

# Question

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**TO:** Senate

**QUESTION FROM:** Senators Kristi Kouchakji, Addy Parsons, and Darshan Daryanani

**RESPONSE FROM:** Senator Fabrice Labeau, Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning)

**SUBJECT:** Question Regarding the Naming of the Men's Varsity Team

**MEETING DATE:** November 18, 2020

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**PREAMBLE:** On April 12, 2019, Vice Chancellor and Principal Suzanne Fortier released a statement saying that the men's varsity team of McGill University will no longer be known as the "Redmen," a racially insensitive slur. Since this statement, the men's team has been referred to simply as "the McGill teams" with the promise of a new name by the end of the academic year<sup>1</sup>.

After this decision, Principal Fortier and Prof. Fabrice Labeau, Interim Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) established a steering committee to decide on a new name for the team. The committee is chaired by Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning) Fabrice Labeau and for McGill varsity head coach Mr. Hubert T. Lacroix. The original timeline outlined in the Meeting Summary of the November 26, 2019 meeting was to release a name by the start of the 2020-2021 season, with the latest promised date to be August 2020<sup>2</sup>.

McGill University has neglected to publicly announce a new name for the promised 2020-2021 season, effectively delaying the process of replacing the original offensive name.

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**QUESTION:**

1. Has there been a decision regarding the new name for the men's varsity team of McGill?
2. If so, why has there been a delayment in announcing the new name? How did the ongoing pandemic play a role in delaying this process?
3. When is the projected date of the promised announcement?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/principal/communications/statements/decision-about-redmen-name>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/studentlifeandlearning/current-projects/mens-varsity-teams-naming-process-committee/meeting-summaries?fbclid=IwAR3dWy649W7mtNBmsn7yvAL1rvVUxCEYLTPoQE4U7g99qSplPJmdyR7oFGY>

**RESPONSE**

Dear Senators Kouchakji, Parsons, and Daryanani,

Thanks for your question, which is very timely. The delay in the finalization of the proceedings of the committee was primarily due to the arrival of COVID-19, which required the University to drastically refocus its resources onto protecting the health and safety of our community and shifting our critical operations to a remote format. This included ensuring the continuation of essential services and supports for our students and staff, and resulted in some delays on non-COVID-19-related projects.

It should also be noted that our original target for announcing a new name was immediately preceding the beginning of McGill's next sports season, and due to COVID-19 the season itself has been delayed.

This being said, we understand that the community is eager to know the outcome of the process, and so, at the time of writing this answer, we are planning to announce the new name very soon, despite continued uncertainty about when the actual sports season will take place.

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