To: Manchester Essex Regional School Committee
From: Cameron Oringer *(Molinare)*
Date: 9/1/2026
Subject: Formal Request for Approval to Serve as Host School for the Cooperative Boys Hockey Program (2026-2027 Pilot Year)

I respectfully recommend that the Manchester Essex Regional School Committee approve:

1. Manchester Essex Regional High School serving as the Host School for the Cooperative Boys Hockey Program for the 2026-2027 winter season as a one-year pilot, subject to the minimum participation requirement of ten Manchester Essex student-athletes and a post-season review by participating districts (Hamilton-Wenham, Rockport, Ipswich).; **and**
2. Support the development of a shared team identity representing all six participating communities.

The immediate priority is to preserve the cooperative program and keep its student-athletes together as a team. Becoming the host school would allow Manchester Essex to provide the administrative leadership and stability necessary for the program to continue during the upcoming winter season.

For 2026–2027, Talbot Rink would remain the program's home facility. Given the limited time before the season, continuing at Talbot provides the most stable and practical option. Rink availability and practice locations would be reevaluated before the 2027–2028 season.

Due to the significant cost of ice time (regardless of the site), the proposed athletic user fee would be **$650 per student-athlete**. Payment plans and financial assistance would be available to ensure that no student is prevented from participating because of a family's inability to pay. The program is projected to be cost-neutral to Manchester Essex through the user-fee structure, admission revenue from home games, a financial commitment from the Vikings Booster Program, and shared administrative costs from the participating districts.

Estimated total cost of the program: $70,000

User Fee	$650/student	30 Students - $19,500
Gate Fee	$7 Adult $5 Student/Senior Citizen	10 Home Games - Estimate of $15,500
Participating District Contributions	$10,000 Hamilton-Wenham $5,000 Rockport $5,000 Ipswich	$20,000
Fundraising Commitment	$7,500 - Vikings Boosters $7,500 - Anonymous Donors	$15,000

The cooperative program also has a strong foundation for long-term sustainability. Agawam Youth Hockey, Cape Ann Youth Hockey, and the existing middle school program provide a healthy

developmental pipeline across the six communities represented by Manchester, Essex, Hamilton, Wenham, Ipswich, and Rockport.

Separate from the host-school recommendation, I am also seeking the School Committee's support for the development of a shared identity for the cooperative program. If Manchester Essex is approved as the host school, the team would operate under Manchester Essex's administrative oversight for the 2026–2027 season while the participating districts, students, families, and community partners explore an identity that represents the entire cooperative program.

A shared identity would provide several important long-term benefits. It would help create a unified culture across all six communities, strengthen connections with the area's youth and middle school hockey programs, and revitalize interest and pride throughout the region. Student-athletes would be given a meaningful voice in selecting an identity that reflects the full partnership.

This approach would also allow families to continue using the helmets and gloves already purchased through the Rockport-hosted program, avoiding unnecessary costs during the transition. In addition, a host-neutral identity would provide an important safeguard for the future. If Manchester Essex determines it will not continue as host beyond the pilot year, host responsibilities could transition to a different school without requiring families or districts to replace uniforms and equipment solely because the host school changed.

Approving Manchester Essex as the host school will provide the immediate stability needed for the 2026–2027 season. Supporting the development of a shared team identity will help create a sustainable, inclusive, and community-centered future for our cooperative boys ice hockey program. I respectfully recommend the School Committee's approval of both proposals.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and your continued support of opportunities for our student-athletes.