



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Change name of Dixie School District

1 message

[REDACTED]

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 10:31 PM

To: commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org

Dixie school district is outdated change it to something simple like Terra Linda School District.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Name Change for the School District

1 message

Liz Rouman [REDACTED]
To: commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 9:59 PM

Dixie School Board Members,

You will be doing a disservice to this community if you decide to vote in favor of one of these Name Change petitions. I believe the petitions do not even state a "reason" for changing the name. The 15-signature petition policy is dated and does not represent a reasonable measure of our current community thought. You really need to pause, step back and really dig into creating a better process of a name change. Do not be pressured by an old policy that does not work in 2019 and only represents technically less than 1% of the District residents (15/13000??) This is embarrassing that my "neighbors" have forced this "process" on you and essentially have wasted hours of your time. Please take back control of this situation and demand that your time is better spent on the education of our kids and budgetary concerns.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

CTN Transparency

1 message

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 8:50 PM

To: Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>
Cc: Jason Yamashiro <jjyamashiro@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Dear Board of Trustees (BOT) and Jason Yamashiro,

Since I joined the Change The Name (CTN) community I have seen the group practice tremendous transparency and openness. Organizers have given the board ample notice and consistently explained forthcoming actions and plans with the BOT. For instance, you knew petitions were coming months in advance to give you time to prepare for this period. Supporters of CTN do not hide behind anonymous websites, we are not afraid to share our names and stories, and we have wanted to work collaboratively with the BOT and community. We still do.

Public Dialogue:

From the fall of 2018 I have seen numerous requests for more public dialogue and engagement from the CTN organizers. Prior to submitting petitions, these requests were ignored in practice. I'm grateful you have organized at least one facilitated community dialogue. I do wish you would do a more thorough and thoughtful notification about the upcoming dialogue. There is not a lot of buzz about it online and I'm afraid it may fall a little flat. But I know several members of the CTN core group who plan on attending and talking to their neighbors. Given the emotions that this fight for racial justice have raised in the community, and ignorance and recent incidents of racism on campuses, it would seem that this should be the first of many dialogues about race in our community. It would be amazing if the new BOT took a leadership role in helping our community through this difficult and ongoing transition toward racism-awareness and increased compassion.

CTN's and my transparency should not be taken for granted. You've had a very compassionate and professional group of activists knocking at your door for many months. So in the interest of continuing transparency I want to alert you to two things I'm aware of that may impact your decisions in the coming weeks.

2/12 Public Hearing:

1) Petition signers are coming in at a faster clip as media attention has increased. We're averaging 30+ new signers a day. This campaign now has a life of its own and the CTN core group of organizers are not responsible and cannot control what many supports will do at upcoming community events. The ACLU and several other large membership organizations are getting involved and notifying their members... so be prepared for a larger group on the 12th. Know that many are very fired up about national-, county-, city- and Dixie School District- recent events. By ignoring the smaller group of CTN activists a much larger group is now mobilizing. We cannot predict what these other activists will bring to the table, or the cultural norms they bring with them. So be prepared. Last time Brad didn't like that I started a chant during the last 30-seconds of my public comment. I will personally promise to you that I will not do that again at this upcoming meeting. But I'm so fired up after five months of this "process" that I cannot commit to abstaining should any other activist start a respectable form of civil disobedience (e.g., chanting, sit-ins, picket signs, remaining standing, clapping, etc.). How you - a predominantly white board - deal with non-violent civil action may have serious repercussions from an optics and crowd-control standpoint. So please discuss this possibility amongst yourselves, have a good plan, and do what you think best when/if the time comes.

2) I believe the core CTN group sees only three potential outcomes from the 2/12 meeting. Continuing on the theme of transparency here are the actions and reactions I would expect:

- A: BOT votes to change the name! (Yay - right thing. Then change the elementary school name and this saga will be for the history books.)
- B: BOT votes down all names, but indicates desire (commitment) to change name in the short-term (2 months?) after more "process." In this scenario you would probably organize many more dialogues, engage students (bigger "cookie party"), etc. (Okay - 2nd best thing. Probably allay many concerns and help release the growing pressure felt in the community. May also address many of the "process concerns" that have been raised. But this does drag out the timeline for all involved.)
- C: BOT votes down all names without indication of commitment to change the name. (Worst choice. At the very best, this will result in someone from the audience presenting another petition on the 12th or the morning of the 13th, starting another 40-day shot clock.)

I do hope that Brad and the BOT don't see these comments as threats or means of intimidation, but instead acts of transparency from a community member who cares deeply about you and ALL within our borders.

From day one my communications have been in an effort to move you in the right direction, and to help you see the troubled waters that lay ahead if inaction persisted. There is a path forward and you do have options. Hopefully the right choice is increasingly obvious as time has passed and most of my previous predictions have already come to fruition. I honestly cannot guess what would lie ahead if you voted no to all names at the 2/12 public hearing, but the thought does worry me. Regardless, please consider me a supporter of you and the community, and as a resource should you wish to discuss anything further.

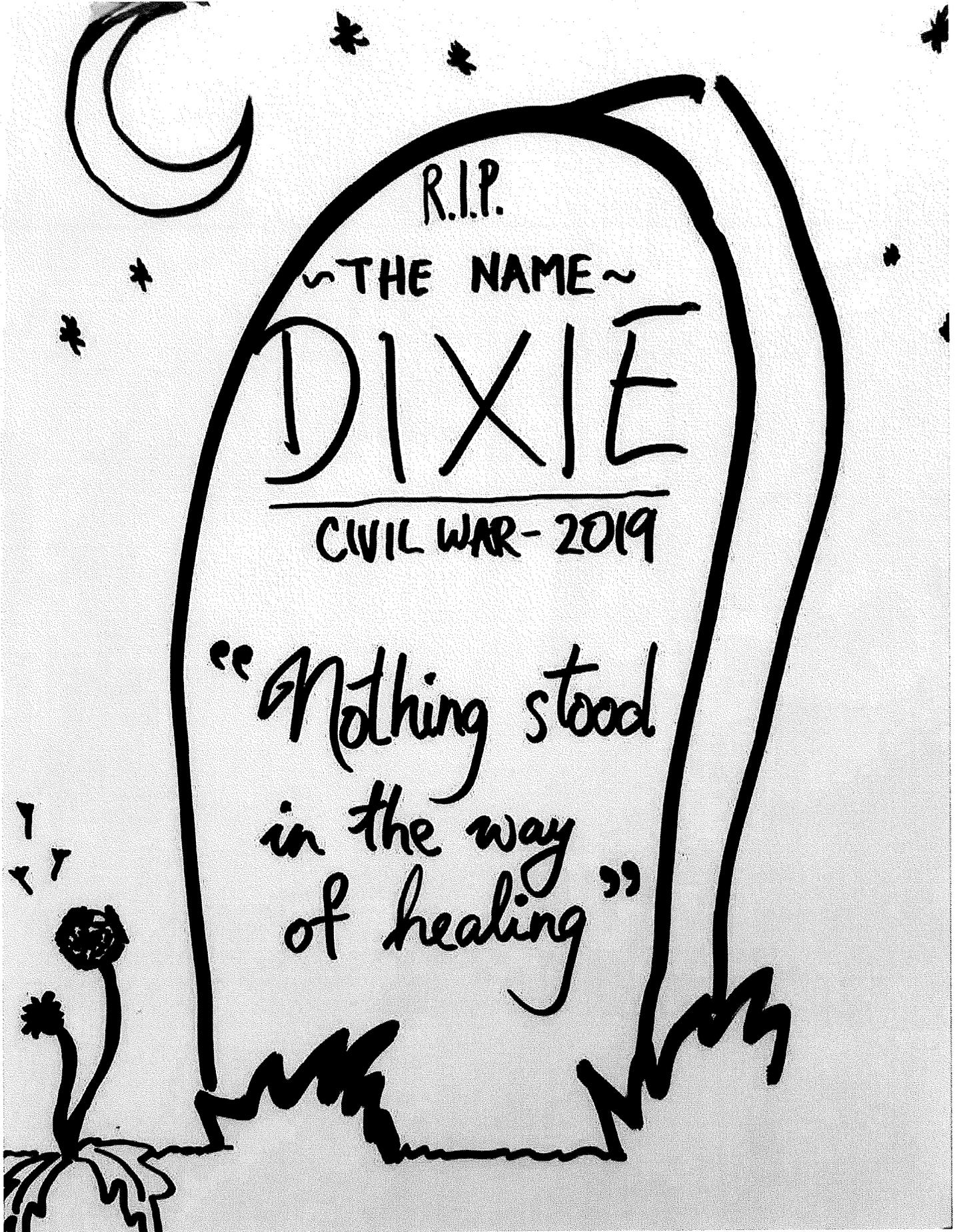
Please take this most recent act of transparency as a sign of respect and appreciation for the position you are in.

