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PRESS RELEASE

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Important Update on Fire PALS School Based Injury Prevention Program

Waterloo Fire Rescue would like to announce that due to budgetary concerns, we will be suspending the Fire PALS school based injury prevention program at this time. Congressional appropriations for Fire PALS have not come through yet. We hold out hope for future funding and feel confident that we will be able to continue to offer this program to Waterloo Community Schools and Cedar Valley Catholic Schools in the future.

Fire PALS, our preschool through 5th grade school based injury prevention program was developed by Waterloo Fire Rescue in 1999 and has been presented to thousands of area school children in our community. We feel our uniformed firefighters have had a great influence on the children that they have presented our injury prevention messages to. Since its conception, Fire PALS has had a significant impact. We have seen a great reduction in the loss of life and property. The community has taken the safety messages to heart.

We cannot overstate the importance of pro-active injury prevention programs such as Fire PALS to instill values and safety consciousness, to have a safety attitude and respect for fire, and to make safe and responsible choices as we go about our daily lives.

We would like to thank Senator Tom Harkin, the Waterloo public and parochial schools, all participating area schools; our principals, parents, teachers and most of all the children for their support and active participation in our program and we look forward to serving you once again in the future.

“Throughout the past nine years, Fire PALS has had a tremendous impact in our community. It has been extremely valuable to the health and safety of the children of Black Hawk County. We have made and continue to make all attempts to continue future funding for this important program,” said Fire Chief Doug Carter.

Sharon Miller, spokesperson for Waterloo Community Schools said, “We have high regards for the Fire PALS program. Given the necessity of fire safety education in preschool and elementary schools and the high quality results seen from the Fire PALS curriculum, it is clear that this program should be continued. We support all efforts Waterloo Fire Rescue is making to acquire future funding for this program. Its presence in the Waterloo Schools is a great contribution to the health and safety of the community.”