



Comment on petitions <[commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)>

## I'm against the Dixie District proposed name change

1 message

  
To: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 5:11 PM

To whom it may concern:

I feel very strongly that the Board should not change the Dixie School District at this time. They should uphold the Board's November 2018 4-1 vote to put this issue on the 2020 ballot.

To be forced to change the name by such a small group of people, when the Dixie District has over 14,000 constituents, will do nothing but tear our community father apart.

I attended school in the Dixie District in the late sixties, and all my children have gone thru the Dixie School District. This is a GREAT COMMUNITY, which I've never seen torn apart like it is now.

To have the Change The Name Group take up so much of the Board's time and energy on this issue, instead of focusing on the kids and the shape of the schools, is disgraceful.

To me the Dixie School District has always been an open and caring District, without prejudice.

  
Eric Edlandson

  
530 Heatherstone Dr

San Rafael, CA. 94903

  
[edlandson@yehoo.com](mailto:edlandson@yehoo.com)



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

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## to Members of the Dixie School District Board:

1 message

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[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@dixieschool.org> Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 4:56 PM  
To: "commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org" <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Dear Members of the Dixie School District Board:

First I want to thank you all for your committed efforts and leadership to keep our public education system one of the best. Thank you!!

I am writing to submit my comments regarding changing the name of the district. Specifically, I respectfully ask the Board to reaffirm its decision to put the name change issue on an advisory ballot, accompanied by a rigorous analysis of the financial impacts of any change.

My son graduated from Vallecito Elementary and Miller Creek Middle School. As immigrants, we love this community very much and respect the people of all colors. We respect different opinions about the meanings of Dixie, but humbly wish that we should not go too far to make a simple issue unnecessarily a fight among the community members. We have other fights to fight, for instance, to increase the salaries of our teachers, to provide more support to the students in need...

I sincerely hope that you make the best decision for our community and our children.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
San Rafael, CA 94903

[Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

## Dixie - A History Lesson

1 message

[commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

Mon, Jan 28, 2019 at 7:58 PM

To: Comment on petitions &lt;commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org&gt;

# History of Dixie School District's Name

"After reviewing the historical documents compiled by Change The Name ([www.changethename.net](http://www.changethename.net)) advocates, as well as a number of supplementary sources, it is my conclusion that the organization's account and characterization of the historical origins of the Dixie School District's name are accurate."  
— Chiyuma Elliott, Assistant Professor, African American Studies, University of California, Berkeley

Read Professor Elliott's full evaluation.

### **THE OLD DIXIE SCHOOLHOUSE FOUNDATION, A 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION, STATES THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WAS NAMED AFTER THE CONFEDERACY.**

In 1972, the Dixie Schoolhouse Foundation submitted an application to the U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service to get the old Dixie Schoolhouse added to the National Registry of Historical Places. The document submitted by Old Dixie Schoolhouse Foundation states that the name "Dixie" was a direct reference to the nickname given to the Confederate States of America.

In their application, they wrote, "Mrs. Leitz (Mrs. Frances Miller Leits, daughter of Bernard Miller and granddaughter of James Miller) also uncovered the origin of the school's name when she stated that her grandfather, not being a man to turn down a challenge, named the building on a dare. Marin County, in 1864, was hotly pro-Northern, and the fact that several "gentlemen" from the South helped construct the first schoolhouse prompted someone to dare James Miller to name the school "Dixie." He did. Thus Dixie opened in March of 1864."

Miller's great great grandson, Lucien Miller, confirms the origin of the name "Dixie" in an oral history archived in the California Room of the Marin County Library. Lucien Miller stated, "And [James Miller] was a democrat and there was a lot of sympathy of Irish democrats towards the South...I was glad that a few years ago there was somebody that wanted to change the name of the school because that was so outrageous."

### **IN THE 1860S, PEOPLE KNEW THAT THE DIXIE SCHOOL DISTRICT WAS NAMED AFTER THE CONFEDERACY.**

Even a month after the founding of the Dixie School District, people recognized the name "Dixie" was a direct reference to the pro-slavery south and that the name was "ominous." In the December 11, 1863 edition of the *Red Bluff Independent*, the newspaper wrote the following in response to the establishment of the Dixie School District:

"It is supposed, by the ominous name, that the young ideas are here to be "trained how to shoot" you. The most surprising thing about this name is, that the inhabitants of such a district should ever desire the establishment of such a radical thing as a school. Probably the effects of association with civilized people in this State."

