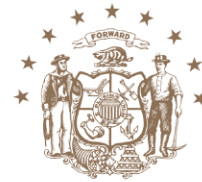




SONDY POPE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
80TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 23, 2019

Contact: Rep. Sondy Pope

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VOUCHER SCHOOL FAILS BIG ON SAFETY AND TRANSPARENCY

MADISON, Wis. – A disturbing [incident](#) recently occurred at St. Josaphat Parish School in Milwaukee. An employee of St. Josaphat brought a gun to school and it accidentally fired, grazing a 10-year-old student. The shooting occurred on April 5, but was not reported to police or parents until two weeks later. Students heard the gunshot and were told that the noise was a ball that exploded.

“Everything about this situation is completely unacceptable. In a private religious school, heavily funded by taxpayer dollars, this becomes a perfect example of why guns do not belong in schools, public or private,” said Rep. Pope. **“The school’s total lack of urgency and transparency is extremely disturbing. If I were a parent of one of those students I would be terrified to know that my child was subjected to such reckless danger.”**

[St. Josaphat Parish \(K4-8\) participates in the Milwaukee voucher program](#) and 208 of their 214 students (97%) have their schooling paid for by vouchers. The school receives a payment from the state of \$7,754 for each student. This \$1.6 million is paid for by a tax-payer-funded GPR appropriation and aid reductions from Milwaukee Public Schools.

“When it comes to our kids’ learning and safety, there is no substitute for oversight and accountability. Elected school boards provide this for 422 school districts across Wisconsin, where the state’s focus should be. The growth of the voucher program over the last eight years has led to a proliferation of for-profit, religious schools siphoning much needed funds away from our neighborhood public schools. Voucher schools have a history of incidences that clearly show a need for more oversight. In an age where school shootings have become far too common, parents should not also have to worry about their children being shot by a careless employee.”

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