Currently, more than a dozen states across the country have taken or are considering taking formal actions to address the continued use of harmful Native “themed” mascots by public K-12 schools in their states. These formal actions can take many forms – from legislation banning schools’ use of these mascots to the hearing of cases concerning school mascots by state human rights commissions.

NCAI created the State Activity Tracker to monitor and share in real time the growing movement at the state level to retire Native “themed” school mascots. Designed to inform state legislators, state agency staff, movement allies, media members, and the general public, this resource presents the latest developments and key resources detailing the current status and extent of activity on this issue in each state.

If you have relevant updates, information, or resources concerning activities in a particular state that you would like to see added to the State Activity Tracker, please email NCAI at mascots@ncai.org and put the state name in all caps in the subject line.

Last Updated: August 3, 2021
LATEST NEWS:

Native American mascot legislation in MA revisited

OK School for the Deaf new mascot: Bison

MI grants support Saugatuck mascot change

KS Commission suggests retiring Indian mascots

LIST OF CURRENT ACTIVE STATES:

California  Massachusetts  North Carolina
Colorado    Michigan      Oklahoma
Connecticut  Minnesota    Oregon
Illinois     Nebraska      Pennsylvania
Kansas       Nevada        Washington
Maine        New York      Wisconsin
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 54 districts, 64 schools

State Legislation: Assembly Bill No. 30

Status: Former Governor Jerry Brown signed the legislation into law on October 11, 2015.

Legislative Summary:

**AB-30 School or athletic team names: California Racial Mascots Act.**

This bill establishes the California Racial Mascots Act, which prohibits public schools from using the term R*dsk*ns as a school or athletic team name, mascot, or nickname beginning January 1, 2017, subject to specified exceptions. The bill also provides that this prohibition may not be waived by the State Board of Education. To the extent that this prohibition imposes additional duties on public schools, the bill imposes a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

Legislation Sponsors: Former Assemblyman Luis Alejo

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

**Native American Caucus of the California Democratic Party Resolutions - California Issues:** Supports the elimination of “R*dsk*ns” as a mascot used by schools, calls upon the Superintendent of Public Instruction to investigate schools and request the State Board of Education to adopt policies eliminating the use of race-based mascots (2001); Calls for the end of Native American names and images as mascots by public schools (2000).

**Southern California Indian Center Board Resolution “Use of American Indian Mascots by Public Schools in California”**: Denounces the use of American Indian mascots, supports legislation designed to prohibit the use of American Indian mascots, and calls upon California public schools to retire American Indian mascots (2000).

Relevant News Coverage:

*Think Progress: California Just Took A Big Stand Against The Team Name ‘R*dsk*ns’* (October 12, 2015)

*CBS News: California bars schools from using "R*dsk*ns" name* (October 12, 2015)

Recent School Mascot Changes: **Hart High School** (July 14, 2021), **John Burroughs High School** (December 11, 2020), **Fresno High School** (December 9, 2020), **Griffiths Middle School** (July 7, 2020)

Key Allies and Organizations: **Native American Caucus of the California Democratic Party, Southern California Indian Center**
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 14 districts, 28 schools

State Legislation: Senate Bill 21-116

Implementation Status: Signed by Governor Jared Polis on June 28, 2021. Since June 28, 2021, one school has changed its mascot. Multiple schools are currently discussing how the law will affect their mascots.

Legislative Summary:

Prohibit American Indian Mascots: Concerning the prohibition of American Indian mascots in Colorado

This bill prohibits the use of American Indian mascots (mascots) by public schools, including charter and institute charter schools, and public institutions of higher education (school) as of June 1, 2022. The bill imposes a fine of $25,000 per month for each month that a school continues to use a mascot after such date, payable to the state education fund.

