

First Lady Walker: Emphasizes the importance of Trauma-Informed Care in school safety

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Welcomes U.S. Secretaries DeVos and Azar to Adams-Friendship School District

MADISON – First Lady Tonette Walker today welcomed U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar to Wisconsin for the Federal Commission on School Safety’s visit to Adams-Friendship School District. The focus of the event, “Transforming School Climate and Culture to Meet the Behavioral Health Needs of Students” incorporates Trauma-Informed Care (TIC).

“Some students fall under the radar by being quiet and keeping to themselves—but, by building strong relationships with every student, we can be more proactive and recognize distress before it escalates,” said Mrs. Walker a long-time advocate of TIC. “The importance of emotional and psychological safety is a critical component to keeping our schools safe. This goes above and beyond physical safety and allows us to look deeper on how to help all of our students.”

The Federal Commission on School Safety was created in March 2018. Betsy DeVos, Secretary of Education leads the Commission, which is charged with keeping students safe at school. The Commission looks at a range of issues including social emotional support, school safety infrastructure, discussion on minimum age for firearm purchases, and the impact that video games and the media have on

violence. The Commission has been holding formal commission meetings, field visits, and listening sessions to learn about best practices in school safety.

Members of the Commission who were in attendance at today's event included Betsy DeVos, Secretary of Education and Alex Azar, Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Mrs. Walker has been a trailblazer in incorporating TIC throughout Wisconsin and the nation. In collaboration with Fostering Futures, she has led efforts TIC transformation across multiple Wisconsin agencies, county human service systems, and tribal nations. She has worked on the federal level to pass House Resolution 443 and Senate Resolution 346, which both aim to increase the promotion and implementation of TIC. As a result of her efforts, May was recognized as Trauma-Informed Care Month.