



2025-2026
HIGH SCHOOL SKATING
HANDBOOK

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

Welcome to the 2025-2026 High School Skating season!

High School Team Skating is a program run by the High School Programs Subcommittee under the Programs and New Program Development Committee of U.S. Figure Skating. The mission of this program is to support student athletes in their high school development through their chosen sport of figure skating.

High school skaters may form teams to compete on behalf of their high school or a combination of high schools, per the eligibility and team formation rules listed in this handbook. High school skating competitions (i.e. competitions offering high school skating events or stand-alone high school competitions) are to be run as sanctioned U.S. Figure Skating non-qualifying competitions per Rule 1021 in the U.S. Figure Skating Rulebook, and the requirements outlined in this handbook.

Athletes participating in these events are considered student-athletes. Their education is of the highest priority, and in all decision-making matters, the Programs & New Program Development Committee, and the local organizing committees (LOC) have a responsibility to minimize the days missed from school.

KEY SEASON DATES

Renewal season runs from October 1 through September 30. The official start of the 2025-2026 season is October 1, 2025. Teams can start registration/renewal beginning September 1.

The high school skating program aligns with the traditional school year with many competitions taking place between October through April. However, high school skating competitions may take place at any point throughout the year, as allowed by state athletic association guidelines.

In addition to sanctioned non-qualifying high school skating competitions held around the country, the Programs & New Program Development Committee looks forward to facilitating the following competition opportunities, open to all registered high school skating teams during the 2025-2026 season:

- 2026 Cyber Challenge: January 2026-April 2026
- 2026 Sectional High School Finals: TBA, Spring 2026

More information regarding these events can be found on the High School Programs webpage on the Members Only website.

ELIGIBILITY & TEAM FORMATION

Athletes must be eligible members in good standing of U.S. Figure Skating or Learn to Skate USA® and may be members of the figure skating club of their choice or be individual members of U.S. Figure Skating.

All skaters must be enrolled as a full-time student as defined by the institution that they attend, grades 9-12, as per state guidelines. This includes traditional, online, and home-schooled students. High school seniors that are rostered on a team for the current high school skating season and graduate in the spring may remain on the team roster and compete through the end of September of their graduation year. However, once the new season begins on October 1, graduates are no longer eligible and must be removed from the roster. Incoming 9th grade high school students may be added starting October 1, marking the beginning of the first full season for which they are eligible.

A minimum of two (2) skaters are required to form a team. Team members may include skaters of any gender. Skaters do not have to be at the same test or competitive level.

Athletes may compete either for the high school they are attending, or as a high school collaborative, defined as follows:

- Athletes from a single school, representing that school, OR
- Athletes representing two or more area high schools combining to form a team.

TEAM REPRESENTATION

Competitors **may not** represent more than ONE high school skating team at one time.

Skaters wishing to change their team representation mid-season must submit the [High School Team Representation Change Request form](#). We kindly ask that athletes inform the team(s) involved to ensure that all parties are aware of the situation.

HIGH SCHOOL SKATING TEAM MEMBERSHIP

All High School Skating Teams participating in high school competitions must register with U.S. Figure Skating on the Members Only website. This will include creating a team roster to include all skaters on your team and paying the annual team dues of \$50, which are payable starting September 1.

All teams must have at least one Team Manager who is 18 years or older, must have a current U.S. Figure Skating membership, and be fully compliant. Team coaches are not required in order to form a team. However, if a team chooses to have a team coach, this person may also serve as the team manager.

For detailed instructions on how to create your team, please refer to the [Steps to Register/Renew Your High School Team](#).

COMPLIANCE

All Team Managers assigned on Members Only must have a green lighted background check and completed SafeSport™ Training. Team Managers are required to be at least 18 years old and have a current U.S. Figure Skating membership.

Coaches assigned on Members Only must complete all applicable compliance

requirements. Details regarding Coach compliance requirements can be found [HERE](#).

Teams that are composed of both Minor Athletes and Adult Participants (skaters over the age of 18) are required to complete an extra step for compliance. Athletes who are 18 at the time of team registration or turn 18 in the middle of the season are deemed Mandatory Athletes. Mandatory Athletes must complete SafeSport™ training on or before their 18th birthday.

