

Why add girls hockey? There are as many answers as there are teams.

In Minnesota, Title IX was applied to the offerings of public schools. Ithaca's school board was told they comply with Title IX since they have already added many girls sports and teams, but they still believe they should offer a girls team because girls requested it and because they offer a boys team.

You will hear many reasons why NOT to add girls hockey, such as lack of ice times, lack of money, lack of interest. These obstacles should not be put in the way of girls having the chance to try the sport of ice hockey, and the chance to represent their school.

Who should advocate for girls high school hockey? In Saranac Lake and in Princeton, the athletic director initiated it upon understanding the needs and interests of their girls. In Ithaca, current players and parents have lead the charge. In Minnesota, those concerned with educational equity saw the gap between interested girls and offerings, and they have created legislation for procedures for distributing ice times fairly and found funding for more rinks all leading to the phenomenal growth in the sport at all levels.

What should we do to get started?

- * Fill out the enclosed form; keep a copy for yourself and return one.
- * Talk about what's needed in your community with lots of others in different positions and situations.
- * Set some goals and plans depending on what's needed.
- * Think positively about the goals/plans and avoid comparing the needs of girls hockey with other girls or boys sports. Someone has to make those hard decisions, but that doesn't mean girls hockey shouldn't receive full consideration, too.
- * Get the media interested in the sport and then in your goals/plans.
- * Use public events (already existing or plan your own) to educate others about the goals/plans.
- * Involve girls, parents, local officials, hockey community members, anyone who would sign a petition, write a support letter, attend a meeting, pass a resolution to show their support of the goals/plans.
- * Be prepared to phase in goals/plans and to do some of the work to make things happen. Offer assistance to whoever would be implementing the goals/plans.
- * Keep trying, ask for assistance, share your story, say thank you for every step of progress. GOOD LUCK!