



News Release

September 9, 2019

ASD statement concerning Dimond High School Swimmer Disqualification:

ASD is reviewing the disqualification of a student athlete during the September 6 Dimond High School home swim meet. The disqualification appears to stem from a difference of opinion in the interpretation of the rules governing high school swim uniforms. Immediately after the disqualification, the Dimond HS swim coach filed a protest with the official to contest the decision. The coach's protest was quickly denied at the meet, and we expect the coach to appeal. We intend to gather all the facts surrounding the disqualification so we can accurately address the matter with officials and take appropriate action to ensure fair, equitable competition and consistent application of the rules for this athlete and her peers.

Because swimming and diving suit coverage rules and regulations have been an ongoing national discussion, the Dimond High School Swim Program has made deliberate efforts over the last year to ensure athletes' uniforms meet the regulations prescribed by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) to avoid any confusion or misinterpretation. This year, the Dimond swim team has purchased approved, team suits for every swimmer that meet the requirements put forth by the NFHS. The disqualified athlete was wearing the approved, school-issued suit during the race. In the first three meets this year, the Dimond swim team has had no disqualifications related to the wear of the swim uniform.

The NFHS provides the rules and regulations by which our athletic competitions are conducted. ASD contracts with local swim clubs to conduct swim meets across the District under the rules stipulated by the NFHS. Officials' decisions are independent, guided by those rules. However, we expect all referees and officials to conduct themselves in a manner that respects the dignity and rights of every student athlete regardless of the young person's gender, body shape, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, or disability.

We owe it to our student athletes to provide a fair and consistent atmosphere in which they can train and compete to their fullest potential. ASD will not tolerate actions by its coaches, students, staff, or community members that discriminate, target, or otherwise create an unsafe or inequitable environment for its student athletes.

We look forward to pursuing an open dialogue among our coaches, students, the Alaska School Activities Association, and our community partners to resolve this situation and to ensure all athletic competitions are conducted consistently and fairly for every athlete and team.

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The Anchorage School District (ASD) educates almost 48,000 students in the southcentral Alaska communities of Anchorage, Eagle River, Chugiak and Girdwood. ASD has more than 130 schools and programs and is one of the 100 largest school districts in the country. For more information, visit www.asdk12.org.



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