

## **Rout the Scout? Or Save the Brave?**

As a member of the public, I attended the LFHS Board “Workshop” Monday night. The meeting began about 40 minutes late and lasted 10 minutes. The Workshop Agenda listed “District Branding” and “Board Member Input” as the only items under discussion. And contrary to the [Agenda](#), no public comment was invited or allowed.

Board members were led in discussion by District Communications Consultant Anne Whipple and Principal Chala Holland regarding the necessity for rethinking the LFHS “brand”. The stated reason for addressing the LFHS logo at this time, according to Dr. Holland, was the reshuffling of schools in LFHS’s athletic conference with the addition and departure of a few schools in the conference. Apparently the reconstitution of the conference requires the refashioning of a new conference banner, prompting, according to Dr. Holland, the “District branding” discussion about official LFHS logos.

Ms. Whipple described the plethora of LFHS athletic logos and the “marketing” and “branding” challenges they apparently pose. Whipple showed Board members a sheet of paper displaying various LFHS logos, including the iconic Native American Scout (displayed on the wall of the basketball gym), the spear and feathered arrow motifs intertwined with the letters “LF” as well as the simple “LF” logo in blue and gold. She opined the simple “LF” logo, without Native American motifs would be “more contemporary” and urged the adoption of a plain logo without scouts, spears or arrows.

Board member Powers asked if the move to get rid of the Scout, arrow and spear was simply “political correctness” and noted he saw nothing offensive or derogatory in the Native American references. Whipple stated that doing away with those references was “more current and reflective of the times.”

The decision to solicit stakeholder input on the elimination of Native American motifs was not addressed and it is unknown who will have the final decision-making authority to eliminate all references to Native Americans on official Scout items or conference banners.

Had the Board invited public participation per its Agenda, questions, one might have asked are the following: why does an “official” logo for the new conference banner necessarily eliminate use of a variety of Scout logos on a variety of Scout products? Isn’t the variety beneficial to satisfy stakeholder tastes and demands? Doesn’t variety generate the purchase of multiple items of team-wear at the Booster Store? Doesn’t variety enhance individual team cohesion by allowing students to customize and “own” their own version of Scout fierceness, determination and winning spirit? Additionally, is anyone really confused about which team is which in an athletic event? Do we really need that one, simple LFHS logo to reinforce “the LFHS brand” lest anyone cheer for the enemy?

Finally, is the suggestion that doing away with these Native American motifs makes LFHS more “current and reflective of the times” actually the knee-jerk view of a tiny subset of people looking to find insult (or worse) where none exists? What and who are really driving the elimination of Native American symbols from official LFHS logos? Perhaps the Board will enlighten us at a subsequent meeting. And allow public comment.

Jennifer Neubauer  
Lake Forest Schools Watch  
Parent Coordinator  
[www.lakeforestschoolswatch.com](http://www.lakeforestschoolswatch.com)

###