Dear Legislators,

I am writing to voice concerns about SB 169.

Our schools are very safe places and we work hard to keep them safe. Every school has a detailed safety plan that staff are prepared to follow in the event of an emergency. Our staff members know what protocol to follow, and law enforcement respond when necessary. Having strong safety systems, along with the support of uniformed law enforcement when necessary, is important to us.

We’re concerned that this bill would create confusion, uncertainty and possibly dangerous situations by encouraging more guns in and around our schools. Allowing people other than law enforcement to carry a weapon at schools would send dangerous, mixed messages to staff, students and the local law enforcement officers who work with our schools.

Even if schools post that firearms are not allowed – an additional burden to post on every facility in our district – penalties would be dramatically decreased, making it harder to deter.

School officials manage school safety and work hard to ensure that schools are safe and positive environments. We should not be encouraging guns in or around schools. Legislators can take school safety seriously by supporting our staff, not undermining school safety systems by encouraging guns in and around schools.

We ask that you support our schools by opposing this bill. We are happy to provide any other information you may need. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Rachel Strauch-Nelson at rmstrauchnel@madison.k12.wi.us or 663-1903.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Cheatham

Superintendent