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Backers push for girls hockey

By Barbara O'Brien
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Supporters made another plea Monday night to the Lancaster Central School Board to include girls varsity hockey in next year's budget.

Parent and Buffalo Regals coach Larry Blas told the board parents are willing to support the team.

"We have the parents ready to run these things; we just need you guys to vote us in here," he said.

Kenneth Graber, board president, said no decision has been made, but added that the board's first budget work session is scheduled for Monday.

"This is going to be a very difficult year to justify any new programs, regardless of what they are. We're going to be struggling, I think, to keep what we have," he said.

But he said that doesn't mean board members aren't open to the possibility.

"I don't want to tell you flat out no. That's not what I'm saying," Graber said. "On the other hand, I don't want to paint too rosy a picture."

Parents and girls started asking Lancaster and other school districts last fall to add girls hockey. Lancaster, they hoped, would join Amherst, a combined Catholic school team, Clarence, Hilton, Orchard Park, Sweet Home, West Seneca and Williamsville in the Western Division of Upstate New York Girls Varsity Ice Hockey.

So far, no girls' hockey teams have been added to budgets for next year.

"I think if somebody does come forward, it will be a domino effect," Blas said.

If girls' hockey were added to the school's winter sports, the district would be responsible for funding it, Graber said.

"I think everybody understands that this year is particularly difficult for a lot of programs," he said. "If we don't think we can do it this year, we may not do it this year, but that doesn't mean it couldn't be done in the future."



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Superintendent Edward Myszka acknowledged rumors about what programs might be reduced or cut.

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