



## **WAHLUKE SCHOOL DISTRICT: Warrior Image**

**DECEMBER 1, 2021**

In April 2021, Governor Inslee signed into law House Bill (HB) 1356, which prohibits the use of Native American names, symbols, and images as public-school mascots, logos in the state of Washington for schools and districts unless they receive permission from the nearest federally recognized tribe. Over the last six months, a group of Wahluke School District (WSD) staff worked with the Wanapum Indians of Priest Rapids (Wanapum) to discuss the future of the Wahluke Warrior. While these meetings were initially to discuss the Warrior, they led to great conversations and plans for future projects. In addition, this legislation has allowed WSD to work with our entire 13th District Legislative team, Representative Lekanoff (co-sponsor of HB 1356), and OPSI leadership.

On November 1st, the Wanapum met with the Yakama Nation Tribal Council to share our proposal. The Yakama Tribal Council is the nearest federally recognized tribe. From this successful meeting, WSD was allowed the opportunity to present to the Yakama Nation Tribal Council and the Yakama Nation General Council. The presentation took place on Friday, November 5th WSD was the only District to present to the Yakama Nation Tribal Council. WSD was honored to share details regarding the Wahluke School District Native American Warrior image and the relationship the Wanapum and WSD have established since the conception of a school in Mattawa.

The Warrior presentation consisted of pictures and historical facts that showcased the relationship that began generations ago between WSD and Wanapum. The presentation highlighted how Native American culture and heritage are intertwined into students' daily lives who attend WSD.

As the federal tribe identified in the legislation of House Bill 1356, the Yakama Nation shared their approval and support after the presentation of the continued use of the Wahluke Warrior image by WSD.

WSD, the Wanapum Indians of Priest Rapids, and the Yakama Nation Tribal Council will be developing a memorandum of agreement by 2023 to ensure the school district continues respectful and integral use of the Native American image. WSD is one of the few school districts in Washington that has been granted this request. Out of respect and as we transition into this new chapter WSD will now be referring to our Warrior as the Warrior Image and no longer will be using logo or mascot.

WSD is honored for this opportunity and is committed to educating our students, staff, and community on our shared historical facts, partnership and make certain we continue honoring the Warrior image.

Attached you will find the official press release from the Yakama Nation Authorizing the Warrior Image use to Wahluke School District. As this unfolds, we will share updates of our memorandum of agreement and how we will be educating our District and community on the use of the Warrior Image.

WSD wanted our staff and students to know this great news first and plan to share this news with our community later today. If you have any questions, please reach out to your building admin or Superintendent Harlow, Lucy Tapia, Amy Marlow, DJ Garza or Cody Marlow.

**Thank you,  
We Are Wahluke**