

*Syosset Central School District*  
**Mascot Selection Committee Meeting**



*December 10, 2024*

# Historical Context

- **April 5, 2001:** Commissioner Mills memo offered guidance to districts removing portrayals. Memo states stating many Native Americans find the “portrayals by others of their treasured cultural and religious symbols disparaging and disrespectful.”
- **November 17, 2022:** [Received memo](#) from Deputy Commissioner of Education directing districts to commit to replacing their Native American team name, logo, mascots and/or imagery by the end of the 2022-2023 school year. Changes to the logo must be made by June 2025. [NYSED says school districts refusing to comply could face withholding of state aid and the removal of school officers, such as elected board members, according to the Department of Education.](#)
- **December 2023:** The Appellate Division of the New York Supreme Court establishes that public school districts are prohibited from utilizing Native American mascots. Arguments that community members support the use of such imagery or that it is “respectful” to Native Americans are no longer tenable.
- **May 2023:** Syosset Board of Education votes [on resolution](#) to eliminate the use of the name “Braves,” including vestiges of the name in connection with any school district team names , logos, or mascot.

# Part 123 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education Relating to Prohibiting the Use of Indigenous Names, Mascots, and Logos by Public Schools April 6, 2023

*“As used in this Part, “Indigenous name, logo, or mascot” means a name, symbol, or image that depicts or refers to Indigenous persons, tribes, nations, individuals, customs, symbols, or traditions, including actual or stereotypical aspects of Indigenous cultures, used to represent a public school, including but not limited to such schools sports teams. It does not include a public school, school building, or school district named after an Indigenous tribe.”*

*“Boards of education must commit, via resolution, to eliminating the use of all Indigenous names, logos, and mascots by the end of the 2022-23 school year. Such resolution shall identify a plan to eliminate all use of the prohibited name, logo, or mascot within a reasonable time, which shall be no later than the end of the 2024-2025 school year.”*

[Read the Entire Part 123 of the Regulations Here](#)

[Superintendent’s Report April 18th, 2023](#)

[Board of Education Resolution May 8th, 2023](#)

# Mascot Selection Timeline

## Fall/Winter 2024

- Create mascot selection committee**
  - Invite community members to join
    - Students, alumni, parents, faculty, staff, residents
    - No limit to number of members on the committee
- Committee completes values and identity survey**
- Committee meets to review results of the survey**
- Committee provides feedback via survey on the mascot criteria**

## Winter/Spring 2025

- District shares the approved list of criteria with community and requests mascot ideas that meet the criteria**
- Committee narrows options to list of between 8 and 12**
- District provides mock ups of the proposed options and presents to the community a series of votes**
- Spring 2025 - mascot launch**

# Selection Committee ThoughtExchange Results\*

243 people received the survey  
~90 people completed the survey

| %   | 👤    | Answer                                |
|-----|------|---------------------------------------|
| 8%  | (9)  | Alumni                                |
| 2%  | (2)  | Community Member                      |
| 38% | (42) | Parent (of current or former student) |
| 21% | (24) | Faculty/Staff Member                  |
| 1%  | (1)  | Student (Elementary)                  |
| 2%  | (2)  | Student (Middle)                      |
| 21% | (23) | Student (High School)                 |
| 8%  | (9)  | Other                                 |

| %   | 👤    | Answer (Multiple select)   |
|-----|------|--|
| 10% | (11) | A.P. Willits Elementary  |
| 12% | (13) | Berry Hill Elementary School                                     |
| 27% | (30) | H.B. Thompson Middle School                                      |
| 8%  | (9)  | J. Irving Baylis Elementary                                      |
| 11% | (12) | Robbins Lane Elementary School                                   |
| 5%  | (6)  | South Grove Elementary   |
| 18% | (20) | South Woods Middle School  |
| 69% | (77) | Syosset High School  |
| 8%  | (9)  | Village Elementary   |
| 5%  | (6)  | Walt Whitman Elementary  |
| 1%  | (1)  | I am a community member who is unaffiliated with any one school. |

\* All community members will have the opportunity to participate in the selection process in the Winter/Spring of 2025





# Committee Criteria

## Survey Driven Criteria:

### **STRENGTH AND RESILIENCE**

- Convey Syosset's strong and determined spirit

### **UNITY AND INCLUSIVITY**

- Symbolize the diverse and cohesive nature of the Syosset community
- Foster a sense of belonging and respect among all members
- Reflect dedication to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all students and families

