



**THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA**

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**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING**

**AGENDA**

OCTOBER 7, 2021; 4:00 PM

**Call to Order - Joyce Wilkerson, President**

**Roll Call - Lynn Rauch, Esq., General Counsel**

**Opening Remarks - Joyce Wilkerson, President**

**Written Testimony**

- Written Testimony

**Registered Speakers**

- Student Speakers List
- Registered Speakers List

**Adjourned**

**Board of Education Meeting Date:** 10/7/2021

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Description

Written Testimony 10.7.21

Type

Supporting Document

Zimbra

[REDACTED]@philasd.org

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## Written Testimony

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**From :** Michael Gorman [REDACTED]

Wed, Oct 06, 2021 04:02 PM

**Subject :** Written Testimony**To :** schoolboard@philasd.org

**WARNING:** This message originated from outside the School District of Philadelphia.  
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I write today regarding two key issues with regard to COVID-19 in SDP and procedures around quarantine:

First, many are aware, the "quarantine learning" component of the school year has been a tough start for many families. We are consistently hearing that kids are going into quarantine and either have nothing to do, or they are just expected to keep up with the class work with no instruction. Obviously that's challenging enough.

However, we are also hearing consistently that families and the kids themselves do not understand why or how they are being tagged for quarantine! I have not received a notice myself, but we hear that families get semi-vague notifications about being a "close contact" and then that's it, straight into quarantine. We have families, including ones with children in very small cohorts, that are being tagged. This includes some that have already been tagged TWICE. Many kids don't know how, why, or where it was that they met the "definition" of close contact.

***Basically these kids are being suspended from school for a week or 10-days. And their families don't really know why, how they can avoid it or what to do differently going forward.***

These are kids that do NOT meet the CDC definition of a close contact (since they are masked) yet the PDPH has seen fit to block them from school and learning. More must be done here to improve communication, shift to the CDC definition, and not just ALLOW test to stay, but actually IMPLEMENT it. It has been proven to be the best balance of keeping kids safe but also keeping them learning in schools. Full stop.

Secondly, as part of the quarantine procedures, we are also hearing many stories that student testing centers are not available, not open at their appointed hours, or have multiple hour waits. This just adds to the frustration. These are families, sometimes taking time off their work, trying hard to get their kids back into school, and they are being stymied. It seems that either we need a new vendor, or our current vendor needs to step up. This must be done to help families navigate this process!

Thank you,  
Michael Gorman



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**Registered Student Speakers**

1. Nora Ouardi, Student  
Topic: School Selection Process

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**Registered Speakers**

1. Jessica Ackert, Parent  
Topic: COVID Test-to-Stay and  
Vaccine Accessibility
2. Sumita Ghosh, Parent  
Topic: Virtual Learning
3. Stephanie King, Parent  
Topic: School Selection
4. Caroline Thorn, Parent  
Topic: Staffing Vacancies
5. Dana Carter, Racial Justice  
Organizing Committee  
Topic: ELA Curriculum
6. Alexandra Meer, Parent  
Topic: No Compliant IEP's, Student  
Safety and Outside Lunches and  
Recess
7. Maritza Guridy, Parent  
Topic: General District Concerns
8. Lisa Haver, Alliance for Philadelphia  
Public Schools  
Topic: Speakers at Public Meetings  
Policy
9. Kristin Luebbert, District Staff  
Member  
Topic: Where Do We Go from Here?
10. Rhea Powell, Parent  
Topic: Asymptomatic Testing for  
COVID-19
11. Diane Payne, Community Member  
Topic: Speaker Suppression
12. Teeyona Crumpton, Parent  
Topic: General District Concerns