



Nick Sandmann from Covington Catholic High School stands in front of Native American activist Nathan Phillips while the latter bangs a drum in his face in Washington on Jan. 18, 2019. (Kaya Taitano via Reuters)

PREMIUM **US NEWS**

Nicholas Sandmann Reaches Settlement With NBC

By [Mimi Nguyen Ly](#) | December 19, 2021 Updated: December 19, 2021

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Nicholas Sandmann has announced that he’s reached a [settlement](#) with NBCUniversal after more than two years since he filed a defamation lawsuit against the media company.

“At this time I would like to release that [NBC](#) and I have reached a settlement. The terms are confidential,” the 19-year-old Kentucky teen [wrote on Twitter](#).

The two parties agreed to dismiss the case “with prejudice and in its entirety,” without a judgment from the court, according to documents ([pdf](#)) filed on Dec. 17 in the U.S. District Court in the Eastern District of Kentucky.

The suit's dismissal "with prejudice" signifies that Sandmann can't refile the same claim again in that court.

NBC was among several media outlets sued by Sandmann for defamation after media reports claimed that he and other students harassed a Native American man, Nathan Phillips, at an incident in Washington on Jan. 18, 2019. At the time, Sandmann, who was a student of Covington Catholic High School, was attending the anti-abortion March for Life rally in Washington with other students.

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Sandmann and other students faced threats and denunciations from many people, including public figures, following the publication of the stories.

Short videos of Sandmann, who was wearing a MAGA (Make America Great Again) hat standing face-to-face with Phillips at the Lincoln Memorial, had gone viral. Due to their short length, the videos made it appear that Sandmann and fellow students had confronted Phillips. Phillips himself told several media outlets that he was confronted and harassed by the students.

But a longer version of the video showed that it was actually Phillips who had approached Sandmann. Phillips was chanting and beating a drum while Sandmann responded by standing still and smiling.

After a longer, 15-minute, video emerged, many public figures that had initially issued statements against Sandmann issued apologies, retractions, or simply deleted their statements.

On May 1, 2019, Sandmann [filed a defamation lawsuit \(pdf\)](#) against NBCUniversal, seeking \$275 million.

"NBCUniversal created a false narrative by portraying the 'confrontation' as a 'hate crime' committed by Nicholas," the lawsuit reads.

Attorneys described Sandmann in the original [lawsuit](#) as a "16-year-old student who stood quietly for several minutes after being unexpectedly confronted without explanation by Nathan Phillips," and said that Phillips "beat a drum and sang loudly within inches of [Sandmann's] face on January 18, 2019, at the Lincoln Memorial."

According to the suit, Sandmann was “an easy target for NBCUniversal to advance its anti-Trump agenda because he was a 16-year-old white, Catholic student who had attended the Right to Life March that day and was wearing a MAGA cap at the time of the incident which he had purchased earlier in the day as a souvenir.”

Sandmann previously reached settlements in 2020 with [The Washington Post](#) and [CNN](#) for officially undisclosed amounts; he had sued them for \$250 million and \$275 million, respectively.

The Covington Catholic graduate, now 19 years old, still has ongoing lawsuits against outlets ABC, CBS, Gannett, Rolling Stone, and The New York Times.



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