



Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin

The Tribally Self-Determined Government Organization
of Free Miwoks, Federally Documented Coast Miwok Lineal Descendants

Recommendation of the Council

ROC# 2021-01

January 13, 2021

Concerning: **The Renaming of the High School in San Anselmo, Marin County, California**

Inquiry

It has been brought to the attention of the Coast Miwok Tribal Council of Marin, that the high school in San Anselmo, CA, formerly Sir Francis Drake High School, has dissolved its direct association to the namesake of SFD. The Council was asked if a name from the Coast Miwok tradition would be appropriate to rename the high school, and if so, what?

Convening of the Council

Council members conducted independent research on this matter, and on January 11, 2021, the Coast Miwok Council of Marin convened to confer and make a recommendation.

Position

The high school in San Anselmo is within the ancient village community of *Awani-wi*, and within the ancestral home of the Coast Miwok of Marin County.

The Council recognizes the courage of the School Board for making important and difficult changes that reflect a more honest perspective of colonial history.

A high school should not go without a *towish awe*, “good name.” Young people need good role models and emblems and banners and signs of courage.

For the youth, our future leaders, who attend this high school; for the faculty and the teachers and the district who operate this high school in a good way; for the families and community who hold the values and purpose of this high school; we offer the following recommendation and offering:

Recommendation & Offering

We offer *Awani-wi*, the name of ancient Coast Miwok village that encompasses the present-day cities of San Rafael and San Anselmo:

***Awani-wi* High School**

Awani-wi is well documented on historic maps by ethnographers and is often depicted with a small dot near San Rafael. *Awani-wi* was not a dot, but rather a large community that spanned from the bay inland along the fresh waterways, much as it does today.

***Awani-wi* means “Red-Earth Painted Basket”**

What is less well known, is the meaning of *Awani-wi*. It comes from ‘*awa-n ewis*, or *red-earth painted basket*. ‘*A-wa* is red clay pigment, ochre, red earth, sometimes yellow earth. Many Nations agree that ‘*A-wa*, red ochre, is strong medicine. ‘*Ewis* is the general term for basket, or the open mouth basket, or wicker water jar. The beauty, diversity, quality and function of Coast Miwok baskets are well known. The *-n* makes the ‘*awa* into something that can happen to the ‘*ewis*. ‘*A-wa* is often used as paint, and in this case to decorate baskets and seal the baskets to make them water-tight for carrying or holding water. *Awani-wi yomi* (village) must have been known for its fine red-earth painted baskets.

As an emblem for a logo as may be useful in representation of *Awani-wi* High School, we offer the use of the imagery of the *red-earth painted basket*. The basket may depict the design of *Kulupi*, the Hummingbird.

As a Mascot:

If the School Board agrees to accept the *Awani-wi* name, we would like to send a friend to watch over the ‘*awa-n ewis*, the Red-Earth Basket, and as such we offer as a mascot for the high school’s sporting and academic teams and the like the use of a favorite First People Hero:

***Kulupi*, the Hummingbird**

Kulupi plays an important roll in Coast Miwok First People stories. *Oye Oyish*, Old Man Coyote, convinces *Kulupi* to steal fire from the sky-people and bring it down to earth, so the people could have light and heat. *Kulupi* is courageous and seeks knowledge and brings the fire. It is appropriate for *Kulupi* to watch after *Awani-wi*, the Red-Earth Basket, and its most important contents: *our community’s young people*.

Making this Recommendation:

Councilman Dean Hoaglin,

Dance Captain & Headman of *Etcha Tamal, Olompali*

Councilman Joe Sanchez

Hoipu of *Etcha Tamal, Petaluma, Nicasio, Tomales Bay*

Councilman Stephen A. Sciallo

Hoipu of *Etcha Tamal, Petaluma, Nicasio, Tomales Bay*

Councilman Jason Deschler

Dance Captain & Headman of *Etcha Tamal, Petaluma, Nicasio, Tomales Bay*

Councilman Sky Road Webb

Hoipu & Fire Captain of Tomales Bay, *Etcha Kalum, Olema, Bolinas*