



## Anchorage School District

5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd.  
Anchorage, Alaska 99504-3135  
(907) 742-4000

### **SCHOOL BOARD**

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President

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### **SUPERINTENDENT**

Jim Browder, Ed.D.

January 30, 2013

Mayor Sullivan,

I am very disappointed that you continue to use messages, such as the Education Summit video summary, that inaccurately portray the Anchorage School District. As you are aware, the district has made significant changes in recent months; changes that were guided by the school board and myself. Many of those changes are outcomes also supported by participants in the summit.

In order to have a quality public education system in this community, we must stop tearing it apart from the inside out. The school board and I are committed to being honest and transparent about where we are as a district, where we need to go and how we are going to get there. Yes, we have room for improvement but we also have much success, more than just “pockets” at choice schools. It’s imperative that we work collaboratively to see growth within a system that already shows success.

Several months ago, we discussed and mutually agreed that the video was outdated and in need of significant revision. I offered full support from myself and my video production team to be of any assistance that was needed to make this happen. Your video currently swings between very select ASD scores and test results statewide that inaccurately reflect the actual outcomes of our students in this community. By pulling these select pieces of information that cater to a negative image of education, the video adversely spins the reality of the situation. This video continues to insinuate that Alaska – and Anchorage – rank last in public education and that simply isn’t true.



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In addition to inaccurate implications, I have heard from many people in our community that the video is demoralizing to the excellent teachers and principals in our district because it implies that we aren't doing our jobs. Again, simply not true.

I know you care deeply about this community. I also have appreciated your efforts to bring attention to education. If you are truly motivated by wanting positive results for students and a world-class school district, I fail to see how divisive tactics will achieve this. If you wish to work together, I would appreciate an opportunity to help you better understand ASD and the changes already in motion. One thing I have learned in my many years as an educator is that a negative approach is never successful and it only tears the community apart. That is an outcome Anchorage can't afford if we want the results that the district's strategic plan, your Education Summit, and members of this community expect.

Sincerely,

Jim Browder, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

cc: Anchorage School Board  
Anchorage Assembly