

# 'I always wanted to play for my high school'

Parents, Administration, Board of Education work together to bring hockey to students

BY TIM HEALEY  
sports editor

For years, student athletes have not been able to continue their hockey careers at the high school level, since there has not been a varsity team.

Brandon Cox, senior, felt this put him at a disadvantage.

"All of the kids I played with from other towns in a pre-high school league were all moving on to high school hockey and Danbury did not offer that," Cox said.

Josh Goldenberg, junior, had to play on travel teams outside of Danbury to keep playing.

Kyle Powers, sophomore, is "too old to play on any local travel teams," he said.

However, this year all that will change.

Last June, the Board of Education (BOE) approved a varsity ice hockey team, and this winter, DHS students will take to the ice with athletes from Brookfield and Bethel as part of a "tri-op" team.

Proposals for a hockey team at DHS have come up previously, but the school had always decided against it.

The idea was most recently brought up about a year and a half ago by the Danbury Hockey Booster Club,

ing a hockey team, however, he has "to make sure it works not only for the kids, but for the Board of Education."

"The fact that we had developed a relationship with a community group," is what made this time different than other times a hockey team has been proposed Salvestrini said.

Powers said the team colors will be maroon and blue, and the team name will be the Cats, since those were the colors and name of the Brookfield-Bethel co-op team that

has existed for 14 years. Also, since Brookfield is the host school, the tri-op team will play in the South West Conference (SWC).

According to Goldenberg, the team's home ice will be the Danbury Ice Arena, and they have four practices and two games each week.

The idea of a tri-op team began when the number of players on the Brookfield-

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a group of parents and their children dedicated to starting a team at DHS. The idea garnered support quickly.

After the parent group brought the idea to Chip Salvestrini, athletic director, he proposed it to administration. Once they were on board, the idea went to the BOE for approval.

Salvestrini said he has always been supportive of hav-



Photo courtesy of Robert Clarke

Josh Goldenberg, junior, looks to make a pass during a travel game last year. Goldenberg said travel hockey will not mean "as much to me as playing for Danbury will."

Bethel co-op team "started to dwindle," Salvestrini said, and Danbury was looking to join with an established program.

There was no fear of the deal with Brookfield and Bethel falling through because if one school dropped out, "we would have latched onto the other school," Salvestrini said.

The cost of the team was another barrier that was overcome.

The total cost to support a team is about \$40,000 to be split three ways between the schools.

"From that perspective, everybody was very happy," Salvestrini said.

The team will not be supported financially by the BOE, so all fund-raising will be done by the players.

Goldenberg has been trying to get a hockey team at DHS for years and is looking forward to this season.

"Representing Danbury High School is going to be a huge honor for me," Goldenberg said. "Playing travel hockey has been fun, but it

hasn't meant as much to me as playing for Danbury will. I am really looking forward to having people from our school attend the games and show their support for the new hockey team."

Powers said, "ever since I started playing hockey I always wanted to be able to play for my high school."

Cox missed out on playing on the hockey "club team" that DHS had from 2003-05 by one year, but is excited to play for DHS in his last year.

"I've wanted a hockey team at DHS since my freshman year," he said. "Although it has taken so long to organize our team, I think we will bring a lot to the table this year and hopefully make it pretty far in the SWC conference."

"I did not vision our school ever having a team in my time, but now that it's a reality, I am more than happy to be a part of it," Cox said. "I hope our school is very supportive of this sport and I hope it becomes a new tradition at DHS."



Photo courtesy of Robert Clarke

Josh Goldenberg, junior at right, and teammate Jake Turrin skate down the ice during a game in 2007 with their travel team. Goldenberg said he is "really looking forward to having people from our school attend the games."