

Chris Steller

From: Matt Grose <mgrose@isd318.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2025 11:47 AM
To: Rep. Peggy Bennett; Rep. Sydney Jordan; sen.steve.cwodzinski@mnsenate.gov;
sen.julia.coleman@mnsenate.gov; reports
Cc: Deb Henton; Valerie Dosland; Sam Walseth; sen.robert.farnsworth@senate.mn; Sen.
Grant Hauschild; Sen. Justin Eichorn; Spencer Igo; Rep. Roger Skraba;
rep.ben.davis@house.mn
Subject: Mascot Progress Report (per M.S.121A.041)
Attachments: Grand Rapids Mascot Progress Report (per M.S.121A.041) Message 2025.pdf

Good morning -

The attached report is submitted per M.S.121A.041, passed during the 2024 Minnesota legislative session.

The report was completed by Matt Grose, Superintendent of Independent School District #318, on behalf of Grand Rapids High School.

Please contact me with questions. I would welcome the opportunity to talk more about this issue and share specific concerns, examples, and solutions.

Best regards,

Matt Grose
Superintendent of Schools
mgrose@isd318.org

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MASCOT PROGRESS REPORT
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #318, GRAND RAPIDS
GRAND RAPIDS HIGH SCHOOL - THUNDERHAWKS

This report is submitted per M.S.121A.041, passed during the 2024 Minnesota legislative session. The information required is taken from the statute, followed by the school district's response in italics.

- 1. Confirmation that the district has removed the American Indian mascot, nickname, logo, letterhead, or team name from the district website.**

Grand Rapids Area Schools has not removed the Thunderhawk mascot from the areas indicated above. There are significant concerns with the selection of mascots affected by the law and the inconsistent application of the law. For example:

- The same mascot has been approved for an exemption in some cases and denied in others.*
- The same mascot was identified by a decision-making body as a concern in some districts and not in others.*
- A mascot that clearly violates the law was given an exemption.*

Our district is seeking legislative action to clarify the process that was used and create an equitable resolution to the concerns that have been raised by our district and others.

- 2. Confirmation that the board has approved a new mascot, nickname, logo, letterhead, or team name.**

No board action has been taken at this time.

- 3. A summary of the district's progress on removing the American Indian mascot, nickname, logo, letterhead, or team name from uniforms, equipment, signs, elements of facilities, and other district items.**

No progress has been made. The district went through the process of changing mascots from "Indians" to "Thunderhawks" in 1995 and we believe the new law requires clarification and improvement.

- 4. A summary of resources necessary to comply with the prohibition and the district's plan to raise and allocate any necessary funds.**

The estimated cost to replace uniforms, redo gymnasium floors, replace signage, replace banners, create new materials, and ensure thorough replacement in the 5 schools in the district that use the Thunderhawk mascot is over \$800,000.

Over the last 5 years, our school district has cut \$9 million dollars from the budget, including the elimination of 80 positions. In 2023, our community voted down an operating referendum request by a margin of 3 to 1. There is no appetite in my community for making additional cuts and eliminating more jobs to pay for the replacement of a mascot that was not denied by our local tribes and that has the support of our American Indian Parent Advisory Committee. Any revenue necessary to make the changes required by the legislature would need to come from the legislature.

This report was completed by Matt Grose, Superintendent of Independent School District #318, on behalf of Grand Rapids High School. Please contact me with questions; I would welcome the opportunity to talk more about this issue and share specific concerns and examples.

*Matt Grose, Superintendent
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