All skaters on the team roster are required to complete the mandatory waivers, medical registry, and emergency contact information.

For a list of all SkateSafe® requirements and policies, please refer to the [SkateSafe® Program Handbook](#).

OUR COMMUNITY:

U.S. Figure Skating is dedicated to fostering a culture of belonging and community that is welcoming for all individuals. We are committed to championing diversity, equity and inclusion and understand its value in combating discrimination and challenging inequalities necessary to develop champions both on and off the ice. We are actively working toward developing equitable practices and policies that foster safety and empower all individuals to authentically pursue their unique path in all areas of our sport. We stand firmly on the belief that our members are the most important asset to our organization and that our differences are meaningful and strengthen our sport. We believe that skating is for everyone.

NON-DISCRIMINATION:

U.S. Figure Skating commits in policy, principle and practice to sustain a non-discriminatory approach on and off the ice for all members. We strive to provide equal opportunity for all despite their varied backgrounds, experiences and identities, and want all members to feel valued and respected at every level of organization. U.S. Figure Skating's SkateSafe® Program receives, investigates and addresses allegations of discrimination or harassment throughout its membership and the organization. Please refer to the [SkateSafe® Program Handbook](#) for further definition of harassment, discrimination and abuse.

By attending this event, all participants are willingly committing to upholding U.S. Figure Skating's Code of Ethics (*GR 1.01*) and Code of Conduct (*GR 1.02*), as detailed within the [U.S. Figure Skating Rulebook](#).

To report a concern of discrimination or harassment to U.S. Figure Skating, please visit www.usfigureskating.org/skatesafe or email skatesafe@usfigureskating.org.

SECTION 2: EVENTS OFFERED

Events offered within the High School Competitions may include the following:

- Team Maneuvers (Levels A, B, C, & D)
- Short Program (Juvenile-Senior)
- Compete USA (Basic 1-6)
- Excel Free Skate (Aspire 1-Senior)
- Championship Free Skate (Junior and Senior)
- Solo Pattern Dance (Preliminary-International)
- Solo Free Dance (Juvenile-Senior)
- Showcase Events (Aspire-Senior)
- Specialty Events (Aspire-Senior)
- Adaptive Skating (Adaptive 2-12)

It is at the discretion of each LOC to determine which events and levels to offer at each competition.

Age restrictions for event offerings may be waived, with prior permission from the appropriate program subcommittee. Deviations from age restrictions must be outlined clearly in the competition announcement.

For the **Standard Event List and Program Requirements**, visit www.usfigureskating.org > Skate > Compete > Competition Program Requirements.

SECTION 3: GENERAL COMPETITION RULES

The following section contains competition rules for high school skating competitions. Competitions should utilize the most current [standard non-qualifying announcement template](#) (Hosting an Event > Sanctions, Applications, And Bids section > Competition Sanctions > Click here for the Standard Nonqualifying Announcement Template) for all requirements at high school skating competitions, except where this document deviates from the requirements listed in that document.

TEST LEVEL ELIGIBILITY

Singles Excel and Well Balanced Events:

- Skaters must meet at least the minimum singles test requirements for the event's level. A skater's singles test level may be higher than the minimum requirement.
 - Skate Up (If allowed at your competition): skaters may skate up one level higher than their highest singles test level allows.
- Skaters may not register for an event level lower than allowed by their competitive floor. An athlete's competitive floor is set by one of the following scenarios:
 - If an athlete has a paid EMS series application for the NQS series, the event level registered for in the most recent NQS will become the lowest level they may compete at in any U.S. Figure Skating sanctioned event.
 - If an athlete has a paid EMS series application for the Excel Series, the event level registered for in the most recent Excel series will become the lowest level they may compete in any Excel event. For Well Balanced and Specialty events the skater will be permitted to register at one level lower than the "floor" set by their excel series entry.
 - If an athlete has never had a paid EMS series application in the NQS or Excel Series, the athlete may select their level based on their goals and technical skills as long as the minimum test requirements are met.
- Skaters are not permitted to enter an Excel free skate and a Well-Balanced free skate event at the same competition (example: Juvenile Girls Free Skate and Juvenile Girls Excel Free Skate). However, they are permitted to enter an Excel and a Well-Balanced event of different types such as a short program (if stand-alone event option), specialty, or showcase events (example: Intermediate Women Short Program and Intermediate Women Excel Free Skate).
- For more details about establishing event levels, refer to the information sheet [HERE](#) or email events@usfigureskating.org.

