



# SONDY POPE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
80TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



**For Immediate Release**  
May 18th, 2015

**Contact:** Rep. Sondy Pope  
608-266-3520

## REPUBLICANS' EDUCATION PRIORITIES ARE CONFUSING AND HARMFUL

MADISON –Representative Sondy Pope (D – Cross Plains) spoke today about a disturbing proposal offered by Assembly Speaker Robin Vos (R- Rochester) that would modify the funding model for both the Racine and Wisconsin statewide voucher programs. The plan would siphon funding away from public schools to subsidize private schools participating in the voucher program.

“It’s a joke that Republicans are already portraying themselves as the saviors of K-12 education,” said Rep. Pope. “The truth is, restoring the governor’s proposed \$127 million cut wouldn’t let schools spend a dime more on helping students. Now Republicans want to divert another \$48 million away from public schools to fund their second for-profit school system, without evidence that they perform any better than public schools. Their message and actions just do not add up.”

The plan is based on Wisconsin’s open enrollment program which allows students to transfer to a public school outside of their resident district. The current payment for each student transferring to another public school is \$6,635. Vos’ proposal would set the payment for a private school student to \$7,210 for K-8 and \$7,856 for high school. This means, a student who elected to attend a private school would receive either \$575 or \$1,221 more funding than a student who elected to attend a public school.

“This proposal bleeds additional funding away from Wisconsin’s public school classrooms. While I am happy that my Republican colleagues have realized the over \$200 million subsidy given to private schools is unsustainable, the open enrollment system was never meant to be used in this fashion,” Rep. Pope said. “If prioritizing K-12 education is truly their focus, I’d suggest they go back to the drawing board and craft a new plan.”