

Native American Youth and Family Center

5135 NE Columbia Blvd., Portland OR 97218 | p 503-288-8177 | f 503-288-1260 | www.nayapdx.org

March 19, 2012

Oregon Department of Education
255 Capitol Street NE Salem, OR 97310-0203
stateboard.members@state.or.us

RE: The Use of Indian Mascots in Oregon

Dear State Board Members:

We are writing today to support a ban of Indian Mascots in Schools that receive State Funding. As an organization that is supportive of Indian People, the preservation of the rights they reserved through treaties, their civil rights, human rights and rights as citizens of the United States I am asking that you also respect these rights and end the used of Indian Mascots.

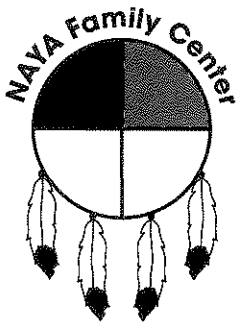
- 1) The continued use of American Indian mascots may be a violation of the civil rights of American Indian people.
- 2) Research has shown that the continued use of American Indian mascots, names, symbols, images, and personalities has a negative effect on not only American Indians students but all students by:
 - a. Undermining the educational experiences of members of all communities—especially those who have had little or no contact with Indigenous peoples. The symbols, images and mascots teach non-Indian children that it's acceptable to participate in culturally abusive behavior and perpetuate inaccurate misconceptions about American Indian culture.
 - b. Establishes an unwelcome and often times hostile learning environment for American Indians students that affirms negative images/stereotypes that are promoted in mainstream society.

Please protect Oregon students and provide socially and psychologically safe learning environments for **all students** free of objectification, stereotypes that are damaging.

Thank You,

Nichole June Maher
Executive Director

Empowering the lives of Native Americans in the Portland area



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