Amendments: The prohibition does not apply to: (1) any agreement that exists prior to June 30, 2021, between a federally recognized Indian tribe (tribe) and a public school, although the tribe has the right and ability to revoke the agreement at any time; (2) any public school that is operated by a tribe or with the approval of a tribe and existing within the boundaries of the tribe’s reservation; or (3) the ability of a tribe to create and maintain a relationship or agreement with a public school that fosters goodwill, emphasizes education and supports a curriculum that teaches American Indian history, and encourages a positive cultural exchange. Any such agreement may allow any mascot that is culturally affiliated with the tribe, as determined at the discretion of the tribe’s governing body.

Legislation Sponsors: Senator Jessie Danielson, Representative Adrienne Benavidez, Representative Barbara McLachlan

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

Governor’s Commission to Study American Indian Representations in Public Schools Report: Commission urges public schools to eliminate derogatory Native “themed” mascots (2016); Commission created by Executive Order B 2015 006, signed by former Governor John Hickenlooper (2015).


Relevant News Coverage:

Colorado Politics: Native Americans say next week’s mascot bill part of momentum for change (March 25, 2021)

The Daily Sentinel: Senate OKs bill to ban Native American sports logos (April 25, 2021)

Colorado Sun: Colorado schools using Indian images for their mascots must change them (July 18, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: Grand Junction Central High School (June 24, 2021), Cheyenne Mountain High School (March 15, 2021), La Veta Junior and Senior High School (September 14, 2020), Loveland High School (September 2, 2020)

Key Allies and Organizations: Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 11 districts, 21 schools

State Legislation: Senate Bill 1202

Implementation Status: Governor Ned Lamont signed the bill into law on June 23, 2021. One school has changed their mascot since June 23. One school is considering changing its mascot based on the new legislation.

Legislative Summary:


After June 30, 2022, municipalities with schools with a name, symbol, or image that depicts, refers to or is associated with a state- or federally-recognized Tribal Nation or Native American individual, custom, or tradition as a mascot, nickname, logo, or team name will not receive grant funding from the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Fund (General Statutes of Connecticut §1202 Sec. 63 (l)(2)).

Legislation Sponsors: Senator Martin Looney, Senator Catherine Osten (introduced provision in budget legislation pertaining to Native “themed” mascots), Representative Matthew Ritter

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

Relevant News Coverage:

The Day: UPDATED - Budget bill would withhold money from towns with Native American-related mascots (June 15, 2021)
WTNH News 8: Capitol Report - The battle over Native American school mascots (June 20, 2021)
Native News Online: Connecticut to Withhold Funding From Towns Appropriating Indigenous Culture Under New Law (June 28, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: North Haven High School (July 14, 2021), Watertown High School (January 25, 2021), Farmington High School (December 9, 2020), Glastonbury High School (August 17, 2020)

Key Allies and Organizations: New England Anti-Mascot Coalition
ILLINOIS (IL)

School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 55 districts, 113 schools

State Legislation: House Bill 4783

Status: Introduced in House during 2019-2020 legislative session, it did not reach a full chamber vote. Sponsors are working to get this legislation in place by 2022.

Legislative Summary:

House Bill 4783: School - Native American Imagery; would prohibit schools from using a Native American logo or mascot unless:

- The school receives express written consent from a Native American tribe within 500 miles of the school, which must be renewed every five years; or
- Conducts a school-wide program on Native American culture at least twice per school year;
- Offers a course of study to students focusing on Native American contributions to society; and
- Files an annual report to the Illinois State Board of Education explaining what academic programs on Native Americans were offered during the school year.

Failure to comply with these guidelines would prohibit the school from competing in the playoffs.

Legislation Sponsors: Representative Kambium Buckner, Representative Jonathan Carroll, Representative Daniel Didech, Representative Bob Morgan, Representative Delia Ramirez, Representative Maurice West

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

- **Illinois Native American Bar Association v. The University of Illinois**: Plaintiffs argued that the Chief Illiniwek mascot violated the state’s 2003 Civil Rights Act (2005); the State Appellate Court affirmed the Circuit Court’s opinion that the mascot did not violate the 2003 Civil Rights Act and dismissed the case (2006). Chief Illiniwek was **officially banned by the University of Illinois in 2007**.

