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## **NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Speak Up, Speak Out Now Offers Text Tips**

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of School Safety (OSS) is pleased to announce a new feature of the 24/7 statewide confidential reporting system, Speak Up, Speak Out (SUSO). SUSO now offers text tips.

“The Office of School Safety provides high-quality programs and trainings to help keep Wisconsin schools safe,” said Attorney General Josh Kaul. “Adding another way to report safety concerns can only make Speak Up, Speak Out even more effective—so long as the tipline is able to continue operating.”

SUSO text tips allow tipsters to report concerning behavior without visiting the SUSO website or downloading the mobile app. Tipsters can text SUSO to 738477 and make a report to SUSO via a direct link to the SUSO tip form. This new feature will make it even easier to submit a confidential report on a mobile device.

OSS launched SUSO on September 1, 2020. SUSO is a 24/7 statewide confidential reporting system free to all Wisconsin schools. SUSO is a comprehensive, one-stop place to turn with important concerns, offering a Threat Reporting System, Threat Assessment Consultation, Critical Incident Response and General School Safety Guidance. SUSO aims to promote the reporting of concerns before violence happens.

#### **SUSO Fast Facts**

- More than 1,700 schools and law enforcement agencies in Wisconsin have received at least one tip from SUSO since its inception.

- To date, SUSO has received more than 7,000 contacts, with half of those coming in the 2022-2023 school year alone.
- Between May of 2022 and May of 2023, 63 of Wisconsin's 72 counties received at least one SUSO tip.

Students, parents, school staff, or any community members can submit a school safety concern or threat via the SUSO website, mobile phone application, toll-free number, or by texting SUSO to 738477.

SUSO Reports can be made 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- Online at [speakup.widj.gov](https://speakup.widj.gov)
- 1-800-MY-SUSO-1 (1-800-697-8761)
- Mobile app ([iOS](#)/[Android](#))
- Text SUSO to 738477

OSS was initially supported by more than \$2 million in federal STOP School Violence Act grant funding from the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance. OSS operations were extended with more than \$1.8 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding. Without additional funding and position authority, the critical services provided by OSS will cease to exist. Wisconsin DOJ requested approximately \$2 million to permanently fund OSS in the 2023-2025 biennial budget, but the legislature voted against including this funding. DOJ is currently exploring other options to secure the funding and positions needed for OSS to continue providing free, high-quality services to students and schools in Wisconsin.