

Atchison mascot forum rescheduled

(KAIR)--The Atchison Public Schools have set a new date for a public forum focused on the future of the district's Native American-themed mascots.

It was originally set for September 17, but USD 409 postponed the forum due to a September 16 wreck that ultimately claimed the lives of two Maur Hill-Mount Academy students.

The two 16-year-old victims of the crash, Zachary Armontrout, of Rushville, Missouri, and Regan Moger, of Houston, Texas, did not attend the Atchison Public Schools, but were students at Atchison's Maur Hill-Mount Academy Catholic High School.

USD 409's decision to postpone the forum was to show solidarity, and to allow a time of community grieving.

Superintendent Dr. Susan Myers told MSC News the forum has been rescheduled for the evening of October 9, at 5:30, at the Atchison Elementary School gymnasium as a special meeting of the Board of Education.

Serving as moderator will be Brian Jordan, of the Kansas Association of School Boards. Jordan served as moderator in Manhattan, Kansas during a 2016 forum also focused on use of a Native American-themed mascot by the Manhattan public high school.

At issue is the use of Native American-themed mascots in the district, with the forum to allow public input while, according to the district, serving “as an opportunity to educate and inform the public about the topic of utilizing Native American mascots.

Atchison High School's mascot is the Redmen while the Atchison Middle School has the Braves mascot.

The forum follows the work of a committee formed by the district in 2016 after the school district received what Myers called “written communications pertaining to the use of the Redmen mascot.”

The committee’s work included compiling input from its members, including positive and negative affects of maintaining the status quo.