**THE DIXIE SCHOOL DISTRICT AREA WAS A DEMOCRATIC PRO-CONFEDERATE STRONGHOLD DURING THE CIVIL WAR.**

An article in the *Marin Journal* newspaper from June 4, 1891 states, "The precinct or district itself (current area that includes the Dixie School District) has always been a Democratic stronghold, at some of the elections the entire vote polled being Democratic. During wartimes the district was called Dixie by the Republicans in derision, and the name clung to it ever since."

During the Civil War, the Democratic Party was pro-slavery. The Democratic Party supported racial segregation and worse after the Civil War. The Republican Party at that time was the party of Lincoln, and anti-slavery.

Lincoln won the 1860 and 1864 presidential elections as a Republican. The voters who lived in the precincts in and around the Dixie School District voted for the pro-slavery Democratic presidential candidates, Breckinridge in 1860 and McLellan in 1864.

James Miller's great great grandson stated in his oral history that James Miller was a Democrat and, "he always had Southern sympathies." William J. Miller, James's eldest son, was a leader of the Democratic Party Committee in Marin. In 1869, William J. Miller was elected to the California State Assembly as a Democrat to represent the 10th district. Prior to Miller's election, Assemblymember A.C. McAlister represented the district as a member of the Democratic Party.

**TODAY, DIXIE IS A SYNONYM FOR THE CONFEDERATE SOUTH.**

**Song for a Dark Girl by Langston Hughes**

Way Down South in Dixie  
(Break the heart of me)  
They hung my black young lover  
To a cross roads tree.

Way Down South in Dixie  
(Bruised body high in air)  
I asked the white Lord Jesus  
What was the use of prayer.

Way Down South in Dixie  
(Break the heart of me)  
Love is a naked shadow  
On a gnarled and naked tree.

**One Way Ticket by Langston Hughes**

I pick up my life, And take it with me,  
And I put it down in Chicago, Detroit, Buffalo, Scranton,  
Any place that is North and East, And not Dixie.

I pick up my life And take it on the train,  
To Los Angeles, Bakersfield, Seattle, Oakland, Salt Lake  
Any place that is North and West, And not South.

I am fed up With Jim Crow laws,  
People who are cruel And afraid, Who lynch and run,  
Who are scared of me And me of them  
I pick up my life And take it away On a one-way ticket  
Gone up North Gone out West Gone!

**THE STRUGGLE TO CHANGE THE NAME OF DIXIE SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS BEEN ONGOING FOR 29 YEARS.**

Bruce Anderson, a Marinwood resident, started asking questions about the Dixie name in 1989 on the first day of school for his child at Dixie Elementary School. In 1997, Kerry Peirson, former Chair of the Marin Human Rights Commission and former Marin Community Foundation trustee, launched the community campaign when he testified on behalf of a name change at a Dixie School Board meeting. He was called a “gorilla” inside the boardroom. He says it was one of the most terrifying nights of his life.

**NAME CHANGE ADVOCATES OFFERED TO PAY FOR THE NAME CHANGE IN 2003.**

In 2003, then Dixie School Board Trustee Karen Crockett and a group of parents, proposed a new district name. The cost was estimated to be \$7,500. A nonprofit organization sent a check to the Superintendent to cover 100% of the expenses related to the name change. We expect the updated cost information to be presented at a public meeting of the Dixie School District Board of Trustees in October or November 2018.

**“What hurts the victim most is not the cruelty of the oppressor, but the silence of the bystander.”**

— Elie Wiesel, Nobel Laureate and Holocaust Survivor

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**2 attachments**



CElliott-DixieSchoolDistNameHistEval-2018.pdf  
145K



2018-10\_Dixie IJ..docx  
139K

By [REDACTED], District Parent, Published in Marin IJ, Fall of 2018:

I was in middle school in Texas when I first learned about "Dixie." As a white middle-schooler in Austin I was mostly shielded from overt racism. One day on a family vacation outside of town I saw a sign with a confederate flag that read, "Welcome to Dixie, don't let the sun set on your black ass!" I first thought it a very funny sign. But my parents' tone quickly changed and they took the opportunity to educate me about the history of slavery and oppression in southern states.

In high school there were some racist kids for sure. They wore little rebel flags on their hats and backpacks, and some would brag about beating up gays and minorities. These kids weren't to be messed with. They were to be feared - especially for kids of color.

Around the time the Rodney King tapes were released, or maybe it was when the officers were acquitted, I have a vivid memory of these same bullies jumping a black kid. When he was bloodied and on the ground one sneered, "this is Dixie, not Africa!" As the bullies fled the scene I was left with a pit in my stomach.

When you strip it down to its essence I believe this fundamentally an issue of racial justice. I agree with Superintendent Dr. Yamashiro, "Dixie" has the direct connotation of the confederate south.

