

SILETZ NEWS



Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians

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Siletz News
Confederated Tribes of
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P.O. Box 549
Siletz, OR 97380-0549

Delores Pigsley,
Tribal Chairman
Brenda Bremner,
General Manager
and Editor-in-Chief

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Siletz students present short films on problems of prescription drug abuse

Community comes out to support students' efforts

By Natasha Kavanaugh

Eight years ago, a collaboration between Lincoln County, the Lincoln County School District and the Northwest Film Center formed the Lincoln County Youth Film Program, which combines education with the art of filmmaking.

This year, students at Siletz Valley School wrote, produced and directed broadcast-quality television, short films and other public service announcements. On May 18, students presented two films entitled *The Sleepover* and *The Playground* at an event that was sponsored by CEDARR (Community Efforts Demonstrating the Ability to Rebuild and Restore).

The Siletz Tribal Community Center was packed with an overwhelming show of community support.

Lorrie Syms, media instructor at Siletz Valley School, has been involved in this program for two years.

"It's amazing what these kids can do once they get a grasp of how the whole concept goes of making



Photo by Natasha Kavanaugh

Students at Siletz Valley School who participated in the Lincoln County Youth Film Program include (left to right) April Sied, Valentina Knott, Scott Lundy, Windy Hill, Jesse Cadwallader, Angie Orellana, Lorrie Syms (instructor), Joseph Bostwick, Morgan Crawford, Forrest Ross, Devon Reed, Misti Warren and Daniel Regan. Not pictured: Brittney Jordan-Goodell, Samantha Messer, Koty One Feather, Tirzah Rilatos, Britany Robertson and Kai Skidmore.

See Film, con't on page 5.

State Board of Education bans use of Native mascots in public schools Oregon schools have until 2017 to make the change

SALEM, Ore. – The Oregon State Board of Education voted 5-1 to adopt a rule prohibiting Oregon public schools from using Native American names, symbols or images as school mascots. Schools have until July 1, 2017, to comply.

Key in this decision made on May 17 was research showing that exposure to Native American mascots had a negative impact on the self-esteem and self-image of Native American children.

"The concept of Native American mascots being hurtful and racist was not new to me," said board member Serilda Summers-McGee. "However, the testimony we received from students, members of the Native American community and researchers regarding the impact of Native American mascots on student learning and self-esteem was extremely illuminating. The role of the Board of Education is to create an environment in which all students can learn and thrive; it was imperative that we pass this rule and resolution to remove the use of Native American mascots in our public schools."

Researcher Stephanie Fryberg told board members at their April meeting that the use of Native Americans as mascots devalues and limits individual identity, even when these mascots are designed with the best intentions and are considered to be "honoring" and "respectful."

"I do not believe any of our schools with Native American mascots intended to be disrespectful," said Superintendent Susan Castillo. "However, intent is not enough. We need to focus on what the impact is on our kids. Our role as educators needs to be to create a safe, supportive and welcoming environment for all of our students – an environment which honors them for who they are as individuals with a rich and varied cultural history. We can no longer accept these stereotypical images for the sake of tradition – not when they are hurting our kids."

See Mascots, con't on page 4.

Siletz response to State Board of Education's decision to ban Native mascots

We are very disappointed by the State of Oregon Board of Education's decision to ban the use of Native American mascots by all Oregon schools. In addition, we are equally disappointed that the Tribe's recommendation to allow Native mascots to be used by our Tribal community schools when approved by their local Tribe was not given consideration.

It is the opinion of the Siletz Tribe that this ban does nothing to address the real issues of racism nor does it address the issue of the low self-esteem of Native students attending public schools. For the Siletz Tribal community, this action has a negative impact on our students and our community. We will be forced once again to succumb to the misguided intentions of people who have no knowledge of Indian communities.

In March, the Siletz Tribe passed a resolution on Native American Logos and Mascots, recommending to the Board of Education that it "recognize the authority of the Tribes of Oregon to approve the use of Native American mascots and logos in their community schools."

The resolution went on to say that, "Other schools in the State of Oregon who wish to establish or maintain a Native American logo and mascot be required to promote cultural studies that combat stereotypes, teach students the value of cultural symbols and portray the true history of the people of their local Tribal community, so that they promote pride in and respect for a Native American logo and mascot."

Unfortunately, these recommendations have been ignored and Siletz Valley School, located in the Tribe's historical homelands and called the Warriors from the beginning, will have to change its Indian chief mascot.