meet. It will make most swimmers at least a little nervous, and it can be anxiety inducing for anyone in a situation this big. This is understandable, but it is also a great learning opportunity for ALL Sharks – from the very experienced all the way to the first season swimmers. **Some swimmers may experience anxiety before Champs that is so intense that they experience physical symptoms – it is important that they push through these to learn that they can do difficult things and come out better for them.** If your child is nervous about Champs, I have some tips:
 - Remind your swimmer that they are doing something they have done before – no one is swimming a new event – **they know what they're doing, even if they've never done Champs before!**
 - Have them try some deep breathing exercises – breathe in through your nose, hold your breath for a few seconds, and breathe out through your mouth
 - Have your swimmer remind THEMSELVES that they've got this! They are going to do AWESOME and nerves and anxiety are a natural part of competition!
- Visualize the Competitions: your swimmer knows what events they will be doing (this will also be posted at the pool this week and will be sent out via Remind). Have them think about the things that they want to do as part of their event (good start, good turn, good finish, proper technique, etc.). Visualization is also a way to help swimmers calm their nerves, because it helps them take ownership of their races. When swimmers feel like they're in control of what they're doing, they don't get as worried.

- Team Responsibility: please remember that even though many of your child's competitions are individual, the Sharks are still a **TEAM**. Please try your best to follow through with Championships – while last minute severe illness can occur and has happened in the past, please remember that almost every swimmer is in at least one relay, and for most relays, **ONE** person being scratched means that the **WHOLE** relay will need to be scratched, eliminating an entire relay for other swimmers – we don't always have enough substitutes.

Timeliness Issues:

- In the past, we have had issues with people showing up late to meets. We understand that life gets in the way of things sometimes. Please **CALL A**

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COACH DIRECTLY if you think there is any possibility of your child being **late** to the **warm-ups** of their session (this prevents us from scratching swimmers prematurely). The number to contact for session 1 is (413)455-4293. The number to contact for sessions 2 and 3 is (413)439-3082.

- We are required to make scratches 30 minutes before the start of the meet. This is a **HARD DEADLINE - we do not have control over this**. We are required to scratch any swimmers who are not present before the scratch deadline. Most swimmers are in relays, so a scratch means that 3 other swimmers will lose a relay. Please keep this in consideration.
- Regarding warm-ups, we only have 20 minutes for each session and get only 1 lane, so timeliness of all swimmers ensures an effective warm-up for everyone.

Events:

- **Relays:** Most swimmers will be in at least 1 relay. Some swimmers are in 2 relays. However, not everyone has relays. This is due to issues with numbers of people signed up for Champs. We will try our best to get everyone in a relay, but not everyone will be in one. We triple-check the entries, so everything that your child is in will be proofed multiple times before we submit.
- **Individual Events:** Event sign-ups for Champs for individual events are considered by the coaches, but they are not guaranteed. Most swimmers will be entered in events for which they sign up, **BUT** we will make changes based on...
 - system times (e.g. a swimmer signs up for 100 back but does not yet have a time for 100 back in our records - we're not allowed to make a No Time entry),
 - the ability of the swimmer (e.g. I will NOT put a swimmer in an event for which they are a major disqualification risk), or
 - on placement opportunities (e.g. a swimmer has a better chance of placing in a different event from one they selected)
- **Entries:** If you want to know what your child is swimming at champs ahead of time, we will have a list posted at the pool that has all individual events and relays for each swimmer on 7/22. I will also have the individual sign-up sheets for each swimmer with final events circled. These sheets list any changes that I make along with my reasoning. Please speak to me directly if you have questions about your child's events.

Volunteering:

- As always, we need parent volunteers to help with Champs. All teams are required to supply volunteers - the meet can't function without help from parents from every team. We will need:
 - Timers – we are **required** to provide 3 timers **for each session**. This is an official work assignment for the Sharks from our league.

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- Meet Marshals – we are **required** to provide 6 marshals **for each warm-up session** and 4 marshals **for each session**. **This is an official work assignment for the Sharks from our league.**
 - Warm-up marshals make sure swimmers are safe, entering the water via the “sit and slide” method unless their whole lane is doing starts, and ensure spectators are remaining in designated areas.
 - Meet marshals help with crowd control (help to maintain order and keep numbers at appropriate capacity) and help spectators rotate in and out of the pool area in an orderly fashion.
- Parent volunteers to act as stroke and turn officials – we are **required** to provide at least one stroke and turn official/judge for **each session!** If you know how to do stroke and turn judging, PLEASE step up for this position (as an added bonus, this is one of the best seats in the house for being able to see the swimmers).
- We need help with keeping swimmers seated, calm, and occupied in the swimmer holding area so that we can find swimmers easily and to avoid accidents and altercations. This will also involve helping swimmers stay hydrated, fueled, and out of the sun.
- Please talk to the board about volunteering if you would like to help out or if you have any questions. We are planning to send out a SignUp Genius for our official Champs work assignments.

