Mascot Musings

Added by **A. Weatherwax** *on November 21, 2018.*

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As a student I've been a Panther. A Bobcat. A Redhawk. As a kid swimming for my local YMCA I was a Dragonfly. As a baseball benchmom I've been every little league team name you can think of. As a teacher I've been a Hornet. A Middie. A Brave. As a fan I've cheered for the Cleveland Indians, Browns and Cavaliers. I've also cheered for the Cincinnati Reds and Chicago Cubs. I've never cheered harder though than I have for the Talawanda Braves, whether it was while my son (class of 2016) was running or wrestling, or while I was shouting with joy when our Mock Trial team made it to States in 2015 and again in 2017.

And now. Now I will be cheering for The Talawanda Brave. I will be a teacher and coach for The Talawanda Brave.

Last night the Talawanda Board of Education voted 3-2 to change the name and mascot of Talawanda by removing a single letter and no longer using the old "Braves Head" symbol on newly purchased items and uniforms.

I've been telling my journalism students that the mascot debate has been about more than whether or not the mascot should change. It's about more than issues of cultural appropriation and money.

It's about what and who determines a school community's identity.

It's about memory.

It's about change.

It's also a story about what gets taught in schools versus what doesn't.

It's a story about what is important to our school community. The Branding Committee gave its presentation to a packed auditorium. In the last year someone has spoken for or against the mascot in public comment at almost every school board meeting. At last month's meeting a large group of people immediately left after public comment even though changes to Ohio's graduation requirements were being discussed.

Today as word of the board's decision spread around the high school, Mr. York got on the pa system to remind us of some important letters: P.R.I.D.E. These single letters make up a word and an acronym: People Respecting Individual Differences Everyday.

There's a story I hope that we will be able to tell one day soon. A story about the Talawanda community respectfully coming together under our new name. The removal of the "s" **can** signify that we are a collective and courageous force: that we are THE BRAVE.

The Talawanda Brave. It's got a ring to it.