



Colorado and Nevada Pass Bills Banning Native "Themed" Mascots, Logos, and Team Names

"There's a distinction between honoring the history of a people and reducing their treasures, religious imagery, their faces, their bodies, their families, their most precious beliefs to a caricature."

-- CO State Senator Jessie Danielson (D-Wheat Ridge, SB 21-116 co-sponsor)

Colorado

On Thursday, June 3, Colorado state legislators [passed Senate Bill 21-116](#) (SB 21-116). It now awaits final approval by Governor Jared Polis. [SB 21-116](#) prohibits "the use of American Indian mascots by public schools, including charter and institute charter schools, and public institutions of higher education as of June 1, 2022." According to SB 21-116's text, the bill "will provide another step toward justice and healing to the descendants of the survivors of the Sand Creek Massacre, most notably the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes, as well as other American Indians in Colorado who have been harmed or offended by these discriminatory mascots."

Notably, this bill will not apply to schools on tribal lands or schools that consult with and receive approval from a federally-recognized Tribal Nation by June 30, 2021. However, Tribal Nations can revoke such approvals at any time. Schools that do not meet this criteria have until June 1, 2022 to retire their Native "themed" mascots, logos, or team names. If a school fails to make the change by June 1, 2022, the bill imposes a fine of \$25,000 per month until a new mascot is chosen.

According to NCAI's [school mascot tracking database](#), there are 28 schools representing 14 districts in the state of Colorado that use Native "themed" mascots, logos, or team names. Nationally, there are still more than 1,900 schools employing Native "themed" mascots.

To read SB 21-116, click [here](#).

Nevada

On Friday, June 4, Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak [signed into law Assembly Bill 88](#) (AB 88). According to the bill's text, [AB 88](#) "prohibits the use of any name, logo, mascot, song or

other identifier that: (1) is racially discriminatory; or (2) contains racially discriminatory language or imagery." Similar to Colorado, this bill will not apply to schools that consult with and receive approval from a Tribal Nation. Schools that do not meet this requirement have until July 1, 2022 to change their name, logo, mascot, song or other identifier.

In [signing the legislation](#), Governor Sisolak stated, "Our schools and public places should be places that embrace Nevada's diverse population rather than perpetuating misrepresentations of any culture or group of people."

According to NCAI's school mascot tracking database, there are three schools representing two districts in the state of Nevada that use Native "themed" mascots, logos, or team names.

To read AB 88, click [here](#).

Ending "Indian" Mascots is an informational service provided by the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), which is the oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization serving the broad interests of tribal governments and communities. It has been leading Indian Country's movement to eradicate offensive "Indian" mascots from sports and popular culture for the past 50 years by educating schools, sports leagues, and the general public about the [many harms they cause Native people](#). To learn more, please click [here](#).

Founded in 1944, the National Congress of American Indians is the oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization in the country. NCAI advocates on behalf of tribal governments, promoting strong tribal-federal government-to-government policies, and promoting a better understanding among the general public regarding American Indian and Alaska Native governments, people and rights.