- **Illinois Native American Bar Association files federal lawsuit against Huntley School District**: Plaintiffs sought retirement of R*dsk*ns mascot at Huntley schools (2001); Huntley School District **discontinued use of its racial slur mascot in 2002**.

Relevant News Coverage:

- **CNN**: Illinois lawmakers have introduced a bill to ban Native American mascots (February 27, 2020)
- **Chicago Tribune**: Chief Illiniwek was **officially retired 13 years ago. University of Illinois is still trying to remedy his ‘painful impact’ on Indigenous people.** (December 9, 2020)
- **The Southern Illinoisan**: As pro teams nix Native American mascots, will Southern Illinois schools consider change? (January 15, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: **Lemont High School** (July 19, 2021), **Lane Tech High School** (August 4, 2020)

Key Allies and Organizations: Illinois Native American Bar Association
KANSAS (KS)

School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 27 districts, 56 schools

State Legislation: Not applicable

Recent State-Based Activity:

**Governor’s Commission on Racial Equity and Justice July 2021 Report Social Determinants of Health - First Report:** Recommends schools in the state “review and eliminate” the use of Native mascots (pg. 22-23, July 2021)

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

**Kansas Association for Native American Education Statement on American Indian Mascots and Branding:** Strongly encourages schools across the state to remove American Indian mascots, branding, and imagery and applauds efforts already underway (2020)

**Kansas Association for Native American Education Resolution #98-1:** Calls for the elimination of American Indian mascots and logos in schools and requests the Kansas State Board of Education and Kansas State High School Activities Association to adopt policies against the usage of American Indian mascots and logos (1998 - reaffirmed in 2018)

Relevant News Coverage:

**CJ Online:** Kansas commission recommends schools change American Indian mascots (July 14, 2021)

**KMAN:** Kansas commission favors end to Native American mascots in public schools (July 15, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: **Atchison High School** (April 12, 2021), **Wichita North High School** (February 8, 2021), **Shawnee Mission School District - four schools** (January 25, 2021)

Key Allies and Organizations: **Heart of America Indian Center dba Kansas City Indian Center**, **Kansas Association for Native American Education**, **Kansas Office of Native American Affairs**, National Center for Indigenous American Cultures (Thidaware), **Not in Our Honor**, and **Region VII American Indian Council**
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 0 districts, 0 schools

State Legislation: Legislative Document No. 944 (HP 699)

Status: Governor Janet Mills signed the bill into law on May 16, 2019.

Legislative Summary:

LD 944 (HP 699) - “An Act To Ban Native American Mascots in All Public Schools”

This bill prohibits a public school from having or adopting a name, symbol or image that depicts or refers to a Native American tribe, individual, custom or tradition and that is used as a mascot, nickname, logo, letterhead or team name of the school.

Legislation Sponsors: Representative Benjamin Collings

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

Relevant News Coverage:

CNN: Maine to become first state to ban Native American mascots in public schools (May 17, 2019)
USA Today: Native American mascots - Maine set the standard with ban on mascots (December 29, 2020)

Recent School Mascot Changes: Skowhegan High School (March 7, 2019)

Key Allies and Organizations: Penobscot Indian Nation, New England Anti-Mascot Coalition
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 24 districts, 39 schools

State Legislation: Bill S.2943

Status: Bills H.581 and S.294 were reintroduced as Bill S.2943. Bill S. 2943 was reported favorably by the Joint Committee on Education and sent to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

Legislative Summary:

Bill S.2943: An Act Prohibiting the Use of Native American Mascots by Public Schools in the Commonwealth

This legislation would prohibit public schools from using Native mascots as an athletic team name, logo, or mascot. Schools may keep a Native mascot as an athletic team name, logo, or mascot if the school is a tribal school or if a school receives explicit consent from a Tribal Nation to use their particular tribal name.