I really want you to do the right thing, and I really want this community to start healing and move on to other pressing matters.

Sincerely,

BCC: Friends and neighbors who support positive change.

P.S. Attached artwork from a CTN-supporter created during the last BOT open meeting:





Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Name change

1 message

sempreciao@aol.com [REDACTED]
To: commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 7:45 PM

To the district board:

I would like to weigh in on the current matter of changing the name of the district. My opinion is: do it!
The name is controversial and carries a meaning that is representative of a shameful period of history in our country.

A name change is just that - it doesn't mean a change in the excellent reputation that the district has earned through its years long outstanding contribution by an extremely capable staff.

This is my fifth decade living in this area....both my now adult children were schooled here. In reading all of the comments and letters in our local paper and made at board meetings, in my opinion the only negative result that come of this situation would be to NOT change the name.

Terra Wood Valley seems a good choice to me.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

name change

1 message

Shannon_grimm@comcast.net
To: commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 7:42 PM

Greetings to the School Board,

I am a resident within Dixie School District. I have ridden my bike past the little museum over the years and finally one day was able to visit inside. It is a sweet little museum and I enjoyed it. Until, I learned that the name Dixie was chosen to support the Southern Confederacy. I was shocked and saddened.

Please change the name to a neutral and respectful name. Even though I don't have children attending school I vote for bonds that support the District. I would like to think that some of my tax money will go to the cost of changing the name.

Let's teach mutual respect and let's practice it.

Thank you,

[Redacted signature]

San Rafael

Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach - Clarissa Pinkola Estes



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Race Counts

1 message

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 7:28 PM

To: Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

BOT,

The attached data is from the Race Counts survey data which compared cities and counties across California: <https://www.racecounts.org/about/>

By keeping a name that scares and intimidates minorities you would support and perpetuate the fact that Marin County remains the most racially disparate county in California.

You can help support and encourage inclusivity and diversity, by taking a step in the right direction and changing the name. The word "Dixie" and its association with the Confederacy is a slap in the face to the few minority families who make a life here in San Rafael. They have pleaded with boards past... but to deaf ears.

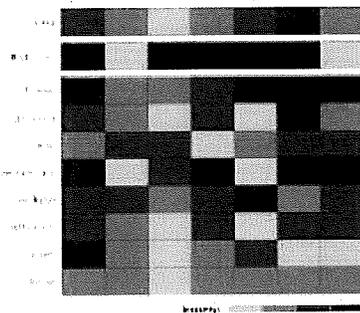
It's a great opportunity to do good before you.

Remove this racist symbol from your letterhead and school signs.

Thank you for your service to ALL in our community, especially the traditionally underrepresented in Marin and beyond,

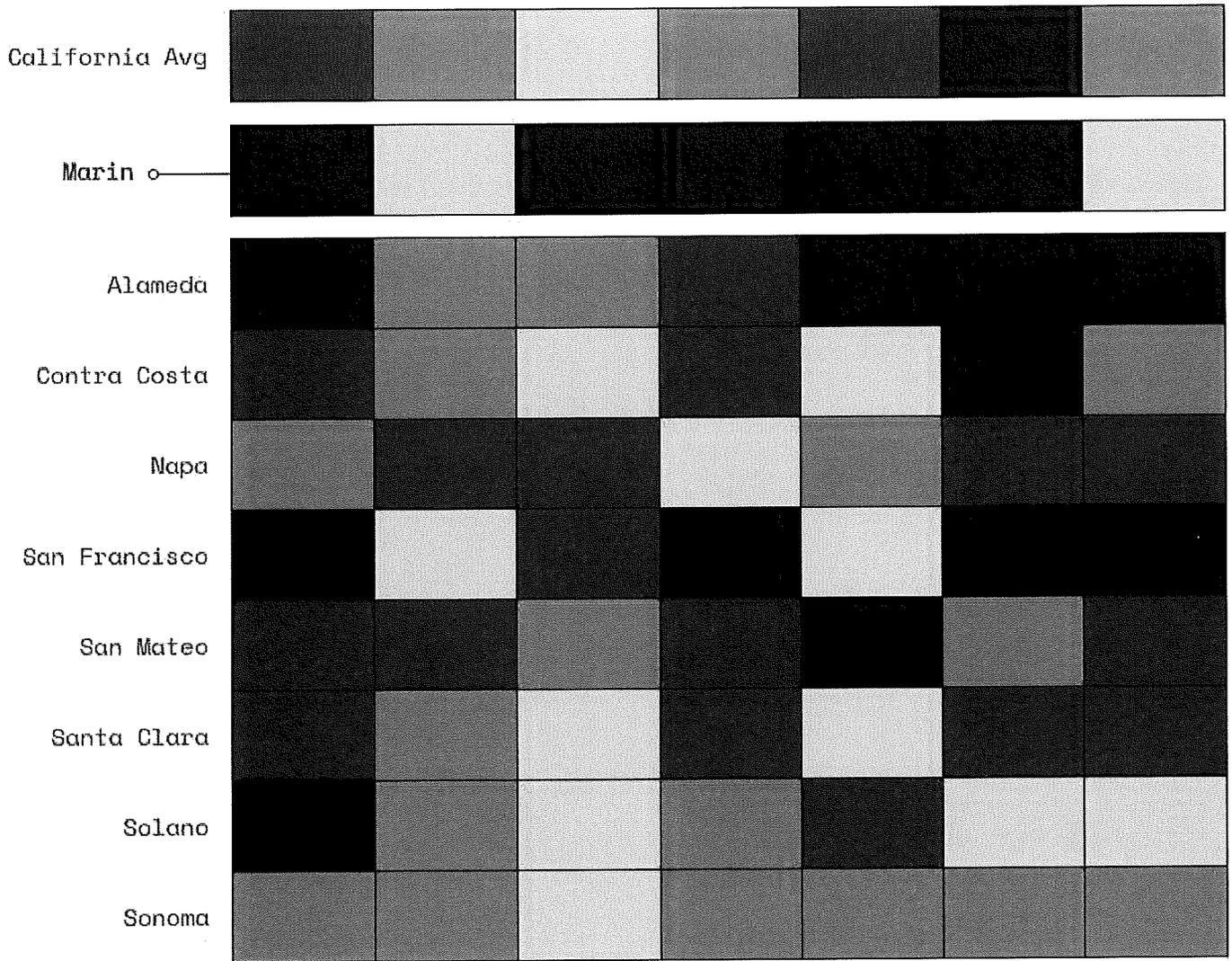
MARIN COUNTY RANKS THE 1ST MOST RACIALLY DISPARATE COUNTY IN CALIFORNIA.

2 attachments



Screen Shot 2019-02-01 at 7.22.13 PM.png
39K

Race Counts_Marin County data.pdf
954K



Disparity: [Color Scale] LOWEST AVG HIGHEST

MARIN



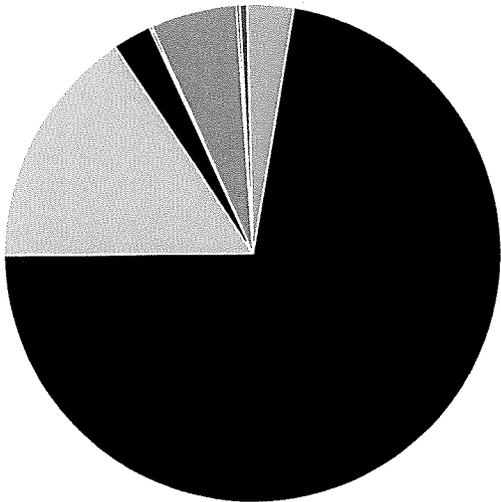
https://www.racecounts.org/country/marin/

MARIN COUNTY RANKS THE 1ST MOST RACIALLY DISPARATE COUNTY IN CALIFORNIA. ADD COUNTY COMPARISON

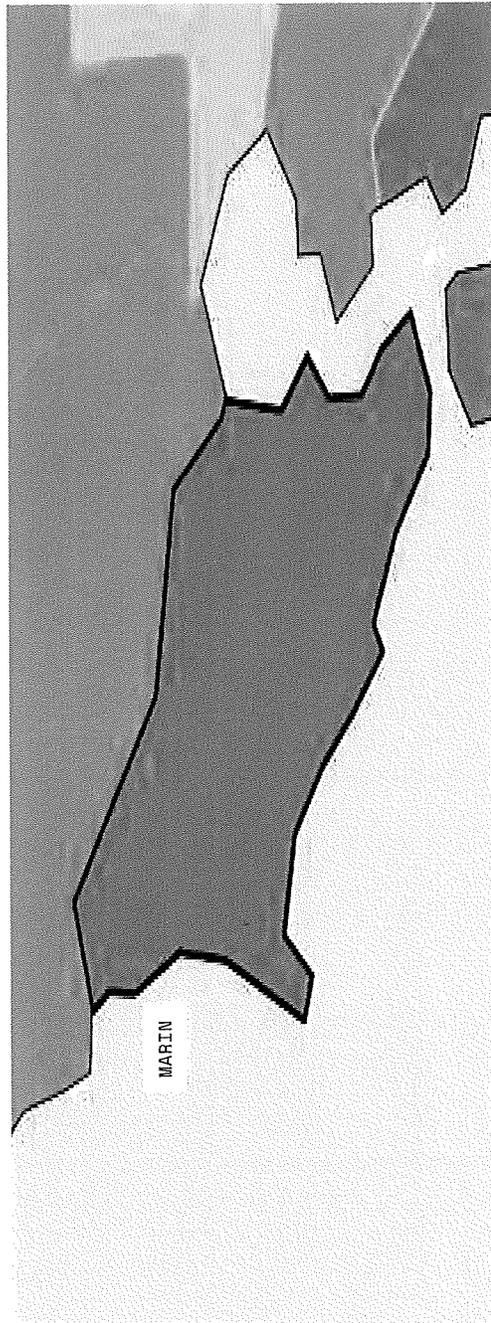
County Overview

An overview of the racial disparity level and how the county ranks statewide and across key issues.

