**Statement of Purpose**

The White Bear Lake Skate School provides a safe and fun place for students of all ages and levels to learn to skate. In addition to learning the sport of figure skating, students will work hard, meet friends, challenge themselves, be respectful and have fun. The lessons students learn at our school will be not only of skating, but of life. They will be supported by a staff of professional coaches and parent volunteers who understand and abide by the following Code of Ethics.

**Values the Organization Espouses**

We are an organization of professional coaches that value the importance of hard work and discipline. We value honesty, integrity, friendships and confidence and will work to instill these in our students. We appreciate that parents have allowed us the opportunity to work with their children on a frequent basis and that we are role models to them. We value the trust that is bestowed upon us in this regard: traveling for competitions, early morning practice and late nights at the rink require a level of responsibility and trust that we do not take lightly. Lastly, we value the sport of figure skating and the life lessons that can be learned from it…winning, losing, teamwork, independence, discipline, motivation, grace and strength.

**Code of Ethics**
1. All decisions should be made in the best interest of the student in mind. Decisions regarding the skaters training should include the parent(s), skater and coach. An introductory meeting should take place where all parties discuss the scope of the training, goals and commitment and everyone understands and agrees to these objectives. Coaches should meet on a regular basis with parents to maintain open communication and check-in on progress of said goals.

2. Always respect the responsibility and position you maintain with your students. Do not initiate or participate in anything that might jeopardize your professional image or trust relationship with your student and their families.

3. Remember that your actions reflect not only upon yourself but on the skate school and the figure skating organization at large. If there is ever a question or doubt about the right course of action, seek counsel from a fellow coach, director or the Institution Code of Ethics.

4. Appropriate language, dress and attitude should be exhibited at all times in the arena as we are role models for our students. Do not participate in gossip or engage in inappropriate conversations in or around the rink.

5. Coaches should prepare a policy document to review with each student and their parent(s) before agreeing to teach the student. After a thorough review of policies, including cancellation and billing information, all parties should sign the policy.

6. Soliciting Students. Never solicit a student from another coach. In the event that a student or parent wishes to change coaches, the following actions should take place:
a. As soon as you are approached by the student or parent, notify them that they must notify their current coach of their desire to switch to you.

b. After notification, notify the old coach to ensure that the conversation has taken place.

c. Do not begin teaching the student until all bills have been settled with the old coach.

d. Schedule a meeting with the new student and parent(s) to review your policies and objectives.

e. Do not criticize the old coaches teaching habits.

7. Encourage and support your students. Give corrections and create a work ethic in a positive environment that builds confidence in them. Do not yell at or say discouraging remarks to them.

8. Encourage a well-balanced life. Support the students desire to engage in other sports and activities outside skating if they so desire. Support their success in school and the importance of preparing for “life after graduation”.

9. Encourage a healthy self-image for the students. Take responsibility for their physical and mental health to the extent possible while coaching. If you notice a change in health, bring it to the attention of the parent. If the parent does not get involved, bring the issue forward to the appropriate parties so the student can be treated.

10. Do not let parents run your lessons! Parents can become too engaged in their child’s training. Respectfully encourage them to be supportive but to let you do your job.
11. At competitions and shows, always demonstrate good sportsmanship and encourage your students to do the same.
   a. Congratulate the other skaters.
   b. Do not speculate as to why skaters were judged.
   c. Support the panel and the institute regardless of whether or not you feel it was appropriately judged.
   d. If there is a question or grievance with competition or test results, discuss it in private with the referee or judging panel.
   e. Be respectful and friendly with other coaches and their skaters.
   f. Remember that the purpose of the competition is to have fun – not always to win.

12. Coaches should not participate on a judging panel for their own students. During ISI competitions and test sessions, if you are accidentally placed on a panel for which your student(s) is/are skating, notify the referee immediately and assist in finding a replacement. In the event that a replacement cannot be found and the referee asks you to remain on the panel, judge objectively and according to the rules of the event.

13. Do not discuss the details of a competition or test event after leaving the judging panel. What is discussed among other coaches on the panel and with the referee is discussed in confidence and should not be discussed outside the event.
Enforcement Procedures

During the interview process, all candidates should review and sign a copy of the Code of Ethics. The director should set aside an hour at a staff meeting to review the code with the current staff and have them sign it. Additionally, a copy of the Code shall be posted in the main lobby for all skaters, parents and coaches to see.

An ethics committee will be assembled to include the director of the skate school, the manager of the ice rink, and a representative from the city. If a coach is in violation of the code of ethics, a formal process should be initiated to make the director of the skate school aware of such an event. This process shall occur by private meeting or written notice. The director will work with the committee to determine the next course of action.

Before any action is taken, the validity of the violation must be assessed. This should be done by interviewing and documenting those involved, including the coach.

If it is determined that the violation put the student in danger, the coaching privileges for the rink will be revoked. In addition, an official grievance will be filed with the United States Figure Skating Association and the Ice Skating Institute. If the violation is determined to be less severe, a file shall be started on the coach and they will be put on probation. If the coach is involved in another offense, both the current ethics violation and the previous will be reported to the committee and the coaching privileges revoked.

Coaches and ice rink staff are all responsible for their adherence to the ethics code but are also responsible for reporting any violations they see or hear. If a violation has occurred during an ISI or USFSA sanctioned event, notify the referee for the event formally and in private and follow the procedure set forth for the organization.
Additional Questions

By assembling this code of ethics, I learned how to combine a number of things into one cohesive document that embodies value, purpose, process, and consequences. It required a lot of thought about details that seem obvious but are often overlooked. There were a number of sources I referenced to ensure that most things were captured in this code including some interviews with our current director. I also read the Code of Ethics for the Professional Skaters Association and two other national skating associations. Taking those broad codes and modifying them to fit the needs of our club and our reporting systems was a challenge that required some brainstorming but yielded an accurate and complete code which can be integrated into our existing systems. I also learned how important a Code of Ethics is for the rink. We have a tremendous responsibility with our students and the rink. Having all students, coaches and parents on the same page with responsibilities helps mitigate some of the drama associated with the sport and ensures that expectation are clear and straight-forward. It clearly outlines the scope of our duties as coaches and the consequences to all parties if a violation has occurred. It also provides an opportunity for a continued discussion around ethics and goals to have with other coaches and with parents.

References

1. Professional Skating Association (PSA) Code of Ethics

2. United States Figure Skating Association

http://www.usfsa.org/

3. Ice Skating Institute

http://www.skateisi.com/site/main.cfm?membertype=coaches

4. Personal Interview

Amy Koland, Skate School Director, White Bear Lake Sports Center

Natalie Wicker, Skating Instructor, White Bear Lake Sports Center