

**Official Proceedings of the GOVERNOR MIFFLIN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of School Directors' Work/General Purposes Meeting
October 5, 2026; Education Center**

Board Members in Attendance – Mrs. Elizabeth Adams, Mrs. Heather Bouchard, Mrs. Caryn Friedlander, Mrs. Michelle Heim, Mr. Ralph Kabakoff, Mrs. Janemarie McKay, Mrs. Laurie Miller, Dr. Lisa Peterson, Dr. Michele Roby – 9. Absent – 0.

Administrators in Attendance – Dr. Erin Anderson, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Kelly Price, Chief Financial Officer; Ms. Stephanie Seifrit, Director of Human Resources; Mr. Tim Ziegler, Chief Operations Officer; Mrs. Ashley Shannon-Huembes, Director of Communications & Community Relations; Dr. Nicole Pagan, Principal, Brecknock Elementary; Mr. Cory Crider, Principal, Intermediate School; Ms. Carissa Harley, Principal, Middle School; Mr. TJ Miller, Principal, High School.

Others in Attendance – Jeffrey Litts, Esq., Board Solicitor; Sharon Patton, Board Recording Secretary; professional staff and citizens.

The Meeting was **Called to Order** at 7:06pm by Dr. Lisa Peterson, Board President, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call. Dr. Peterson announced that the Board held an **Executive Session** for discussion of personnel and professional development matters.

Public Comment

Mr. Greg Miller spoke about an act of discrimination involving a GGML Board member that occurred in July at Community Days, against a group of attendees. He said he shared a formal memo, prepared by the Cumru Township Police, with the school board and Dr. Hess with the expectation that the school board become involved and take action on the matter; however, nothing happened. He also referenced what he said were several other incidents over the past few months where he believes the administration has lied to the Board and to the public, and referred to this as a credibility crisis. He said he has observed Board members Janemarie McKay, Ralph Kabakoff, Laurie Miller and Michelle Heim asking questions over the past few months, pushing for more oversight, and for the Board to function as a governing body, and called for the rest of the board to do the same. He also claimed that the Board has been instructed not to respond to public comment and then asked if anyone wanted to respond.

Dr. Lisa Peterson, Board President, responded to Mr. Miller, assuring him that the Board has heard from staff members, community members, and stakeholders, and is working diligently. This was all she could share publicly at this time.

Mr. Ralph Kabakoff said that overt discrimination is never okay in the community and that we all need to do better, including himself, in advocating so that all community members feel safe.

Mrs. Michelle Heim acknowledged everyone in attendance, saying it makes a bold statement when people come out to speak to the Board. She assured them that silence does not mean they're being ignored.

Mr. Andy Donnell expressed concern over language updates to Policy 226 (Searches). He also reflected on the August 28th football game when, he claimed, inaccurate information was conveyed about security coverage. Further, he claimed that false information was given to the Board surrounding the Cumru Township Police Chief, Commissioners and Township Manager not being included in the September 21st Executive Session. He also referenced the comments made by Mr. Greg Miller in regard to Community Days and claims that it highlights pattern the public deserves to know about. Mr. Donnell asked that the 226 Policy revision be tabled and that an independent review of what happened at the August 28th football game be conducted.

Mr. Rich Roberts spoke about the revision to Policy 226 (Searches), saying he's all for the safety of our students, but inquired as to what safeguards will be in place when searches are done in private, and who will be authorized to conduct them. He also asked what trainings would be provided before individuals are authorized to carry out searches, and said he'd like to see that information included in the policy.

Ms. Susan Brent asked that the revision to Policy 226 (Searches) be tabled this evening and that an independent review of what happened at the August 28th football game be commissioned. She also said she'd be interested in hearing Dr. Hess's response to the social media posts which allege a lack of exit interviews for departing staff, defamatory treatment of parents that speak up, poor treatment of staff who challenge her directives, lack of teacher support, poor leadership, and misrepresentation of student scores in an effort to illegitimately maintain federal funding.

