

# Rep. Nedweski: Responds to federal lawsuit alleging grooming and abuse at Oconto Falls High School

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**MADISON** - State Representative Amanda Nedweski (R-Pleasant Prairie) issued the following response to a federal lawsuit filed in the Eastern District of Wisconsin alleging that several students at Oconto Falls High School were subjected to sexual grooming and abuse by school employees and that school district officials ignored warning signs and complaints over the course of more than 20 years:

“The heartbreaking allegations in this lawsuit underscore exactly why Wisconsin Act 88, and the other grooming-related bills passed by the legislature this session, are so critical to protecting students and deterring abuse,” Nedweski said. “If the allegations in the complaint are accurate, it would represent a profound failure by adults entrusted with protecting these students. I am incredibly proud of the courage shown by those who have come forward, and I hope they are able to receive the justice and support they deserve.”

The complaint details numerous alleged instances of grooming behavior or sexual abuse by school staff toward minor students, identifying at least fourteen victims and at least nine different teachers accused of misconduct. According to the lawsuit, there were also occasions where other school staff—who are mandated reporters under state law—were aware of concerning behavior and failed to properly report it. One alleged victim who reported her abuse claimed that her story was “not taken seriously” by school officials. The allegations described in the complaint date back as far as 2005.

“No student should ever feel that their reports of abuse are being ignored by the people responsible for keeping them safe,” Nedweski added. “While Wisconsin Act

88 criminalizes grooming and adds it to the state's mandatory reporting requirements, Wisconsin Act 89 requires school districts to conduct annual training for school staff to identify grooming and boundary-crossing behaviors. As a mother, it's horrifying that we are even at a point where this needs to be explained to the adults charged with educating our children—but allegations like those described in the Oconto Falls lawsuit demonstrate why these safeguards are necessary.”

2025 Wisconsin Act 88 creates a criminal definition of grooming, punishable by 10–25 years in prison and automatic registration as a sex offender. In addition to the annual training requirement, 2025 Wisconsin Act 89 requires school districts to establish policies governing appropriate communications between school staff and students. Nedweski also pointed to her bill, AB 1004, which prohibits the use of confidentiality agreements that allow districts to quietly move problematic educators to other districts. The bill passed overwhelmingly in the Assembly and currently awaits action in the Senate.

“I am proud of the bipartisan work we have done to strengthen protections for children,” Nedweski said. “While the allegations in this lawsuit must ultimately be resolved through the legal process, they serve as a sobering reminder of why strong safeguards and accountability measures are essential to protecting students.”

Rep. Nedweski represents the 32nd Assembly District, which includes the Town and Village of Bloomfield, Village of Bristol, Town of Brighton, Village of Genoa City, portions of Kenosha, portions of Lake Geneva, Village of Paddock Lake, Town of Paris, Village of Pleasant Prairie, Town of Randall, Village of Salem Lakes, Village of Twin Lakes, and the Town of Wheatland.