

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION CENTER

School District of West Allis - West Milwaukee, et al.

9333 West Lincoln Avenue • West Allis • Wisconsin • 53227-2395
(414) 604-3000 Fax (414) 546-5795



October 14, 2010

Mayor Dan Devine
City of West Allis
7525 W. Greenfield Avenue
West Allis, WI 53214

Dear Mayor Devine:

I am writing this communication to express my concern regarding the proposed location of a firearms store at the corner of 60th and Grant Streets. My specific concern deals with the sale of firearms and other weapons from that location and its proximity to Longfellow Elementary School and playground, also located on the corner of 60th and Grant Streets. This store would be within 1,000 feet of our elementary school.

Currently in Wisconsin there is a state statute (s948.605) known as the Gun-Free School Zone statute that was put on the books in 1990. This law clearly states that it is unlawful to possess a firearm within 1,000 feet of a school. While the law does provide an exception for private property, exiting the building onto a public sidewalk in front of the store, in the public alley behind the store, or on the public sidewalk on the side of the store would be in violation of the State law.

Having weapons pass in and out of the store on a regular basis is very disconcerting for me, our Board of Education, our School Administrators, and our parents and children. I have enclosed a similar letter of concern expressed to me from our Longfellow Elementary School Principal Peter Gull.

I would also note and am confident that while the City and the Police Department will work with the business owner to ensure that he will commit to making his store the safest possible; however, the owner does not control the clientele who enter and leave his building.

I have also been made aware that the store's request for licensure to sell firearms has not yet been approved at the Federal level, and I would respectfully request any contact information you may have with the Federal Licensure Agency, so that we may contact them as well with our concerns.

Therefore, I would ask that you please work with the current business owner to consider a relocation plan for his business that does not include being within 1,000 feet of a school building or work to change the City of West Allis ordinance. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Kurt D. Wachholz'.

Kurt D. Wachholz
District Administrator

KDW/lk

Enclosure

LONGFELLOW SCHOOL

School District of West Allis - West Milwaukee, et al.

2211 South 60th Street • West Allis • Wisconsin • 53219
(414) 604-4300 Fax (414) 546-5540

Peter Gull, Principal



October 13, 2010

Mr. Kurt Wachholz
Superintendent of Schools
West Allis – West Milwaukee School District
9333 W. Lincoln Ave.
West Allis, WI 53227

Dear Mr. Wachholz,

I am writing to report the many concerns expressed by Longfellow parents and neighborhood residents over the news of the possibility of a gun shop opening for business on the corner of 60th and Grant Streets. Based on conversations, phone messages, and emails we are sensing almost overwhelming fear, confusion, and outrage from community members living near our school.

A reporter from CBS 58 visited the area around 60th and Grant during the afternoon of Monday, October 11. She told residents about the potential new business and conducted interviews. A news story was aired that evening and the first contacts to Longfellow regarding this issue started the morning of Tuesday, October 12. Longfellow parents and neighbors started email chains and phone trees to spread the word. Parents have contacted the school office and classroom teachers (at least ten separate contacts), District administrators, West Allis city officials and local media sources. From the conversations I've had and from those reported by staff members, three questions appear consistently: Is this legal and what are you doing to stop it? What do we do if/when the shop opens? Who is crazy enough to open a gun shop this close to a school?

Longfellow understands that city, state, and federal rules may not prohibit the opening of a gun shop across the street from an elementary school, but it's been difficult to explain that to parents who worry for the safety of their children and the element that this business may bring to the neighborhood.

Thank you for your support in this matter and please keep me informed if you hear of more developments.

Sincerely,

Peter Gull, Principal