Ms. Adriana Rivera/Ms. Betania Robles-Rivera are the mother and sister of a student who was subjected to being searched at a recent football game. They shared that, due to his disability, he reacted negatively to being searched and that they feel he was wrongfully disciplined. They claimed that the adult conducting the search did not identify his/herself or recognize the student's disability and that, should Policy 226 (Searches) be revised, clear safeguards should be put in place.

Mr. Rick Wolf, a retired GM administrator with 37 years of service to the district, expressed his disappointment in recent social media posts that he states are inaccurate, do not paint a complete picture, and are passionately derogatory. He noted that while GM is not perfect, it is a good, solid school district, providing many opportunities for its students and urged people to stop tearing it down. He also shared his own experience implementing a controversial policy in response to a student health and safety concern and stated that the proposed revisions to Policy 226 (Searches) aim to address a student safety concern.

Dr. Michele Roby spoke as the parent of two Middle School students and her disagreement with the cell phone policy. Personally, she sees no problem with the students carrying their cell phones during the school day, and stressed that this is both a safety issue and a lifeline for students who have been through trauma. She encouraged administration and the Board to reconsider the procedure of keeping phones powered down and in backpacks for the school day.

Ms. Sharon Kohler spoke about recent social media posts detailing reported instances of poor treatment of staff by Dr. Hess. She stated that she does not feel that Dr. Hess is fulfilling the responsibilities of her position and that the reported behavior would not be tolerated in the private sector. She asked the Board to question why long-term teachers are leaving the district, discuss the issue at the next executive session, and tell the public how they intend to investigate and resolve the matter. She stated that, based on the Board's response, she may look to submit a No Confidence petition to the Board.

During review of the agenda, the Board took Voting action on the following items:

HUMAN RESOURCES

Motion by Heim and second by Friedlander to **TABLE Human Resources Agenda Item**

7.5 – Employments

Roll Call Vote – Ayes: Heim, Friedlander, Adams, Bouchard, Kabakoff, McKay, Miller, Peterson, Roby – 9. Nays: 0.

MOTION CARRIED.

Motion by Heim and second by Friedlander to Approve the following **Human Resources Agenda Items:**

- **Red Rover Technologies, LLC** - Master Services Agreement with Red Rover Technologies, LLC, Exton, PA, for a Human Resources Hiring/Records Management system; cost is an annual fee of \$33,500 plus a one-time implementation service fee of \$6,000, for a total of \$39,500; net cost after applied vendor discount is \$33,500, as presented
- **Retirements**, as presented
- **Resignations**, as presented
- **Status Changes**, as presented
- **Leaves of Absence**, as presented
- **Tenure Attainments**, as presented
- **Degree/Credit Acknowledgements**, as presented
- **Professional Development Course Requests**, as presented

Roll Call Vote – Ayes: Heim, Friedlander, Adams, Bouchard, Kabakoff, McKay, Miller, Peterson, Roby – 9. Nays: 0.

MOTION CARRIED.

FACILITIES USE

Motion by Bouchard and second by McKay to Approve **Facilities Use Requests**, as presented

Roll Call Vote – Ayes: Bouchard, McKay, Adams, Friedlander, Heim, Kabakoff, Miller, Peterson, Roby – 9. Nays: 0.

MOTION CARRIED.

Closing Comments

Dr. Anderson read aloud a written statement from Dr. Hess, who was unable to attend the meeting. In her statement, Dr. Hess addressed some of the statements made on social media.

Mrs. McKay thanked all of this evening's speakers, saying she respected their courage. She also stressed that she believes school board members have a responsibility to listen carefully, to seek facts, and to ensure that every member of our school community is treated with dignity and respect. She said she found it concerning that the Board did not invite the Cumru Township police, commissioners and township manager into its Executive Session on September 21st.

Dr. Peterson again reminded everyone that the Board's Voting meeting has been moved from October 19 to October 26.

There being no further business before the Board, Heim motioned and McKay seconded to **Adjourn the Meeting** at 9:00pm.

Sharon L. Patton
Board Recording Secretary

