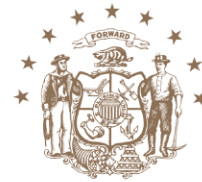# SONDY POPE
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
80TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE   **Contact:** Rep. Sondy Pope
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REP POPE: GOP PUTS PRESSURE ON DISTRICTS TO OPEN SCHOOLS IN-PERSON

MADISON, Wis. – A large number of Assembly Republicans led by Speaker Vos recently sent a letter to various school district superintendents with recommendations for opening schools to begin the upcoming school year. The GOP lawmakers recommended to districts that they open schools with in-person classroom learning and open access to athletic facilities. Representative Sondy Pope (D-Mt. Horeb) the ranking member on the Assembly Committee on Education responded:

"I find it quite ironic that the party of local control would so blatantly attempt to interfere on the most local level. It is especially distasteful that the same body responsible for funding these districts would attempt to directly influence how they operate. The decisions of opening in-person or virtually should be made using science and data, both of which suggest that in-person classes will greatly increase infection rates in many areas the state. Ignoring this obvious risk is recklessly dangerous and will ultimately cost lives. Needlessly exposing our children and educators to high transmission rates is unconscionable. They should not be used as guinea pigs for re-opening society."

"It saddens me that the science of disease control has become so politicized and/or simply ignored by a large swath of the population. This virus has proven its ability to be fatal, and we do not yet know what long-term effects may exist for survivors. School district decisions on whether or not to open are difficult enough and should be left to them without pressure from a party that has done little to address the pandemic and has outspokenly rejected the science of masks and quarantine. This suggestive nature of the letter from the GOP shows a lack of responsible leadership and the exploitation of a deadly pandemic to score political points in an election year."

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