

Rep. Stubbs: Representative Shelia Stubbs, Ms. Debra Hawkes, mother of 15-year-old autistic student, and community partners hold press conference regarding treatment of autistic student

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MADISON, WI – Today, Representative Shelia Stubbs, Ms. Debra Hawkes, Bishop Dr. Godfrey Stubbs, Senior Pastor at End Time Ministries International, Director of Community Education and Training for the Autism Society of Wisconsin Megan Hufton, CEO of Creating a Village Andrea Shorter Amos, and President Greg Jones of the Dane County Chapter of the NAACP, First Vice President of the Wisconsin State Conference of Branches held a press conference regarding an incident that took place with Ms. Hawkes' 15-year-old nonverbal autistic son, Jaden by staff at East High School earlier this month. (D-Madison) released the following statement:

“Today, I held a press conference at the State Capitol with Ms. Debra Hawkes regarding an incident that took place at East High School involving her nonverbal autistic 15-year-old son Jaden earlier this month.

Thank you to Bishop Dr. Godfrey Stubbs, Senior Pastor at End Time Ministries International for delivering the invocation, and thank you as well to Director of Community Education and Training for the Autism Society of Wisconsin Megan Hufton, CEO of Creating a Village Andrea Shorter Amos, and President Greg Jones of the Dane County Chapter of the NAACP, First Vice President of the Wisconsin State Conference of Branches for standing with us today in support of Ms. Hawkes, her

son Jaden, and their family.

When I learned that Ms. Debra Hawkes' son Jaden, a nonverbal autistic student at East High School, had been given an opened can of dog food to eat by an employee of the school, I was at a complete loss for words.

This is shameful, and this is unacceptable. As a Former Special Education Teacher, I am appalled that this incident took place.

I will be asking for a prompt and thorough investigation into this incident by the Madison Metropolitan School District, the Madison Police Department, and the Department of Public Instruction, and I will continue to raise awareness. I am asking for accountability and transparency, and I ask that Ms. Hawkes be given timely answers to the many questions she still has regarding this incident.

We cannot have a safe and healthy community without safe and healthy schools. That means protecting our students. That means accountability in cases of misconduct. That means transparency and communication with families.

I will be continuing to support Ms. Hawkes and monitor this situation as more information becomes available.”