That same ache resurfaced twice recently. One morning driving through our neighborhood I saw signs that read "Keep Dixie, Dixie." To me it was a dagger in the heart of inclusion and welcoming spirit. A symbol of racism and division popping up across my neighborhood. Gulp.

That evening at a Dixie School Board meeting I got another dose. Many spoke about how "Dixie" symbolized racism, segregation, and hate. One black resident said that seeing the signs felt to him like burning a cross on his front lawn, and as he walked back to his seat a sign was aggressively waved in his face. Ugh.

The Mayor of San Rafael spoke eloquently about why he believes the name should change, as did previous school board members, parents, a student, and a heart-wrenched teacher.

On the other side arguments mainly circled around allocation of staff time and district dollars. At present, the two biggest concerns are a) the name itself is extraordinarily offensive, and b) some don't want the District to spend "a single penny on this stupid issue."

The board has discussed a non-binding resolution for a community-wide election in 2020. This unfunded, can-kicking measure would be a lose-lose for our community. Bringing our local history of institutional racism and segregation into the national spotlight, and building to a crescendo of division on Super Tuesday. Left to public polling, Dixieland might still have segregated schools today. If voters didn't want to change the name, it would still hurt people - perhaps even more - after a bitter election. And change advocates would continue their efforts requiring time from district staff.

While some believe it unfair and symbolic of the lack of leadership from the District Board, a workable compromise may be for supporters to raise a portion of the money necessary to change the name(s). This can be achieved without an expensive and contentious community-wide vote.

Join me on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 12-4pm, at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Marin, for a petition signing party! All are welcome to this family-friendly event. Bring your favorite new name and enjoy potluck cookies!

I pray the Board will exercise their powers responsibly and bring this ugly debate to a speedy resolution. Like that fateful car ride in Texas, this is a teachable moment. Recall, "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." Let it not be too much longer here, please.



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

## Dixie

1 message

Mon, Jan 28, 2019 at 7:03 PM

R [REDACTED]  
To: "commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org" <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

To the Dixie School Board of Trustees,

I'm writing to support the Board's decision to put the matter of changing the name of the Dixie School District to a vote of the residents.

This matter has already created a division within our community and cast aspersions on the good people living here. As more and more politicians and outside activists get involved, the issue will become more polarizing. Should the Board make a decision without seeking community input that division will worsen.

One of the great strengths of the Dixie School District over the years has been the degree to which parents contribute time and money to support the work of the schools. If the community is not consulted, long-term dissatisfaction will likely impact volunteerism as well as the passage of future school bonds.

Hear the people—hold the vote.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
San Rafael, CA 94903

Sent from Premium Email app for Hotmail





Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

## Re: Adding our organization as a supporter

1 message

Mon, Jan 28, 2019 at 5:21 PM

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] info@changethename.net>

[REDACTED] Susan Morgan <susanmorgan@gmail.com>, Terri Blewett <ttismetan@gmail.com>

Hi Susan,

Indeed! Welcome to this important local cause for social justice.

In order to officially sign the petition please visit [www.changethename.net](http://www.changethename.net) if you haven't already. There are some really great organizations in our midst, and we're thrilled to add Indivisible Marin (IM) to the list!

If you or anyone you know, inside or outside the district, wants to submit comments by the 4th, please use this special email they've set up: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

Perhaps you could read a letter of support from yourself and/or IM on the 12th? You'll only be given 2 minutes of public comment. We're really trying to pack the gym on the 12th and the room will hold 300-400 people. We really appreciate you joining the cause and we need your help pushing this effort over the goal line! Think you could add a note in your next e-blast to the IM community? Definitely like-minds.

Your neighbor

On Jan 28, 2019, at 5:09 PM, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@changethename.net> wrote:

Thank you, [REDACTED]. We are honored and grateful. I've cc'd two of our most active organizers, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I encourage you to talk with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

The deadline for written comments is February 4 at 3pm. We also are eager to organize the public to attend the public hearing on February 12 at 530pm at Miller Creek Middle School gym.

Can we include you in our core team emails over the next 15 days before the vote?

On Jan 28, 2019, at 3:40 PM, Susan Morgan <[REDACTED]@dixieschooldistrict.org> wrote:

Hello,

We would like to add our organization, Indivisible Marin, to your list of supporters. We have many members who reside in the the district including me.

We will also send written comments to the Board of Trustees.

Thank you for all of your excellent work!

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Comment on petitions <[commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)>

## 100 more people signed "Dixie School Board of Trustees: Change The Name Of Dixie School District"

1 message

[mail@changemail.org](mailto:mail@changemail.org) <[mail@changemail.org](mailto:mail@changemail.org)>

Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 4:14 PM

Reply-To: "Change.org (change@mail.change.org)" <[reply-fec516777762027e-112\\_TEXT-739153032-7259830-861725@mail.change.org](mailto:reply-fec516777762027e-112_TEXT-739153032-7259830-861725@mail.change.org)>

To: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

**change.org** New signatures

**Dixie School Board of Trustees & Superintendent Yamashiro** – This petition addressed to you on Change.org has new activity. See progress and respond to the campaign's supporters.

