

Fate of Atchison mascots set for April

**(KAIR)--With a decision likely to be made in April, the USD 409 Board of Education Monday evening heard public comments regarding two controversial mascots used in the school district.**

**Most of those who spoke, all in favor of removing the Middle Schools “Braves” and the High Schools “Redmen” previously voiced their opposition to the mascots’ use during a public input session held March 4 to address the topic.**

**Four new voices were heard Monday evening, including that of Seth Stillings, a school district alumnus who represents “The Atchison High School Alumni for the Replacement of the Redmen Mascot,” which he said has about 100 members. Stillings submitted a letter seeking the removal of the mascot.**

**Patron Charro Kelly called on the School Board to be a symbol for good, citing Kansas native, and slain Civil Rights leader, James Reeb, as an example.**

**Educator Erin Wolfe and Benedictine College history professor Joshua Wolfe also spoke, with both citing historical accounts of the United States government massacring Native American tribes in the 1860’s and 1870’s.**

**School Board members, at the conclusion of the comments, encouraged more public input, thanking those who have spoke, written letters, or made other contact with the board regarding the controversial issue.**

**A decision regarding the fate of the mascots is likely to be made at the School Board’s regular April meeting.**

**The issue has been explored in the recent past, including a lengthy committee review of the issue and input from the public that ended with a 2018 5 to 2 School Board vote that kept the mascots in place.**

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