Legislation Sponsors: Senator Jo Comerford, Representative Nika Elugardo, Representative Tami Gouveia

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

Bills S.247 and H.443: Prohibiting the Use of Native American Mascots by Public Schools in the Commonwealth (2019-2020)

Bill S.291: An Act Prohibiting the Use of Native American Mascots by Public Schools in the Commonwealth (2017-2018)

Relevant News Coverage:

MassLive.com: Native American mascots under spotlight as Massachusetts bill proposes eliminating their use in public schools (February 5, 2021)

Greenfield Recorder: Senators sponsor state bill to ban Native American mascots (February 12, 2021)

Tewksbury Town Crier: Native American mascot legislation revisited (July 24, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: Algonquin Regional High School (April 28, 2021), North Brookfield High School (December 21, 2020), Athol High School (November 5, 2020), Pentucket Regional High School (October 6, 2020)


* NCAI has opted to not use the Massachusetts state flag due to the offensive nature of the flag. The map of Massachusetts is attributed to Maps by FreeVectorMaps.com.
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 32 districts, 85 schools

State Legislation: Not active

Recent State-Based Activity:

Second Amendment to a Compact Between the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians (NHBP) and the State of Michigan: This gaming compact amendment creates the Michigan Native American Heritage Fund (NAHF) for the purpose of promoting understanding, history and good relationships with the State's Native Americans (2016)

Up to $500,000 per year from the NHBP's state revenue sharing payments go into the NAHF; the funds are distributed in the form of grants to schools, colleges and universities, and local governments to assist with initiatives to improve curricula and resources related to Native American issues, and mascot or imagery revisions, ideally in collaboration with Michigan's federally-recognized tribes. Among the NAHF’s 2021 recipients were Saugatuck Public Schools, Okemos Public Schools and Vivian Riddle Elementary School, who each received grants to rebrand from a Native “themed” mascot to one that is culturally responsive.

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Michigan Complaint Against Paw Paw Public School District: The ACLU of Michigan filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), asking that the Paw Paw Public School District be investigated for maintaining a racially hostile educational environment (January 2019). The U.S. Department of Education, OCR launched an investigation into Paw Paw Public Schools to determine in part “…whether the District effectively caused, encouraged, accepted, tolerated, or failed to correct a racially hostile environment for Native American persons at its high school” (December 2019). Although the investigation is still pending according to the OCR, the Paw Paw Public Schools Board of Education voted to retire its “R*dsk*ns” mascot in March 2020 before replacing it with the “Red Wolves” moniker in July 2020.

Senate Bill No. 646: Bans team names, mascots, and logos based on race or ethnicity (2017)

Senate Bill No. 487: Bans “R*dsk*ns” team name in public schools (2017)

State of Michigan: Bill Schuette, Attorney General, Opinion No. 7296: The Superintendent of Public Instruction does not have the authority to withhold state school aid funds from school districts that use an American Indian mascot, logo, or other imagery (2017).

Michigan Department of Civil Rights Discrimination Complaint: The Michigan Department of Civil Rights filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR), stating the continued use of American Indian mascots, names, nicknames, logos, slogans, chants and/or other imagery by each of the schools named in the complaint creates a hostile environment and denies equal rights to all current and future American Indian students (February 2013). The U.S. Department of Education, OCR dismissed the complaint, concluding the information provided in the discrimination complaint is not sufficient for the Office of Civil Rights to infer that racial discrimination has occurred or is occurring (May 2013).

