



THE BUFFALO NEWS

 PRINT THIS

## Girls should face off

### Formation of a new hockey league gets a welcome boost from committee

July 10, 2009, 5:49 AM / [0 comments](#)

It's hard to imagine, in some ways, that girls' hockey remains a backwater in this region's high school sports programs. Whatever the reason, the problem will soon be solved if plans to create a regional girls' varsity ice hockey league come to fruition. Prospects are encouraging.

A special committee of athletic directors has recommended launching such a league in the 2010-11 school year, 14 months from now. The committee also recommended that school districts interested in joining the league hold intra-district games, scrimmages and clinics in the 2009-10 school year.

The trick to getting this league on the ice is that at least five districts need to commit to joining. So far, two have—Williamsville and the Monsignor Martin High School Athletic Association, which represented the Catholic schools.

But public funds are tight now. Indeed, early this year, the New York State Public High School Athletic Association required schools to reduce the number of competitions in all sports.

What is more, hockey is a high-cost sport. The committee estimates the cost at \$24,500 per school. That covers stipends for coaches, league fees, ice time, uniforms and transportation. Players will likely have to buy some of their own equipment.

Still, backers are optimistic. Parent advocates plan to lobby other districts to join the planned new league. Booster clubs would help raise funds to offset the cost for teams. Some adjoining districts could combine resources and students to form a single, cross-district team.

At worst, if a league cannot be formed by 2010-11, the committee has recommended the continuation of lower-level hockey programs for girls as well as the formation of a club structure.

One way or another, it appears that high school girls in Western New York will have the chance to play ice hockey before long. But a league has to be the goal. With the help of parents and students, enough districts should be able to make this work. Once established, the league could grow as the economy improves and funding becomes more readily available.

Girls deserve the chance to play this exhilarating sport in a competitive and safe setting. That's what a new league would accomplish. That's what needs to happen.

```
div.comments-header {border-top:3px double #999;padding-top:10px;background-  
color:#c5e0f5;overflow:auto;height:100%;padding:1em;border-bottom:1px dashed #999;} div.comments-header  
h2 {font-size:19px;font-weight:normal;color:#333;} div.comments-header form {float:right;} div.comments-  
header a:link, div.comments-header a:visited {color:#1f3889;text-decoration:underline;} div.comments-header  
div.comment-count {padding-top:0.5em;padding-bottom:0.5em;}
```

## Reader Comments

[Click To View and Add Comments](#)

### Find this article at:

<http://www.buffalonews.com/opinion/editorials/story/729250.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

© 2008 The Buffalo News.