

Students Say 'Millionaire' Mascot Is Divisive

Many years ago, Americans of wealth and privilege vacationed in a place called Lenox, Massachusetts.

Over the years, many of them gave back by lavishing the community with philanthropy. They built a school and purchased uniforms for local children.

The Berkshire Eagle reported that the millionaires were central to the survival of the town after many citizens left to fight in the wars.

As a way of recognizing the kindness and generosity of their benefactors, Lenox Memorial Middle and High School named its mascot—"The Millionaires."

But a new generation of students say it's time for a new nickname—because they feel the word "millionaire" has become offensive and divisive.

A recent survey found that 67 percent of the student body was in favor of a new nickname.

"While the name beautifully memorializes the millionaires who supported our school and town during a difficult time, the majority of our student body feels no longer represented by the name," one student leader told the newspaper.

The student leader went on to say that some students have been bullied because of the nickname and they "embarrassed to wear school jackets in public for fear of being made fun of, or about going to basketball games, listening to spectators make rude comments regarding the mascot."

But the crux of the matter is the divide between the haves and the have-nots.

"In today's polarizing political climate, the term 'millionaires' has become associated with the top one percent of our country, which excludes and burdens a very large majority of the population and currently plays a large role in the division of the United States" the student leader told the newspaper.

Instead of explaining to the children that success and wealth are to be commended and not condemned, the school district said they would take up the name change request at an upcoming meeting.

There's a reason why one of the most successful game shows on television was called, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* and not *Who Wants to live in Poverty?*

State Rep. William Pignatelli applauded students for being engaged and supports the idea of a better name.

"To use that phrase when people young and old are struggling is a poor reflection of what Lenox is all about," he **told the newspaper.**

Mr. Pignatelli, by the way, is a Democrat.

It's unfortunate the kids at Lenox High School are ashamed of the prosperity that built their school and put clothes on their backs.

But since they are shopping for a new moniker, perhaps I could offer some suggestions. How about the Lenox High School Mighty Paupers or the Fighting Food Stampers?