



Hello OSI and LESI Members,

Hope you are doing well! For those of you that do not know me, my name is Zach Toothman, and I am the current Central Zone Athlete Director, co-chair of the Zone Directors' Council, but at the heart and identity of my athlete representation: ***an athlete member from Lake Erie Swimming.***

Lake Erie Swimming has been my LSC ever since I learned how to swim and have been able to create so many memories from qualifying for my first LSC Championship, making it on my first Lake Erie Zone Team to represent my LSC, being elected to the LSC Junior Athlete Representative role in 2019, and most importantly making friendships and relationships with other athletes and LSC members that I still connect with today.

Just like myself, your passion for your LSC whether it be Ohio or Lake Erie runs deep. I appreciate all that you do for the sport and our community both in and out of the pool in the state of Ohio. Your dedication, leadership, and guidance are what has and will have set our athletes up for success athletically and in their future endeavors.

In the upcoming weeks, a vote will take place between the two LSCs to potentially merge and be united under **One** LSC for the state of Ohio. This step and the profound impact between OSI and LESI will be huge in the future of USA Swimming in Ohio. I can speak personally that I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead under a united LSC.

I have had the privilege of guiding the LSC athletes from both OSI and LESI towards a merged athlete committee and I will be the first to say the energy and excitement of this possibility is radiating! On our weekly calls, the athletes bring stories and verbatims from their fellow teammates on what a potential merger would mean to them. Through my years of athlete leadership, I have never seen such excitement and full support of all athletes behind an idea than the merger. These athletes are dedicated in making the athlete experience in the merged LSC one that is unforgettable and transformative. Their vision of what a unified LSC can look and provide to the athletes in the state of Ohio represent the same experiences I had throughout my swimming journey. The friendships, competition environments, athlete service initiatives, new opportunities to grow, and everything else in between are what the athletes are looking forward to the most!

The time is now to turn the page and embrace the merge between LESI and OSI. Both LSCs have thrived and provided so many great opportunities and experiences for athletes in the state for years. Collaborating together we can begin charting a new way forward and energize the community for the future! We can begin developing new ideas and opportunities for athletes that they will embrace for years to come, **together.**

To begin this new chapter for our athletes, it is up to us **collectively** to put the story into action through our vote. While I know there are still details of the merger that need to be defined and developed further, I am fully confident that we can achieve this full vision and reconcile any roadblocks in our way. This new story will be dynamic; it will be profound; and most importantly it will be one for all athletes in the state of Ohio. This unified LSC will represent the interests of all members and why Ohio Swimming will be stronger than it ever has been!

I implore you to vote yes for the merged LSC at the upcoming Special HOD Sessions as we look towards the future. I am more than happy to talk and connect with you if you have any further questions or concerns. My contact information is below.

The future of swimming in Ohio starts with **YOU**, and I am excited to be a part of it alongside you!

Sincerely,

Zach Toothman and LESI & OSI Athlete Representatives

ztooth21@gmail.com

osiathletes@swimohio.com