



SONDY POPE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
80TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



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Contact: Rep. Sondy Pope
608-266-3520

NO CHOICES FOR “CHOICE” STUDENTS

WITH VOUCHER “CHOICE” SCHOOLS CLOSING UNEXPECTEDLY, STUDENTS ARE LEFT BEHIND.

MADISON – Early this week, Milwaukee private voucher school Daughters of the Father Christian Academy shut down nine days into the school year. The school was fully funded by the Milwaukee Parental Choice program and received vouchers to provide an education to students. Unfortunately, Daughters of the Father is not the only Wisconsin voucher school to close unexpectedly. Rep. Sondy Pope (D-Cross Plains), ranking Democratic member on the Assembly Committee on Education, released the following statement regarding voucher school closures:

“I am appalled that our state continues to support unaccountable schools that can, at the drop of a hat, leave our students in the dust,” said Rep. Pope. “This trend of voucher schools closing unexpectedly isn’t new. Knowing this, Republican legislators and Governor Walker chose to continue to expand the voucher school program at taxpayers’ expense.”

Since 2003, 57 voucher schools have shut down – some with little notice to parents and students. To date, Wisconsin has wasted \$181.6 million funding these terminated schools.

“With the largest funding cuts to education in our state’s history, enacted by Governor Walker, our public school students already have to worry about inadequate resources, large class sizes, and constantly changing standards and assessments. When taxpayer-supported students have to worry about their school being open from day-to-day, it’s clear we need to make a change. “

In January, Senator Nikiya Harris Dodd (D-Milwaukee) and I proposed legislation to increase voucher school accountability. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Education, but no action was taken to consider the bill. The state budget passed without any considerations for improving voucher school accountability.

“Daughters of the Father – a taxpayer-supported school – reported a reading proficiency score of less than 1 percent,” said Rep. Pope. “When it was reported that public schools had an average reading proficiency score of 37 percent, Republican legislators were up in arms calling for public school accountability. But with even more dismal numbers coming from choice schools, we’re hearing no calls for accountability from Republicans. It’s commonsense that we expect a school teaching our kids to remain open. To keep our students safe, I implore legislators across the aisle to join us in calling for voucher school accountability.”

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