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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

Investigation by State Auditor's Office Leads to Charges

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ST. PAUL (2/6/2009) – Citing an investigative report filed by the Office of State Auditor Rebecca Otto, the Sheriff of Norman County has filed felony charges in District Court in Ada alleging that a School District employee misappropriated over \$118,000 in district funds.

The investigation by the Office of the State Auditor found that between July 2006 and March 2008, over \$100,000 was removed from bank deposits for Independent School District #2215, Norman County East. In addition, over \$10,000 in checks was not deposited and \$5,000 in cash was not receipted or deposited. Marcella Bentley of Twin Valley, who worked as accounting technician/bookkeeper in the district, has been charged with four counts of theft, embezzlement of public funds and check forgery.

To view the complete investigative report, go to:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20081219.000>.

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The Office of the State Auditor is a constitutional office that is charged with overseeing more than \$20 billion spent annually by local governments in Minnesota. The Office of the State Auditor does this by performing audits of local government financial statements, and by reviewing documents, data, reports, and complaints reported to the Office. The financial information collected from local governments is analyzed and is the basis of statutory reports issued by the Office of the State Auditor.

Rebecca Otto is Minnesota's 18th State Auditor. A high-resolution official photo is available for download at http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/images/otto_hires.jpg. To learn more about State Auditor Otto, see <http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=bio>