



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Senator Melissa Agard and Representative Gary Hebl Respond to Racist Assignment at Patrick Marsh Middle School

SUN PRAIRIE - A group of social studies teachers have been put on administrative leave after they assigned a project to sixth grade students asking them how to punish an enslaved person. According to the Sun Prairie School District (SPSD), this was not a part of the district approved curriculum. The SPSD is conducting an investigation into the situation.

"I am glad the Sun Prairie School District responded quickly and is actively investigating the situation," Rep. Hebl (D- Sun Prairie) said. "However, this demonstrates how much further we have to go when it comes to addressing racial biases and racial disparities in our state and in our classrooms."

"Slavery is a stain on our history that inflicted years of violence, murder, and created lasting effects and generational trauma that still exists in the Black community," Sen. Agard (D-Madison) said. "To reduce the horrific events of a long, dark period of our history to a violent question that asks students to imagine themselves as an owner of enslaved people is deeply disturbing. The assignment that was assigned to sixth grade students today was inappropriate and racist."

"No lesson plan, assignment, test, or quiz, should ever involve asking a student how to punish an enslaved person or another human being," said Rep. Hebl. "Assignments like this further perpetuates racial biases and shows blatant disregard for cultural competency, especially considering this came out on the first day of Black History Month. There is no excuse for how this lesson was presented."

"My heart is with the kids and families impacted by this and I pledge to do what I can to improve Wisconsin so all of our kids know that they matter," said Sen. Agard. "We have to do better for our children."

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