Final Tips for Champs Participants

- Seating at the meet is limited – West Springfield High School is a small venue, so the earlier you get there, the better your seat will be. **Please be ready to rotate in and out of the spectator area so that all fans can have the opportunity to watch their swimmers compete!** Admission is \$5.00 per person and Programs are TBD each. **Please be aware that all monetary transactions are CASH ONLY!**
- Bring extra equipment – malfunctions with suits, caps, and goggles happen frequently, so having extras of everything will ensure that there are no big issues during Champs (we had a swimmer miss an event several years ago at winter Champs because his suit ripped and he did not have a backup). **Please double check your child’s bag to make sure they have packed what they need!**
- **All swimmers – male and female – should wear a Sharks cap while competing – the coaches will have extra just in case, but please bring your own as well.**
- It's a good idea to bring something to do - there will be extended periods of time between your child's events. Champs is a long meet, so bringing a tablet, a puzzle book, or reading material can help pass the time (for both swimmers and parents!). Please be careful about sending electronic devices with your child - we have had swimmers lose pretty expensive

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items in the past, and I cannot account for other teams (with whom we must share the bullpen), only our own. If your child is absent-minded, please do not let them use an electronic device without supervision from a responsible person. **SSSC is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged property! The bullpen volunteers are not responsible for taking care of swimmers' belongings – that is the responsibility of each swimmer. If it is valuable, please do not risk bringing it!!**

- Talk to your child about where they will be spending the meet - the bullpen at Champs is NOT in the pool area – it will be in a separate area TBD (possibly a significant distance from the pool area), and **I expect swimmers to be there for the duration of the meet** (the Sharks will have our own designated area to sit). Please do not allow your child to stay with you in the pool area, and if you must be with your child, please stay in the bullpen with them. It is tremendously difficult for coaches to find children in the stands, so please make sure that your child knows that they are to stay with the rest of the team in their designated area so that no one misses their events. **Please also remember to check out with a coach before you leave the meet so that there are no issues with the final relays – please assume that your child will be swimming in a final relay unless/until told otherwise DIRECTLY by a coach.**
- There will be a concessions stand that serves food and drinks, but if you would like, you may send your child with snacks or food packed ahead of time. Definitely make sure your child has water and Gatorade so that they stay hydrated (remind them that they must eat food and drink Gatorade in the **designated areas only!**) **I expect my swimmers to pick up after themselves!!**
- Please remember to bring cash! Admission, programs, and concessions will be cash only. There will also be a vendor selling clothing items.

Post-Season

- Our **LAST** week of Sharks activities/practices for the winter season is the week of 7/22 – 7/25. After that, we will not be doing any swimming or practice until the start of the fall/winter season. The start of pre-season activities will be Monday, September 9th, 2024 – please stay tuned to the website, Facebook, and TeamSnap email for updates on swim lessons and clinics. Regular season spring practices will begin, as usual, at the end of September (Monday, September 30th, 2024 will be the first official day of regular practices, but there will be pre-season lessons and activities prior to that date).
- We will be having our **end of season party** on the evening of **Monday, July 29th at Kiley from 5:30pm – 8:30pm**. All are welcome, but please be aware that, due to numbers, ONLY Sharks COMPETITIVE swimmers will be allowed in the pool (NO swimmers from lessons or non-Sharks friends/family). Please

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make every effort to attend – we not only distribute Champs awards but also team awards as well! It is our way of celebrating all of the hard work the swimmers and families have put in all season!

- A portion of the party is dedicated to distributing team awards, medals and ribbons from Champs, meet attendance medals, and any remaining best-times ribbons.
- The party schedule is as follows:
 - 5:30-6:45pm: pool time (for **Sharks competitive swimmers ONLY**) AND food. Please note that food will be distributed to swimmers first before families to ensure that there is enough to go around. Food will be kept outside the building to limit cleanup and keep the pool area clean.
 - 7:00-8:30pm: Team awards, medals and ribbons from Champs, meet attendance medals, and best-times ribbons. This portion of the celebration will take place inside the pool area to allow for swimmer recognition.
 - **PLEASE** RSVP for this celebration on TeamSnap. An event has been created and you can add notes for numbers of people. This will allow our board a better estimate for food. **We are likely to run out of food if we don't have an accurate head count, so please make sure you RSVP!**