

6TH DISTRICT
ANTHONY H. WILLIAMS

SENATE BOX 203008
THE STATE CAPITOL
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3008
717-787-5970 • FAX: 717-772-0574

DISTRICT OFFICES
2901 ISLAND AVENUE • SUITE 100
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19153
215-492-2980 • FAX: 215-492-2990

2103 SNYDER AVENUE
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19145
215-755-9185 • FAX: 215-982-3375

419 CHURCH LANE
YEADON, PA 19050
610-284-7335 • FAX: 610-284-5955

TWITTER: @SenTonyWilliams
FACEBOOK: Anthony Hardy Williams
INSTAGRAM: senator_anthonytwilliams
WEBSITE: www.senatoranthonytwilliams.com

Democratic Whip



Senate of Pennsylvania

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April 2, 2019

Joyce Wilkerson, President
Board of Education
The School District of Philadelphia
440 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130

Dear President Wilkerson,

I write to you regarding the March 28, 2019, meeting of the Board of Education and its vote mandating the use of metal detectors in Philadelphia public schools.

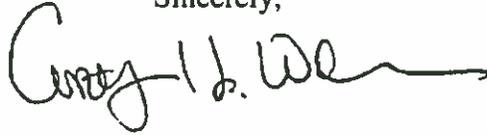
As a state legislator, I am deeply familiar with the challenges we face in promoting school safety and protecting Pennsylvania's children. For me, there is no greater obligation than ensuring our children can safely grow and learn in school. I know of your commitment to Philadelphia's students and I understand that we must all do what we can with imperfect information. But, there are times when we can change policies and positively impact the communities we serve. Though I recognize that metal detectors are already used in most Philadelphia public schools, the Board had an opportunity to thoroughly review their use and find a better way to protect public school students while providing welcoming community spaces conducive to education.

Reports surrounding last week's meeting highlight the growing division between policymakers and the general population in Philadelphia. Countless Philadelphians are tired of a top-down approach to policy and will be heard through whatever means are available to them. This top-down approach to policy led to the outbursts during the Board of Education meeting. I may disagree with these tactics, but I certainly understand the frustration and despair of those who feel that public officials are not listening to their concerns.

This is a moment in time when the Board of Education can demonstrate that it is a truly representative body. The Board of Education can demonstrate that it is more responsive to local

concerns than the previous governing body. To do this, I urge the Board to reconsider its vote to mandate the use of the metal detectors in Philadelphia public schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony H. Williams", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Anthony H. Williams
State Senator – 8th District

cc: Wayne Walker, Board Vice President
Julia Danzy, Board Member
Leticia Egea-Hinton, Board Member
Mallory Fix Lopez, Board Member
Lee Huang, Board Member
Maria McColgan, Board Member
Chris McGinley, Board Member
Angela McIver, Board Member