Michigan State Civil Rights Commission Report on Use of Nicknames, Logos and Mascots Depicting Native American People in Michigan Education Institutions: Calls on schools to review this report and include Native American groups in discussions pertaining to the use of Native “themed” mascots (1988)

Relevant News Coverage:

Indian Country Today: Attorney General - Superintendent Can’t Withhold Funding From Schools With Native American Mascots (July 15, 2017)
ABC 10: Senate bill aims to remove school nicknames (November 15, 2017)
MLive: Federal authorities investigate complaint of ‘racially hostile environment’ at Michigan school (December 12, 2019)
Indianz: Native American Heritage Fund awards grants to schools in Michigan (June 28, 2021)
Wood TV: Grants support Saugatuck mascot change, KRESA Native American program (July 19, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: Okemos High School (May 24, 2021), Saugatuck High School (August 17, 2020), Petoskey High School (August 13, 2020), Clinton High School (July 20, 2020)

Key Allies and Organizations: American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan, Native American Heritage Fund
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 10 districts, 23 schools

State Legislation: Minnesota HF4387 and Minnesota SF4372

Status: Introduced to the legislature in the 91st Session (2019-2020) and referred to the Education Policy Committee (House) and E-12 Finance and Policy Committee (Senate); never voted on by either full chamber. Sponsors plan to reintroduce the bill during the 2022 session.

Legislative Summary:

A bill relating to education; prohibiting the use of American Indian mascots and logos; amending Minnesota Statutes 2018, section 124E.03, subdivision 2; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapters 123B; 135A.

Legislation Sponsors: Representative Mary Kunesh-Podein, Representative Jamie Becker-Finn, Representative Robert Bierman, Representative John Considine Jr., Representative Aisha Gomez, Representative Hodan Hassan, Representative Fue Lee, Representative Alice Mann, Representative Ruth Richardson

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

Minnesota Indian Affairs Council Resolution 12112013_3: Declares that race-based Indigenous mascots be eliminated from sports activities within the State of Minnesota, including professional sports teams playing in Minnesota, and request that Minnesota state officials take actions consistent with the resolution (2013)

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees Resolution: Opposing the use of discriminatory logos, names, mascots and nicknames by its institutions and opposing intercollegiate athletic and other competitive teams (2002)

Minnesota Indian Education Association Resolution No. 2103: In opposition to the University of North Dakota’s use of “Fighting Sioux” name and logo (2001)

State Board Resolution "Urging the Elimination of the Use of Racially Derogatory Mascots, Symbols, or Emblems in Schools Throughout the State of Minnesota": Encourages all boards of education “...to immediately commence or proceed to remove such mascots, emblems, or symbols from the public education system.” (1988)

Relevant News Coverage:

Recent School Mascot Changes: There have been no mascot changes in the past year.

Key Allies and Organizations: Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, Minnesota Indian Education Association
NEBRASKA (NE)

School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 22 districts, 45 schools

State Legislation: Not applicable

Recent State-Based Activity:

Nebraska Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights: Civil Rights and the Impact of Native American Names, Symbols, and Imagery in School Mascots (March 2021)

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs Resolution #99-2: Supports the end of Native American logos, symbols, and names as mascots in Nebraska schools (1999)

Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs requests 27 public schools to end their use American Indian mascots (1991)

Relevant News Coverage:

NTV ABC: Nebraska schools could see new debate over Indian mascots (July 14, 2019)

Nebraska Public Media: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Holds Hearings on Native Mascots in Nebraska Schools (December 17, 2020)

Lincoln Journal Star: Nebraska civil rights board recommends phasing out Native mascots in state's schools (March 17, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: There have been no mascot changes in the past year.

Key Local Allies and Organizations: Nebraska Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 2 districts, 3 schools

State Legislation: Assembly Bill 88

Implementation Status: Signed into law by Governor Steve Sisolak on June 4, 2021

Legislative Summary:

Assembly Bill 88 - Makes various changes relating to governmental entities.

A.B.88 requires the board of trustees of each school district, the governing body of each charter school and governing body of each university school for profoundly gifted pupils to change, and adopt a policy that prohibits the use of, a name, logo, mascot, song or other identifiers that: (1) is racially discriminatory; (2) contains racially discriminatory language or imagery; or (3) is associated with a natural person with a racially discriminatory history.

