Introducing the activity of ice skating to your local school district is not only an excellent way to provide exposure for your Basic Skills program and figure skating club but also fosters important relationships with your local physical education teachers. These relationships can provide a multitude of opportunities for local students to engage in the sport while offering numerous fitness and social benefits. The information below will help you begin the process of developing your Skating in the Schools program.

Making the Connection
The most important dynamic to bringing skating to the schools is making the connection between the rink and school. One of the best vehicles to do so is via the physical education teachers. Reach out to the P.E. teachers of all grades in your local school districts and invite them to the rink for a meeting and walk-through of the facility. Flyers, brochures, e-mails and face-to-face invites can help you facilitate this connection and ultimately launch your new Skating in the Schools program. The following are frequently asked questions related to the Skating in the Schools program from the school, rink and figure skating club perspectives.

SCHOOLS
The following are common questions P.E. teachers or school administrators will ask before bringing their students to a skating session. Program directors and club representatives should be prepared to address and answer these questions before reaching out to their local school.

What is the overall nature of the program?
The program is a product of U.S. Figure Skating and is a step-by-step curriculum that permits schools to include ice skating as part of the physical education offerings.

Who is creating, offering and initiating this program?
U.S. Figure Skating, the national governing body of figure skating, developed the Skating in the Schools program, in coordination with skating directors and experienced educators.

What format may this program take?
The Skating in the Schools program can be implemented under different formats, i.e., a one-day session (field trip), four sessions stretching over four weeks, a P.E. unit, after-school programs and other formats may be adapted to particular situations. Skating can also be implemented into the general school curriculum; for example, the physics of ice skating can be used as an example within a science class (i.e. centrifugal force in a spin or the science of gliding).

How do I find a rink near my school?
To locate a rink, contact U.S. Figure Skating at 719.635.5200 or go to the Skating in the Schools home page at www.usfigureskating.org and use the search engine to find all registered Basic Skills programs and figure skating clubs in the United States.

How do I find enough time during a typical P.E. class to bring my students to a rink?
Every school has a different procedure in scheduling classes. Individual physical education teachers will determine which steps are necessary to schedule the necessary time to transport students to and from the rink.

How do I find the means and funding for transportation to a rink?
Every school has a specific procedure for scheduling and funding bus service, within the school district, based on availability and schedules of other schools in the district. The administration of the school should be approached on this issue.
How do I find funds for the ice rental and skates, and cost of a lesson?
Contact your local rink to determine the costs, i.e., ice time, staffing fees, skate rental.

Who will teach the skating class?
The curriculum is designed to be taught by the school physical education staff with assistance from a registered U.S. Figure Skating Basic Skills instructor or registered coach at a local rink.

What will the curriculum be?
The Skating in the Schools curriculum was created by U.S. Figure Skating and educators, and is modeled after the Basic Skills Program.

How will safety be addressed?
A curriculum unit is specifically designed to address skaters’ safety. Nationally recognized safety standards are included and should be followed to prevent injuries and prepare skaters for a safe experience.

To what age/grade is the program best suited?
The curriculum can be adapted to all ages, pre-school through college.

Why should the school be involved in this program?
More and more, schools are providing an enhanced range of athletic endeavors for their students. Emphasis is being placed upon life-long activities that will bring high levels of physical fitness to the students. Ice skating provides not only a healthy environment but also teaches important lessons in meeting personal challenges and fulfillment. Specific benefits include:

- Safe introduction for students who might not participate in skating
- Exposure to a new sport!
- Re-energize a P.E. program
- FITNESS!
- Age-appropriate, skill-based sport curriculum that is not usually a part of a P.E. program
- Lessons taught by qualified individuals
- Lessons/activity developed by a national governing body
- Focus on an new individual sport
- Focus on balance
- Include in a unit focused on the Olympic Games (with other sports)

What is the liability coverage available for the program?
All sanctioned skating and skating-related activities of member clubs, teams and Basic Skills programs are covered including events that are run under the direction of the club, team or program. General liability coverage provides insurance for an occurrence that results in bodily injury or property damage to a third party. This coverage does include the cost of defense even if the charges are groundless, false or fraudulent.

Each school district has specific liability coverage for its students. Both policies should be examined before the students participate in the Skating in The Schools program. It is beneficial to have either a registered Basic Skills program or member club host the Skating in the Schools program. Make sure all students sign an activity waiver before participating. (Samples can be found on www.usfigureskating.org under Clubs, Risk Management).
RINKS

The following are common questions the facility might want answers to before allowing a school group to book a skating session. P.E. teachers and the program facilitator should be prepared to address and answer these questions before proceeding.

**How can the Skating in the Schools program benefit the rink?**

- Increased ice utilization
- Wider exposure of the facility to young people/families
- Increased enrollment in skating lessons
- Increased attendance at public sessions
- Increased birthday/celebration bookings
- Decrease in injuries on public session
- Positive media coverage
- Positive support of the community and school
- Recognition from U.S. Figure Skating as a Skating in the Schools participant

**How will safety during the program be addressed?**

All specific school safety procedures will apply. In addition, the program emphasizes safety precautions and procedures to be observed by the instructor and skaters. Skill development sequences within the program have been developed to facilitate safe learning and instruction. Each rink also has safety procedures to be observed at that particular facility.

