

Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council Resolution

adopted January 30, 2006:

Resolution 2006-01.03

Address to Public School Districts Regarding Indian Nicknames, Logos and Mascots

Whereas, the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc. is a consortium of eleven federally recognized Indian tribes located in Wisconsin and Michigan; and

Whereas, some Wisconsin public schools still have school nickname/logo policies based on race which target Native Americans; and

Whereas, the American Psychological Association has confirmed the growing body of knowledge indicating that these race-based school policies can harm all students, but particularly Native American students; and

Whereas, a diverse and growing body of professional opinion has shown that these policies reduce the self-esteem of Native American students and reduce the number of future roles Native American students visualize for themselves in society; and

Whereas, a diverse and growing body of professional opinion has shown that these policies constitute discrimination based on race because they raise the self-esteem of non-Native Americans while lowering the self-esteem of Native Americans; and

Whereas, the Wisconsin Superintendent of Public Instruction has recently re-affirmed support for the elimination of Native American nicknames, logos, and mascots in public schools, and has written to public school districts across the State of Wisconsin, encouraging them to consider alternatives to Native American imagery; and

Whereas, the “boost” in self-esteem experienced by non-Native Americans helps explain why some non-Native Americans support these race-based policies and have difficulty understanding why Native Americans could have a different view based on a different experience; and

Whereas, a diverse and growing body of professional opinion has shown that this harm occurs below the conscious level so that Native Americans are often not aware of the psychological impact; and

Whereas, these race-based policies also harm non-Native students by “teaching” them that it is “acceptable” to stereotype Native Americans; and

Whereas, the harm extends beyond the boundaries of the school district and similarly affects Native and non-Native athletes and fans in other school districts which compete against these schools; and

Whereas, members of Native American tribes are living in these school districts and are affected by these race-based ‘Indian’ nickname policies;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc. respectfully asks that all school boards in school districts with these policies act quickly to find an alternative to using the Native American race for a school nickname, logo and/or mascot.

Certification

I, the undersigned Executive Director of the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc., do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Board of Directors the 30th day of _____ January _____, 2006.

(signed)

Michael W. Allen, Sr., Executive Director