RACE AS % OF POPULATION



MAP



Key Takeaways

Marin is a high performance, high disparity and less populous county.

After paying for rent in Marin County, Latino households are left with \$16,367 while White households are left with \$59,304.

Nearly one in four Latinos in Marin County is uninsured.

Marin County is among the most disparate in terms of poverty in California: only 5% of Whites live below poverty while close to 35% of Native Americans are below the poverty line.

Asians are 2.5x more likely than Latinos to be employed as officials or managers

in Marin County.

Black youth are 14x more likely and Native American youth are 5x more likely to be arrested for curfew violations than Whites in Marin County.

PREV	1	2	3	4	5	6	NEXT
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HEATMAP OF DISPARITY A visual snapshot of racial disparity and performance across seven key issues. Use the filters to toggle between disparity and performance.

RANK BY: Quadrant Disparity Performance

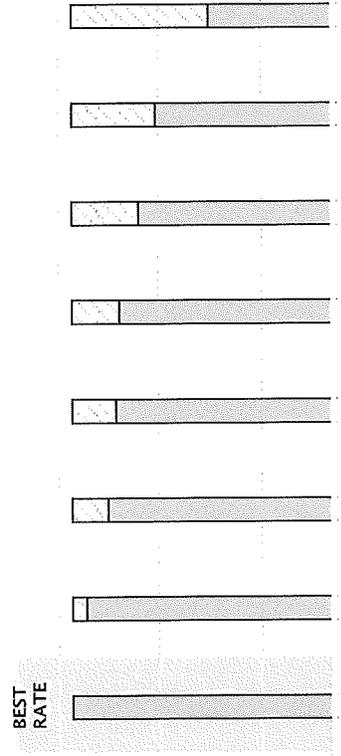
	Crime & Justice	Democracy	Economic Opportunity	Health Access	Healthy Built Environment	Housing
<u>California Avg</u>	0.1425	-0.25583				
Marin	1.04103	-0.3783	0.76786	0.4772	0.29063	
<u>Alameda</u>	0.78472	-0.27186	-0.11637	0.1118	0.42197	0.35625
<u>Contra Costa</u>	0.04355	-0.00591	-0.38398	0.02372	-0.27889	0.31363

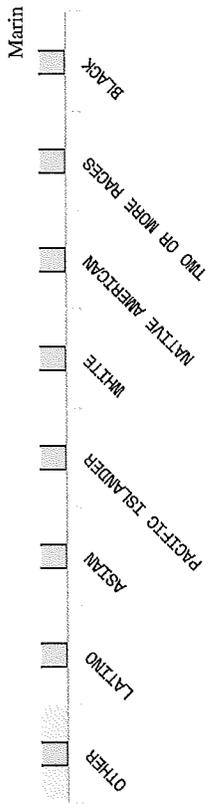
<u>Mapa</u>	-0.33627	0.37397	0.07327	-0.90874	-0.16366	0.19262
<u>San Francisco</u>	0.48606	-1.01447	0.20946	0.78317	-0.41718	0.72704
<u>San Mateo</u>	0.30083	0.37393	-0.18538	0.07744	0.27725	-0.10326
<u>Santa Clara</u>	0.41912	-0.29104	-0.28855	0.12088	-0.4875	0.04843
<u>Solano</u>	0.52804	-0.08411	-0.52484	-0.166	0.0011	-0.33494
<u>Sonoma</u>	-0.03009	-0.22197	-0.46298	-0.06374	-0.01735	-0.08074

Disparity LOWEST AVG HIGHEST

01 ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

EMPLOYMENT TO POPULATION RATE (%) BY RACE





AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES TABLE S2301 (2010-2014)

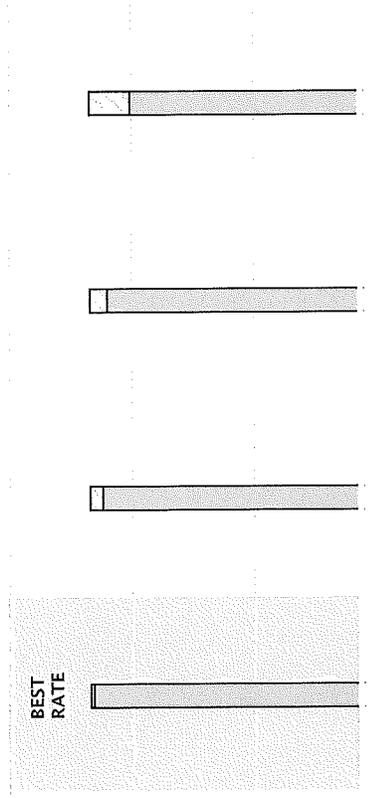
MARIN COUNTY

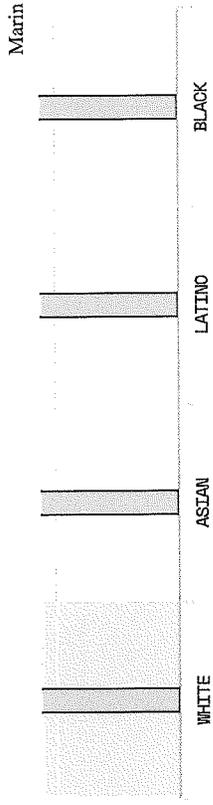
Total

- PERFORMANCE **60.3** %
- RAW PERFORMANCE **126,399**
- DIFFERENCE FROM BEST **11.1** %

02 HEALTHCARE ACCESS

LIFE EXPECTANCY IN YEARS BY RACE





CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEATH MASTER FILE, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE POPULATION ESTIMATES (2007-2011, 2006-2010)

MARIN COUNTY

Total

- PERFORMANCE

83.5
years

- RAW PERFORMANCE

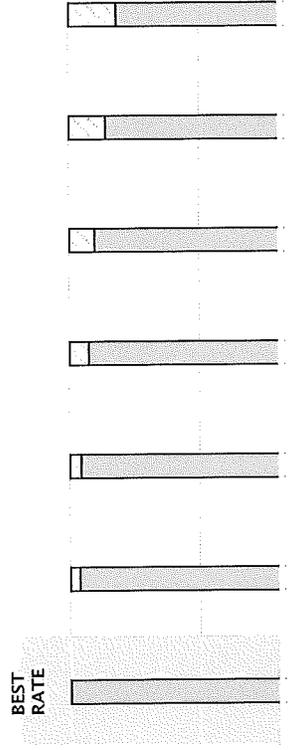
N/A

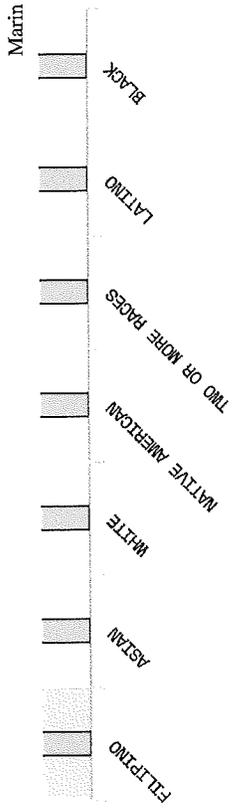
- DIFFERENCE FROM BEST

0.0
years

03 EDUCATION

GRADUATES AS A PERCENTAGE OF FOUR-YEAR ADJUSTED COHORT STUDENTS BY RACE





CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (2014-15)