Dixie School Board of Trustees: Change The Name Of  
Dixie School District

Petition by Change The Name Committee · 100 supporters



**100 more people signed  
in the last 3 days**

[View petition activity](#)

### RECENT SUPPORTERS



**Brandon Geddes**

Washington, · Jan 30, 2019



**christian barth**

University Park, · Jan 30, 2019



**Peter Trouba**

Indiana, · Jan 30, 2019



**Brayan Huerta**

Louisville, · Jan 30, 2019



**Hayden Scott**

Ripley, · Jan 29, 2019

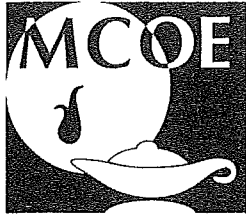
[View all 100 supporters](#)

#### CHANGE.ORG FOR DECISION MAKERS

On Change.org, decision makers like you connect directly with people around the world to resolve issues. Respond to let the people petitioning you know you're listening, say whether you agree with their call to action, or ask them for more information. [Learn more.](#)

This notification was sent to [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org), the address listed as the decision maker contact by the petition starter. If this is incorrect, please [post a response](#) to let the petition starter know.

**Change.org** · 548 Market St #29993, San Francisco, CA 94104-5401, USA



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# MARIN COUNTY

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## OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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1111 LAS GALLINAS AVENUE/P.O. BOX 4925  
SAN RAFAEL, CA 94913-4925  
marincoe@marinschools.org

MARY JANE BURKE  
MARIN COUNTY  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

(415) 472-4110  
FAX (415) 491-6625

December 14, 2018

Brad Honsberger, President  
Dixie School District Board of Trustees  
380 Nova Albion Way  
San Rafael, CA 94903

Dear President Honsberger and Members of the Board,

As an elected official charged with serving the students of Marin County for the past 24 years, I hold a deep respect for the kinds of challenges faced by school board members who volunteer their time in public service to their local school district. I recognize that you take your role seriously and strive to make decisions that are in the best interests of the students and families you serve. Having had the opportunity myself to make the kinds of decisions that impact people from a variety of backgrounds and beliefs, I have come to learn that there are times when we must break from tradition, from our comfort zone, to acknowledge new perspectives. This is one of those times for the Dixie School Board, it is time to change the name.

Since the birth of our nation, our society has been afflicted by issues of civil rights in a variety of forms. While our culture has come a long way in recognizing that people of different races, genders, religions, sexuality and creeds are in fact, "just people," like you and me, there are reminders of our past that are disrespectful and do not promote a forward-thinking culture. Across the nation, these kinds of symbols and titles are being changed to acknowledge a more positive, enlightened society. While some may be against the "historic" loss that this change brings, many feel empowered by the promise of a more positive future.

In my tenure as the Marin County Superintendent of Schools, I have witnessed the divisiveness caused by the Dixie name. Over the past twenty years, the issue has come to the forefront at least four times, rehashing the same concerns and distracting the District from its core work of serving students. While past efforts to change the name to one that more appropriately represents the students and local community have been set aside, I urge the Board to exercise its duty, as bestowed upon you by the electorate, and take action without incurring the additional expense of an election. An election would only serve to prolong the contentious debate that has driven a wedge into this community for too long. It is time for the community to move forward.

I have called Marin County my home for over 40 years. I have spent my career in an office that resides within the boundaries of the Dixie School District. My late husband, Larry Lyon, proudly served as the

Superintendent of the Dixie School District until his death. My children attended Dixie schools. I understand the attachment to a name, to a history, to a legacy of quality educational programs.

But I ask the Board to consider if the name "Dixie" is what makes this community special; is it what drives the success of our students? Is such a name predicated on what binds our community and its strong belief that a child's success hinges on providing a caring, nurturing environment that supports not only academic success but also the social emotional needs of our children? I suggest not.

I assure you that changing the name will not compromise the opportunities that will help our students succeed in school and in life. This legacy will continue to flourish. In fact, this is an opportunity to teach our children about the history of the Dixie name, the meaning and its cultural significance. This is an opportunity for our students to participate in a cultural shift, one they can be proud of.

