

Honorable State Board of Education Members:

Thank you for hearing my testimony on the Native Mascot Issue, and how it will negatively affect our Siletz Tribal Community, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians generally, and the Siletz Valley Charter School.

My name is Robert Kentta, I am an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. I grew up in Siletz, attended Siletz School from grades 1-12, and was and always will be a "Siletz Warrior". After attending and graduating from Siletz High School (during which years threats were issued that Lincoln County School District was going to close our High School and ship us to Toledo) I attended the Institute of American Indian Arts, to learn and bring skills back to work in and for my Tribal Community.

2 years after my high school graduation, LCSD did indeed close Siletz High School, and our Students were shipped to Toledo HS, then the Middle School was taken, and those students also shipped to Toledo... Neither the High School nor the Middle School students received fair or equal treatment at their new schools. Their ability to participate in sports was diminished because of logistical barriers to attending practices and games/meets, and issues directly related to their being Siletz community children – not Toledo children [i.e. coaches/staff treated them different]... many would have participated as Toledo "Boomers" [a medium sized burrowing rodent] – had they been allowed – but many mourned the loss of their Siletz Warrior status/identity, our drop-out rate was horrendous, and our students school experience was often one of mis-treatment, if not outright discrimination, and other bad memories. Along with that, our community lost a core part of its identify and unifying force.

Eventually LCSD decided to close the remaining Siletz School. They just announced at the end of a school year that they would not re-open in the fall. The Siletz Tribe had to hire a consultant to hurriedly draft and move the draft charter through the School District which had just closed the school. We were successful in getting the Siletz Valley Charter School K-8th Grades opened by that fall [2 weeks after other Dist. schools had opened... but WE OPENED]. LCSD was/is able to take 20% of the State funding for those Grade because of State law. They actually were financially benefitting by being the sponsoring School Dist. by closing our school and forcing us into crisis mode to react... and have created ongoing budgetary concerns by taking a portion of the already scant funding and forcing the CTSI to supplement the Siletz Valley Charter School – in order to keep the doors on their hinges, and open.

We have as a Tribe, as a Community, and as a School put up with many years of all kinds of mis-treatment and loss., and each time we have fought back to maintain our identity as Siletz Warriors. Our Siletz Reservation was established in 1855, with its headquarters in the Siletz Valley. This reservation was intended for all of the Western Oregon Tribes to be confederated

upon, subject to ratified treaty stipulations which included the providing of schools for our people, among other things. Those schools operated as boarding schools from the 1860's until 1908, when the "boarding school" was dis-continued, and the "Siletz Agency School Farm" [now the town of Siletz] was surveyed into town lots and sold by the U.S., instead of escheating to the Tribe. The old boarding school was maintained as a Siletz Reservation Day School until ca 1920... at that time, the Day school was closed because so many non-Indians had moved onto Siletz Reservation lands which had been opened to settlement, that a new public School was build [near the center of the old Siletz Agency School Farm]... and all Siletz member students could attend that school.