

Seneca Nation of Indians

President - Matthew B. Pagels
Clerk - Marta L. Kettle

12837 ROUTE 438
CATTARAUGUS TERRITORY
SENECA NATION
IRVING, NY 14081

Tel. (716) 532-4900
FAX (716) 532-6272



Treasurer - Rickey L. Armstrong Sr.

90 OHI:YO' WAY
ALLEGANY TERRITORY
SENECA NATION
SALAMANCA, NY 14779

Tel. (716) 945-1790
FAX (716) 945-1565

AT THE REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL OF
THE SENECA NATION OF INDIANS HELD ON
DECEMBER 12, 2020 AT THE WILLIAM
SENECA BUILDING ON THE CATTARAUGUS
TERRITORY, IRVING, NEW YORK 14081

CN: R-12-12-20-13

EXECUTIVES PRESENT:

PRESIDENT - MATTHEW B. PAGELS
CLERK - MARTA L. KETTLE
TREASURER - RICKEY L. ARMSTRONG, SR.

END CULTURAL APPROPRIATION AND SUPPORT EQUITABLE EDUCATION ACROSS NEW
YORK STATE TO COMBAT RACISM

MOTION: by Angie Kennedy, seconded by Joshua Becker, that the Seneca Nation Council approves
the following resolution:

WHEREAS, institutional racism is endemic in the United States of America; and

WHEREAS the coronavirus pandemic has impacted every aspect of life and shines a spotlight on the
entrenched inequalities throughout society; and

WHEREAS Black Lives Matter protests fueled by public outrage over the deaths of George Floyd and
Breonna Taylor further highlighted the depth of inequity across the country; and

WHEREAS racist policies and systemic disinvestment have left Indigenous people - an often-
overlooked segment of the population - vulnerable on too many fronts; and

WHEREAS, despite the significant cultural and economic contributions of Native people to the country,
New York State and the Western New York region, we are not treated with sufficient
respect or afforded equitable treatment:

END CULTURAL APPROPRIATION AND SUPPORT EQUITABLE EDUCATION ACROSS NEW YORK STATE TO COMBAT RACISM
REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL
DECEMBER 12, 2020
PAGE 2

- Systemic disinvestment resulting in poor access to healthcare and lack of critical services has left Indigenous people with significantly higher rates of underlying conditions, leading to higher death rates during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.
- A recent report found that 87 percent of state history standards include no mention of Native history after 1900, a shortcoming that speaks to a significant lack of social equity and respect for the Nation’s cultural significance, fueling racist thought and policies; and
- Native populations have among the highest opioid overdose rates in the nation, reaching epidemic proportions, but critical treatment and prevention dollars are not reaching many Native communities in significant need of funds; and
- Native voters – particularly in key swing states like Arizona, Michigan and Wisconsin – played a key role in President-elect Joe Biden’s victory, and a record six Native individuals were elected to the U.S. Congress, but the contributions were overlooked, brushed aside, and even insulted, by mainstream media.

WHEREAS the entrenched prejudice against Native people is so deep in the collective non-Native consciousness that it has long been viewed as accepted to use slurs and inappropriate imagery in sports team names at the local and national levels, and to downplay the storied history of an entire population; and

WHEREAS, this gross mistreatment, largely born of ignorance and a lack of culturally sensitive and inclusive education, is starting to change; and

WHEREAS, this evolution in thinking is evidenced by Washington’s NFL team retiring the Redskins name and, at the local level, ending the use of “Indians” in all Peru Central School District’s sports teams, as well as moves to rename offensive places like “Squaw Island” in Canandaigua; and

WHEREAS more than 100 schools across New York State lack comprehensive curriculum about the history of Native people and yet may have sports teams with names that are offensive to Indigenous individuals and perpetuate harmful stereotypes, including, but not limited to: “Chiefs”, “Red Raiders”, and

WHEREAS, as a state and nation we have a moral imperative to address our history of structural racism head-on and continue to identify comprehensive solutions that end this longstanding burden on Native Americans,

END CULTURAL APPROPRIATION AND SUPPORT EQUITABLE EDUCATION ACROSS NEW
YORK STATE TO COMBAT RACISM
REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL
DECEMBER 12, 2020
PAGE 3

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT the Seneca Nation Council calls on the New York Board of Regents to publicly take a stand against cultural appropriation and racist practices and encourage the State's districts to attack prejudice at its roots by implementing curriculum changes to include a robust review of the history and contributions of Native people in New York State.

In addition, the Board must address the lack of rules for certifying Native language and culture teachers, which make it difficult for these qualified individuals to find jobs and once they do, leaves them ineligible for tenure and therefore vulnerable to layoffs.

ALL IN FAVOR


MOTION CARRIED

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify the foregoing extract is a true and correct copy from the minutes of the Regular Session of Council of the Seneca Nation of Indians held on December 12, 2020 on the Cattaraugus Territory, original of which is on file in the Clerk's Office of the Seneca Nation of Indians.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused the seal to be affixed at the William Seneca Building, on the Cattaraugus Territory, on the 15th day of December 2020,

ATTEST:


MARTA L. KETTLE, CLERK
SENECA NATION OF INDIANS

{SEAL}