Hello swimmers and parents,

 If you are reading this you have selected the option on registractions to learn more about this opportunity. For those who are not familiar with the organization, USA Swimming (USAS) is a nationally recognized competitive swim program that governs clubs across the country from introductory level swimmers the whole way up to olympic level swimmers. I wanted to look into the program for our club for two reasons: First, we have an ever growing number of SGSC alumni looking for a place to train and compete, and since CASL (our summer league) only allows competition up to the summer after they graduate, we need to look elsewhere if we want to accommodate them. Many of our current swimmers have expressed interest in swimming different events compared to the “same-old” lineup of events. USA meets have the standard 50s/100s, but they also have 200’s of the strokes, 400IM, 400/800 relays and actual distance events like 800m/1000yd or 1500m/1650yd. Many summer meets are often swum in a long course, or 50m, pool which is a whole new and exciting experience for those that have never done it before.

 For this summer, at least, we are going to compete as an “unattached” team, which has some benefits and some drawbacks. The main benefit is that getting the entire club certified by USAS is a long process and this allows us to begin competing this season. The other benefit is that we can start with a smaller group of swimmers. To be a “USA Club” every member of the club must be USAS members, which is a big change, and a big cost change for everyone, even those who are not able/interested in attending the USAS meets. The downsides are that unattached swimmers cannot form relays at USAS meets, and you (the swimmers/parents) must take care of registration and meet entries yourselves (there is no formal system for unattached coaches to submit meet entries for swimmers or otherwise track/organize an unattached “team”). We’re basically a bunch of independent swimmers who happen to show up at the same place at the same time.

 Since we are registering as unattached, you will need to get a registration link directly from our chapter of USA Swimming (Mid-Atlantic Swimming). You can contact Amy Steeves for the link at registration@maswim.org. If you have a current or lapsed USAS membership there shouldn’t be anything additional that you need to do (other than reactivate if necessary). The cost of the athlete membership is about $90/year. Additionally, the meets have a per-event registration fee (often $10/event).

My goal for this summer is to attend 2-3 meets. I’m aiming for one at the end of May, then one in June/July depending on what the schedule allows. While I’ve been told by the USAS membership personnel that you have to register for the meets individually, most of the meets I’ve look at request entries submitted through email using a meet file, so once we decide on meets I will have to reach out to the meet administrator to find out exactly what they would like from us.