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Letter to the Editor

Safety though trust, not tech
Manhattan: Metal detectors make “me feel like I’m going in a prison.” That’s from one of the 100,000 students in New York City who must take off their shoes, belts and even bobby pins to put their belongings through X-ray machines every day just to go to school (“Civil liberties misfire,” editorial, March 20). A safe environment is essential to education. But metal detectors only give the illusion of safety without actually making schools safer. Yet children — mostly of color — are subjected to the humiliation of being put through them, losing untold hours of class to wait in line, and beginning every morning in an environment of fear and distrust. This year, five guns total have been discovered in city schools. That’s five too many, but it confirms how sharply crime has recently dropped in city schools. The better way to promote safe schools is to focus on building trusting relationships between educators and students, so they will feel comfortable approaching an adult when there’s a serious problem — which is exactly what happened in both of these incidents.

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