

For Immediate Release

Friday, August 28, 2020

Contact: Angela Hinline

Email: angela.hinline@ambroseacademy.org**St. Ambrose Academy petitions Wisconsin Supreme Court in fight against Dane County “unconstitutional and unlawful” school closure Order**

Madison, WI – Late last Friday, Dane County officials ordered schools closed for in-person instruction in third grade and above – only 60 hours before many parochial and private schools were scheduled to open.

Joan Carey, executive director of St. Ambrose Academy, a 6th-12th-grade Catholic classical school on Madison’s west side, immediately made it clear to school families that we would not allow this order to stand, and pledged to fight it through every available means.

On Wednesday, August 26th, attorney Misha Tseytlin of the Troutman Pepper Hamilton law firm, sent a letter on behalf of St. Ambrose Academy and seven other Catholic parish and school plaintiffs to all relevant County officials, demanding that they rescind the Order by no later than Friday, August 28, 2020, at 12:00 p.m, given the “unconstitutionality and unlawfulness of the School Closure Order,” citing harm to “parents, children, and schools across the County.”

Today, Public Health Madison & Dane County did not respond to the noon deadline in the demand letter, leaving our legal team with no recourse but to proceed and eliciting this response from attorney Tseytlin: “Dane county’s decision to be the only county in this state to close private schools for in-person education is as inexplicable as it is unconstitutional. We had hoped that Dane County would come to this conclusion on its own, but they have left us no choice but to seek relief in the Wisconsin Supreme Court.”

Long-time school parent Angela Hinline expressed her grave disappointment: “It’s too bad that Public Health Madison Dane County didn’t choose to recognize our constitutional rights. They are not just ignoring but openly attacking our faith-based schools.” Asked about parental rights under the state Constitution, she said: “We believe that parents should be able to choose how best to educate their children, and we will do whatever it takes to defend that right on behalf of our parents and their children.”

St. Ambrose launched a campaign at www.ambroseacademy.org/openschool this past Saturday, which has helped raise over \$100,000 for legal expenses to fight this Order and allow those parents who choose to send their children to in-person instruction at our schools to do so. We express our full trust in God and gratitude for this overwhelming support.

###