



**To:** Members of Ayr, Burford, Paris and St. George Minor Hockey Associations

**From:** President - Ayr Minor Hockey Association  
President - Burford Minor Hockey Association  
President - Paris Minor Hockey Association  
President - St. George Minor Hockey Association

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**Dear Ayr, Burford, Paris and St. George Minor Hockey Members,**

As we begin the 2023/24 hockey season, together Ayr Minor Hockey, Burford Minor Hockey, Paris Minor Hockey and St. George Minor Hockey Associations have started discussions on the possibility of creating a jointly operated Representative Hockey Program for the benefit of all minor hockey.

A Representative Hockey Program would provide our communities with the highest caliber of hockey available. Working collectively, the associations are in the process of reviewing current organizational structures and the potential changes to develop a proposal for submission to the Ontario Minor Hockey Association. As the planning develops, communications will be shared timely, with progress updates on matters that require your consideration and input. We will strive hard to answer the many questions you may have.

To move forward in a transparent and informed manner, some foundational principles have been set out to help guide the committee working on this proposal:

1. Ensuring that changes proposed at the REP level have little to no impact to the Hometown Local League hockey structure.
2. Clarifying why these changes are being considered for REP level hockey.
3. Improved communications to all of our members on this proposal.
4. Securing and providing answers to questions you have in advance of any vote on this proposal so that you can make a well-informed decision.

### **Principal 1 - No Change Where Change Is Not Necessary**

The majority of our players play at the recreational Local League level. For these players and families, no changes are proposed, and they will continue to receive the community-based hockey experience. Local League players will continue to proudly wear their Flames, Coyotes, Wolfpack and Generals sweaters. Players will continue to play within their local community rinks and will continue to play and develop with their friends as part of the overall Local League hockey program. The modified proposal will ensure we maintain the hometown hockey experience our members value and expect.

## **Principal 2 - Clarifying Why**

Our top priorities are player development and fun. Player development and fun are best achieved when players play at the level of hockey that meets their needs (Local League, REP, or Select) and alongside other players that have the same and/or similar skills and ability. With declining player enrollment, our smaller associations have struggled to offer a full range of hockey programming (Local League, REP and Select) in a consistent manner across all divisions. Consequently, our smaller associations see players play at levels of hockey above and below their needs and with teammates with abilities that are far superior or inferior to their own. When this happens player development and fun suffer.

By working together through a REP partnership arrangement, we can provide a more complete and sustainable hockey program. We can do this without interfering with or modifying our local league structures. Local league hockey will remain as it currently operates; those seeking more competitive/skilled hockey would have a combined REP level hockey program to play in. This program seeks to offer "A/AA" major/minor REP, BB and Select divisions from a combined talent pool that will result in improved consistency in player ability within each team and see those teams playing comfortably at an appropriate level of competition.

This much-improved hockey program cannot be offered by any of our associations alone. By working together at the REP level, we will be able to deliver a broader spectrum of hockey programming for the benefit of all players.

## **Principal 3 – Communications**

This communication is one of many that will be shared with you as this proposal develops over the coming months. In addition to the association websites, we have established a Brant Waterloo Minor Hockey Facebook, Instagram and X (previously Twitter) page to provide our members a direct way of keeping informed in a timely and coordinated way. Each participating association will also post articles and links on their respective webpage that will connect you to Brant Waterloo Minor Hockey social media. Each participating Board Member is well informed on what is going on and will be able to point you to where you can find out more information – should you be searching for information. We are planning for our first Members Information Meetings in September 2023 and will advise members shortly on meeting dates once confirmed. Stay tuned for information.

## **Principal 4 – Answers to Your Questions**

The best votes come from informed voters. When voters have unanswered questions, the tendency is to vote for "status quo". We will strive to answer your questions well in advance of any vote on this proposal so that you can properly consider this proposal. We acknowledge that not every question will have an answer, but when that is the situation, we will explain why and how/when we expect to be able to address it.

### The Goal and Draft Organizational Structure

Our goal is to develop a Hockey Association framework that provides improved hockey development opportunities within a structure that preserves the local community identity that we all value.

The proposed model will preserve the original Minor Hockey Organizations within our area, allowing Ayr Minor Hockey, Burford Minor Hockey, Paris Minor Hockey and St. George Minor Hockey to continue in celebrating their community identities with local hometown teams at the recreational level – where the Local League teams will be able to continue their rich community histories and traditions, within the framework of a new cooperatively-run organization. Brant Waterloo Minor Hockey is created by the Local Minor Hockey Associations whose sole purpose is to run and manage the representative component of the Minor Hockey Program. The Representative Hockey Program organization would be operated by a jointly administered Board of Directors, appointed by Ayr, Burford, Paris and St. George Minor Hockey Associations.

We strongly believe that this partnership of equals will achieve the best of both worlds in terms of preserving and celebrating our traditional Hometown Hockey identities at the Local League level, while allowing us to build a stronger, more dynamic and competitive Rep Hockey Program that will benefit all players within our participating organizations.

More information about this proposal will be communicated to you over the coming weeks and months as the negotiating team continues to pull this proposal together. Please forward any questions, comments, or concerns to the attention of your organization's President.

Sincerely,

Brad Sayles, President, Ayr Minor Hockey Association  
Dave Greenwood, President, Burford Minor Hockey Association  
Mike Sinclair, President, Paris Minor Hockey Association  
Katie Vallee, President, St. George Minor Hockey Association