



Council on American-Islamic Relations
Philadelphia Chapter
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October 12, 2026

Dr. Tashiba Graham, President
Members of the Appoquinimink Board of Education
Dr. Matthew Burrows, Superintendent
Appoquinimink School District

Re: Request for Apology and Dialogue Regarding Anti-Muslim Social Media Content

Dear Dr. Graham, Dr. Burrows, and Members of the Board:

On behalf of CAIR-Philadelphia, a chapter of the nation's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization serving Pennsylvania and Delaware, I write regarding the reportedly anti-Muslim social media post by Board Member Elena Brenner. We respectfully request a public apology and meaningful engagement with Muslim students and families to address their concerns and rebuild trust.

Following conversations with community members, we are encouraged by your willingness to engage constructively, and we offer CAIR-Philadelphia as a resource to support dialogue, learning, and trust-building. In that spirit, we are refraining from broader press engagement at this time, except to respond to direct media inquiries and to bring awareness to our concerns.

A [community petition](#) expresses concern about the post's impact on Muslim students' sense of belonging and families' confidence in district leadership. Parents are requesting a formal apology, a public reaffirmation of board member standards of conduct, and a district-wide communication clarifying expectations for public statements and social media activity. We support these requests.

In a statement, The Executive Committee of the Islamic Society of Delaware (ISD) has also expressed its concerns, stating:

"Elected school district officials have a responsibility to uphold the values of respect, inclusion, and safety for every student and family, regardless of faith or background. These values are fundamental to our American identity and are as American as apple pie.

"Islamophobic rhetoric and content are unacceptable and undermine the principles of equality, mutual respect, and the dignity of every member of our community. We urge all public officials to lead by example, reject religious prejudice, and help ensure that our schools and communities remain welcoming and safe for all."

CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil liberties and advocacy organization. Its mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.

Muslim families are an integral part of the Appoquinimink community. Their children contribute through student leadership, community service, and everyday participation in school life. They deserve the same dignity, respect, and support as every other student.

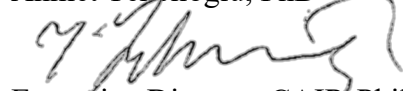
The district's Muslim community is hopeful that this can become a meaningful learning moment—a step toward greater understanding, maturity in public leadership, and sustained engagement with the community. We urge Ms. Brenner to offer a sincere apology, meet with Muslim students and families, and listen to their experiences. Acknowledging the harm and taking steps to rebuild trust would demonstrate the leadership our children deserve.

We encourage the Board and district administration to respond constructively to families' concerns and reaffirm their commitment to the dignity and belonging of students of all faiths. CAIR-Philadelphia stands ready to assist in facilitating community dialogue and education about Islam and Muslim communities. Our [*An Educator's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices*](#) is also available to help school officials support Muslim students and create a positive learning environment.

We would appreciate a written response outlining how the Board intends to address these concerns, as well as an opportunity to discuss next steps. Thank you for your attention and your service to the district's students and families.

Sincerely,

Ahmet Tekelioglu, PhD



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