### **TRADITION AND LEGACY**

- Celebrate and honor the rich history and enduring legacy of the Syosset community

## Additional criteria to be considered:

### **UNIQUENESS**

- Distinctive and memorable, setting Syosset apart from other schools in our region

### **TIMELESSNESS**

- Built to remain relevant and meaningful for generations to come

### **COLOR SCHEME MATCH**

- Complement the school's existing colors

### **USABILITY**

- Able to be used in various contexts, such as sporting events, academic competitions, and community gatherings

# Committee Criteria Rubric

## Mascot Selection Rubric

We propose that the criteria serve as a rubric for sorting through team name/mascot ideas from the community. The rubric will be a likert scale, where each idea is ranked against the criteria on a scale of 1 to 5.

## Scoring and Evaluation

**Total Score Range: 7–35**

- **7–14:** Needs significant improvement
- **15–21:** Some strengths, but several areas for improvement
- **22–28:** Strong mascot, with minor refinements needed
- **29–35:** Outstanding mascot; effectively meets all criteria

# Committee Criteria Rubric

## **STRENGTH AND RESILIENCE**

**Does the proposed team name/mascot convey the community's strong and determined spirit?**

- 1: Weak and uninspiring; fails to evoke any sense of strength or determination.
- 2: Somewhat represents resilience, but lacks a strong connection to the community's values.
- 3: Adequately represents strength and resilience, but could be more impactful.
- 4: Strong representation of determination and spirit, with minor room for improvement.
- 5: Clearly embodies the community's strength and determination in a powerful way.

# Committee Criteria/Rubric

## TRADITION AND LEGACY

**Does the mascot honor the legacy of the community?**

- 1: Disregards community legacy.
- 2: Minimal connection to the community's traditions.
- 3: Balances tradition and modernity, but lacks strong emphasis on either.
- 4: Strongly honors the community's legacy while remaining relevant.
- 5: Perfectly blends tradition and modernity, making it a proud symbol of the community.

# Committee Criteria/Rubric

## UNITY AND INCLUSIVITY

**Does the mascot symbolize the diverse and cohesive nature of the community, fostering inclusivity?**

- 1:** Excludes or fails to represent diversity or inclusivity in any way.
- 2:** Limited representation of unity or inclusivity; appears disconnected from community values.
- 3:** Moderately inclusive, with some representation of unity and diversity.
- 4:** Well-designed to foster inclusivity and unity, with minor opportunities for improvement.
- 5:** Fully inclusive and representative of the community's diversity and cohesion.

# Committee Criteria Rubric

## UNIQUENESS

**Is the mascot distinctive and memorable, setting Syosset apart?**

- 1: Generic and indistinct; does not set Syosset apart.
- 2: Somewhat unique but easily comparable to other schools' mascots.
- 3: Moderately unique, but lacks a strong "wow" factor.
- 4: Distinctive and memorable, with minor room for improvement.
- 5: Exceptionally unique and stands out as a defining symbol of Syosset.

# Committee Criteria Rubric

## **TIMELESSNESS**

**Is the mascot relevant and timeless, with the potential for long-term appeal?**

- 1: Highly trendy and likely to become outdated quickly.
- 2: Limited appeal for future generations; tied to current trends.
- 3: Moderately timeless, but with potential to feel outdated over time.
- 4: Strong timelessness, with only slight risks of obsolescence.
- 5: Completely timeless; will remain relevant and inspiring for many years

# Committee Criteria/Rubric

## COLOR SCHEME MATCH

**Does the mascot design complement the school's colors (red and white)?**

- 1:** Color scheme poorly matches or clashes with the school colors.
- 2:** Limited incorporation of red and white; colors feel secondary or mismatched.
- 3:** Adequate use of red and white, but lacks a seamless integration.
- 4:** Strongly aligns with the red and white color scheme, with minor enhancements possible.
- 5:** Perfectly integrates red and white into the mascot design.

# Committee Criteria/Rubric

## USABILITY

**Is the mascot versatile enough to be used in various contexts (sports, academics, community events)?**

- 1: Unusable in most contexts; design or concept lacks versatility.
- 2: Limited usability; may work in one or two specific contexts only.
- 3: Moderately versatile, but less effective in certain applications.
- 4: Highly versatile, usable in most contexts with minor limitations.
- 5: Extremely versatile and adaptable to all intended uses.

# Next Steps

**Next meeting:** In-person Work Session  
*Thursday, January 23rd at 6pm*