All other singles and partner events (such as Showcase and Solo Dance):

- Skaters must meet the minimum test requirements for the events level, but not exceed the maximum permissible test requirement.

Team Maneuver Events:

- Athletes may "skate up" but they may not compete on a team at a lower level than the highest Singles test they have passed.

Artistic Free Skate Events:

- Level will be determined by the highest singles test passed. Skaters may compete at the highest level they have passed, or “skate up” up to one level higher.

TEAM ELIGIBILITY

All teams must be eligible, registered teams, as defined in Section 1 of this handbook.

Each team may enter a maximum of 30 starts per competition.

Not all skaters on the team’s roster must be assigned to an event. Unassigned skaters may be used for substitutions. Best practice for maintaining a roster to be used for substitutions will be up to the LOC/Interclub/Series administration organization.

Skaters may enter individual events and/or team maneuver events.

The LOC will determine whether high school teams may enter one or two (maximum) entries at the same team maneuvers level. This must be clearly stated in the competition announcement and communicated to teams prior to the start of events. The Cyber Challenge will allow a maximum of 3 entries within the same level for a single high school team.

Team maneuver events consist of teams of **no fewer than 2 athletes** (any mix of gender) from the same high school team with no one skater performing more than 5 elements if 9 elements are used or 6 elements if 12 elements are used.

REGISTRATION & ENTRIES

Competition LOCs may use their preferred method of processing registration, which must be clearly outlined in the competition announcement. Competition announcement should specify:

- Registration process for the competition (online management software, etc.)
- Entry fees
- How entry fees will be collected
- Any additional fees that may be collected
- Late entry policies
- How substitutions, additions, and changes to a team’s roster will be handled

Entry fees will be determined at the discretion of the LOC. Suggested entry fees are as follows:

- Team Events: \$100 per team
- Individual Events: \$60 per event

The LOC should reserve the right to limit the number of entries, eliminate events due to insufficient entries, combine or divide groups as necessary, and eliminate events if

necessary to accommodate the amount of available ice.

If entry fee revenue exceeds competition expenses, profits may go into the host team's account for future team support or scholarship intention.

PHOTO/VIDEO

Live and on-demand streaming, and sales and distribution of U.S. Figure Skating sanctioned and approved events, programs, and activities that include the playback of music is strictly prohibited. This prohibition does not apply to the distribution of footage that does not include music. Questions about this can be directed to music@usfigureskating.org.

LENGTH OF COMPETITION

If the number of entries exceeds the available ice time for the competition, the LOC chair, in conjunction with the chief referee may choose one or more of the following methods to reduce the length of the competition:

- Eliminate the optional dance in the solo dance event.
- Reduce the number of starts per team.
- Eliminate ladies' events with only one entry. (Men's events will not be eliminated.)

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARTICIPATING TEAMS

It is each participating team's responsibility to review the competition schedule for accuracy within 72 hours of receipt and notify the competition chair of any errors.

GROUP SIZE AND COMPOSITION

No group will consist of more than 12 skaters. If more than 12 skaters are entered into one level, the skaters will be split as evenly as possible into as many groups as necessary to keep each group no larger than 12 skaters.

If an event has 12 or more skaters and is split into two or more groups, groups may be split randomly. However, it is recommended that all groups be split in a manner that distributes skaters from schools with more than one start in a particular event as evenly as possible.

Team Maneuvers may be judged as one group or split into two or more groups at the discretion of the Chief Referee.

Singles Excel and Well-Balanced events will be split and judged as ladies events and mens events unless otherwise directed by program requirements and guidelines. Solo Dance, showcase and artistic free skate events will not be split by gender.

