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THE BUFFALO NEWS

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## KEN-TON SCHOOLS

# Girls ice hockey unlikely by fall

By Janice L. Habuda  
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Local school districts still are exploring the possibility of establishing girls varsity ice hockey programs, but don't look for the first puck to drop this fall.

Brett Banker, the athletic director for the Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda School District, told the School Board on Tuesday that a committee of athletic directors will meet again next month on the subject. The group first got together in December, and parents continue to lobby within their respective school districts.

Banker said Tuesday that the committee is researching several issues, including the level of interest for a program, the number of girls currently playing organized hockey, and the level of experience and skill of those girls.

The committee anticipates it will issue recommendations in June, Banker said.

In the meantime, Banker said he is unaware of any district moving forward with expansion plans for next year. "At this point, there wouldn't be anyone to play against, essentially," Banker said.

During a meeting of the Williamsville School Board on Tuesday night, officials also said there are no plans to pursue girls ice hockey for the next school year — this, despite impassioned pleas for the sport from students and parents attending the meeting.

Banker's update to the Ken-Ton board came after three residents spoke in favor of establishing a program.

William Pavone spoke for the third time Tuesday. He is part of Girls 4 Varsity Ice Hockey, a parents group representing several school districts, as well a board member of Great Lakes Girls Hockey League.

"We will continue to push every month until girls ice hockey becomes a reality," Pavone said.

Jim Simmons said he has three daughters attending Ken-Ton schools.



“The absence of girls hockey as a varsity sport is sometimes very discouraging,” Simmons said.

The sport develops physical skills, teamwork and dedication, he said. “These qualities will apply to the classroom, also.”

“My daughters are looking forward to playing the sport that they love for the schools that they love,” Simmons said.

[News Staff Reporter Sandra Tan contributed to this report. jhabuda@buffnews.com](mailto:jhabuda@buffnews.com)

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