MARIN COUNTY

○ Total

- PERFORMANCE

91.9

- RAW PERFORMANCE

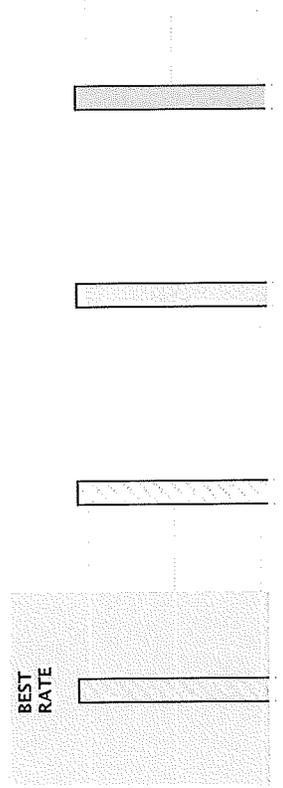
1,990

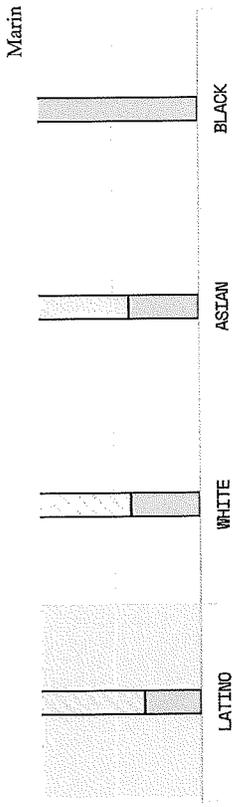
- DIFFERENCE FROM BEST

8.1

04 HOUSING

SUBPRIME (HIGHER-PRICED) LOANS PER 1,000 MORTGAGE LOAN APPLICANTS BY RACE





HOME MORTGAGE DISCLOSURE ACT (2010-2014)

MARIN COUNTY

—○ Asian

- PERFORMANCE

4.1

- RAW PERFORMANCE

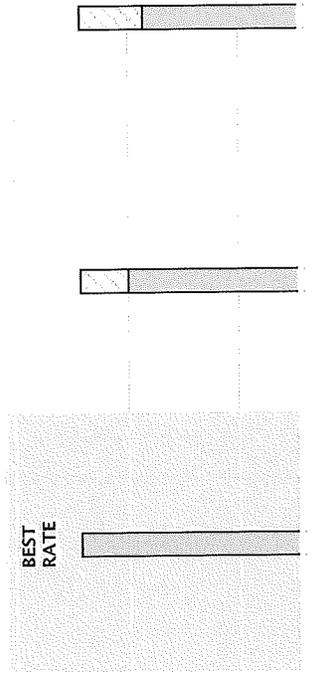
18

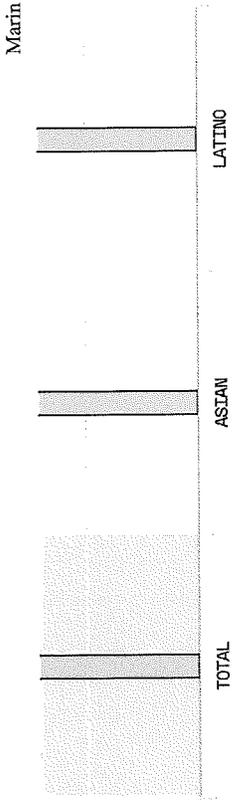
- DIFFERENCE FROM BEST

0.8

05 DEMOCRACY

VOTING IN MIDTERM ELECTIONS (%) BY RACE





CALIFORNIA CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT (AVERAGE OF 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014)

MARIN COUNTY

○ Total

- PERFORMANCE

68.3
%

- RAW PERFORMANCE

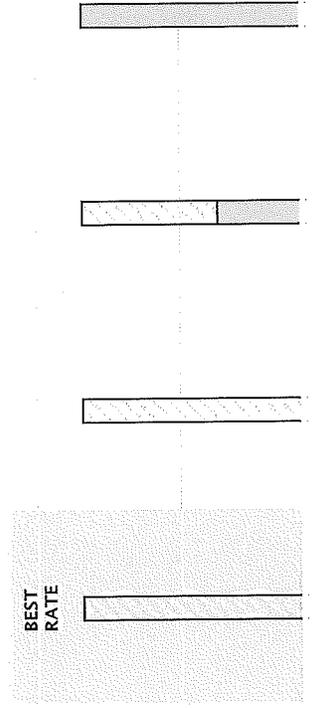
113,248

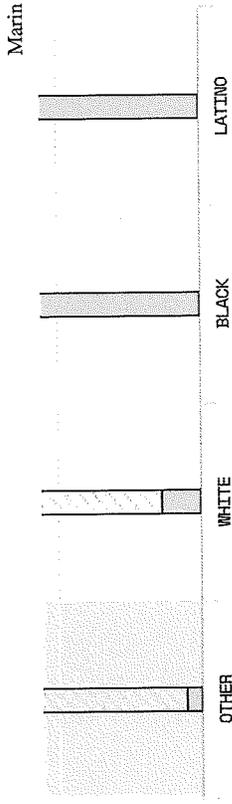
- DIFFERENCE FROM BEST

0.0
%

06 CRIME & JUSTICE

TRUANCY ARRESTS PER 10K SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN BY RACE





OPEN JUSTICE DATA, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (2010-2014); CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (2015-2016)

MARIN COUNTY

○ Total

- PERFORMANCE

9.51

- RAW PERFORMANCE

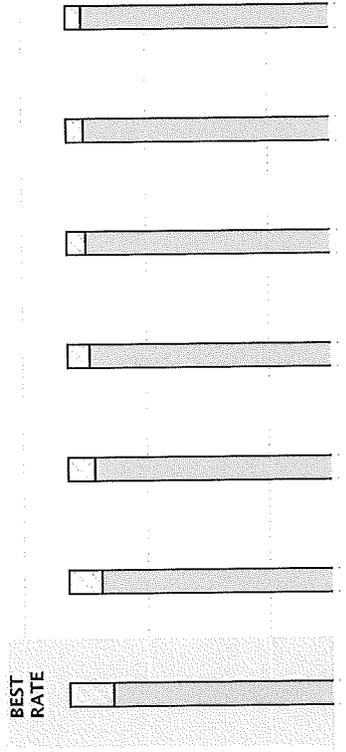
160

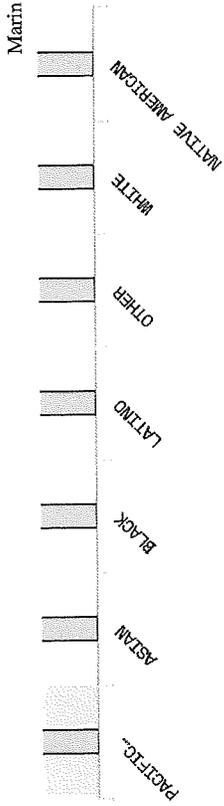
- DIFFERENCE FROM BEST

8.4

07 HEALTHY BUILT ENVIRONMENT

DRINKING WATER CONTAMINANTS BY RACE





DESHHA CAL ENVIRO SCREEN 3.0; AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES TABLE B03002 (2010-2014)

MARIN COUNTY

Total

- PERFORMANCE

263.1

- RAW PERFORMANCE

N/A

- DIFFERENCE FROM BEST

35.8

Get data updates and campaign news. Enter your email and zip code.

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• OUR PARTNERS

Unlocking the Power of People™



Advancement Project is a next generation, multiracial civil rights organization. In California, we build alliances and trust, use data-driven policy solutions, create innovative tools, and work alongside communities to ignite social transformation!



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Kerry Pierson's pieces from the IJ

1 message

Alex Stadtner <astadtner@gmail.com>

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 7:16 PM

To: Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Hello BOT,

Please accept and read these comments involving local activist, Kerry Pierson.

Excerpts from the Marin IJ.

Thanks,
Alex

2018-11-30: **Why does Dick Spotswood want to preserve 'Dixie'? by Kerry Pierson**

"Dick Spotswood's columns should be accompanied with a disclaimer. Something to the effect of, "The thoughts, history and recommendations following have no connection to truth, reality, or sensitivities of non-white people."

His recent articles suggesting that the name of the Dixie School District should be determined solely by a vote of district residents ignores the fact that 78 percent of the Dixie budget is made up of state and federal funding. His recommendation might make sense if Dixie were a private district. Perhaps that is the solution ... a private district.

I also note that Dick has never mentioned the fact that Marin leads the state in racial inequity, a distinction we should be ashamed of.

The suggestion that Noah Griffin and I are "outsiders," while some lady from Calaveras has standing, is as self-serving as it gets. Why is Dick so committed to preserving the name Dixie, no matter what the verifiable history shows and no matter how African-Americans or other social justice advocates feel about it.

2015-07-20: **Confederate flag rekindles Marin effort to change Dixie School District's name, by Janis Mara**

Two longtime Marin residents are calling for the Dixie School District to change its name, a decades-old demand revived by the national controversy over various associations with the Confederacy and racism.

