

# MICHIGAN METRO GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL HOCKEY LEAGUE

## COOPERATIVE TEAM GUIDELINES

### **ARTICLE I PURPOSE**

The purpose of this cooperative team is to provide a mechanism for newly formed teams to enter the League or for an existing League team to remain sustainable. It is not a means for any team to alter their competitive level. Team viability can depend on a number of factors including enrollment, cost, level of support from the school's athletic department, availability and location of alternative club level club hockey, and school demographics. Each cooperative team has a unique set of circumstances that affect their sustainability as a League member. It is incumbent upon the league members to accept additional league members, but only those that can remain as a long-term viable member.

Cooperative teams should attempt to use the cooperative team allowance to promote their program for the long term. As such cooperative teams need to embrace the B level league. The long term goal of any cooperative team is to grow their participation base such that each individual school can support their own team.

### **ARTICLE II Guidelines**

Section 1. Membership rules. Any secondary school sponsoring hockey may become a member of this league as a Cooperative team by meeting the following criteria:

- A) Existing Cooperative teams will need to obtain league re-approval every two years.
- B) Existing Cooperative team will need to submit a re-approval application prior to the second season of their existing 2 year permit. The application must be submitted prior to September.
- C) If the re-approval application is denied, the team will continue as a cooperative team for second season of the existing 2 year approval.
- D) Existing single school league teams that wish to move to a Cooperative team must also obtain approval prior to September of the season of entry. The new Cooperative team must submit a new team application.
- E) New Cooperative teams must submit a new team application. Prospective new teams must notify the League President of their intentions to join by March 1 or by the date of the post-season League meeting, whichever is later. Team must also submit a new team application to the secretary of the league before April 15 of the year the school hopes to begin play of a league schedule.

Section 2. Guidelines for consideration.

- A) Enrollment - Ideally, the combined enrollment of the cooperative schools under considerations should be <3500 students. However, cooperative teams may still

be considered when the combined enrollment is >3500 students. This exception is especially important to support new cooperative teams and existing cooperative team that have not been successful in growing their participation base. The <3500 students guideline is only a guideline which is one aspect for consideration of a cooperative team.

*The MMGHSHL Enrollment guideline is adapted from the MHSAA guidelines which reads:*

**SECTION 1(F)**—*Two or more member high schools whose combined enrollment does not exceed 3,500 students may conduct, with the approval of the Executive Committee, a cooperative program in the following specific sports (sponsored by 250 or fewer schools) for which application has been made and approval has been granted: girls gymnastics, ice hockey, boys lacrosse, girls lacrosse, boys alpine skiing, girls alpine skiing, boys swimming & diving, and girls swimming & diving.*

*If none of the schools involved in a proposed Cooperative Agreement sponsored the sport at any level on an interscholastic basis during the previous school year, then the 3,500-student maximum enrollment may be waived by the Executive Committee. However, the cooperative agreement may not exist beyond three school years*

- B) It is recommended that one school must be designated as the primary host and will be considered the official team name. A Cooperative board must be formed to govern the Cooperative team. This board should consist of Athletic Directors from each member school, or an appointee.
- C) Teams under consideration for renewal need to demonstrate participation in the B level program, or justify.
- D) Teams under consideration for renewal need to submit a renewal application. If an adequate number of players attend one individual school, it is recommended that the individual school form its own team. Exceptions can be considered if the remaining schools cannot support a team.

### Section 3. Rules.

- A) Teams (Cooperative or single school) may combine practice ice for the purposes of controlling costs.

### Section 4. Guidelines for schools to consider

- A) A “Cooperative Program Board of Control” should be appointed to oversee the cooperative program. It should consist of at least an administrator, and the athletic director of each cooperating school. It should convene to initiate the program and to resolve disputes which may arise throughout the life of the program.
- B) Though not required, cooperating school districts should be adjacent. Travel distance between schools should be reasonable.
- C) Cooperative arrangements should be sought only in sports where opportunities are not

limited and it is not anticipated that students will be “cut” from the squad.

- D) Cooperative agreements are not intended for a single participant for a year or two but for a significant group of students for several years.
- E) If you have an existing program, will students from another school replace students from your community and deny the sons and daughters of your local taxpayers the opportunity to participate in that activity?
- F) If two or more schools are cooperating to create a program where none has existed 1)  
Who will pay for and maintain/laundry uniforms and equipment, facility maintenance?
  - 2) Who will pay for travel to practices, to contests?
  - 3) Who will select, supervise, and pay coaches?
  - 4) If applicable, whose cheerleaders will cheer?
  - 5) Whose training rules, letter award guidelines, etc., will be followed?
  - 6) Whose local academic and other regulations will be followed?
  - 7) Can daily class schedules be coordinated?
  - 8) How will gate receipts be handled?
  - 9) Where will practices and games be held, and who will pay those expenses?
  - 10) Who will host and supervise events?
  - 11) Is athletic accident insurance coverage provided, and who pays for it? Have liability insurers been notified?
  - 12) Whose school identity, mascot, colors, etc., will be used?
- G) Will an existing sport suffer because of the creation of a cooperative program in another sport that season?