

May 8, 2017

Superintendent Alex Russin
Cordova City School District
PO Box 140
Cordova, AK 99574-0140

Dear Superintendent Russin,

We are writing to encourage you to screen the documentary titled *Chasing the Dragon: The Life of an Opiate Addict* in the high schools in your school district. As we're sure you're aware, opioid abuse has become an epidemic across our country and is threatening many of our communities here at home. An average of 46,000 people die from drug overdoses every year, and about half of those overdoses are from opioids. Today, more people die from drug overdoses than car accidents or from gun violence. *Chasing the Dragon: The Life of an Opiate Addict*, produced at the behest of the FBI and the DEA, offers an unblinking view into the crisis, one that every teacher and every student should see.

The film tells true stories of several individuals affected by opioid abuse. It sheds light on the health implications of addiction along with the horrors of withdrawal. The film also addresses how quickly addiction can set in, the link between addiction and crime, and the prevalence of addiction in all segments of our society.

However, some of the more poignant segments come from recovering addicts who started using in high school. Approximately one in five high school seniors reports misusing prescription drugs at least once in their lifetime. It's painful beyond words to see how easily kids can get addicted to opioids, and what their lives become after they do so.

Students need to know the risks. That is why we are asking you to show a screening of *Chasing the Dragon* to your students. Education on the risks of experimentation is needed, and we think the documentary is one of the many ways in which we can inform the youth to make better decisions. Though at times difficult to watch, we believe it is better to watch it now than to risk being addicted later.

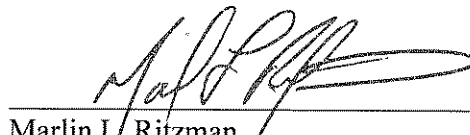
We believe that our children are especially vulnerable, and showing *Chasing the Dragon* will help them understand the risks and dangers when dealing with such an addictive substance. As your students head out for summer break, we want kids to be aware of those risks and dangers.

Thank you for your time. Together, we can conquer this epidemic that is ravaging so many lives across our great state. Please feel free to reach out to our respective offices should have you any questions.

Sincerely,



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



Marlin L. Ritzman
Special Agent in Charge: Anchorage FBI