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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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June 3, 2009

Ald. Bob Donovan  
(414) 708-2096

## State Budget Item Could Spoil School's Success Story

*St. Anthony's Threatened by Wrong-headed Proposal, Alderman Donovan Says*

**Alderman Bob Donovan** has known Rep. Pedro Colon for many years and considers him a friend, but he has some strong words for a proposal the south side state legislator has slipped into the proposed 2010-2011 state budget bill.

Specifically, Rep. Colon's measure is this: "**Choice program — Bilingual education.** Require a choice school with an enrollment of more than 10% limited-English proficient pupils to have a bilingual-bicultural education program, beginning in the 2010-11 school year."

Alderman Donovan, who represents the 8<sup>th</sup> Aldermanic District on the near south side, said his constituency includes many St. Anthony's families who have chosen the school (located at 1747 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St.) specifically *because* it emphasizes getting students fluent in English as quickly as possible. "This budget mandate makes no sense and could actually severely damage a successful school," said Alderman Donovan. "This measure was slipped in to the budget with no public debate or discussion because it makes absolutely no sense whatsoever."

Many St. Anthony's parents have decided against sending their children to Milwaukee Public Schools for bilingual education for a variety of reasons, but mainly because the fluency in English is deferred in those programs and not put on the front burner, the alderman said. "This is America, and the parents know how critical it is for their children to become fluent in English. Evidently the parents of the students attending St. Anthony's have more common sense than some elected officials," he said.

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## **St. Anthony's Threatened By Budget Item/ADD ONE**

St. Anthony's officials have said that if Rep. Colon's budget measure is approved, the school will need to replace about 10-15% of its faculty and would be faced with huge purchasing requirements for bilingual books and materials. One official has said the mandate could bankrupt the school.

Alderman Donovan said he will work vigorously to have the mandate pulled out of the budget when the state Assembly takes up the bill next week. "They (legislators) are certainly going to hear from me and from some of the families that would be affected by this," he said.

Governor Doyle has indicated he wants to sign an approved state budget prior to July 1.

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