

February 24, 2016

ND High School Activities Association  
C/O Matt Fetsch, Executive Director  
350 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE  
Valley City, ND 58072

NDHSAA Board Members,

We are writing with a concern relating to North Dakota Girls High School Hockey. Our question is why are 5 schools in Bismarck, with enrollment of over 4500 allowed to form a cooperative of only one high school hockey team? We also have concerns regarding cooperatives formed by Fargo North, South, & Shanley, Grand Forks Red River & Central. All of these communities have every amenity needed to field more than one team.

As we travelled throughout the state this winter, we repeatedly overheard conversations of disgust of this practice. We do not feel that it is helping to grow the sport. These teams are cutting girls and many girls are quitting due to frustration. The games between these cooperatives and our smaller communities are grossly lopsided.

As we recruit more girls to fill our teams, whether at the younger levels or high school, we are helping the sport flourish and grow. We are hopeful that other communities would want to do the same. The NDHSAA Cooperative guidelines state that the NDHSAA Board of Directors must approve all cooperative sponsorship applications. NDHSAA seems to be approving creating All-Star teams.

Devils Lake, like many other smaller schools are blessed to have players that enjoy to play the game no matter the outcome, they work as hard as any to reach their personal best. We've seen these girls excel in other areas due to this involvement with hockey. They are showing strengths in academics, they are officiating hockey games, and some may become coaches. However, there are too many conversations taking place that smaller schools need to dissolve their girls high school hockey team due to competitiveness. Thus, taking away a great learning experience for these girls.

This is a serious matter affecting many young women in North Dakota. We hope it will be immediately reviewed by NDHSAA along with all school boards, superintendents, athletic directors, coaches, and parents. It is time to realize that growth within our sport and children is more important than winning.

Regards,



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