

February 15, 2021

Camanche Community School District School Board Members-

The world view regarding social justice has changed dramatically over the last six to nine months and the topic of the "Indian" mascot has been at the center of conversations for the administration team for the entire school year. We can no longer sit back and not speak up knowing what we know today.

We have heard from the National Congress of American Indians, NCAI, and Iowa Commission on Native American Affairs, and other groups that Native American Imagery used as mascots has a negative impact on the youth of Native Americans. Native Americans are people and NOT mascots. Each year during registration we ask the follow question: Are you Hispanic, American Indian, Asian, African American, Pacific Islander, or White. We would not allow any other race/ethnicity to be identified as a mascot, for example, Camanche Hispanics, Camanche Asians, Camanche African Americans, Camanche Pacific Islanders, or the Camanche Whites. We have watched professional sports, colleges, universities, and public schools around us change from offensive native themed mascots such as Redskins, Indians, Braves, Warriors, and Chiefs and the time has come for us to make that same decision.

The **Mission** of the **Camanche Community School District**, in partnership with the family and **community**, is to empower students to develop the knowledge and skills to become lifelong learners and successful, **productive citizens** in a **diverse**, technological, **ever-changing global society**. The dominos have been tipped around us and if we continue to ignore this topic we not only are continuing to negatively impact Native Americans we are also sending the wrong message to all of our students from PK-12. It is our job as educators to provide a culturally responsive environment for our students.

As a school board and administration, it is our job to act in the best interest of the students of Camanche. If we were to have a new school established in our community and a mascot was needed today in 2021, the mascot of the "Indian" would not even make the list. Our community has a great sense of community pride. That pride is not tied to the "Indian" mascot, we will still have community pride no matter what mascot we have as a school district.

Dr. Record's email to the board and administrators said it best: As a resolution passed by NCAI's membership in 2005 explains, "the use of 'Native American' sports mascots, logos, or symbols perpetuates stereotypes of American Indians that are very harmful. The 'warrior savage' myth has plagued this country's relationships with the Indian people, as it reinforces the racist view that Indians are uncivilized and uneducated and it has been used to justify policies of forced assimilation and destruction of Indian culture." One of our main jobs in education is to help students unlearn stereotypes!

With everything we know today, February 15, 2021, our official position as a group of school administrators is to retire the "Indian" mascot at the end of this current school year. As school leaders, it is time for us to stand up and stand out even if this is not a popular decision in our community.

Together In Education,

Aimee Dohse- CES Principal

Justin Shaffer- CMS Principal

Carrie Lane- CHS Principal