

On June 30, 2023, to comply with Minnesota Statutes § 121A.041, Esko Public Schools officially ended its use of the longtime “Eskomos” team name and igloo logo. This change complies with a Minnesota law banning Indigenous nicknames and imagery in public schools. Review the statute here:

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/121A.041/pdf>

Initially, a deadline of September 1, 2025, was established for removal of all imagery, but was later delayed until 2026.

Since the passage of the law, Esko Public Schools has worked to comply with the mandate: updating digital media, purchasing new uniforms, clocks, and seating while removing other logos embedded across facilities. Leading up to the September 1, 2026 deadline, the District is finalizing this process.

Over the summer, new flooring in the high school commons has been installed, covering a tile igloo. The varsity gym floor has been refinished to remove another. “Home of the Eskomos” has been taken down below the Esko Public Schools sign above the main entrance. And, the igloo and end zone script “Eskomos” will soon be painted over on Esko’s turf field. The light-up “turf club” igloo, recognizing our many donors to the 2013 North Field project, has been donated to, and graciously accepted by, the Esko Historical Society.

Note: Esko’s 13-year-old turf field has some usable life remaining. After exploring multiple options, the only financially responsible option emerged—professionally paint over the igloo and lettering as required, while using the field until it reaches the end of its functional life. Even if that is just a year, maximizing our community investment in the playing surface was the appropriate action. The field will be compliant with the law, but it will be noticeably painted.

These projects total in the hundreds of thousands of dollars in District funds, with no financial support granted by the legislature to comply with the directive. Multiple attempts have been made to create a funding mechanism regarding this mandate, but none have been included in a bill or received a floor vote. District advocacy led a local legislator to introduce a bill specifying Esko for replacement costs. That bill was not moved forward, but is reviewable below:

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/94/2025/0/HF/830/versions/0/pdf/>

Costs and stakeholder input will be considerations as the District considers future nickname and mascot-related discussions and actions.

Together in success,

Greg Hexum

Superintendent
Esko Public Schools