



PURPOSE

For decades, there has been discussion regarding the use of Native Americans as team mascots. Once thought to be honoring heritage, the Native American community has found this practice to be demeaning, even racist in some forms. In 2001, then NYSED Commissioner Richard Mills requested that all public schools cease the use of this practice.

Over the course of the last decade the MCSD has continued to be the Red Raiders, while distancing ourselves from the Native American imagery. As you can see from the logo above, the district began using the “M” to represent imagery of our Red Raider name.

The Native American mascot conversation has heated up in recent months given the change made by the Washington Football Team last summer, and most recently the Cleveland Baseball Team. In response to this recent push, there has been legislation drafted in the NYS Assembly that would severely harm NYS Public Schools who have a Native American mascot.

“New York schools with race or ethnicity based mascots would be banned from getting state funding under a new bill recently introduced in the Legislature. The bill defines mascots as a person, animal or object derived from a specific race or ethnicity or “based on certain characteristics of a specific race or ethnicity.” If made law, schools would have three years to replace their mascots before they lose their access to public money.”

The MCSD BOE strongly believes that we can appropriately maintain our Red Raider identity and great history while also being compliant and respectful of the desired changes. We see this as an opportunity for our school community, including our treasured alumni to provide an authentic identity to what we believe defines a Red Raider! **We believe our proud history is derived in our name, not a logo.** That is why at the November 2020 BOE meeting the decision was made to create a representative committee to conduct a thorough exercise of defining a Mechanicville Red Raider for the purpose of creating an image which will define our brand.

We believe in equity and inclusivity and in order to accomplish this task we have created a well rounded committee representing alumni, faculty, coaches, community members, and the business community. It is our goal that the Red Raider defines and represents each and every member of our student body, and community at large. The district leadership recognizes how important it is to student success to be connected to the school and feel an identity within it. This year we launched the Red Raider of the Month program. A student at every grade level is honored at the monthly Board meeting to promote pride in our school and acknowledge them for outstanding representation of the monthly P2 traits.

MCSD will always strive to be a leader, and will use this as one more piece to our School Impact Process, as school culture is at the heart of all we do! **#OneMechanicville #RedRaiderPride**