

FACT SHEET on the use of Native American mascots, logos and nicknames

1. In 2017, the 12 tribes of the **United Tribes of Michigan** were united on a resolution calling for the end of Native American-inspired nicknames, mascots and logos.
2. **LRBOI, April 4, 2000: Resolution Condemning the Use of Indian Mascots, Logos and Nicknames**

“...The Tribal Council of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians hereby file and formalize its opinion and condemnation of the use of Indian mascots, logos and nicknames by public schools in the State of Michigan and throughout the United States and urges members of the LRBOI to file protests, including this resolution, in all public schools requesting the school to change the Indian mascot, logo and nicknames...”

<https://lrboi-nsn.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/01-0404-08-Resolution-Condemning-the-Use-of-Indian-mascots-Logos-and-Nicknames.pdf>
3. **The Michigan State Board of Education in 2017 reaffirmed its stand against the use of Native American mascots, logos, or nicknames for school teams.** The board passed a motion to give the state superintendent authority to withhold school aid funding from districts with offensive mascots, nicknames, and logos that had received notice but did not change them after a 60-day response period. The state attorney general subsequently issued an opinion that the superintendent did not have legal authority to withhold aid.

<https://stateboardinsight.nasbe.org/michigan-board-acts-on-native-american-logos-and-mascots/>

The Michigan State Board of Education had in 2010 reaffirmed a 2003 resolution that encouraged school districts to eliminate “American Indian mascots, nicknames, logos, fight songs, insignias, antics and team descriptors by all Michigan school.”

<https://www.freep.com/story/sports/high-school/2020/07/19/native-american-michigan-high-school-sports-nicknames/5461896002/>
4. **The American Psychological Association in 2005 called for the immediate retirement of all American Indian mascots, symbols, images and personalities by schools, colleges, universities, athletic teams and organizations.** The APA based its position on a growing body of social science literature that shows the harmful effects of racial stereotyping and inaccurate portrayals, including the particularly harmful effects of American Indian sports mascots on the social identity development and self-esteem of American Indian young people. <https://www.apa.org/pi/oema/resources/indian-mascots>
5. **In Michigan, 44 high schools still use nicknames or logos that Aaron Payment, the tribal chairperson of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and president of the United Tribes of Michigan, says play into racist stereotypes of indigenous people**

<https://www.freep.com/story/sports/high-school/2020/07/19/native-american-michigan-high-school-sports-nicknames/5461896002/>

6. **Manistee High School mascot:** During the 1930s, the local newspaper held a contest to name the high school mascot with Chippewa winning the popular vote. Historian James McClurken, speaking at a Manistee County Library program in 2010, explained that “due to the invisibility of the Ottawa, a lot of non-tribal people were unaware that the tribe even existed and believed the area was inhabited by Chippewa Indians.

<https://lrboi-nsn.gov/images/docs/public-affairs/docs/currents/2010/12%20-%20December%202010.pdf>

7. **Petoskey, MI: “School leaders in Petoskey ended nearly 70 years of Native American-themed sports imagery this month (August 2020),** a move some say took far too long. The Petoskey School Board voted unanimously during an early August meeting to remove the final remaining Native American-themed logo from its sports imagery...some tribal parents and officials questioned why the move came 15 years after LTBB adopted a resolution publicly opposing Native American mascots and logos.”

https://www.record-eagle.com/news/local_news/native-parents-officials-question-timing-of-petoskey-school-mascot-decision/article_e860b000-def9-11ea-8855-9771db8ccb78.html#:~:text=Jan%20Michael%20Stump-,A%20Petoskey%20High%20School%20marching%20band,the%20school's%20%22Northmen%22%20mascot.&text=Jan%20Michael%20Stump-,A%20Petoskey%20High%20School%20marching%20band,the%20school's%20%E2%80%9CNorthmen%E2%80%9D%20mascot

8. **Paw Paw, MI: The Paw Paw Redskins will be no more after district leaders voted to scrap the controversial mascot, citing division in the community. (March 2020)**

The Paw Paw Public Schools Board of Education voted 6-1 to “respectively retire” the long-standing mascot Redskins at the end of the school year. The name drew controversy and divided the community, the board said.

Superintendent Rick Reo asked for the change in the mascot at a meeting Monday, March 9, because of division caused by the name, he said in the most recent edition of [district newsletter “Pride and Progress.”](#)

<https://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/2020/03/michigan-school-scraps-redskins-mascot-citing-division.html>

9. **Belding MI: Removes “Redskins” as mascot in December 2016.**

Belding Area Schools is a school district headquartered in [Belding, Michigan](#).^[1]

Previously the district used the "[Redskins](#)" as the mascot. Wes Cummings, who served as the athletic director at Belding, stated that Belding's athletic rivals often made derogatory references to killing Native Americans during sports games.^[2] In December 2016 the school board voted to remove the "Redskins" as the school district mascot.^[3] As of 2017 the district has since decided to change the name and mascot to the Black Knight.^[4]

- 10. Maine schools retired their last Native American-themed mascot in March 2019. In May 2019, Maine became the first state to pass a law banning Native American**

mascots at all public schools. “How to Talk About Indian-Themed Mascots” provides helpful resources to respond to common arguments made in the debate about mascots.
<https://www.suitupmaine.org/indian-mascots/>

Additional Resources:

Michigan Coalition Against Racism in Sports and Media

<https://actionnetwork.org/groups/mcarsm>

Missing the Point: The Real Impact of Native Mascots and Team Names on American Indian and Alaska Native Youth, Center for American Progress (2014)

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/reports/2014/07/22/94214/missing-the-point/>

Research and Findings on the Use of Native American Imagery As a Mascot, Mariemont City Schools Report for the Board of Education (September 2020), Cincinnati Ohio

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MOEbTbu-I3IB6_sXz24C3-8rVPHaNzIT/view?usp=sharing

Native American mascot laws and regulations—a survey of various state and school board actions is provided on this Wikipedia site (with the caveat that Wikipedia is a crowd-sourced resource): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_American_mascot_laws_and_regulations

American Indian Sports Team Mascots: Change the Mascot— <https://aistm.org>