Legislation Sponsors: Assemblyman Howard Watts, Assemblywoman Rochelle Nguyen, Assemblywoman Cecelia González, Assemblywoman Sarah Peters, Assemblywoman Selena Torres

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

Relevant News Coverage:

NPR: A New Nevada Law Bans Racial Mascots In Schools And 'Sundown Sirens' (June 6, 2021)

The Nevada Independent: Nevada Indian Country celebrates wins at the Legislature, including greater access to higher education for students (June 13, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: There have been no mascot changes in the past year.
NEW YORK (NY)

School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 55 districts, 113 schools

State Legislation: Senate Bill S1549C and Assembly Bill A5443C

Status: Introduced in the 2021 session, but never voted on by either chamber. Sponsors are planning to re-introduce this legislation during the 2022 session.

Legislative Summary:

Senate Bill S1549C and Assembly Bill A5443C

Requires the commissioner of education to promulgate rules and regulations to ensure that no public school uses a Native name, logo, or mascot.

Legislation Sponsors: Senator Alessandra Biaggi, Representative Bichotte Hermelyn

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

New York Senate Bill S8708A: Requires school boards of school districts with race-based mascots to, at least once annually, dedicate a portion of a school board meeting to a discussion of racial sensitivity (2020).

New York State Legislature Resolution Condemning the Promotion and Marketing of Dictionary-defined Racial Slurs as School Mascots: Urges owners of professional sports franchises to condemn the promotion and marketing of dictionary-defined racial slurs, and asks schools and school districts to refrain from using them as names for school mascots (2014).

New York State Education Department Commissioner Decision No. 13,963: Dismisses a petition, due to lack of standing, that challenged the use of the “Red Raiders” mascot by the Port Jervis City School District, but acknowledges the “seriousness of the issues” and directs staff to review the matter (1998); the Port Jervis City School District continues to use Native imagery with its “Raiders” mascot. Upon review of the matter, the New York State Education Department issued a memorandum on Public Schools Use of Native American Names, Symbols, and Mascots, concluding “that the use of Native American symbols or depictions as mascots can become a barrier to building a safe and nurturing school community and improving academic achievement for all students,” and asks school boards “to end the use of Native American mascots as soon as practical” (2001).

Relevant News Coverage:

Recent School Mascot Changes: Jamestown High School (July 1, 2021), Coxsackie-Athens High School (June 17, 2021), Caledonia-Mumford High School (December 9, 2020), Shelter Island High School (August 31, 2020)

Key Allies and Organizations: Changemascot.org
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 12 districts, 21 schools

State Legislation: Not applicable

Recent State-Based Activity:

State Advisory Council on Indian Education Annual Report Presentation to the North Carolina Board of Education: Urges public school administrators and boards of education to review mascot selection policies and educate personnel on the long-term, damaging effects of disrespectful Native “themed” images and messages (pg. 6, 2021).

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

North Carolina State Board of Education "A Resolution to Recommend that the North Carolina Public Schools Study the Impact of American Indian Sports Mascots and Logos and Review Policies and Procedures on This Issue": The resolution encourages public schools to educate themselves and review policies and procedures regarding Native “themed” mascots and requires "...local education agencies to annually report to the Office of the State Superintendent plans of action and actions taken regarding their review of policies and procedures toward the use of American Indian sport mascots, logos, and all demeaning imagery (2002).” The State Superintendent of Education issued a memorandum to all superintendents in the state requesting information from each district regarding its use of American Indian imagery and mascots (2002).


Relevant News Coverage:

The Fayetteville Observer: Native American mascots, nicknames, images stir debate in NC schools (February 1, 2021)
WRAL: NC advisory council - Expand educational opportunities for Native American students, change offensive mascot names (April 7, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: There have been no mascot changes in the past year.

Key Allies and Organizations: North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, North Carolina Mascot Education and Action Group, North Carolina State Advisory Council on Indian Education
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 50 districts, 146 schools (2 BIE)

State Legislation: Not applicable

Recent State-Based Activity:

Oklahoma School for the Deaf Replaces “Indians” Mascot with “Bison”: The school, a division of Oklahoma Rehabilitation Services, proposed to the Commission for Rehabilitation Services a change to its mascot. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the change (2021).