START ORDERS

Start orders for all events will be by random draw and posted either at the competition or via an online leaderboard.

WARMUP GROUP SIZE AND TIME

All warm-up group sizes are at the discretion of the referee with skater safety being the primary concern. The warmup for events with a small number of entries may be combined without regard to gender.

Team Maneuvers: For guidelines regarding team maneuver event warm ups, please review the [25-26 Team Maneuvers Requirements](#).

JUDGING SYSTEM

Team Maneuvers will be judged using the 6.0 Judging System. For team maneuvers, judges will give one mark per team. Showcase events are required to be judged using the Components Judging System (CJS). All other events may use either 6.0 or the International Judging System (IJS).

AWARDS

Medals will be awarded to places first through third in each event. Team trophies may be awarded for team maneuvers in lieu of individual medals. Medals or ribbons may be awarded for fourth place at the discretion of the LOC.

LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS

GENERAL LOCKER ROOMS:

Locker rooms and changing areas at U.S. Figure Skating competitive events are for athletes only, will be labeled with regard to specific use, and where identified will be gender specific. An exception can be made for Minor Athletes under 11 years old that will allow for one parent of the same sex to assist their child immediately prior to and after their skating event(s). Please review the Locker Room and Changing Area Policy and the SkateSafe Handbook (both found on the [U.S. Figure Skating SkateSafe](#) page). Locker Room signage can also be found on the SkateSafe® page under "[Resources](#)".

TEAM LOCKER ROOMS:

The designated team Coach, Team Manager, one additional Team Service Personnel and athletes competing at the skating event are allowed in the Locker Rooms/Changing Area designated for their team. The Coach, Team Manager, and Team Service Personnel **must** remove themselves from the Locker Room while any Minor Athletes are actively changing or undressing. All Locker Rooms/Changing Areas will be monitored. If any concerns arise, immediately contact the Locker Room Monitor. If there are concerns regarding this policy, an athlete should change prior to arriving at the competition. The use of any recording and photographic devices inside a Locker Room/Changing Area is strictly prohibited. Any violation of the Locker Room policy should be reported to U.S. Figure Skating using [this reporting form](#).

SECTION 4: AWARDING OF THE INDIVIDUAL/TEAM POINTS:

Individual Points:

Points are awarded to all skaters who compete. Championship Junior and Senior, and International Dance events earn two additional points per placement.

Team Maneuver Points:

Points are awarded to all team maneuvers teams that compete. Points are awarded to the team maneuvers team as a whole, and not per skater in the event.

# of Skaters	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1 st	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	10	8	6	6	6
2 nd	11	10	10	10	10	10	10	8	6	4	4	
3 rd	10	9	8	8	8	8	8	6	4	2		
4 th	9	8	7	6	6	6	6	4	2			
5 th	8	7	6	5	4	4	4	2				
6 th	7	6	5	4	3	2	2					
7 th	6	5	4	3	2	1						
8 th	5	4	3	2	1							
9 th	4	3	2	1								
10 th	3	2	1									
11 th	2	1										
12 th	1											

Ties: In the case of a tie, skaters will share available points. For example, competitors tied for 1st place in a group of ten will each earn 11 points (12 points for first plus the 10 points for second)

Withdrawals:

The number of skaters in an event will be based on the number of competitors who actually skate at the competition.

SECTION 5: CONTACT INFORMATION

National Vice Chair, High School Programs, U.S. Figure Skating Programs & New Program Development Committee

Caryn Bickerstaff

Email: ccbickerstaff@gmail.com

Chair, Programs & New Program Development Committee

Patch David

Email: patchd22@gmail.com

Senior Manager, Member Programs - U.S. Figure Skating

Chloe Roberts

Email: croberts@usfigureskating.org

Phone: 719.228.3432

Manager, Member Programs - U.S. Figure Skating

Casey Mallory

Email: cmallory@usfigureskating.org

Phone: 719.635.5200 EXT: 883

SkateSafe Policy and Compliance Questions

Email: skatesafe@usfigureskating.org