



# DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Scott Mittelstadt Chief Deputy

October Sheriff Column – Investigating Violence at School Board Meetings and Investigating Voter Fraud

Over the last several weeks I have had concerned citizens contact me regarding issues about reports that the FBI is going to come to investigate school board violence and my stance on voter fraud complaints.

As a result of the many questions, here is my input. First, many are aware of the United States Attorney General's letter to the FBI directing them to act on violence at school board-type events. I am here to tell you that I have had zero reports of violence occurring at our local school board meetings that would rise to the level of a state crime, let alone a federal crime. Additionally, we must be careful not to trample on the rights of parents who have the right to express their opinions to their school board members. Of course, those parents must remain lawful while doing so. I said it last summer during the lawless riots across our nation and I will say it again. I will protect the first amendment rights of any citizen regardless of the viewpoint which they have. If a person steps out of line and breaks the law, that is no longer an expression of free speech. We will hold lawbreakers accountable for their actions. Nothing has changed as far as my stance on this issue and I have seen no lawless riots at school board meetings in Dodge County. I have also been in contact with FBI officials in our region. They recognize that the Sheriff's Office and local police agencies are perfectly capable of handling issues that may arise without the need for the FBI. I have an excellent working relationship with the FBI and in the unlikely occasion that there is a need for their assistance, I will make that determination.

Regarding Voter Fraud, I watched Racine County Sheriff Schmaling's press conference this week and I commend him for following up on the complaint which his office received. They followed the evidence and presented that evidence to his district attorney and the public. I can assure you that the Dodge County Sheriff's Office will also investigate any reported voter fraud to determine if a crime has been committed and we will follow the evidence as we will for any other crime. In the past, we have investigated voter fraud and we will do so in the future as well, if necessary. We, like Sheriff Schmaling, want all elections to be done fairly and according to the law. We also want everyone's legitimate vote to count.

There are a lot of scary things going on in our world right now and I am not naive to that. However, there are still a lot of great opportunities for us as well. Remember that just because you saw something on social media or you heard a politician say something, even at the local level, doesn't make it true. Do your research and make your own decisions. As for me and my staff, we are going to try to avoid the political motivations out there and we will continue to proactively work with the community toward making Dodge County a safe and enjoyable place to live, work, and visit.

Sheriff Dale Schmidt