Kerry Peirson of Mill Valley and Noah Griffin of Tiburon are spearheading the movement to change the San Rafael district's name. To these activists, and to Marin residents from similar movements in 1997 and 2003, "Dixie" is a Confederate anthem that conjures images of the slave era, racism and the Ku Klux Klan.

South Carolina this month took down the Confederate battle flag, a powerful symbol of slavery and the Old South that has roiled emotions in South Carolina for decades. The move was sparked by the slaughter of nine African-Americans at a church Bible study by an accused shooter who is an avowed racist.

The decision reverberated around the country, and Peirson and Griffin say it's time to take similar action.

"I'm hoping that Marin has evolved on these issues and is ready to embrace a new name and a new start for this old and distinguished school district," said Peirson, a local political activist and former Marin Community Foundation trustee.

"In the arguments going on in South Carolina and other places, at least those supporting the (Confederate battle) flag have an argument because they are in Dixie. For that to be here in California, it's inappropriate to the state," Peirson said.

District's response

Brad Honsberger, president of the governing board of the Dixie School District, was reluctant to say too much about the proposal.

"My understanding is that our district is named after Mary Dixie, a descendant of the Miwok Indian tribe, and she used to live in Vallecito, California. There is no relation to the Confederate flag," he said.

Honsberger said he could not recall the name of the book or who showed it to him, "but I do remember seeing it with my own eyes."

Asked if he was receptive to changing the name, he said, "It wouldn't be my decision. I couldn't comment on that."

Asked if he would be willing to give the proposed name change a hearing by putting it on the agenda of the next school board meeting, Honsberger said, "I don't have a comment on that."

Other school board members did not return calls seeking comment.

"Obama District"

The suggestion comes at the same time Sen. Steve Glazer, D-Orinda, introduced a bill in the California Legislature that would prohibit using the names of Confederate elected and military leaders on state and local property.

Glazer also sent a letter to Fort Bragg Mayor Dave Turner asking the city to eliminate its connection with Braxton Bragg. Bragg was a U.S. Army officer when Fort Bragg was named for him but later became a Confederate general.

The Board of Trustees of the Dixie School District held public hearings on the Dixie name in 1997, voting to continue using it.

In the 1990s, "I went to the school board meeting and asked them to consider it (changing the name)," Peirson said. "The room turned into the antebellum South. I was called a gorilla. I was afraid."

In 2001, the appropriateness of the district name was brought up by several speakers during hearings of the county Committee on School District Organization. Several speakers called the name "Dixie" offensive.

In 2003, district Superintendent Thomas Lohwasser was presented with a petition signed by 23 residents who wanted the name changed to the Miller Creek Elementary School District. Lohwasser could not be reached for comment last week.

Peirson said, "I don't want it to be like we are forcing them to change the name. I want it to be like South Carolina where they decided it was best.

"Name it the Obama School District. We will be the first of many," Peirson said. "Wouldn't that be a delicious outcome?"

Little Rock Nine

Griffin said he wouldn't mind the school district being named after President Barack Obama, but his idea would be to call it the Glenn Robinson School District, after the late African-American school trustee from Marin.

"Glenn Robinson was on the (Marin County) school district board for 40 years. I would not be against "Obama," but because of Glenn Robinson's service and local ties to Marin County, I would suggest that name," said Griffin, a public affairs consultant, speaker and musical performer who is an IJ columnist and former public member of the IJ's editorial board.

"I equate the massacred nine in Charleston with the massacred Little Rock Nine who opened the way to school integration," Griffin said. "There were nine martyrs to the cause in Charleston. You never know what your life is going to stand for, but because they gave their lives we are looking at putting the Confederate flag where it belongs and looking at the symbols fraught with meaning, especially for the African-American community."

The word "Dixie" is one of those symbols, Griffin and Peirson said.

"Dixie is synonymous with the Old South, the slave-bearing antebellum South," Griffin said.

The history of the name's origin is uncertain. Evidence from the Anne T. Kent California History Room backs assertions that the name was chosen on a dare by a Southerner who participated in the building of the old Dixie schoolhouse in 1864 on land donated by James Miller.

Griffin said his research shows that Miller, a slave owner from Missouri, purchased the land and gave the district its name.

Another theory suggests the school was named after land grant owner Don Timoteo Murphy's daughter, Dixie.

Huffman's view

Marin Supervisor Damon Connolly, a former Dixie School Board member whose supervisory district includes the Dixie district, also did not return calls seeking comment.

When contacted, Connolly's aide, Chris Calloway, said, "I mentioned it to him (Connolly) and it's something he has no background in or knowledge of."

Rep. Jared Huffman, D-San Rafael, introduced legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives this month to ban federal display and sale of the Confederate flag under certain circumstances.

Asked about the Dixie district proposal, Huffman said he "always wondered about the origin of the Dixie School District. It has always seemed a little out of place to me...."

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Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Noah Griffin IJ Pieces

1 message

Alex Stadtner <astadtner@gmail.com>

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 7:06 PM

To: Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Dear BOT,

Please accept and read these Marin IJ Voice pieces from local author, Noah Griffin.

Thank you,
Alex

4 attachments

-  **Marin Voice_ Dixie name-change issue 'a wake-up call for Marin' – Marin Independent Journal.pdf**
588K
-  **Marin Voice_ The name 'Dixie' is a throwback to the days of human suffering – Marin Independent Journal.pdf**
940K
-  **Marin Voice_ How will the next generation respond to past atrocities_ – Marin Independent Journal.pdf**
1727K
-  **Marin Voice_ Why the message of Martin Luther King still matters – Marin Independent Journal.pdf**
3063K

OPINION > COLUMNISTS

Marin Voice: Dixie name-change issue 'a wake-up call for Marin'

By NOAH GRIFFIN |

PUBLISHED: January 11, 2019 at 10:00 am | UPDATED: January 12, 2019 at 7:49 am

Each year a service organization to which I belong pays for and passes out hundreds of dictionaries to Marin third-graders. On the walls of many classrooms are pictures of American heroes. Inevitably one sees an image of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

As Marin County grapples with the quandary of a Dixie School District in our midst, I wonder what Marin is willing to do of a concrete nature to honor the memory of the martyred civil rights leader.

One way is to rid ourselves of the name Dixie. School board Trustee Marnie Glickman, the only Dixie board member to publicly support the name change, has gone on record, stating: "We have a moral obligation to teach our children about history. Dixie is a synonym of the Confederacy. It is a reminder of slavery, segregation and lynching."

In the past few weeks a phalanx of public officials, respected community leaders and organizations have stepped forward to join the movement to change the district's name. In addition to Congressman Jared Huffman, they include state Sen. Mike McGuire, county schools Superintendent Mary Jane Burke, county Supervisors Kate Sears and Dennis Rodoni, San Rafael Mayor Gary Phillips, Marin Community Foundation President and CEO Thomas Peters, the Marin Human Rights Commission, the Marin Democratic Central Committee, the Marin Green Party and the Marin Interfaith Council. For a complete list of supporters, now over 1,500, visit changethename.net.

Despite the snowballing avalanche of public support, there are still elected officials sitting on the sidelines, some trying to have it both ways. When you walk into Assemblyman Marc Levine's office, you'll see prominently displayed a Black Lives Matter placard. Unwilling to take a public stand on this issue, he told me and others who met with him that we should end our discussion by thanking him for meeting with us and that he would let us know he would think about the name-change issue. It's now been several weeks.

Marin Supervisor Damon Connolly, himself a former Dixie School Board member, wrote a letter to the district board, stating, "We can do better." Yet when asked directly, his staff wouldn't say whether he's for or against the name change. He reminds me of a politician who once said: "Some of my friends are for the issue, some are against. And I'm four-square for my friends."

Not taking a stand is taking a stand. Quoting Dante: "The hottest place in hell is reserved for those who in times of moral crisis, preserve their neutrality." I'm certain the newly elected Dixie trustees are weighing that thought. It was pointed out in a recent IJ editorial they sidestepped the issue in their endorsement interviews, which did not go unnoticed.

This issue is a wake-up call for Marin. It holds up a mirror to ourselves. It allows us to see who we really are rather than how we would like to see ourselves. Evidence of the skittishness of the "We Are Dixie" contingent is their unwillingness to attach their names to their website. How proud of their stance can they be?

Marin has deep-seated issues it must address, well beyond a mere symbolic step such as a name change.

Just in the past two weeks the principal of Miller Creek Middle School within the Dixie School District issued a letter to parents concerning "an increase of hate filled speech including racial slurs, imitations of accents, perpetuation of

Clearly there is much work to be done. On Jan. 15, the day of King's birthday, 10 names will be submitted to the Dixie Board of Trustees, which is legally bound to act upon them by Feb. 24. Please show your support that evening by attending the meeting at 6 p.m. in the district office, 380 Nova Albion Way in Terra Linda, and honor the memory of Dr. King in the process.

