

West Salem Hockey Association (WSHA)

Guidelines and Rules for Evaluations & Team Selection

(Edited as of October 2025)

This document is meant to outline and explain the evaluation and team placement process for the WSHA. The purpose of this document is to maintain and communicate consistency and fairness on an ongoing basis for the Association, its members and its players.

Tryout Goals:

1. Provide a fair and unbiased approach to evaluate overall hockey ability of each youth player
2. Ensure the integrity of the process is maintained, allowing the skater to develop with other similarly skilled players
3. Assign players levels of team play that will be competitive, as well as challenges, for all team members

Tryout Purpose:

When, based on the number of participants registered at a given age level, more than one team will exist for an age level, tryouts will be held in order to place skaters on an appropriate team based on their skills. Skaters may elect not to participate in the tryout process and will thus be placed on the lowest level team for that age level. The team-size roster range for all teams will be determined by the WSHA Board of Directors and conversations with head coaches per level. The BOD and coaches consider the number of registered players, desired roster size for each level of play and overall talent pool at each level.

Please keep in mind the young skaters place plenty of pressure on themselves going into tryouts. Remember that they are out here to play a game, a great game that should be enjoyed. Enjoying the game, having fun with teammates, learning hockey and life lessons can be achieved on any level. Encourage your skaters to relax, have fun, and give 100% effort. Please allow situations like this to be a life lesson for your player. "We all get cut; we all get fired. We are all told at some point in our lives that our services are no longer needed. Sports are a microcosm of life—life will go on if your player did not make the team. Let your player enjoy the game and play at a level that will allow him or her to flourish and want to play again next season." Angelo Ricci, Ricci Hockey Consulting

Tryout Requirements:

1. Players must wear full hockey gear for all sessions.
2. Players should check-in 30 minutes prior to the assigned tryout session.
3. Players will be given a colored, number pinnie jersey.

Prior to evaluations, the Coaching Committee:

- Selects a team of on-ice coaches for each level to conduct the pre-evaluation and evaluation sessions. One person is designated as the lead coach.
- Appoints the evaluation team for each age level. A panel of evaluators with a high level of hockey knowledge will be used. Non-parent evaluators from outside the organization will be paid a nominal stipend.
- Approves drills used during evaluations.

Process:

- Each level will have both an age-appropriate skill assessment and a scrimmage.
- Ice time during scrimmages may not be even and lines may be adjusted to allow evaluators the ability to see players in different matchups. The amount of playing time in scrimmages is not correlated with team placement or skill level. Playing time in scrimmage is entirely to ensure the evaluators have the opportunity to see skaters with the appropriate groups and situations to make their recommendations.
- If a player wants to be both a skater and a goalie, they need to pick either skater or goalie position for tryout evaluations. If they pick skater, they have to make the A team as a skater in order to make the A team. Then that player will be allowed to play some goalie as the coach determines appropriate, etc.. If a player wants to be a goalie 100% of the time - the player is evaluated against the other full time goalies.
- Players will be provided an evaluation jersey or pinnie with a number. The evaluation jersey must be returned at the conclusion of evaluations.
- Evaluations are not open to spectators in the rink. While you are allowed to hang out in the lobby, we encourage you to leave the rink, to allow your skater to focus during the evaluation. The evaluators will have a designated area and are NOT to be communicated with by parents before, during or after the evaluations. Spectators may not communicate with players during the evaluation sessions.

Team Selection:

- Following the evaluation sessions, designees from the board of directors will meet with the evaluators and determine the rosters. The team selection admin will facilitate the discussion among the evaluators to select each roster spot, one spot at a time until the roster is full.
- Evaluation scores will NOT be released. Players who desire feedback regarding their evaluations can discuss that with their head coach after teams are selected.
- Teams will be sent once coaches are assigned and confirmed for that level. We understand the desire to know teams quickly; however, we need to ensure the committee is not rushed in the process of team and coach selection. Please be patient as this process could take several days!
- WSHA continues to adhere to the 24-hour rule, meaning no contact should be made from families to anyone involved in evaluations for 24-hours post evaluations and results being shared. Any contact made prior to 24-hours after these events will be deleted/ignored.

Evaluation Criteria and Selection Factors:

Skills: One of the most important skills athletes need to demonstrate at evaluations is skating. Players should be able to show they can start, stop, turn, and crossover. Other skills athletes will need to execute are puck control, passing, receiving, and shooting. Performing offensive and defensive tactics should also be tested.

Hockey Sense - Awareness of the Game: Knows how play will develop, player in right place/right time, calls for puck/directs play verbally, understands when to line change (if applicable), understands game situations, demonstrates knowledge of rules

Play Away From the Puck: Pass option for teammate, supports puck carrier, back-checks with intensity, fore-checks with intensity, covers/positions self defensively, positions to become scoring threat, spatial awareness

Play Around the Puck: Wins foot races to the puck, wins possession battles, maintains control of puck, makes smart plays with the puck, clears puck from defensive areas, moves puck to scoring areas, advances puck up-ice.

Hustle/Compete: Exits/comes back to player bench hard, sets play tempo during shift, out-skates others, skates with purpose, quickly gets up off ice, quickly changes direction, consistent effort for entire game.

Teamwork & Sportsmanship: Communicates with line mates/partners/goalie, moves puck to teammates willingly, Positive leadership by example, demonstrates sportsmanship before/during/after game, encourages/motivates teammates, shows positive emotion.

Attitude: It's not all about skills during evaluations. Players also need to work hard, treat others with respect, show that they are coachable and are a good teammate.

Preparedness: Athletes need to demonstrate they came to evaluations ready to go. This can include showing up on time with the right equipment.

Following directions: Coaches need players who can follow instructions. Athletes need to demonstrate they can perform the drill by paying attention and executing it correctly.

Unable to Attend Evaluations Due to Illness, Injury or other Conflict:

- **Known/Planned absences**
 - Submit in writing to the BOD as soon as conflict is known. You must give a minimum of 2 weeks' notice. This will be passed on to the Evaluation Committee.
 - The Committee shall determine if the absence is reasonable and if special accommodation should be made.
- **Unplanned/Emergent absences (i.e. sickness, hospitalization)**
 - Notify the BOD as soon as the issue is known. Failure to do so may affect player placement.
 - The board shall determine if the absence is reasonable and if special accommodation shall be made.
 - If needed, a separate tryout will be scheduled.
 - Every effort will be made to place the skater on the most appropriate team.

Independent Evaluator Pool

3rd party/non-parent evaluators will be used to assess all skaters at each level. Evaluators will instruct the players at the tryout, informing the players of the drills and format. Evaluators will rank the players based on the evaluation criteria. Every effort will be made to equalize the number of minutes a goalie is on the ice during game play at tryouts.