

November 18, 2025

Matthew Singer
Admitted in Alaska and Oregon
D: 907-339-7129
C: 907-830-0790
msinger@schwabe.com

VIA E-MAIL <u>attorney.general@alaska.gov</u> <u>stephen.cox@alaska.gov</u>

Attorney General Stephen J. Cox Alaska Department of Law 1031 West 4th Avenue, Suite 200 Anchorage, AK 99501-1994

RE: Anchorage School District response to November 14, 2025 letter

Dear Attorney General Cox,

I represent the Anchorage School District (ASD). Pursuant to the Alaska Rules of Professional Conduct, any further correspondence from you to ASD regarding this matter should be addressed directly to me. Your letter dated November 14, 2025 has been received.

First, we wish to address the implied assertion of authority in your document. As you know, ASD is governed by a locally elected school board, pursuant to the home rule charter of the Municipality of Anchorage. We do not believe the State of Alaska's Attorney General is vested with any statutory or constitutional powers supporting your lengthy demands for information contained in your November 14 letter.

In addition, <u>publicly available reporting</u> indicates you may have a conflict of interest regarding this particular matter due to your status as a co-founder of a private K-12 school, which received "help and support" via a relationship with Hillsdale College. Please advise if you choose to recuse yourself from any further engagement, so we can facilitate contact with the appropriate designee within the Alaska Department of Law.

As a courtesy, we have dedicated the time necessary to correct mischaracterizations made in your letter. A review by ASD finds the facts of this situation to be as follows:

A non-ASD affiliated third party, acting on their own initiative, placed "non-endorsement" stickers on pamphlets which contained organizational views and promotional material, intended for distribution on ASD campuses. This action was

taken pursuant to instructions in a Flyer/Poster rule that ASD revised under the direction of then-Superintendent Dr. Bishop.

- ASD acknowledges that the application of this policy to a pamphlet (as opposed to a flyer or poster) was a mistake. The pamphlets should have been reviewed by a different team, such as Teaching and Learning or Donations. The error was not corrected when the pamphlets were provided to ASD.
- Challenges with appropriate processing of this pamphlet were first brought to then-Superintendent Dr. Bishop's attention via an email from a concerned citizen on May 1, 2021. The citizen offered a photograph of the same or a similar Hillsdale College pamphlet with the same disclaimer and asked for an explanation. Unfortunately, ASD appears to have no record that Dr. Bishop ever responded to this citizen or that the issue was addressed. We regret this inaction caused the matter to go unresolved for so long.

We ask that you join us in recognizing that no actor in this situation harbored ill intent and instead concentrate on the major challenges facing Alaska's students: unpredictable and inadequate funding, teacher recruitment and retention challenges due to rising health care costs and a deficient retirement plan, supporting those impacted by the recent natural disaster in western Alaska, and the urgent need to improve student achievement through successful implementation of the Alaska Reads Act.

Our community expects steady, student-centered leadership, and that is where ASD will continue to direct its full focus, rather than giving undue attention to what appears to be intentional manipulation of information and political grandstanding from your office. Given her background and knowledge of the subject matter, Dr. Bishop should be able to address any other questions regarding then-Superintendent Bishop's policy, its application, and its history.

For your reference, we have attached and linked the following materials:

- A copy of ASD's public statement on this matter.
- A copy of the 2021 email obtained through a public records request, sent to then-Superintendent Bishop, raising the same concern about the same pamphlet and disclaimer.
- A <u>link</u> to ASD's current flyer and poster guidelines, consistent with those in place during Dr. Bishop's tenure.

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- A <u>link</u> to a recent Team ASD story highlighting Mears Middle School students learning about our nation's founding documents.
- A <u>link</u> to a recent Commonwealth North discussion featuring Alaska superintendents, underscoring our collective focus on student success, educational stability, and leadership grounded in service.

Sincerely,

SCHWABE, WILLIAMSON & WYATT, P.C.

Matthew Singer

MSI:jehu

Attachments: as stated

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