

**TUCKAHOE SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETIC
DEPARTMENT TRYOUT PROCEDURES**





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Dear Parents/Guardians of Tuckahoe Student-Athletes,

The athletic team selection process is without question the Tuckahoe School District coaching staff's most challenging responsibility. In order to create a procedure that will give every student an equal opportunity during the team selection process, the District created a committee comprised of experienced coaches at all levels (Varsity, JV, Freshman, & Modified), Physical Education teachers, Guidance Counselor, a member of the Board of Education, and myself. The committee evaluated all facets of the tryout process to establish best practices for the District. This document codifies those practices.

We are confident that these guidelines will help not only our athletes, but also our coaching staff as they navigate through the process of identifying players during team selection and help us to provide the best experience for our student-athletes.

Sincerely,

Austin Goldberg

Director of Health, PE & Athletics

TUCKAHOE TRYOUT PROCEDURES

The committee evaluated and made specific recommendations regarding the following elements of the team selection process:

- 1) Number of days for tryouts
- 2) Extension of tryouts
- 3) Splitting groups
- 4) Number of coaches participating in the evaluation process
- 5) Sport-specific rubrics to evaluate student athletes
- 6) Tryout procedures
- 7) Informing student athletes of the team selection result

1. Number of Days for Tryouts

Modified: Minimum of 4 Days

Freshman, JV & Varsity: Minimum of 3 days

2. Extending Tryouts

Tryouts will be extended as needed at the discretion of the committee. This can be done as a full team or tryouts can be extended individually. Tryouts are not to exceed 6 days for JV and Varsity and not to exceed 8 days for Modified. Please see parent handbook for additional tryout information regarding prior season post-season play, medical, District attendance policy, and transfer student exceptions.

3. Splitting Groups

The Athletic Department will split tryout groups as needed to make smaller groups. As each sport is unique, there will not be a specific cutoff number, the decision as to whether to create a second, third, etc., tryout group will be made by the Athletic Director in consultation with the coaching staff.

3. Number of Coaches Evaluating Students During Tryouts

There will be a minimum of two coaches and/or Physical Education teachers evaluating students during the tryout period.

Best practice is to have at least two coaches and potentially an additional coach, when available, to help evaluate players. A third coach is not always available, but the Athletic Department will work to find third evaluator.

4. **Evaluation Rubric**

All evaluating coaches will use a rubric to score student athletes and will compare the rubric with their fellow evaluator(s) at the end of the evaluation period when making a shared decision about team selection.

The rubric will include, but may not be limited to, the following elements for scoring:

- **Attitude**
- **Play during scrimmage (if able to scrimmage, sport- dependent)**
- **Attendance/Punctuality (tryouts, practices, and games are NOT optional)**
- **Sport-specific skills**
- **Physical fitness**

5. **Tryout Procedures**

The following procedures shall serve as a guideline for coaches to follow. However, coaches may also include other elements they feel are helpful in evaluating student athletes.

The students and his or her parent/guardian are responsible for making sure they are cleared to tryout.

- *Skill-Related Drills*: Students will be brought through a series of sport related drills to assess their ability.
- *Stations*: Stations may also be used, depending on the sport. Stations are especially helpful for sports with tryouts taking place inside (e.g., baseball and softball).
- *Conditioning*: Students level of fitness will be tested during tryouts.
- *Scrimmaging*: Students will be given the opportunity to scrimmage with peers in sports where possible, giving coaches the ability to assess students in situations approximating a game.

BOWLING: At the completion of the try-out sessions, which must include nine games bowled over a three-day period, if the individual's bowling average puts him/her in the top eight of

your bowlers, he/she is eligible for the team.

GOLF: At the completion of the tryout sessions, which must include 18 holes golfed over a three-day period (the first three days of the individual's tryout when the course is accessible), if the individual's golf average puts him/her in the top 8 of your golfers, he/she is eligible for the team.

6. Notification of Team Selection

After the team selection process has taken place, students will be notified via e-mail (from FamilyID registration), what team they placed on or if they were not selected. After team selections are made, we invite students to have a face-to-face meeting with the coaching staff the next available day, after team selections are made.

If a student, who did not make the team, wants to meet with the coaching staff, the coaching staff will go over the team selection rubric and give very specific feedback to the student to explain why they were not selected. Coaches are not able to talk about other students at this meeting. In addition, those students who do not make the team will be given information on how they can improve in that sport over the course of the year in an effort to give that student athlete a better chance of making the team the subsequent year.

Unfortunately, team selection is unavoidable. Roster size is dependent on the number of athletes the Committee judges appropriate given the team level (Modified, Freshman, JV, Varsity), the facilities available, student interest, skill level of students, safety and efficiency of development of the students, and number of coaches available. There is no guarantee of any student being on any level of roster. The tryout procedure and making a team is year to year.

All team schedules can be found on tuckahoeathletics.org.

7. Preparing your son/daughter for the possibility of not making a team

Not making a team can be devastating for a student athlete. It is critical that students and parents be prepared in the event that this is the case.

Joel H. Fish, PhD, Director at the Center for Sport Psychology, and author of *101 Ways to be a Terrific Sport Parent* (Morgan James Publishing, 2013), offers this helpful advice on how parents can help support and encourage the young athlete:

- **Be self-aware parents.** Parents need to be aware of their own attitudes towards making the team, and towards winning and losing because inevitably their children will pick up these attitudes. Fish cautions, "I believe parents are extremely well intentioned, but parents often have an emotional response to their child not making the team." Parents who display anger or immediately want to challenge the coach's decision are adding an extra dimension to their child's burden. Charles Kuntzleman, author of over fifty books on fitness and health, says, "The most powerful thing is to not display, when they get home, displeasure with what the coach did. Parents have to learn to bite their tongue; it's demoralizing to the team, and a great disservice to the child."
- **Give your child a chance to feel.** Parents can help their child cope by giving him or her 'permission' to have a normal response. Fish says, "There's a tendency for parents to rush in there and say 'it's ok' – sometimes we need to say to our kids 'that must hurt,' or give them a hug, or not say anything." Parents who respond to their child not making the team by saying "Well, soccer is a stupid sport anyways!" invalidate the hurt their child is feeling as well as dismissing something that may well be very important to him or her.
- **Help your child see the big picture.** There's much more to being successful in life than simply making a sports team, however important it may seem at the time, and parents can help their children realize this. Fish suggests that, before a tryout, parents make a list together with their child of multiple goals which reflect what the tryout is really about. One of those goals can be making the team, but include others as well, such as having fun, trying your best, being a good teammate, and learning something. Says Fish, "When not all the eggs are in the outcome basket, that can be really helpful for a child who doesn't make the team, because he's going in with multiple definitions of what it means to be successful."

Parents can also help their children realize that even though they didn't make it onto the team they were hoping for, they have other options. A community league may offer an opportunity to get involved, or maybe a different sport or activity altogether would provide a fun and exciting challenge. Some athletes who have been cut from one team have gone on to be very successful in a totally different area. Others who were at one time cut from their high school teams (like basketball great Michael Jordan) have gone on to become outstanding athletes.

Every young athlete or performer who is making an effort to succeed will eventually encounter some stiff obstacles and competition. Parents can help their kids to not only handle these setbacks graciously, but to actually grow from them.

Additional resources can be found on the Athletic Department webpage