It is also an opportunity for our community to practice civil discourse. As with any change, there will be people for and against it. As a Board, you have an opportunity, a duty, to set the tone for a positive dialogue. I encourage you to rise to the occasion by modeling respectful dialogue, listening thoughtfully and leading with integrity. We must remember, the children are watching.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Jane Burke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Jane Burke  
Marin County Superintendent of Schools



Thomas Peters, Ph.D.  
President & Chief Executive Officer

December 10, 2018

Brad Honsberger, President, and Members of the Board  
Dixie School District  
380 Nova Albion Way  
San Rafael, CA 94903

Dear Mr. Honsberger and Members of the Board:

As a 25-year resident of the Dixie School District, I proudly went to the polls for every election affecting the District, be it selection of board members or support for local tax measures. It was a personal privilege to regularly endorse the dedication of the District's board, staff and faculty to the high level of quality education provided over the years to thousands of young students.

It is with that history and pride in the District that I write to urge that you seize this moment of opportunity: change the name of the District.

The plain fact is that in today's American cultural and linguistic context, the predominant connotations of the word "Dixie" evoke not only rebellion and treason, but pain and terror.

No amount of local interpretation of diary entries, historical footnotes, genealogical searches or nuances of irony or humor can override this reality. While it may not be so for some, the evidence is clear that to many millions of Americans, particularly of course to African Americans, the titles and symbols of the "Confederacy" stand, first and foremost, for humiliation, degradation and threat.

What lies before your Board is a golden opportunity to exercise principled community leadership. By recognizing that the time has come for a new name, the Board can declare that the enduring hallmark of the District is its dual commitment to quality education and a welcoming spirit, openly offered for all youngsters and all families.

As it has been in the great moments of this nation's civil rights progress, it is the clarion call of public leadership, especially in times of division and debate, that fosters a pattern of respect and clarifies the template of equity.

Your Board stands at just such a moment. No poll or plebiscite can replace the courage of conviction that elected leaders can, and on some occasions must, exercise. By selecting a more appropriate and inclusive name, you would send a powerful and poignant message both to the whole community and to your young students, now and into the future.

Sincerely,

Thomas Peters, Ph.D.  
President and CEO



Comment on petitions <[commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)>

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## Change the name of the school district


1 message

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To: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 4:04 PM

I live in the Dixie School District. I strongly urge you to change the name of the school district now.

  
San Rafael, CA 94903



Comment on petitions <[commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)>

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## Change the name!

1 message

[REDACTED] <[sonoma-sc@earthlink.net](mailto:sonoma-sc@earthlink.net)>

Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 4:01 PM

To: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

XXXXXX School Board Members,

I live in Sonoma County. However, I feel compelled to voice my support for removing such a clear racially charged name as Dixie to something the school district, residents, parents, teachers and children can be proud of.

Thank you.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Viauvingen Ln  
Petaluma, CA 04052  
[REDACTED]

*Saudi Arabia: a leading state sponsor of terrorism*





Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

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**dixie**

1 message

  
To: commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org

Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 3:52 PM

Hi

I just listened a comedy Roy Wood Jr. monologue that might explain to white people what the dixie school district might mean to African Americans. It's about the confederate flag, but it might also apply to the dixie school district.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUoNIQQIDOs>

Being jewish, i should would not want the school district to be called 3rd Reich School District. sometimes things have to change. Thats why we dont have Minstrel Shows or restricted Country Clubs in Marin.

please change the name of the school district

thanks

  
San Rafael CA



Comment on petitions <[commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)>

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## Please Step the Waste on the Name Change Effort

1 message

Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 2:25 PM

[REDACTED]  
To: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

Dear Dixie School Board,

I am writing this note to you today to with the hope that with the strong support from the majority of Dixie Community, enough of the members on the Board will stand strong and vote to end the waste of resource on this ridiculous and outrageous name changing effort, forced on the Board and the Dixie Community by certain group with its own personal political agenda and negative view of the name, to a end.

I had a birthday party for my 14 year old daughter with 8 of her great friends last week. All 9 of them, with the exception of one, grow up and went through schools within the Dixie School District. I debated about it but decided to causally brought up the name change war going on. Those are the things I heard from those 14/15 year old:

1. I grow up in the Dixie School District. To me, the word Dixie never carried the negative meaning those people see. It is only negative if you want to see it that way.
2. It is part of the history. We should not try to change the history but to learn from it.
3. I am proud of our school district will always call it Dixie even if they decide to change it. We still all the sports team and organizations with Dixie in it, we cannot keep doing this!
4. My mom is a teacher in the District and she is sad to see all those resources being wasted on this while we can spend them on the kids!
5. We need to learn to accept things we don't like/agree. Otherwise, I am afraid nothing in the world is right since someone can always find something negative about everything.

SO PLEASE, listen to our kids, who, fortunately or unfortunately, have the least politically polluted views in this case! Be strong, take the right vote and tell those people with their own negative view and political agenda to leave our proud Dixie School District alone!

