

Pathway to Achieving Skating Goals

By Claude Sweet

Children who are being educated via public, private, and home schools have specific state and federal standards that are expected for each grade level. Age does determine when a child is eligible to register for kindergarten, but for the most part a student's age in upper grades only determines when they may legally opt out of attending school.

The number of official school days per year varies slightly from state to state, and the length of a legal school day is subject to state statutes. The state defines the legally accepted excuses for a student to receive an excused absence for not attending school.

Promotion from one grade to the next is based upon each student meeting or exceeding specific benchmarks in each core subject. Many school districts offer remedial programs, during summer holiday and school breaks, to help students catch up with their peer academic and social group.

Participation in figure skating is voluntary and movement from one skill level to the next is not mandatory. Voluntary evaluation of skating skills, by an independent panel of three trained USFS judges, allows skaters to compete against others who have also passed the USFS test requirements.

It is very important for a coach to challenge their skaters to achieve his or her very best. Test grading standards are based on the "bell shaped" grading curve used in the educational system. A "D" letter grade in school equates to an "Unsatisfactory, but not a failing" grade in school and causes an athlete to be ineligible to play sports.

A "Minimum" passing mark for a USFS test equates to a "Satisfactory" grade. The skater who demonstrates having acquired more than the minimum skill level receives a higher numerical score equal to a "C+", "B" or higher letter grade.

The following is a comparison chart between USFS and school grading systems:

	USFS Tests	School Grading System
Unsatisfactory	Below minimum - retry	F = failing grade
Unsatisfactory, But not failing	Minimum passing mark – received from two judges	D = Minimum passing mark. Student does not qualify to participate in sports and other extra curricular activities
Satisfactory	Minimum mark received from three judges	C = Average mark. Student does qualify to participate in sports and other extra curricular activities. Demonstrates a 70 – 79% mastery of subject skills
Good	Minimum mark plus .1 over the minimum mark on each element	B = Good mark. Demonstrates a 80 – 89% mastery of subject skills
Very Good	Minimum mark plus .2 over the minimum mark on each element	B+ = Very good mark. Demonstrates a >90% mastery of subject skills

Excellent	Minimum mark plus .3 over the minimum mark on each element	A = Excellent mark. Demonstrates a mastery of subject skills
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Have your parents, and/or coach considered developing a schedule to achieve specific skating goals for the current season?

- A target a date to take your next –
 - ISI or Basic Skating Skill Badges?
 - MITF test?
 - Free Skating test?
 - Compulsory Dance test?
- Established a plan to compete at what specific level for the current competition season –
 - Basic Skating Skills – No USFS test
 - Beginning 1
 - Beginning 2
 - Beginning 3
 - Beginning 4
 - Beginning 5
 - Beginning 6
 - Beginning 7
 - Beginning 8
 - Free Skating 1
 - Free Skating 2
 - Free Skating 3
 - Free Skating 4
 - Free Skating 5
 - Free Skating 6
 - Test Track Competitive Level
 - USFS Pre-Preliminary
 - USFS Preliminary
 - USFS Pre Juvenile
 - USFS Juvenile
 - USFS Intermediate
 - USFS Novice
 - USFS Junior
 - USFS Senior
 - Qualifying Competitive Track
 - USFS Pre-Preliminary
 - USFS Preliminary
 - USFS Pre Juvenile
 - USFS Juvenile
 - USFS Intermediate
 - USFS Novice

- USFS Junior
- USFS Senior
- USFS Adult
- Prioritize a list of competitions you want to enter in the current skating season. The following examples are for Southern California:
 - Open Competitions
 - Skate La Grandé
 - California Open
 - La Jolla Open
 - Los Angeles Showcase
 - Southern California Inter-club Competition
 - Hidden Valley
 - Glacier Falls Summer Classic
 - Golden West Open
 - Desert Ice Open
 - Refer to file for a comprehensive list of competitions 09ISI-BasicSkills-USFS calendar
 - Pacific Southwest Regional Championships
 - Pacific Sectional Championships
 - National Championships
 - US National Championships
 - US Junior National Championships
 - US Synchronized Team Skating Championships
 - US National Showcase Championships
 - US National Theater on Ice Championships