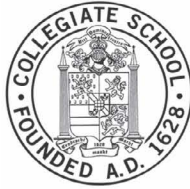


## Board of Trustees' Decision Letter on the History and Symbols Task Force's Recommendations



June 17, 2020

Dear Members of the Collegiate Community,

We write on behalf of the Board of Trustees to share the decisions we have made relating to Collegiate's symbols. The Board carefully considered the recommendations of the History and Symbols Task Force, which the Board formed in response to the Open Letter published by our students in February 2019. The 17-member Task Force was chaired by trustees James Solomon '83 P'25 and Rev. John Vaughn P'20, and included trustees, parents, alumni, administrators, faculty, and students. The Task Force undertook an intensive, year-long process that included numerous focus groups, a community-wide survey, consultation with historians, and extensive deliberation. We are indebted to them for their work, and we hope you will read *The Report of the History and Symbols Task Force*, which details its process and rationale.

The Board has adopted the Task Force's recommendations. In doing so, the Board voted to update and redesign the school's mascot, the Dutchman. The image is considered by many in our community to be exclusionary and inconsistent with our Statement of Beliefs. The image of the Dutchman has changed a number of times over the years, and it is time to change it again. In addition, the Board voted to update the school seal, so as to remove the two explicit religious references (the "A.D." and the Latin motto) in light of the school's legal separation from the Collegiate Church over the last several decades. A group of faculty, administrators, parents, alumni, and students led by Mr. Solomon and Rev. Vaughn will announce a process in the fall to update the image of the Dutchman. We expect the process to include community-wide input on the selection of a new design. We will also work with our internal experts to identify a new Latin phrase. Finally, the Board voted to retain our nickname, "Dutchmen", and our colors, orange and blue. Our nickname and colors invoke the bonds of friendship and ties to the school that link Collegiate boys to one another throughout their lives. This concludes the work of this Task Force.

The changes we are announcing should not be viewed as an effort to erase history, but rather to reflect our commitment to being a more inclusive and welcoming community. We intend to display permanently in 301 Freedom Place South the current and historic versions of these symbols, even after they are updated. They will be phased out of, but not banned from, our community. Over time, we will further incorporate into the life of the school the study and celebration of our past. Understanding Collegiate's nearly 400-year history is our responsibility and should be part of each boy's education.

This work, and the Board's discussions, occurred prior to the tragic killing of George Floyd and the national discussion and actions that followed it. As stated in the community-wide letter sent last week, the Board and the School are refocusing our efforts to combat within Collegiate the institutional and other racism that pervades so much of our society. Seeking to make our symbols more unifying is a small but important step, we hope, in our commitment to be a more inclusive Collegiate. Much more work lies ahead.

Sincerely,

Lee M. Levison  
Headmaster

Jonathan K. Youngwood '85 P'19, '25  
President, Board of Trustees

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