

Joint Meeting

March 8, 2022

School Committee and Diversity and Equity Committee

Dr. Jenkins opened the meeting of the Equality and Diversity Sub-Committee at 6:30pm.

Roll Call was taken. In attendance were:

Marc Hayes, Kathleen Amaral , Shelly Scott, Lili Chamberlain, Elizabeth Murphy, Diane Massari, Kelly Bloom, Juleena Pamphile, Jaeda Walker

Ross Thibault was not in attendance

Approval of minutes of 7/13/2021: Motion made to approve by Kathleen Amaral, 2nd by Elizabeth Murphy. Approved unanimously.

Approval of minutes of 8/18/2021: Motion made to approve by Kathleen Amaral, 2nd by Elizabeth Murphy. Approved unanimously.

Dr. Jenkins explained that at last night's school committee meeting it was noted that the Equality and Diversity Sub-Committee had been appointed for 1 year terms which expired in December 2021. In order to be able to proceed with tonight's meeting the school committee voted on 3/7/2022 to extend the membership of the Equality and Diversity sub-committee through this week. Dr. Jenkins stated that if the current members of the committee want to remain on the committee going forward they must forward their interest to Kate Genthner by the end of this week. She stated the future composition of the sub-committee would be taken up at the school committee's 3/21/2022 meeting.

Motion was made by Kathleen Amaral to adjourn to the joint meeting of the School Committee and Equality and Diversity Sub-Committee. 2nd by Elizabeth Murphy. Approved unanimously.

Dr. Jenkins opened the Joint Meeting at 6:35.

Roll call was taken. In attendance were:

John Nunes, Shannon Jenkins, Kathleen Amaral, Chris Oliver and Mary Waite

Dr. Jenkins explained that presenters will be given 10 to 15 minutes to speak after which committee members can ask questions.

Presenter 1: Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe: Chairman Brian Weeden introduced an elder who told a story about her experiences in the 70's relative to students wearing Native American clothing which she found offensive.

The chair discussed how Mashpee School District was providing education relative to Native American history and culture. He noted the majority of Native Americans don't consider themselves "Indians".

Shawna Newcomb another member of the tribe presented virtually.

The chair summarized the Mashpee Tribe's presentation by suggesting Dartmouth eliminates the Indian logo and enhances its cultural studies and that folks take time to visit various tribes.

Presenter 2: Pocasset Wampanoag Council member Megan Running Deer Page presented on behalf of herself. She noted the Pocasset tribe has long ties to the territory. She asked that the logo be removed as it doesn't represent Native American people.

Mr. Oliver read into the record a letter signed by:

Pocasset Wampanoag Tribe of the Pokanoket Nation
Chairman & Vice Chairman
George Spring Buffalo, Daryl Black Eagle Jamieson
Council of Clan Chiefs
Justin Singing Bear Lyon
Robert Wandering Buffalo Kelley
Duane Ousagequin Shepard
[www. Pocassetpokanoket.com](http://www.Pocassetpokanoket.com)
www.Pocassetlandtrust.org
508-736-7423

Dr. Jenkins noted she received letters from:

Nipmunk Tribe
Chappiquiddic Tribe
Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe

Presenter 3: Member of the Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribe: Brad Lopes presented virtually. Mr. Lopes stated he was speaking on behalf of himself. He noted he had a petition in support of eliminating the Indian logo, signed by 50 members of the tribe. He also noted that a previous speaker offered a good suggestion relative to developing authentic relationships with Native Americans and enhancing education around the subject.

Presenter 4: Members of the Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribe: Tribe member Sean Carney began the group's presentation by introducing the other members present. He noted he was speaking in support of keeping the logo on behalf of those present and others who are in agreement with his statements who are not present.

Mr. Carney provided a history of the logo's development noting the symbol has unified the community and it is not disrespectful of Native American people. He also noted the Aquinnah Wampanoag is a federally recognized nation.

Mr. Carney read a letter that had been submitted to the committee and was signed by numerous members or the tribe. He also noted the term Indian is codified in the Constitution. To eliminate it is to erase the people.

He also suggested establishing strong partnerships with tribal members to enhance education.

Elder Edith Andrews then spoke about how the Indian logo was developed to represent the Eastern Woodland Indian. She stated "it's an icon. Don't erase the Indian."

Presenter 5: North American Indian Center of Boston: President Jean-Luc Pierite presented virtually. He discussed a 7/2020 letter that had been sent to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell strongly demanding the elimination of all Native American depictions relative to equipment, teams, etc.

He also spoke in favor of enhancing education around Native American culture and history. He ended his statement by asking “What are we when we reduce ourselves to a symbol?”

Mark Andrews from the Aquinnah Wampanoag tribe then asked if he could add a comment. He stated he attended DHS and described how proud all were to wear the Dartmouth Indian. He noted it has been taken on competitions i.e. music and athletic for many decades and was still a source of pride for the community.

Elder Edith Andrews then noted the correct pronunciation of Aquinnah!

7:35: Dr. Jenkins asked if there were any further questions/comments. Seeing none she reminded the sub-committee members to email Kate Genthner if they were interested in being considered as a “continuing” member of the sub-committee.

Mr. Oliver thanked all for attending and those who helped put the meeting together. He stated the discussion needs to be continued emphasizing nothing should be done until at least after the April 5th town vote which includes a non-binding referendum question on the Indian logo. He stated it’s clear that the Dartmouth Aquinnah Tribal members have a big stake in this and we need to continue to listen to them.

Mr. Nunes also thanked everyone for attending noting he learned a lot.

Ms. Waite offered her thanks and noted there are certainly diverse opinions. She stated she sees two issues: the logo and education. She agreed that no matter the outcome, education and fostering relationships should be continued.

Dr. Jenkins stated she is interested in looking at materials used in Mashpee relative to education. She noted we can review our curriculum and see where we might be able to adjust.

Ms. Amaral thanks the group and noted the common theme of education.

Dr. Jenkins stated the next school committee meeting is scheduled for 3/21/22: this discussion will continue. 3/22/22 Public Comment meeting on the Indian logo will be held in the DHS auditorium.

7:45: Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Nunes, 2nd by Mr. Oliver. Motion approved unanimously.