

Supporting the Removal of Racist Mascots from Public Schools from Race & Class Working Group

Background

Our state senator, Jo Comerford, has been inviting support, letters, and testimony supporting [S.294 - An Act Prohibiting the Use of Native American Mascots by Public Schools in the Commonwealth](#). This bill is at the top of the [Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda](#) now that the bill to change the Massachusetts state flag and seal, which our meeting publicly supported, has been signed into law. (This site includes minutes from many MA tribes saying why this legislation is so important to them.)

At the April 2021 meeting for business we minuted our approval of two minutes relating to right relationship with the Indigenous peoples of our region. These minutes included approval of the following:

“We are deeply considering historical realities, the impacts of settler colonialism, and how profit and harm still derive from these events. In particular, we are asking what is our right relationship with this land and the original people of the land?”

In response, we affirm Indigenous identities in this community today and a vibrant cultural legacy. Through engagement with local organizations such as the [Ohketeau Cultural Center](#), [Visioning Bear Intertribal Coalition](#), and the [Nolumbeka Project](#), we respectfully support the healing and restoration that is underway. We yearn for genuine peace in our time and for generations to come.” (from the “Acknowledgment” statement that the meeting approved)

“Humbly recognizing that there is much practical and spiritual labor yet to be done, we commit ourselves to the long journey of truth-seeking and relationship building.”

(from the statement we approved from Mt Toby Meeting to NEYM communicating our support for the proposed NEYM Letter of Apology to Native Americans)

As one next step in carrying through on these intentions, we are ask meeting to support the above mascot legislation.

Proposed Minute

We affirm our support of bill S294 and ask the clerk to write a letter to the newspaper and to our legislative representatives urging adoption of this bill to end the use of Indigenous mascots in Massachusetts public schools. The Race and Class Working Group will assist the clerk in writing and distributing this statement.