

NEW LONDON

Montville Board of Education votes to remove “Indians” mascot

by: Melissa Warner, Isabella Gentile
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MONTVILLE, Conn. (WTNH) — Montville is the latest school district to get rid of a Native American mascot.

On Tuesday night, the Board of Education voted unanimously to remove the “Indians” nickname and mascot from Montville High School and the Leonard J. Tyl Middle School.

Any logos that include Native American images or symbols will be replaced.

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For now, the schools’ new logos will be a large orange “T” for Tyl or “M” for Montville.

“If we can’t find it in our hearts to show our Native friends in Connecticut that we understand and respect them, then how will we ever be able to teach our own children understanding and respect,”

one woman said during the meeting.

Nobody who wanted to keep the name spoke at the meeting Tuesday night.

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Superintendent Laurie Pallin said the Mohegan Tribe has offered to help cover some of the costs to replace the logos and uniforms.

“We don’t want the use of the Indian name to be a polarizing issue for the town or the tribe and we recognize that our use of this nickname is not a Montville issue but a much more global decision. We are proud of Montville Public Schools’ relationship with the Mohegan Tribe, and I hope our community unites around the fact that we want to stand together with the tribe in making this change,” Pallin said.

“The Mohegan Tribe greatly values its relationship with the Town of Montville, which has spanned generations to the benefit of both our communities,” said Dr. Marilyn “Lynn” Malerba, Chief of the Mohegan Tribe. “Those close ties have served as the foundation for an open and cooperative dialogue on the topic of school mascot names. In our discussions with Montville, we made it clear that we appreciate and applaud any community seeking to be more sensitive to the history of American Indians. Montville has always been that community.”

Montville stood to lose more than a million dollars in funding from the state if they kept the “Indians” name due to a budget bill passed last year.

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