Thanks,

[REDACTED]  
Resident of the Dixie School District since 2009



Comment on petitions <[commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)>

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## Name Change

1 message

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[REDACTED]  
To: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 12:00 PM

Please change the racist name Dixie. Should have been done long before now.

Stop the conflict, stop the pain you are causing to so many and do the right thing.

[REDACTED]  
Susan Russell

[Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

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**name change**

1 message

[REDACTED]  
To: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 10:40 AM

I have been a resident of the Dixie School District for almost 50 years. Both of my children attended Dixie Schools K-8. While they were in elementary school I was very active in their individual schools and as a parent on school board meetings/activities. When they were at TL High School my husband was on the San Rafael School Board. I am a retired teacher (50 years). We are old timers to education and Terra Linda. We have seen a lot of changes, controversy, squabbles etc and are very sorry to see what is happening now. Particularly considering what is happening in our country now on a much bigger, more serious scale. The past 50 years we thought that Dixie was named after an Indian woman of the region or an early woman settler in TL. The fact that we are in California--Northern at that--NEVER did it ever cross our minds that the school district was named after something in the southern states!!! I feel this entire situation is absolutely ridiculous and time and money should be spent on the children and teachers! At the very least this should be put to vote of the entire Dixie Community. Thank you for your consideration. [REDACTED] San Rafael 94903



1 message

Reply-To: [kathbiz@comcast.net](mailto:kathbiz@comcast.net)  
To: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 8:20 AM

Please accept these 2 letters as a request to let the community choose the name of our school district.

Thank you

## The Doughertys

**2 attachments**

1. The first step in the process of the research is to identify the problem. This is done by the researcher through a series of steps. The first step is to identify the problem. This is done by the researcher through a series of steps. The first step is to identify the problem. This is done by the researcher through a series of steps.

**Dixie letter1.jpg**  
601K

asked people to read the book and to write a letter to the author. The letters were then read aloud to the group. The letters were read in a way that was respectful of the author's privacy and the group's privacy. The letters were read in a way that was respectful of the author's privacy and the group's privacy.

**Dixie letter2.jpg**  
596K

Dear Members of the Dixie School District Board:

Thank you for your service to our community and our children. I am writing to submit my comments regarding changing the name of the district. Specifically, I respectfully ask the Board to reaffirm its decision to put the name change issue on an advisory ballot, accompanied by a rigorous analysis of the financial impacts of any change.

There are different theories about the origin the Dixie name and unfortunately, we'll never know more than we know today about James Miller's thinking when he named the district. There are also differences about feelings that people have toward the name. Some associate Dixie with the Confederacy and others associate it with educational excellence in an open and welcoming community in Northern California. The advisory ballot is the only way to ensure that all voters in the district can make their voices heard.

Another reason we need the advisory ballot is that sadly, the opportunity for open dialog has past. The division that this issue has caused in our small community has turned neighbor against neighbor and intimidated people from speaking up. The privacy of the voting booth will ensure that people feel comfortable expressing their opinion.

I sincerely hope that you make the right decision for our community and our children.

Sincerely,

  
San Rafael CA 94903

Dear Members of the Dixie School District Board:

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I sincerely hope that you make the right decision for our community and our children.

Sincerely,

  
San Rafael CA 94903

[Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

## Dixie Name Change

1 message

Tue, Jan 29, 2019 at 12:28 AM

To: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

Members of the Board of Trustees  
Dixie School District

As a nearly 28-year resident and taxpayer of the Dixie School District, I want to first thank you for your service to our children. I have had three daughters get their primary and middle school education in our Dixie schools (Vallecito, Miller Creek) totaling 30 years in those excellent schools. All three are now attending public colleges and universities in California, launched by the excellent academic, cultural, athletic and social springboards they enjoyed there. Furthermore, they've played for years on various Dixie Youth Soccer League teams.

I am asking that you reaffirm that the the Dixie School District name change decision *be left to our community* in the form of an Advisory Ballot in 2020 as was previously decided 4-1 by the school board last November. The undemocratic methods employed by those wanting to force a name change now are *not* the way this should be done. In order to determine true consensus, we cannot simply rely on raucous community meetings, angry posts on community forums, petite petitions with a mere 15 signatures, impassioned newspaper editorials and, and now inflammatory regional and even *national* media stories.

These abusive tactics have divided our community and created more discord, distrust and pain than the name itself ever did. We can and should do better.

Along with those in We Are Dixie, I respect the right of everyone to express their own opinions, but feel it is crucial that decision be made by the people living, benefitting and PAYING for the Dixie School District and not to outsiders who have NO STAKE in the outcome.

