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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attorney General Kaul and Office of School Safety Executive Director Meet with Wisconsin Students to Discuss School Safety

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul and Wisconsin Department of Justice Office of School Safety (OSS) Executive Director Trish Kilpin are meeting with students around the state this fall to hear their thoughts on school safety. These student engagement discussions offer an opportunity to hear directly from students on their school safety concerns, what makes them feel safe, and what they believe needs to be done to ensure a safe, positive learning environment.

“Speaking directly with students is essential to understanding their perspective on school safety issues,” said Attorney General Josh Kaul. “We appreciate their input as we continue working to keep Wisconsin schools safe.”

“These meaningful engagement opportunities with students, those closest to the issues, will better inform our school safety priorities,” said OSS Executive Director Trish Kilpin. “The sessions provide an opportunity for us to listen to youth voice, hear about their lived experiences and understand their hopes for a safer future.”

The first student engagement discussion will take place today in Lacrosse, Wis. Several other visits are planned at schools throughout the state this fall in Kenosha, Wis., Appleton, Wis., DeForest, Wis., and more to come.

About the Office of School Safety

OSS provides programs that are crucial for protecting educational staff and students. In 2020, OSS launched Speak Up, Speak Out (SUSO), a 24/7 statewide confidential

reporting system free to all Wisconsin schools. It provides a single point of contact for reporting concerns before violence can occur. Learn more at speakup.wisconsin.gov.

OSS also offers a variety of free trainings concerning violence prevention, protection, mitigation, crisis response, and recovery. These include trainings for Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM), Standard Response Protocol (SRP), and the Standard Reunification Method (SRM). OSS offers regional trainings to communities that request it.

OSS also has twelve trained Critical Incident Response Teams (CIRTs) around the state. These teams provide all Wisconsin K-12 public, private, charter, and tribal schools access to a regional team to support them if crisis events occur. CIRTs are made up of multi-disciplinary volunteers including law enforcement officials, psychologists, social workers, nurses, and school administrators. They provide resources to help aid the recovery process for school communities impacted by critical incidents, including long-term mental health services for those who require them.

About Office of School Safety Funding

Earlier this year, Gov. Tony Evers signed Assembly Bill 1050 into law, which provides bridge funding for the Office of School Safety to continue its school safety initiatives in Wisconsin through September 2025. This bridge funding will allow the state to potentially provide stable funding for the OSS as part of the 2025-2027 biennial budget. While this bridge funding has allowed OSS to continue its success in keeping students and teachers safe, long-term funding is still needed.