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

Intertribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes Resolution No. 2001-08: Calls for the elimination of stereotypical use of American Indian names and images as mascots in sports and other events (2001)

Relevant News Coverage:

The Daily Ardmoreite: Oklahoma School for the Deaf announces new mascot (July 22, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: Oklahoma School for the Deaf (July 12, 2021), Union High School (November 9, 2020)

Key Allies and Organizations: Intertribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 8 districts*, 15 schools (1 BIE)
*Each district listed has reached a formal agreement with a Tribal Nation in the state of Oregon, per the requirements of Senate Bill 1509.

State Legislation: Senate Bill 1509 was signed into law on March 6, 2014.

Key State-Based Activity:

State Board of Education Adopts a Resolution to Ban Use of Native American Mascots: The Resolution prohibits Oregon public schools from using Native American names, symbols, or images as school mascots, after July 1, 2017 (2012).

The Oregon State Legislature passed, and the Governor later signed into law, Senate Bill 1509 which allows district school boards to enter into approved written agreements with federally-recognized tribes in Oregon for use of a mascot that represents, is associated with or is significant to the tribe (2014). Following the direction of Senate Bill 1509, the State Board of Education amended its rule to allow exceptions to the ban if a school enters into an agreement with one of Oregon’s federally-recognized tribes (2016).

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

Senate Bill 215: Permits district school board to enter into written agreement with federally recognized Native American tribe in Oregon that is located closest to school district with respect to name, symbol or image of mascot associated with a Native American tribe, expected behavior of students and spectators at athletic events with respect to mascot, and training on cultural diversity that athletic directors or other persons identified by school board are required to complete (2013). Former Governor John Kitzhaber vetoed Senate Bill 215 (2013).

Report to the State Board of Education on Schools’ Use of Native American Mascots: Summarizes the state of Native American mascots in Oregon and recommends a rule that prohibits Native American mascots (2012)

Oregon Indian Education Association Resolution #07-02: Recommends the elimination of all Native American mascots in all school activities within the State of Oregon (2007)

Relevant News Coverage:

CNN: Oregon bans Native American school mascots, images (May 18, 2012)
The Seattle Times: Oregon bans Native American mascots in schools (May 18, 2012)
The Oregonian: Native American mascots have to go, Oregon State Board of Education rules (May 22, 2015)
The Astorian: Oregon school board adopts exception to Indian mascot ban (January 21, 2016)

Recent School Mascot Changes: There have been no mascot changes in the past year.

Key Allies and Organizations: Oregon Indian Education Association
PENNSYLVANIA (PA)

School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 45 districts, 113 schools

State Legislation: Not applicable

Recent State-Based Activity:


Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

 Relevant News Coverage:

Bucks County Courier Times: State commission orders Neshaminy to stop using stereotypical Native American images  (November 25, 2019)
Bucks County Courier Times: Neshaminy School District can use R*dsk*ns nickname, state rules  (June 9, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: Susquehanna Township High School  (May 3, 2021), Susquehannock High School  (April 15, 2021), Radnor High School  (September 2, 2020), Unionville High School  (August 24, 2020)

Key Allies and Organizations: Coalition of Natives and Allies
WASHINGTON (WA)

School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 18 districts, 24 schools (1 BIE)

State Legislation: House Bill 1356 - 2021-22

Implementation Status: Signed into law by Governor Jay Inslee on April 26, 2021. Since the signing, three schools have changed their mascots and many more are considering how best to proceed with the new law in place.

Legislative Summary:

Prohibiting the inappropriate use of Native American names, symbols, or images as public school mascots, logos, or team names.

Prohibits public schools from using Native American names, symbols, or images as school mascots, logos, or team names. Establishes exceptions to the prohibition if certain requirements met, including consultation with and authorization by, the applicable tribe or tribes. Allows for the phasing out of uniforms or other materials bearing Native American names, symbols, or images as mascots, logos, or team names if specified requirements are met.

