



STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

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Statement by Ted Kirsch, President, AFT Pennsylvania On the School Reform Commission approval of five new charter schools in Philadelphia

“It is unconscionable for Philadelphia’s School Reform Commissioners to spend money they do not have while expecting teachers and support staff to accept pay cuts and shell out thousands of dollars out of pocket for classroom materials – all because of 14 years of SRC mismanagement. What’s more, it is disingenuous for commissioners to claim that they have not approved charter applications since 2007 when, in the past eight years, it has converted 20 neighborhood public schools into charter schools and added more than 32,000 charter school seats.

“Now the SRC is again expanding charters that serve a minority of the children in Philadelphia at the expense of 204,000 children who attend Philadelphia’s financially starved schools. Philadelphia’s public school children are denied essential resources every day in schools without nurses, counselors, teachers and classroom aides and art, science, libraries, music, sports, tutoring, after school and summer enrichment programs and other educational opportunities.

“The SRC’s actions are irresponsible, fiscally unsustainable and continue to short-change the children and families the commission is supposed to serve. “

Ted Kirsch, president of AFT Pennsylvania, is a Philadelphia public school graduate, a former Philadelphia high school history teacher and was president of the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers from 1990 to 2006. AFT Pennsylvania represents public, private and charter school teachers and support staff; college and university faculty and staff; and state employees throughout Pennsylvania.

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