Taxation *with* representation is one of our nation's founding principles. Not the other way around.

I ask that you open this decision to those in our community who have a vested interest. Any other means is not how it should be done.

Sincerely,

San Rafael, CA 94903





Comment on petitions <[commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)>

## Change the Name

1 message

[REDACTED]  
To: [commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org](mailto:commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org)

Mon, Jan 28, 2019 at 10:41 PM

Dear Dixie School Board:

As a resident of the Dixie Elementary School District, I am writing in support of changing the name. It seems so easy to know what the right thing to do is when the controversy over confederate monuments, flags and symbols is taking place in Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama or Arkansas, but when it happens in our own back yard then suddenly we're no longer sure. Regardless of the history of how the Dixie School District was named, "Dixie" has and always will be associated with the South, slavery, the Ku Klux Klan, cross burnings and lynchings. It has absolutely no connection or relevance to Marin or the area in which it's located and if we don't change the name, the controversy will never be put to rest.

I support renaming the school either Live Oak Elementary School District, Live Oak Valley School Elementary District or Oak Valley Elementary School District.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
San Rafael, CA 94903  
[REDACTED]



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

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## Preserve the name "Dixie"

1 message

Mon, Jan 28, 2019 at 9:04 PM

To: commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org

Correction:

Friends and Dixie school board members.... my earlier submission may have been excluded due to incomplete residence address. I am at [REDACTED] KERNBERRY DRIVE, SAN RAFAEL and have been here for 40 plus years.

And I urge you to listen to your constituents verses negative outside influences. In fact, is there some law that precludes you from insisting that comments at public meetings are allowable from legal residents of the District only? Frankly, I was appalled to see how much time you've granted Noah Griffin and his malcontents at Board meetings!

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Lower Lucas Valley  
San Rafael



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

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## Dixie is not a symbol of academic excellence to all of God's children...

1 message

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**[REDACTED]**  
To: Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Mon, Jan 28, 2019 at 8:09 PM

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/08/17/worshiping-the-confederacy-is-about-white-supremacy-even-the-nazis-thought-so/?utm\\_term=.456288046f61](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/08/17/worshiping-the-confederacy-is-about-white-supremacy-even-the-nazis-thought-so/?utm_term=.456288046f61)

"The Nazi order praised the Old South, seeing in Dixie a society that exalted white leadership and kept African Americans on the lowest rungs of the social order. Recognizing this, civil rights activists have worked for over 80 years to expose those links and to show how the veneration of the Old South can provide a nurturing climate for hateful, fascist ideologies. Revealing the deep connections between Nazi and Confederate beliefs became essential to proving that Southern racial practices were, in fact, clearly antithetical to American values like democracy and equality."

# California State Senate

## SENATOR MIKE MCGUIRE

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S SECOND SENATE DISTRICT



Brad Honsberger, President  
Dixie School District  
380 Nova Albion Way  
San Rafael, CA 94903

Dear President  and Trustees:

Thanks in very large part to your hard work and commitment to the children and their families in your community, Dixie School District has justifiably earned an outstanding reputation for the high quality of its instruction and the exemplary performance of its students. It's safe to say that many people choose to live in the Dixie School District so that their children are able to benefit from the results-driven education advanced by the district and its outstanding team of educators. That is why it is so distressing that such a positive image of the district is being tarnished by the current controversy surrounding its name.

Being a former school board member myself, I greatly respect your board's authority. I have made it a point to rarely involve myself in local school district issues in any of the seven Northern California Counties I am honored to represent, but I believe this issue is different.

Whatever the true origins of the name of the school district, there is no question that "Dixie" is synonymous not just with the Southern Confederacy, but also with racism and deep psychic pain. For many people, the name "Dixie" symbolizes oppression, degradation and intolerance. The word rose from one of the darkest periods in our nation's history, one with which we have yet to fully come to terms.

Much of the anger and divisiveness now reflected in the debate over changing the name of the Dixie School District mirrors the anger and divisiveness taking place nationally over the rise of white nationalism.

I know that you and our Board did not originally name the district. You inherited the name from the 1860s. That said, you now have an opportunity to take action on what should have been done years ago.

Until your Board advances a name change, this conflict will not go away. The animosity and resentment will stay center stage and the first thing people will be talking about when the Dixie School District is mentioned will not be the exceptional quality of the instruction children receive, but rather the racist origins of the name. No matter if folks like it or not, the name Dixie can't stand in modern America and I urge you and your board to proactively initiate a name change in the coming months.

I am deeply appreciative of your service and your time to review this correspondence. I'll be following up with this letter to have a further discussion on this topic.