Legislation Sponsors: Representative Debra Lekanoff, Representative Jessica Bateman, Representative April Berg, Representative Steve Bergquist, Representative Lisa Callan, Representative Lauren Davis, Representative Laurie Dolan, Representative Joe Fitzgibbon, Representative Roger Goodman, Representative Kirsten Harris-Talley, Representative John Lovick, Representative Nicole Macri, Representative Timm Ormsby, Representative Gerry Pollet, Representative Alex Ramel, Representative Bill Ramos, Representative Tarra Simmons

Other Key State-Based Activity and Resources:


Washington State Board of Education Resolution - 1993 Mascot: Asks all school districts to review building names, mascots, logos, activities, events, portrayal of caricatures, and behaviors to ensure that such references and activities were free from bias and derogatory connotations or effects associated with race, creed, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, and disability (1993).

Relevant News Coverage:

The Wenatchee World: House passes bill to prohibit Native names as school mascots (February 24, 2021)
Tri-City Herald: Kennewick school hopes to keep Kamiakin Braves mascot (February 26, 2021)
The Seattle Times: Ban Native mascots in schools without Tribal support (March 1, 2021)
The Center Square: Washington bans Native American references in school mascots, team names (April 28, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: South Bend Jr./Sr. High School (July 23, 2021), Marysville Pilchuck High School (June 22, 2021), North Central High School (May 12, 2021), Renton High School (April 14, 2021)

Key Allies and Organizations: Governor’s Office on Indian Affairs, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, OSPI Office of Native Education
School districts and schools with Native “themed” mascots: 26 districts, 67 schools

State Legislation: Not applicable

Recent State-Based Activity:

2021-23 Executive Budget: Governor Tony Evers recommended providing $200,000 of tribal gaming revenue to create a program to assist certain school districts in adopting and implementing a nickname, logo, mascot or team name that is not race based (pg. 503, 2021). This recommendation did not make it into the enacted 2021-23 Biennial Budget.

Wisconsin Association of School Boards Resolution 2021-10: Encourages school districts to identify imagery and practices that are not welcoming of all students and initiate discussions to replace the offending imagery and practices (2021); Resolution 2020-10, which had much stronger language against Native “themed” mascots failed to pass (2020).

Key State-Based Activity and Resources:

Wisconsin Court of Appeals Appeal No. 2011AP2917: Reversed County Circuit ruling that allowed Mukwonago School District to keep its mascot after two parents filed a lawsuit against the Department of Public Instruction for its order to the Mukwonago School District to drop its “Indian” mascot; Mukwonago School District openly defied this order and voted to keep its mascot (2013).

Senate Bill 25 and 2009 Wisconsin Act 250: Creates rules on what is defined as a race-based mascot and sets procedures and requirements on how to request a review of a mascot by the Department of Public Instruction (2009-2010); Assembly Bill 297 and 2013 Wisconsin Act 115 significantly raise the requirements needed to facilitate a review on a mascot and changes the reviewing department to the Department of Administration (2013).

Relevant News Coverage:

Wisconsin Radio Network: Doyle signs Indian mascot bill (May 5, 2010)
Wisconsin State Journal: Scott Walker signs bill making it harder to force schools to drop Indian nicknames (December 19, 2013)
Wisconsin Examiner: School boards confront racial mascots (January 26, 2021)
Sokaogon Chippewa Community News: Governor Evers Wants to Provide State Money to Help School Districts Shift Away from Native American Mascots and Logos (February 25, 2021)
Associated Press: Evers budget proposal would help schools drop race-based mascots (March 3, 2021)

Recent School Mascot Changes: Seneca High School (July 26, 2021), La Crosse Central High School (November 9, 2020), Weyauwega-Fremont High School (October 26, 2020)

Key Allies and Organizations: Wisconsin Indian Education Association, Wisconsin Indian Education Association Indian Mascot and Logo Task Force