



Committee of Seventy

Join us in our fight for better government

21 October 2013

The Honorable Tom Corbett
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
225 Main Capital Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Corbett:

The Committee of Seventy urges you to appoint a nominating panel to help you fill two vacancies – Pedro Ramos' and Joe Dworetzky's – on Philadelphia's School Reform Commission.

The extraordinary circumstances surrounding the city's public schools require an open and transparent process for making what are perhaps your most significant appointments ever to the SRC.

These are deeply troubling times for the city's public schools, with unresolved contracts with the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, an ongoing fiscal crisis that has led to massive personnel cuts and extreme unpredictability about the future of public education in the state's largest city. Over 200,000 students and their families have been adversely impacted by the chaos and uncertainty.

These problems present you with a real opportunity for a public process in the exercise of your SRC appointment power.

We urge you to appoint a nominating panel to solicit nominations and to present you with a short list of finalists to fill the two SRC vacancies. The names of the finalists should be made public so that citizens have an opportunity to review their qualifications before you choose a nominee to send to the state Senate for approval. We believe this can be accomplished swiftly so that the SRC is not without a full complement of members for as little time as possible.

This request has no bearing on the debate about whether Philadelphia's public schools should continue to be controlled by the state or transferred back to the city. It is instead about making the current governance model more effective and transparent.

I hope you will seriously consider this proposal.

Sincerely,

Zachary Stalberg
President and CEO