

Dear Wissahickon School Directors,

In the aftermath of a national event, Wissahickon's superintendent, Dr. James A Crisfield decided he should publish a letter concerning school safety.

After his remarks on school safety and security, Dr. Crisfield, against his own concerns, decided to use his position of public trust as a platform to launch a political movement.

Acknowledging the political nature of his words, Dr. Crisfield said the following;

"One last thought lands me in unusual political waters for a school superintendent. I believe it is time for all of us, public school leaders included, to have the courage to call for a ban on rapid-fire assault weapons. Enough is enough. We need to stop framing this as a rollback of constitutional rights, and we need to stop framing it as some sort of partisan political issue. Instead, we need to start framing this as protecting kids. Period. We need to be done with the fallacious, slippery-slope argument that a ban on these people-killing weapons will be a ban on all guns. No, it will not. I don't have any patience when it comes to partisan politics, especially in the realm of education, and how this can fall prey to Democrat vs. Republican posturing is beyond me. We need to act now to protect students now."

In order to understand the impact of a public employee using this platform as launching point for a political movement, change the subject matter to abortion.

"One last thought lands me in unusual political waters for a school superintendent. In light of the Dr. Kermit Gosnell abortion clinic horrors, I believe it is time for all of us, public school leaders included, to have the courage to call for a ban on abortion....."

Regardless of your political ideology, it is crystal clear why a public employee communicating a political ideology is wrong.

Additionally, Dr. Crisfield's political comments violate his employment contract and are against Wissahickon School District Board Policy.

Please see Appendix A for the applicable terms of Crisfield's employment contract.

Applicable Board Policies:

No. 356 Administrative Employees – J. Access to Inappropriate Material, 3. Political Activities  
a. Employee users will not use the District system for political lobbying.

No. 924 Dissemination/Display of Literature/Materials, Prohibited Activities and Materials,  
Literature or materials that contain content as follows shall not be disseminated to WSD students and families. Is affiliated with a political organization of any type or is political in nature.

As residents and/or taxpayers, school directors, district administrators and district employees we should be concerned when the district's leadership blatantly ignores and violates the terms of their employment contract and school board policies and would go undisciplined. Regardless to the subject matter of the letter, no other district employee would be able to step up and voice a political ideology without paying the consequences. Anyone who has been disciplined under board or school policy should demand Dr. Crisfield is held accountable for his actions.

Dr. Crisfield, a public employee, serving in a professional capacity, drew a political line within our school district, his workplace and our community. He placed himself on one side of a political issue and distanced himself from countless others who may sit on the other side....and he did this using district resources that clearly violates district policy. He acknowledged he was in "political waters" before proceeding recklessly forward, with disregard to policy and contract.

As a resident and/or taxpayer of Wissahickon School District, I demand the Wissahickon School Board issue Dr. James A. Crisfield a formal written counseling concerning his disregard of local policy and his misappropriation of district resources. This written counseling will also be included in his next performance evaluation. I also demand Dr. Crisfield redact his comments specific to his "One last thought" and published a formal apology to the students, residents and taxpayers for his emotional, unprofessional and inappropriate remarks.

Signed,



1st Sgt / USMC (ret)

17 FEB 2018

## APPENDIX A

### APPLICABLE EXCERPTS FROM CRISFIELD EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

g) The superintendent shall be responsible for the total day-to-day administration of the district in accordance with the board's policy.

h) The superintendent, or his designee, in consultation with the board president, shall be the official spokesperson for the district in providing information to the board, district employees, district residents the community and other outside groups or agencies on matters affecting the operation of the district.

7. (a) The superintendent agrees to serve as the Chief Administrator of the District and perform the duties and responsibilities of the district in a competent and professional manner in accordance with:

(1) The laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

(2) the provisions of this agreement

(3) the written job description for the position of superintendent of schools (superintendent job description) which is attached as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference; and

(4) the written policies of the Board and Wissahickon School District

#### Exhibit A

1e. Foster a climate of mutual respect and understanding between all employees, the Board, administrators and the community.

#### 4. Communications

b. Maintain a good working relationship with the staff while ensuring effective communication with all the employees, the board of school directors and the community at large.