Tags: **Marin Voice**

Noah Griffin

Noah Griffin of Tiburon is a public affairs consultant, speaker and musical performer. He is a former public member of the IJ's editorial board.

OPINION > COLUMNISTS

Marin Voice: The name 'Dixie' is a throwback to the days of human suffering

By NOAH GRIFFIN |

September 21, 2018 at 10:00 am

The fight to strike the name “Dixie” from a Marin County school district is as old as the Republic and as young as the memory of those unmindful of the past. The arguments against the name change are straight out of the civil rights resistance playbook.

One of the arguments is that the people advocating change don't live in the district. But of the 23 speakers at the last Dixie School District board meeting, 18 live in the district. Other longtime veterans who initiated the struggle still live in the county and were asked to participate. Similar “outside agitator” labels were leveled at Martin Luther King Jr. when he left Atlanta to go to Alabama. He answered them in his “Letter from the Birmingham Jail” — “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Truth is no less true because of who says it or where they live. Some whites claim not to have witnessed racism in the district. To tell minorities what to be offended

Alums of Marin County high schools such as Tina Mitaine had to endure Slave Day in 1988 when white students came to school in black face. Others withstood Mexican Day, when wearing sombreros and bandoleros was thought funny. Sally Matsuishi, on the anniversary of Pearl Harbor, found "Jap" painted on her locker at a Marin County school. Her counselor excused the slur with another, explaining that it might have just meant she "was spoiled."

In the past two years the painted "N" word greeted the newly arrived principal at Tamalpais High School. The same word was recently spray-painted at Redwood High with the name of a long-time counselor attached.

Tam High faced its own moment of truth in 1988 when it changed its mascot from the Indians to the Red-Tailed Hawks. San Rafael barbershop owner Tino Wilson told me recently he started the school as an "Indian," finishing as a "Hawk."

Researching history clearly shows nothing is new. The arguments then were against political correctness, the desire to maintain history and tradition. Basically, their view? Get over it. Dixie area residents may soon find themselves up Miller Creek without a paddle.

Think back to the resistance to Muhammad Ali changing his name from Cassius Clay. Or Pittsburgh Pirates outfielder Roberto Clemente demanding to be called by his given name and not Bob, as the sportscasters insisted.

"Dixie" is an anachronistic throwback to an era of slavery, bondage and human suffering. By maintaining the name, we do a disservice to the district, the county and the children we seek to educate. It is disingenuous to maintain that Dixie is anything but synonymous with the Confederacy. That was acknowledged in the Dixie School Foundation's application for landmark status.

The war is over. The South lost. That chapter is closed. I do not deny Confederate history. There is, however, no need to celebrate it, to honor or to memorialize it in Northern California outside of a museum. Let that museum be the original Dixie Schoolhouse with an accurate acknowledgement of the name's origin. There should be no pride in maintaining a name that brings pain to any segment of our community.

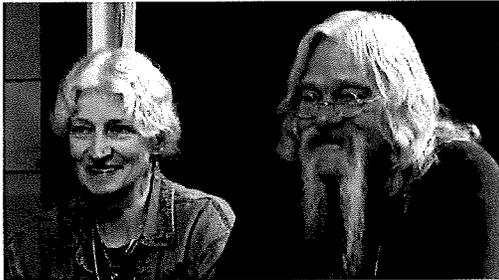
We are missing a teachable moment. Our children need to learn to neither trivialize nor dismiss the sensitivity of others. Or worse yet, to become generationally numb to their pain. What better opportunity than to stand up for Marin County values. Whose side are you on? Certainly, the David Dukes and the Donald Trumps of the

James Russell Lowell has written: "New occasions teach new duties. Time makes ancient good uncouth. They must ever up and onward who would keep abreast of truth." Winds of change are sweeping the land. The name Dixie, the song, Confederate statues and flags are being retired. We in Marin are not so special to ignore or think ourselves above doing our part to keep pace with the times.

Quoting Lincoln: "We cannot escape history. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down in honor or dishonor to the latest generation."

Noah Griffin of Tiburon is a public affairs consultant, speaker and musical performer. He is a former public member of the IJ's editorial board. He has been advocating for a Dixie School District name change since 1997.

Tags: **Marin Voice**



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This Is What the Alaskan Bush People Don't Want Their Fans to Know [↗](#)

By Ranker

 Ranker

The Alaskan Bush People captivated Discovery Channel viewers everywhere, but as we've learned in recent years, these...

Noah Griffin

Noah Griffin of Tiburon is a public affairs consultant, speaker and musical performer. He is a former public member of the IJ's editorial board.

OPINION > GUEST COMMENTARY

Marin Voice: How will the next generation respond to past atrocities?



Noah Griffin. Wednesday, Nov. 13, 2013. (Robert Tong/Marin Independent Journal)

Childhood trauma. We all go through it. The question is whether we grow from it, are stunted by it or feel impelled to action.

Tom Steyer and Kat Taylor's TomKat Foundation recently funded a trip for 25 students, largely from Marin City, to attend the opening of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration, in Montgomery, Alabama.

The museum is on a six-acre site overlooking the state Capitol. It is dedicated to the thousands of known and unknown victims of lynchings whose collective stories are told on steel columns hanging from the ceiling.

To wit, just one: Mary Turner "who after denouncing her husband's lynching by a rampaging white mob, was hung upside down, burned and then sliced open so that her unborn child fell to the ground." One of the students upon witnessing this account wrote she was lost for words.

I thought of the trauma I experienced when, as a youngster, my parents took me to hear the mother of the slain 12-year-old Emmett Till. Accused of whistling at an Alabama white woman, he was kidnapped and found three days later in the Tallahatchie River.

"The barbed wire holding the cotton-gin around his neck had become snagged on a root. There was a bullet in the boy's skull, one eye was gouged out, and his forehead was crushed on one side." The story was horrific enough. The lasting trauma for me was seeing the picture of his mangled, disfigured face on the cover of the memorial program. Part of my childhood innocence left me that day. Heading by train through the South that next summer I stayed as much as I could beneath the level of the window for fear of being shot.

The students from Felicia Gaston's Performing Stars who toured the museum in Montgomery have returned with a variety of responses. They range from anger, grief and sadness to resolution to right historical wrongs, in the various forms in which they exist today.

Who knows, maybe out of them may emerge the next Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, John Lewis or even Barack Obama. In the words of Alexander Pope: "As the twig is bent, so grows the tree."

Of further interest to me is how the rights of African-Americans can be so often sacrificed for the so-called greater good. One of the original aims of the NAACP was to enact federal legislation against state lynching insofar as it was sanctioned or not enforced on behalf of black people in the South. President Franklin D. Roosevelt claimed his hands were tied. To do so would alienate powerful Southern voting blocs within Congress and thereby stifle his New Deal programs.

Only time will tell how the trip to Alabama will play out among those who went. One student is returning to attend a college his grandmother never finished as she headed west to escape Jim Crow.

Jeannette Egenlauf filmed the excursion and is intent on making a documentary of the experience in hopes it can be shown throughout Marin County high schools to broaden the experiences of the general student population.

The Marin Community Foundation has stepped up to fund Marin City students under the auspices of the newly founded Social Justice Initiative to attend an Al Gore climate change conference in Los Angeles. The issue of environmental justice is critical within communities of color nationwide, demanding new leadership emerging from within to tackle issues such as those of Flint, Michigan.

Perhaps the lesson from these experiences is just to plant the seed. You don't know when harvest time will come.

Noah Griffin of Tiburon is a public affairs consultant, speaker and musical performer. He is a former public member of the IJ's editorial board.



