



NATIONAL INDIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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NIEA Resolution 2013-07

TITLE: SUPPORT FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACE-BASED NATIVE LOGOS, MASCOTS, AND NAMES

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1970 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; and

WHEREAS, NIEA, as the largest national Indian organization of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents, and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

WHEREAS, through its unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, self-representational use of logos, mascots and names remain a cherished tradition in many Native communities, and therefore, tribal and Native schools that so choose to retain traditional names and symbolism should be exempt from this resolution; and

WHEREAS, Native cultures have endured centuries despite attempts to destroy and assimilate them; and

WHEREAS, the continued use of stereotypes by major educational institutions and national sports franchises not only detracts from the proud history, cultures, and traditions of Native peoples, it is harmful to Native children; and

WHEREAS, the use of negative stereotypes is a testament to the continued practice of the outright commodification of Native peoples and their unique cultural identities; and

WHEREAS, it devalues Native people and culture and can destroy the self-esteem of Native students, which can strain their ability to achieve academically; and

WHEREAS, NIEA's advocacy on this issue has resulted in the elimination of Native logos, mascots, and names in hundreds of educational settings across the nation by providing workshops, presentation of professional papers, adopting resolutions, providing legal briefs, and holding forums on organizing networks of Native educators as advocates; and

WHEREAS, educational institutions and national sports franchises, unfortunately, continue the practice of using Native logos, mascots, and names despite great success and efforts by Native organizations, tribes, parents, and other stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, educational institutions and national sports franchises that choose to continue using race-based logos, mascots, and names harm children by exposing them to negative stereotypes and indoctrinating them and the American public with the idea that it is acceptable to typecast an entire race of people; and

WHEREAS, the limited and sparse representations of Native Americans in the media and popular culture comprise a significant portion of what children learn about Native people and thereby impact their identity formation by reinforcing stereotypes about Native cultures from the past and present; and

WHEREAS, the NIEA passed a prior resolution, The Elimination of Race-Based Indian Logos, Mascots, and Names (NIEA Res. 09-05), in 2009 during the NIEA Annual held in Milwaukee, which provided prior opposition to educational institutions utilizing disparaging logos, mascots, and names; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing base of support calling for the elimination of Native logos, mascots, and names as evidence by condemnation from national leaders, such as President Barack Obama and numerous congressional members; professional organizations, for example the American Psychological Association; education advocacy organizations, such as the National Education Association; human rights and tribal organizations, like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Congress of American Indians; and sports regulatory commissions, like the National Collegiate Athletic Association; and

WHEREAS, educational institutions and national sports franchises, such as Washington, DC's National Football League organization, should not be vehicles of institutionalized racism; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NIEA calls for the immediate elimination of race-based Native logos, mascots, and names from educational institutions and national sports franchises across the United States; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NIEA does hereby call for educational institutions and national sports franchises to cease their use of such race-based Native logos, mascots, and names in the effort to remove these stereotypes and raise the self-esteem of Native students so they have the same opportunity as their non-Native peers to achieve academically without discrimination.

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that the following resolution was dully considered and passed by the National Indian Education Association on November 2, 2013 at which a quorum of the membership was present.

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Pam Agoyo', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Pam Agoyo
President