**What assistance can U.S. Figure Skating provide to approach schools?**

Contact U.S. Figure Skating and connect with a member of the Skating in the Schools advisory panel for guidance and coordination or to answer any questions or for personalized assistance in formulating a plan to approach the school.

The following assistance will be provided by the U.S. Figure Skating:

- Models of participation
- Printed curriculum and sample programs
- Online dedicated support web site
- On-going dialogue with U.S. Figure Skating advisors
- Validation of the program to the school
- U.S. Figure Skating contacting a school to verify support or participation in the program

**What are the costs to the rink for hosting the program?**

A nominal charge to participants can be assessed if necessary to help cover some of these costs. Projected costs could be:

- Promotional pricing (discounts)
- Marketing materials, advertising flyers
- Providing skate rental
- Providing ice time
- Instructors/staffing needs
- Rink program facilitator/coordinator

**When will the P.E. program be scheduled?**

The program will be scheduled as a result of coordination between the participating school and rink. Possibilities may include:
• Public sessions
• During National Skating Month
• Un-utilized daytime ice
• Within summer day camps
• Basic Skills lesson times
• Day off from school

What specific services need to be provided?

• Skate rentals
• Ice rental/price package
• Skate guards (if necessary)
• PA system (if requested)
• Rink coordinator/host (if necessary)

Who is organizing and implementing the program?
It is sponsored by U.S. Figure Skating, implemented by the school and taught by the school’s physical education teachers in coordination with a local instructors, skating director, club or rink staff.

May a skating director or a coach initiate this program?
A skating director or a coach may initiate this program in conjunction with the school and the rink or club. Communication is key.

What role will the skating director or coach play in the program?

• Initiate, coordinate and guide the school through the program – act as the liaison
• Introduce a greater number of people to the sport of ice skating
• Introduce U.S. Figure Skating curriculum to a new audience
• Cooperate with P.E. teachers to increase the frequency and intensity of skating’s profile as a sport
• Become an “expert” resource for the school
• Opportunity to promote the sport, rink, skating school, club and coach
• Schedule a follow meeting with the P.E. teacher to discuss the positives of the experience and how you can improve in the future

What is the number of participants expected?
Attendance will be determined by the school in conjunction with the rink.

How does someone from the rink promote the PE program to schools?

• Contact U.S. Figure Skating for the program packet
• Determine the potential offering to the school
• Make initial contact with the principal
• Meet with principal, athletic director, P.E. department, curriculum coordinator and any interested staff to explain the program

May additional, appropriate rink programming information (skating lesson, public session, party info) be given to the school program participants?
The nature and appropriateness of providing students with a packet of additional rink offerings should be worked out between the school and the rink in advance.
Where do we get program content/curriculum/guidelines?
Go to the Skating in the Schools web page on www.usfigureskating.org or contact Susi Wehrli-McLaughlin at swehrli@usfigureskating.org or 719.635.5200.

CLUBS

The following are some common questions a figure skating club might want to answer before approaching a school about hosting a Skating in the Schools program.

May a club approach a school to initiate this program?
A club may contact the school and offer to host the program. If the club owns the rink, the club may run the program in concert with the school. If the club rents ice from the local rink, it may be more cost effective to involve the rink in the planning, pricing and implementation of the program.

Where does the club get the program content/guidelines/curriculum?
Go to the Skating in the Schools web page on www.usfigureskating.org or contact Susi Wehrli-McLaughlin at swehrli@usfigureskating.org or 719.635.5200.

What are the benefits to a club participating in/supporting the PE program?
- Fulfilling the U.S. Figure Skating mission statement to promote figure skating
- Awareness of the club to a greater number of students/families
- Potential new members
- Increasing diversity
- Potential attendees at club ice shows or events
- Positive community/school involvement
- Exposure to students who might not participate in skating
- Potential increase in Basic Skills program
- Potential long-term partnership with area P.E. teachers
- Potential evolution of a school club program
- Capitalize on the world-wide attention on the sport immediately following the Olympic Games

How can the club provide support for the program?
The club can provide coaches, ice time, volunteers, advisors, equipment, U.S. Figure Skating prizes for challenges and scholarships for club membership.

How does someone from the club promote the PE program to schools?
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- Determine the potential offering to the school
- Make initial contact with the principal
- Meet with principal, athletic director, P.E. department, curriculum coordinator and any interested staff to explain the program

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U.S. FIGURE SKATING

How will programs be registered and tracked?
U.S. Figure Skating will provide on-going tracking of 2009-10 pilot programs to assist in evaluating strengths and weaknesses for future improvement, enhancement and expansion of the program.

Real World Example:

Come Skate with US!
Program conducted by the Utah Olympic Oval

Program Specifics:
The Utah Olympic Oval is offering a skating program for ages 5-18. This program will bring youth groups to the Utah Olympic Oval for a tour of the facility, lunch, free ice time, skate rental/helmets and instruction. Dates available are from June 11-August 22. Groups are welcome to come one time or as often as they like. Reservations are required 10 days in advance for each visit. Space is limited, so call now to reserve your spot.

Where: The Utah Olympic Oval
Who: School/Youth Groups ages 5-18
What: Tour of facility, lunch, skating – just $3 per student
When: Monday-Friday, 12-1:30 p.m., June 11-Aug 22
How: Call now to reserve your space!