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By ADTAXI - Adtaxi

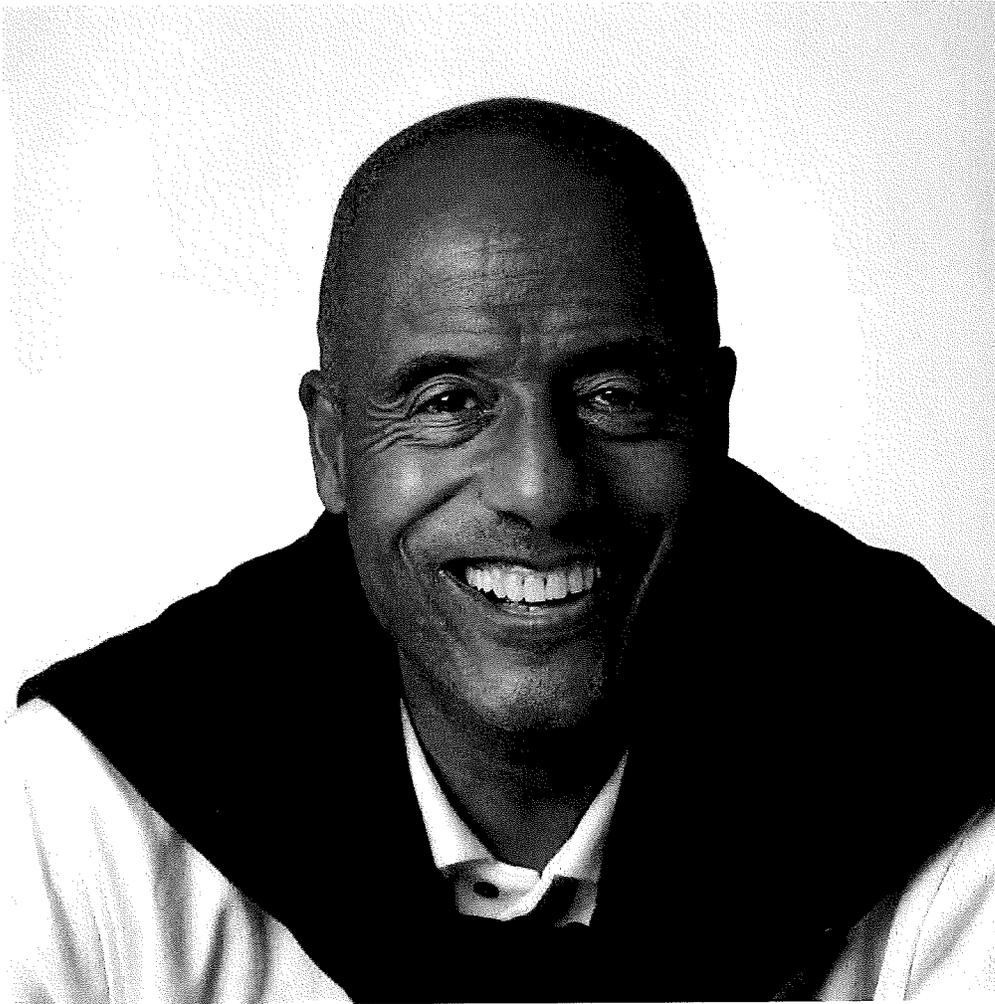


Noah Griffin

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OPINION > GUEST COMMENTARY

Marin Voice: Why the message of Martin Luther King still matters



Noah Griffin. Wednesday, Nov. 13, 2013. (Robert Tong/Marin Independent Journal)

By **NOAH GRIFFIN** |

PUBLISHED: April 6, 2018 at 11:42 am | UPDATED: July 23, 2018 at 11:51 am

ADVERTISING

Every era, every nation is blessed with its own heroes and martyrs. India had its Gandhi, South Africa its Mandela and America its Martin Luther King.

What do their lives teach us? How can we learn from them? Are they still relevant to us now?

Longfellow summed it up best. "Lives of great men all remind us/ We can make our lives sublime/ And departing leave behind us/ Footprints in the sands of time."

In the case of Gandhi, he was visited by the great theologian and mystic Howard Thurman, who in 1935 led the first delegation of African-Americans to meet with him in India. A member of Gandhi's delegation challenged Thurman's adherence to Christianity: "It was in the name of Christianity your people were enslaved."

Wrestling with that question, Thurman returned home to write "Jesus and the Disinherited." What would Jesus do with the pariahs, the outcasts of society? His writings were of tremendous meaning to Dr. King, about whom it was said he was never without a copy of the book. Thurman's thesis helped explain the revolutionary nature of Jesus' religion and how love and non-violence could transform America, as Gandhi did India.

King was able to synthesize Eastern thought with Western challenges to initiate the American Civil Rights Movement.

Mandela, from a jail cell at Robben Island, inspired my law school classmate

Each man's life built upon the other to inspire, to educate and to meet the challenge of his circumstances.

Who's to say King's life was not the impetus for the recent "March for our Lives" in Washington, D.C.?

King's "March on Washington," because of his iconic "I Have a Dream" speech, is emblazoned in our minds. Its impact galvanized the youth of America to engage in the sit-ins and the anti-war protests of the 1960's.

The year 1968 is forever seared in the minds of those who lived through it. Not only is it associated with the death of King but with the Tet offensive, the assassination of Bobby Kennedy, the passage of federal fair housing legislation, President Johnson's announced intention not to seek re-election and the nomination of Richard Nixon to the presidency.

Each event had its separate impact, but taken as a whole they signaled a watershed decade in American history.

The unanswered question remains: How would King be viewed had he not been assassinated?

The fact is, at the time of his death his image was taking a beating.

Many in the civil rights movement thought he had lost his way. They disparaged the Poor People's Campaign that King was in the process of organizing; many felt it diluted the strength of his battle against bias and segregation.

Others felt he was out of his depth campaigning against the war in Vietnam.

Still, others demanded he take a more militant stance on all the issues and lean more to the outspoken rhetoric of a Stokely Carmichael or a Malcom X.

Also left unanswered is the question: Were King to have lived out his normal course of days, would he be lumped in and largely overlooked and under-appreciated with the NAACP's Roy Wilkins or the Urban League's Whitney Young or even CORE's James Farmer?

Assassinations from the time of Lincoln forward put an abrupt end to life and at the same time ushered in the flower of immortality rooted in the soil of what-might-have-beens.

One thing for certain: King's legacy has been claimed by liberals and conservatives alike. Those who marched with him, such as Rep. John Lewis, continue his fight in the halls of Congress. Jesse Jackson still speaks out on issues of concern. Andrew Young, former mayor of Atlanta and ambassador to the United Nations, is a respected elder statesman in the struggle.

Some little-known and forgotten King facts: King's mother was assassinated in 1974. His brother died under mysterious circumstances in a pool drowning. The family sued the government in civil court for involvement in King's death and won.

Despite all this, Martin Luther King's life, legacy and spirit lives on to be claimed by succeeding generations in whatever struggle they feel is on behalf of truth, justice and equality.

Noah Griffin of Tiburon is a public affairs consultant, speaker and musical performer. He is a former public member of the IJ's editorial board.



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By ADTAXI - Adtaxi



Noah Griffin

Noah Griffin of Tiburon is a public affairs consultant, speaker and musical performer. He is a former public member of the IJ's editorial board.



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Change of Name for Dixie School District

1 message

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 5:01 PM

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

Dear Board Members & Staff,
I strongly agree with changing the name "Dixie".
It is a confederate symbol which represents an enormous
history of slavery, poverty, & hideous suffering of the Black
members of our society.

You now have an opportunity to change your district's
representation to one of inclusion, acceptance and honor
of all peoples who have contributed to building our country,
and Marin County in particular.

I do not have a particular name in mind, but would suggest
honoring the Native people who once flourished here and
still have living descendants in the area.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Muir Beach



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

James Miller

1 message

We Are Dixie <werdixie@gmail.com>

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 4:51 PM

To: commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org



12_13.docx

106K

#1- Holding up the portion of Noah's piece that talks about saving Marin from itself and passing it out to the school board members:

This is a school district and education is key. We talk over and over again about having good role models out there for our kids. What kind of role models are we being when bullying by grown ups is being accepted, when bringing people in from the outside to "fight" your battles is acceptable and when using social media for these purposes is rewarded. These people care nothing about our community, for them it is a fight to win, and will spare no expense in the casualties. They are ripping our community apart. Where will they be when this all blows over, when we have to pick up the pieces from a divided community that until now worked together....oh right, they will be making their documentary and gaining national attention and moving onto a new district and new cause so they can save all of Marin from itself.

I also want to add something about what kind of role model have our past school board members been who say they were embarrassed to say they were from the Dixie School district. We teach our kids to stand up for who they are and be true to themselves oh, right and not care so much whatever people think.

#2 History Repeats:

I would like to read you some quotes from descendants of James Miller. While these quotes are 21 years old, they speak to the character of the man. For your reference, this appeared in a Marin IJ article dated 2/12/97.

One of the descendants told the trustees at the school board meeting that James Miller fled Ireland, in part, to escape persecution for his Catholic beliefs. "His family came to America for freedom." "He was a supporter of minorities and not a persecutor of minorities." She also said I don't think we should try and erase history. We can't do away with the fact that Dixie existed.

Another descendant said, "History is sketchy as to the naming of the school. I think if you look at the character and the things that he did, he was not a person that persecuted and demeaned. He was a person that enriched."

While you say that was 20 years ago, perhaps their views have changed....well you can't change the character of a person who has been dead for 128 years.

What also hasn't changed is the objections from the community. Within the article it states, "Readers take objection to a Mill Valley man's proposal to change the name of the Dixie School District" That btw that person is Kiery Pierson and he still doesn't live in our district. I guess something has changed a little... now our community objects to an additional man from Tiburon joining forces to divide our neighborhood.

Please let our community decide what is best for us.

