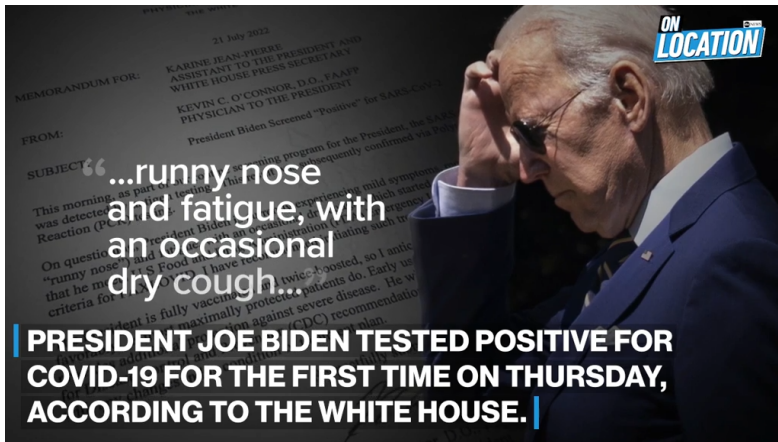


## Tampa high school will retire its Native American mascot

A Florida high school will retire its "Chiefs" mascot following an emotional school board meeting over the Native American symbol

By The Associated Press  
June 22, 2022, 9:18 AM



On Location: July 22, 2022

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TAMPA, Fla. -- A Florida school board sided with student leaders who asked to change the school's Native American mascot despite emotional testimony from alumni and an online petition with more than 6,000 signatures seeking to keep the "Chiefs."

Chamberlain High School's student government association recommended dropping the mascot after surveying their classmates, finding that 58% consider the traditions offensive, the Tampa Bay Times reported. The Hillsborough County School District's Title VI Native American Parent Advisory Council also recommended the change.

The Hillsborough County School Board voted 5-1 Tuesday to drop the "Chiefs." Board member Melissa Snively cast the dissenting vote.

Many people at the meeting said they took pride in the mascot and feel "chief" conveys honor and respect, the Times reported. Even Tampa's Mayor Jane Castor, a school alum, said she's "always a Chamberlain Chief," Fox 13 reported.

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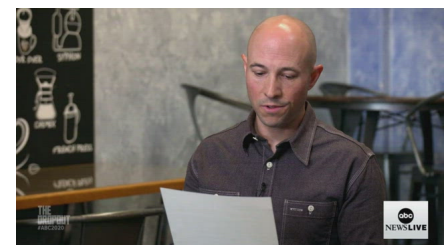
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Many alumni pleaded their case to board member Henry Washington, a former Chamberlain principal. Betty Sue White Brown, a member of the school's inaugural class in 1958, reminded Washington that he had once been Chamberlain's "high chief," the newspaper reported.

Washington, however, introduced the motion to change the mascot, saying "it's time for a change."

"I understand that this is very painful for a lot of adults," board member Jessica Vaughn said. "And I have tried to be very empathetic about that, even though I've seen some horrific comments on social media and I've heard some very disappointing comments coming out of the audience today."

School district officials estimate it will cost about \$50,000 to make the necessary changes to signage, imagery and new team uniforms. Russell, the principal, said the school plans to raise the funds, and the student body will select a new mascot this fall.

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