Warmest regards,

MIKE MCGUIRE  
Senator

*I look forward to your  
consideration.*

JARED HUFFMAN  
2ND DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
WATER, POWER, AND OCEANS – RANKING MEMBER  
FEDERAL LANDS

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE  
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT  
WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515–0502

WASHINGTON OFFICE  
1406 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
PHONE: (202) 225–5161  
FAX: (202) 225–5163

WEBSITE: [huffman.house.gov](http://huffman.house.gov)

December 10, 2018

Brad Honsberger, President  
Dixie School District  
380 Nova Albion Way  
San Rafael, CA 94903

Dear Trustees:

Thank you for your public service and leadership in overseeing a school district that is exemplary in so many ways. I've enjoyed visiting your schools over the years, and I share your pride in the high standards and excellent education that we have come to associate with this district. With these positive associations in mind, and hopefully as a trusted partner of the district, I write to urge you to do something that frankly should have been done many years ago: change the district name.

I recognize this is a local decision that is yours to make, not mine. I represent dozens of school districts and make it a point not to weigh in on local school board issues generally. But having the name "Dixie" connotes -- intentionally or not -- a dark and hateful part of our nation's history that offends many people in our community and beyond. For that reason, this is more than just a local issue. That is why, as your Congressman, as a San Rafael public schools parent, and as a steadfast supporter of our schools, I feel compelled to express my views.

We cannot separate this issue from the broader context of our country's struggles with racism, including the ugly resurgence of neo-Confederates and white nationalists who are trying to take us backward after decades of progress on civil rights, equality, and ethnic and religious tolerance. As you may know, I am a former civil rights lawyer and I have worked in Congress to end some of the hateful vestiges of the Confederacy that have persisted into modern times, including Confederate monuments, public displays of the Confederate battle flag, sales of Confederate memorabilia at National Parks, and more. Our nation's dark history and current struggles with racism compels us to be honest about the hateful origins of these symbols and to acknowledge that whatever revisionist nostalgia some may attach to them, they are rooted in racism and deeply offensive to many people.

Listening to the spirited, sometimes vitriolic local debate over the provenance and original meaning of the name "Dixie," it seems that we're missing the bigger point. We will surely never know whether James Miller meant "Dixie" to be an homage to the Confederacy, a bit of whimsy from a lost bet with confederate sympathizers, a tribute to a Miwok woman he may have known, or something else. There is no clear, documented connection to anything we can identify as meaningful to our history, environment, culture or values, and that leaves us scratching our heads all these years later about the anachronism of a Marin County school district called "Dixie." But balanced against Mr. Miller's unknowable intent, we have the undeniable reality that many people are confused, offended, and divided by the district's continuing use of the notorious nickname of the Confederacy. This cloud of controversy will linger over the district until the name is changed, with negative ramifications for students, current and potential staff, and for building a reputation for educational excellence, tolerance, and inclusion.

SAN RAFAEL  
999 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 290  
SAN RAFAEL, CA 94901  
PHONE: (415) 258-9657  
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PETALUMA  
206 G STREET, #3  
PETALUMA, CA 94952  
PHONE: (707) 981-8987  
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UKIAH  
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UKIAH, CA 95482  
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FORT BRAGG  
430 NORTH FRANKLIN STREET  
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FORT BRAGG, CA 95437  
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EUREKA  
317 THIRD STREET, SUITE 1  
EUREKA, CA 95501  
PHONE: (707) 407-3585  
FAX: (707) 407-3559


December 10, 2018  
Letter to Dixie School District Trustees  
Page 2

My hope is that under your leadership, the board will take the long overdue step of committing to a name change and then bring the community together in a forward-looking, public process to identify a new name that actually makes sense and doesn't offend people. It could be a tribute to the founder of the district, a great educator or alumnus from the district, a name that directly honors the Miwok people who originally lived here, or something else that the community can understand and be proud of. Whatever name you ultimately choose, the process of bringing people together in a respectful, forward-looking manner is important to ending this painful controversy and moving forward toward the excellent, unsullied reputation your district deserves.

Finally, I hope you will not defer this decision. The suggestion of a non-binding advisory election, even if it could be funded and actually held, is not a solution. At the end of that costly and divisive process, the decision will still be in your hands. Nor will a local advisory vote put to rest the controversy and damage that comes from choosing to continue using the "Dixie" name; if anything, a local advisory vote that embraced the name "Dixie" would create an even bigger and darker cloud over the district. It's time for everyone to move on. You have the burden and responsibility of making what may temporarily be a hard decision. But this is also a unique opportunity to usher in a positive, unifying new chapter for the children, families, and educators of this great school district.

Thank you for your consideration, and please call on me if I can be of assistance going forward.

Sincerely,



**JARED HUFFMAN**  
Member of Congress