#3 The Dixie Name

What we do know....James Miller was a great man and one that cared deeply about education. He was pro Northern.

Tonight, I would like to ask these questions....

Have we seen anywhere what the actual dare or challenge for naming the school is? No

Is this all hearsay? Yes

Is it possible James Miller named the school after the Indian family with the last name Dixie who he came in contact with on his travels -- it's possible

Is it possible that James Miller named the school Dixie, for his 10 children, the last one born in 1858. -- it's possible. Let me remind you James Miller lived in Quebec for 13 years where they speak French and coincidentally, the French word for 10 is DIX.

Is it possible that he named the school district after the Confederate states where he never lived, to demean and oppress a group of people? Doubtful!

From what we know about James Miller and what his descendants have told us, it's highly unlikely that he would have chosen this name for harm.

Please let our community decide.

February 1, 2019

To: Dr. Jason Yamashiro, Dixie Superintendent
Dixie School Board

Re: The name of Dixie School District

I would like to present my perspective on the name "Dixie School". I have lived and paid taxes in the District for 36 years; my children attended Vallecito School for kindergarten. I was born in Marin and educated in the county.

I am well acquainted with the truth of what Dixie School represents from my knowledge of its existence growing up in Marin. Dixie School District was always held in high regard. In fact, when I was obtaining my teaching credential at Dominican University in the 1970, our program visited Dixie School as a model school for excellent teaching. I also did my student teaching at Dixie School. The school and district has always represented excellence in teaching and an inclusive atmosphere.

I have another bit of personal history which has greatly contributed to my opinion of Dixie School District:

I have visited the little white school house on Las Gallinas and there within read the registry of students. I have ancestral interest in these names signed so long ago, for they record the schooling of my aunts and uncle during the 1920's. I read Vivian Silva, Lucille Silva and Evo Silva, Jr and see that the children of immigrants were offered the gift of free schooling in this beautiful county and country.

Before the Golden Gate Bridge, before World War II, my grandfather, Evo, made the long journey from the Azores to work in Marin's dairy farms, as did many other Portuguese immigrants. At that time, Marin was rural and mostly undeveloped. Those immigrants were laborers from islands and might not have fit into the communities of mansions where many of them were employed, but their children received an education, one which my grandfather had not received in his home land.

My grandfather, [REDACTED] worked long, difficult hours in messy hard work; dairy farms in those days did not have the conveniences of

modern machines. Yet, his children went to school in a beautiful one room school house. To them, this was an American dream.

To me, Dixie School is a part of my family history, the history of many other American immigrants. It represents freedom and roots in a new culture and land.

And this is the meaning that Dixie School holds for me. California was a free state during the Civil War. Many people followed their dreams to come here and build a new life.

Perhaps this little school house and its name can be viewed from the context of what it truly represents, a school of hope, education and equal opportunity, a name to be proud of. There has never been any innuendo of racism in this District.

The truth of this district is represented in its name and real history and stands true and powerful. To attach any other meaning is not in service to the real long history of students, teachers and families who have maintained the highest standards of education, no retelling or false naming can erase that Truth in the real meaning of Dixie School.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the author.

San Rafael



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

The Dixie Name

1 message

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 3:00 PM

To: "commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org" <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

#3 The Dixie Name

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From what we know about James Miller and what his descendants have told us, it's highly unlikely that he would have chosen this name for harm.

Please let our community decide.

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.



Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Fw: Community Input

1 message

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 2:35 PM

To: "commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org" <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

re-sending.

----- Forwarded Message -----

From [REDACTED]

To: Alissa Chacko <achacko@dixieschooldistrict.org>; Brad Honsberger <brad.honsberger@gmail.com>; bnguyen@dixieschooldistrict.org <bnguyen@dixieschooldistrict.org>; mhutchinson@dixieschooldistrict.org <mhutchinson@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Sent: Wednesday, January 9, 2019, 8:46:01 AM PST

Subject: Community Input

Happy New Year. I hope you all had a wonderful holiday.

While I wish at this new year would allow the board to focus on our children, I believe your objectives might have to take a back seat to the name change issue. I know it is inherent that you hear from our community. While holding public forums is one way to do this, having the advisory election is the way to accurately hear from your constituents. There is fear running throughout our community members who do NOT want the name change as they are witness to the deceitful tactics the CTN group is enacting in order to get their message out unopposed.

Here are some examples:

- 1) Bruce Anderson asked the leadership of Can Do!, the Dixie School District Education Foundation, to immediately ask for my resignation because I dared to speak out against him and the Change The Name group. Please note when I did speak out, I did so as a private citizen not as a Can Do! board member. I wish I could say the same about Marnie Glickman.
- 2) A change the name advocate walked into a place of business of one of the We Are Dixie Supporters and berated her in front of clients and potential clients.
- 3) David Curtis, Marnie Glickman's husband, filed a police report against members of the We Are Dixie with false accusations.
- 4) David Curtis, posts demeaning and false information about the WE are Dixie supporters.

For those of you who know me and know the WAD supporter who was berated, you know we will not back down because someone tries to take us down. Unfortunately there is a large portion of our community that feels they cannot speak out for whatever reason.

Additionally as we have seen from all the recent press, the CTN group is doing everything to get media to be part of their narrative. They have hired someone to film every school board meeting and my guess is the media will show up at all public forums. For those of you who don't know, they have just reached out to the LA Times and the Huffington post to pitch them a story.

Again, for most people it takes a lot for them to speak in public. Some people might be comfortable being filmed but I know others who would never speak out if there was a camera in the room. So let me ask you this, do you think you would get a true representation of our community in these forums?

Here are some excerpts from personal emails I received and emails received by WAD that show that while people support WAD, they cannot are either afraid or cannot speak out publicly:

- 1)A senior in the community who was open to helping her daughter gather signatures for the We Are Dixie Petition now remains silent. As she sat there at an event, she heard two of her close friends say if you don't support the name change, you are racist. While she has made it clear she supports our efforts she is afraid to outwardly do so.
- 2)A Dixie School District graduate who chose to raise her kids in the district had this to say: " I'm in a totally tough situation that frankly I'm pretty disturbed about. A couple of my clients support the other side of this issue. My husband and I discussed this at length and I need to be super careful not to jeopardize my business. In addition, there are other possible issues with coaches that involve our kids- go figure. I'm going to have to reluctantly pull out of this. I am so sorry!!!!!! I appreciate what you are doing. Isn't this sad and ridiculous?!"
- 3)Another quote from a Dixie resident "I totally support your efforts but I am not supposed to be commenting on politics as a State of CA employee. County employees for Marin would also not want to be speaking in public about politics, or any public servant. We sign a form when hired."
- 4)Another resident commented that she has a high level job at a large local employer and is afraid to speak up as people might retaliate against her company.
- 5)"I signed the petition and left a comment, but meant to do it anonymously. Is there any way you can change my signature and posting to anonymous? I have a neighbor who is a real name change fanatic and heard she is checking the list routinely. While I do not support any school funds being diverted from educating our kids towards a name change, I'd like to keep the peace in the neighborhood."
- 6)"I support keeping the school name as is. Unfortunately I cannot openly show my support due to my employment."

Unfortunately Ms. Glickman and team will use any public forum as a soap box and media circus. I urge you to stay the course with the advisory election so you can truly hear from your constituents.

All the best,





Comment on petitions <commentonpetitions@dixieschooldistrict.org>

Fwd: Name change

1 message

Fri, Feb 1, 2019 at 11:52 AM

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

Additional Comments from October. A very important change in the equation occurred in December when concerns about funding were removed from the table.

Local philanthropists understand the need to change the name.
[REDACTED]

On Wed, Oct 10, 2018 at 8:50 AM [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Brad,

I left at 11:15 last night so didn't get to see the end of the meeting or hear how the resolution went. I do not envy the board for being in such a challenging position, but there is a way forward. I'm so appreciative of you and all your board members service and attention to this issue. Thank you.

I just wanted to thank you for putting this issue on the agenda and giving it a public airing.

Both sides are fired up, but for different reasons.

One side is apparently most concerned about finances. I believe this could be addressed by private funds if backers of a name change fund-raised to off-set any costs associated with the change.

The other side is deeply disturbed and saddened by the symbol of racism on the public school. This side of the issue only has one way of being addressed. The only way to take away this painful reminder of racism and white privilege is by changing the name.

I suggest that paying for community voting and kicking the can down the road is not the best way forward. I suggest that the board should show more leadership against the evils (consciously and unconsciously) displayed in the District's name. Follow your heart and not your pocketbook. If a petition for a reasonable name comes forward and private donors commit to paying for the change, please give it careful consideration.

As I alluded in an earlier email. This is a thorn. It's already festering and more and more eyes are turning toward the issue. The sooner you and your colleagues change the name the sooner we can get on with some much needed healing.

Thank you for your service and consideration,
[REDACTED]