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Dear Upper Darby School District Community,

On September 24, 2024, Dr. McGarry's presentation focused on school safety measures, particularly emphasizing the proposed implementation of a weapons detection system in the Upper Darby School District. The system, provided by Evolv Technology, is described as more advanced than traditional metal detectors, capable of processing 2,000 people per hour per lane. The presentation outlined the estimated hardware, software, training, and labor costs across multiple school locations, with additional annual software licensing fees for subsequent years.

The presentation detailed the planned deployment of the system at Upper Darby High School, Beverly Hills Middle School, and Drexel Hill Middle School, specifying the number of devices and their locations at each school. Dr. McGarry discussed potential impacts on the school day, including scheduling considerations and the need to adjust current ID scanning procedures. The presentation raised questions about policy implications, the use of the system during evacuations and after-school activities, and its potential effect on the district's facility use policy for non-district events. The school board approved the proposal on September 24th, and I have also linked it here.

### [Presentation](#)

Evolv Technology, founded in 2013, is a company dedicated to enhancing safety in public spaces, particularly schools. Their flagship product, Evolv Express, is an advanced weapons detection system that uses artificial intelligence and sensor technology to identify potential threats without the inconvenience of traditional security measures. As previously stated, Evolv Express is not a metal detector. The key features of Evolv Technology include:

1. Focus on creating safer environments without negative security experiences
2. A team composed of experts in physics, engineering, security, and operations
3. Technology that distinguishes between personal items and potential weapons
4. Emphasis on providing a touchless, frictionless screening process
5. Particular attention to school safety, aiming to reduce student stress and anxiety



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Upper Darby High School will deploy a total of nine Evolv Express systems across different locations on campus. The main entrance will have two dual-lane standard configurations, providing robust screening capacity for the primary ingress point. The PAC and the gym area will each have two dual-lane standard configurations. The stadium entrance will be secured with a single-lane standard system for outdoor activities. The Drexel Hill Middle School system will be implemented at three key locations within the school. A dual-lane standard system will be installed at the main entrance, while the gym lobby and cafeteria will each feature a single-lane standard system. Beverly Hills Middle School will establish three central screening locations: the Main Entrance with a double lane, the Old Gym with one single lane, and the Loading Dock with one single lane, all using standard configurations.

The typical operational setup for each screening lane at each school involves two staff positions: Flow Control and Threat Resolution. The Flow Control staff manages traffic and directs visitors who trigger alarms to secondary screening. In contrast, the Threat Resolution staff conducts secondary screening using either a wand metal detector or having individuals pass through the Evolv Express again. To accommodate students and staff with medical devices at all three secondary schools, the school will offer an alternative secondary screening method using a wand. Additionally, plastic tables will be placed perpendicular to the RX Towers to allow for the "pass around" of certain items such as binders, laptops, umbrellas, and eyeglass cases. All stations will be monitored by administration and security, who are the only ones conducting searches or wandings. The UDEA staff members will assist with escorting students and tracking the detection but will not conduct searches. All locations will have separate search areas near the entry points.

We anticipate delivery between 2-3 weeks, and implementation to follow. Implementing weapons detection systems in schools is set to change the daily routine, particularly as schools move away from the current SchoolPass system. This shift will notably impact morning arrival procedures at secondary schools, where the familiar ID scan will no longer be feasible upon entry. The change stems from the substantial staffing needs required to continue ID scanning, with estimates suggesting an additional 50-60 safety staff would be necessary to maintain this practice. ID scans will transition to hallway checks, altering the flow of student entry. The introduction of weapons detection systems is expected to extend processing times for student entry, especially during the initial implementation phase. The impact of these changes extends beyond logistics to the very culture of the school. While the introduction of weapons detection systems aims to create a more secure environment and potentially reduce anxiety about safety



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threats, it may initially cause some disruption to the normal flow of the school day. Students, staff, and parents will all need time to adjust to these new realities.

As schools navigate this transition, we must be mindful of several challenges. There's the potential for false alarms disrupting the school day. We anticipate delays for the first few months but plan to improve over time. Clear communication with all stakeholders about the new procedures will be crucial. Perhaps most importantly, schools must balance enhancing security measures and maintaining a welcoming educational environment. By carefully planning and communicating these changes, we can work towards creating a safer environment while minimizing disruptions to the educational process. This transition, while challenging, represents a commitment to student safety in an evolving world. As we proceed with this implementation, we will share pertinent information and provide the next steps. We will continue to send information and make ourselves available for questions. Please watch this [introductory video](#).

Thank you for your time, and we look forward to supporting our staff, students, and community in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Anthony Vaughn'.

Anthony Vaughn  
Director of Public Safety