



Chair W. Bryan Bowles
Vice Chair Cynthia Phillips
State Charter School Board
250 E. 500 S.
Salt Lake City, UT 84114
February 13, 2024

Governor Cox, via Chief of Staff Joe Pyrah
Lieutenant Governor Henderson, via Chief of Staff Jon Pierpont
Senate President Adams
House Speaker Schultz
Senior Advisor Cummins
350 N. State Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Chair James Moss
Vice Chair Molly Hart
Vice Chair Jennie Earl
Utah State Board of Education
250 E. 500 S.
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

President Nicole McDermott
Vice President Kris Nguyen
Board Members Julie Jackson, Clarke Nelson, Connie Burgess, Kim Chandler, and Karyn Winder
2500 S. State Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84115

Dear Governor Cox, Lieutenant Governor Henderson, Senate President Adams, House Speaker Schultz, Senior Advisor Cummins, Leadership Members of the Utah State Board of Education, and Granite School District Board of Education:

On behalf of the Utah State Charter School Board, we wish to express our condemnation of the unethical, morally reprehensible, and unlawful behavior in which State Board of Education member, Natalie Cline, recently engaged when she posted harmful, personally identifiable, insulting information about a minor Utah public school student on her social media in a manner likely to provoke a disorderly or violent response against this student and her family.



Although we believe that a single egregious act, such as this, should be sufficient cause to initiate the removal of this board member from office through the appropriate processes, Member Cline has engaged in a series of such acts during her term of office. In addition to this recent harassment and disclosure of personally identifiable information about a specific minor student, Member Cline has mocked students of the LGBTQ+ community and incited violence against a teacher. Member Cline's actions required a school to provide security against threats of violence toward groups she has targeted and incited violence and harassment against a Utah public school teacher. In that last instance, Member Cline publicly revealed the name of the teacher and her school of employment.

Member Cline's behavior has been both unethical and unlawful. In Utah, insulting and taunting individuals on social media in a way that is likely to provoke a violent or disorderly response is a criminal act of electronic communication harassment. The crime is enhanced if an individual electronically publishes, posts, or otherwise discloses personal identifying information of another individual in a public online site or forum with the intent to abuse, threaten, or cause an individual physical or emotional injury or damage and without the individual's permission; or when this information is disclosed with the expectation that others will further disseminate the information (Utah Code §76-9-201 and Utah Code §76-6-703.1). If personally identifiable information is that of a minor, the crime becomes a class A misdemeanor on the first offense or a third-degree felony on the second or subsequent offenses.

The Utah Student Data and Privacy Act also categorizes as a class A misdemeanor any action in which an individual knowingly or intentionally permits unauthorized collecting, sharing, or use of student data (Utah Code §53E-9-310 and Utah Code §53E-9-302). Public school employees and volunteers, under which members of the Utah State Board of Education are also included, are expressly prohibited by law from bullying, hazing, and cyber-bullying any public-school employee or student (Utah Code §53G-9-602).

Finally, Member Cline has also violated numerous provisions of the Utah Government Operations Code of Conduct which references Utah Admin Code Rules R477-8, R477-9, R477-10, R477-11, R477-14, and R895-7; and Utah Code Chapters 63G-2 and 67-16. This Code of Conduct expressly requires government employees and volunteers to respect and protect the confidentiality and privacy of records and information; prohibits the disclosures or publication of the information contained in a private, controlled, or protected record for any purpose other than the performance of their official duties; and requires the exercising of appropriate judgement to prevent disclosure to others. By this Code of Conduct, employees and volunteers are expressly prohibited from engaging in unprofessional conduct on or off the job that compromises the ability of the employee, the Department, or the state to fulfill its



responsibilities, including, but not limited to, engaging in any illegal activity or other conduct unbecoming to the Department's public reputation.

We acknowledge and support the Utah State Board of Education's censure of Member Cline's behavior in its issuing of a Letter of Reprimand condemning Natalie Cline's hateful rhetoric. However, we believe that Member Cline has continued to engage in unlawful activity and behavior unbecoming of her position.

We strongly encourage the Utah State Legislature to commence impeachment proceedings against Natalie Cline.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "W. Bryan Bowles".

W. Bryan Bowles
Chair, State Charter School Board

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia Phillips".

Cynthia Phillips
Vice Chair, State Charter School Board

CC:

Sydnee Dickson, Utah State Board of Education Superintendent
Scott Jones, Utah State Board of Education Deputy Superintendent
Angie Stallings, Utah State Board of Education Deputy Superintendent
Darin Nielsen, Utah State Board of Education Associate Superintendent of Public Instruction