

February 8, 2024

Office of the Attorney General
attorney.general@alaska.gov
Alaska Department of Law
1031 West 4th Avenue, Suite 200
Anchorage, AK 99501-5903

Alaska State Ombudsman
Attention: Intake
ombudsman@akleg.gov
1500 W. Benson Blvd
Anchorage, Alaska 99503

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
Attention: Complaints
eed.contact@alaska.gov
PO Box 110500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500

Re: Formal Complaint Against City of Ketchikan, Ketchikan Public Library, Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District, and Ketchikan Gateway Borough School Board

To Whom it May Concern:

I am filing this formal complaint against the City of Ketchikan, the Ketchikan Public Library, the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District, and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School Board for the deliberate retaliatory actions of their employees and elected representatives in response to the legal and valid Requests for Reconsideration I filed and appealed with the public library and high school library beginning on May 16, 2023. Attached is a timeline and copies of pertinent correspondence and social media posts in support of this complaint.

At the Ketchikan Wearable Arts Show on February 2 and 3, 2024, librarians Lisa Pearson, (reportedly the leader of the performance); Shawna Carter, and Gayle Brooks, together with the University of Alaska Southeast Library Manager/Academic Support Specialist and Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly Member, Kathy Bolling; Ketchikan High School librarian, Caitlin Jacobson; and Ketchikan Public Library's Library Director, Pat Tully, performed a piece entitled, "Polite Te Bastardes Carborundorum." Newspaper, radio, and social media posts prove that this quote together with their motif and costumes were meant as retaliation against residents who have recently challenged youth titles and to all those who speak out in support of those challenges — challenges that were fully conducted within established policy framework as evidenced in the attached documentation, despite the librarians' media claims to the contrary. The translation of this quote, "Don't Let the Bastards Grind You Down," hurls insulting and abusive vulgarity at anyone who has or might avail themselves of this valid and statutory reconsideration process. The complexity of the presentation and timing of the show indicate that

these public employees and elected representatives were actively working to undermine the established Reconsideration process while they were supposedly evaluating citizen Requests.

Beginning on September 28, 2023, I submitted and appealed three Requests for Reconsideration to the Ketchikan Public Library, carefully following their own published policy. As stated in my January 17 and February 1, 2024 letters to Delilah Walsh, Ketchikan City Manager, because of those actions, I have been unjustly accused of violating the United States Constitution, wasting library and city resources, racially profiling, and chipping away at parental rights by citizens, library employees, and fellow Library Advisory Board members. Kathy Bolling and Grant Echohawk, Borough Assembly members, were two such accusers, saying they spoke on behalf of themselves as individuals. Kathy Bolling also took part in the performance, clearly acting on behalf of her job as the Library Manager/Academic Support Specialist of the University of Alaska Southeast.

Caitlin Jacobson plastered pages of *Flamer* all over her costume for the performance pointedly flinging her outer cloak into the audience in her haste to reveal these pages. *Flamer* is one of the books whose placement in the Ketchikan High School Library I challenged using the school district's own policy beginning September 28, 2023. Following my submission, the school district changed that policy twice while my challenges were still in process, radically restricting and negating its effect. What's more, when I appealed the superintendent's denial of the challenge to the school board, the board, as defended by their president (seen enthusiastically supporting and enjoying Ms. Jacobson's and the other librarians' Wearable Arts Show performance/statement), deliberately released the personal identifiable information I was required to include with those challenges. As exemplified by this performance and many supporters' reactions to it, that action is a direct threat to my family's safety.

These retaliatory, unethical, reckless, and dangerous actions by city and school district employees and elected representatives are just the sort of repercussions others referred to when they told me that, while they supported my challenges, they would not be speaking out in public. These individuals and the public entities they represent have undermined and violated public trust; subverted policies, procedures, and statutes; and planned, supported, and/or participated in retaliatory actions. In doing so, they have, among other things, openly disregarded and endangered the safety of me and my family. I have repeatedly voiced my concerns and complaints to local authorities as a borough resident and attempted to improve library policies and procedures as an appointed Library Advisory Board member. At every turn I have been dismissed, contradicted, accused, shut down, and now retaliated against. I am, therefore, submitting this formal complaint.

Sincerely,



Deborah Simon, M.Ed.
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360-860-1349

cc (without attachments): David Kiffer, Mayor
Janalee Gage, Vice-Mayor
Jack Finnegan, Council Member
Riley Gass, Council Member
Mark Flora, Council Member
Judy Zenge, Council Member
Jai Mahtani, Council Member
Lallete Kistler, Council Member
Delilah Walsh, City Manager
Mitch Seaver, City Attorney
City of Ketchikan
334 Front Street
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

cc (without attachments): Stephen Bradford, School Board President
Keenan Sanderson, School Board Vice President
Nicole Anderson, School Board Clerk-Treasurer
Judy Guthrie, School Board Member
Tom Huette, School Board Member
Melissa O'Bryan, School Board Member
Katherine Tatsuda, School Board Member
Michael Robbins, Superintendent
Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District
333 Schoenbar Rd.
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

cc (without attachments): Rodney Dial, Mayor
Glen Thompson, Vice-Mayor
Jeremy Bynum, Assembly Member
Grant EchoHawk, Assembly Member
Austin Otos, Assembly Member
Sharli Arntzen, Assembly Member
Jaimie Palmer, Assembly Member
Kathy Bolling, Assembly Member
Glenn Brown, Borough Attorney
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