



May 18, 2016

Mr. Josh Fenton  
Commissioner  
National Collegiate Hockey Conference  
1631 Mesa Avenue, Suite C  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Dear Commissioner Fenton:

With a request for your confidentiality due to the sensitive nature of this inquiry, this letter is intended to convey Minnesota State University, Mankato's interest in exploring potential admission to the National Collegiate Hockey Conference, beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year. If we move forward, we would look to compete as a full member of the NCHC during the 2018-2019 hockey season.

As you are aware, the landscape of college hockey may be entering another round of transformative change, and we want to take this opportunity to be proactive in exploring what is best for our institution with regard to our men's hockey program's conference affiliation.

In recent years, our institution has made a significant financial investment in our program, which we believe has yielded a positive return. Our head coach, Mike Hastings, just completed his fourth year with MSU hockey, and under his guidance, the Mavericks have forged a 100-49-7 record – the third-highest win total of any Division I men's hockey program over the same period. Hastings has helped Minnesota State win a pair of WCHA regular-season titles and two WCHA postseason tournament titles while making three NCAA tournament championship appearances, including a school-record 29 wins in 2014-15. Our 2014-15 team was ranked #1 in the nation five times and carried the #1 overall seeding position into the NCAA tournament. After the season, Hastings was named WCHA Coach of the Year and was also the recipient of the Spencer Penrose Award as the AHCA National Coach of the Year.

Hastings was signed to a new five-year contract in June 2015, and last fall, the program relocated to the new "Home of Maverick Hockey" after a \$5 million renovation to the Verizon Wireless Center. The facility now includes a new center-hung video scoreboard, coaches offices, locker rooms, team and reception spaces, student-athlete study areas and lounges, training rooms, and a strength and conditioning center that serves both the men's and women's teams.

We believe our on-ice record – as well as the financial investment we've made – demonstrate our commitment to making our hockey program successful. We hope these efforts help position our institution as an attractive future member of the National Collegiate Hockey Conference as we explore that possibility.

In turn, we understand that in exploring future NCHC membership, we must not only stand on our own merits, but also on the "added value" we would bring to the NCHC. To that end, I offer the following:

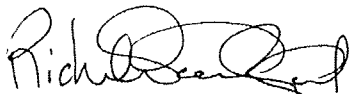
- In reviewing your conference map, we are at the center of your geographic footprint, which is an important consideration in this time of escalating travel costs. We are a bus ride for four of your current members and with local charter service available in Mankato and a major metropolitan airport less than 90 miles away, we provide easy, affordable access for those teams traveling by air.

- The new “Home of Maverick Hockey” is conveniently located adjacent to a Hilton Garden Inn in the heart of revitalized downtown city center. The four-star hotel offers everything teams are seeking in a “stay and play” experience, including covered parking, full service meals, team meeting spaces, and an enclosed, skyway system that is a short 5-minute walk to the arena and keeps student-athletes warm, dry, and out of the winter elements.
- We are also committed to a wide-open, fast-paced style of play that fans enjoy watching and which allows for the complete growth and development of young student-athletes, as evidenced by the number of players the program has moved on to professional opportunities in recent years, including one hockey alum that has had the privilege of hoisting the Stanley Cup and another that has had the honor of helping to captain Team USA.
- As noted previously, I believe the long-term contract for our head coach and the recent upgrades we have made to the hockey facility are clear evidence of the investment and commitment we have made to our hockey program. Currently, we are working on a plan to phase in the full cost of attendance for our hockey teams.
- Finally, membership in the NCHC would allow many of our institutions to renew long-established rivalries amongst highly familiar opponents. For all of our schools, I believe this type of competition would heighten fan interest, spur attendance and help to drive many important revenue streams. This alliance would further energize our already strong fan base that led our league in attendance, and fans of our team and other NCHC member teams would have more opportunities for short trips to watch their favorite teams compete. Our proximity to your postseason championship venue in the Twin Cities would make travel to the NCHC “Frozen Faceoff” extremely convenient for our fans, and we believe we could help elevate the “Frozen Faceoff” to another level of prominence and acclaim.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate our very strong interest in exploring the possibility of becoming a member of the National Collegiate Hockey Conference and beginning to compete in the NCHC in the 2018-19 season.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (507) 389-1111 or via e-mail at [richard.davenport@mnsu.edu](mailto:richard.davenport@mnsu.edu), and thank you in advance for your careful thought and confidential consideration of our interest. We look forward to your feedback and welcome discussion regarding this inquiry.

Sincerely,



Richard Davenport  
President  
Minnesota State University, Mankato