
**Investigation Report Regarding Susan Greenberg's May 5, 2025, Opinion in the Beaverton
Valley Times**

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I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

In late May 2025, the Beaverton School District ("District" or "BSD") received eight separate anonymous complaints about a May 5, 2025, opinion ("Opinion") by Board Member Susan Greenberg that was published in the Beaverton Valley Times. On June 12, 2025, the Board voted to retain a neutral investigator to investigate the complaints pursuant to [Policy KL/KL-AR](#) – Public Complaints. The scope of the investigation is to conduct a fact-finding investigation, make factual findings, and apply the factual findings to District policy.

Ms. Greenberg served as a Board member for twelve years, and her final term concluded on June 30, 2025. The Opinion was entitled "Opinion: Voters should reject divisive politics pushed by Beaverton teachers' union." Ex. 1. In general, Ms. Greenberg's Opinion raised concerns about the Beaverton Education Association ("BEA") advocating for a certain curriculum regarding the Israeli/Gaza war,¹ and urged voters to reject a slate of candidates endorsed by the BEA in the May 2025 elections. The complaints generally asserted that the Opinion was "racially charged" and caused staff and families to feel unsafe in BSD schools.

This report contains the independent findings of the investigator. The District did not impose constraints on the fact-finding process and had no involvement in the findings. The factual findings in this investigation report are based on a preponderance of the evidence standard, which requires a determination that it is more likely than not that a specific fact occurred. The investigation report does not include determinations as to whether there were violations of the law. This report concludes by applying the factual findings to relevant District policies.

II. INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED AND EVIDENCE REVIEWED

All the complaints were submitted anonymously, so no complainants could be interviewed to learn more information. Ms. Greenberg agreed to be interviewed even though her term as a Board member ended prior to the interview being scheduled. Ms. Greenberg was interviewed remotely on July 18, 2025.

¹ Given the complexity and sensitivity of this situation, I understand that any characterization of the Israeli/Gaza war is subject to dispute. For instance, some individuals may object to this characterization on the grounds that the war is not on Gaza, but on Hamas. Other individuals may object to this characterization on that grounds that what is occurring is not a war but a genocide. I use "Israeli/Gaza war" to reflect neutrality about the underlying political situation and to respect all perspectives.

Documentary exhibits are listed below and provided in conjunction with this report. Other evidence received and reviewed but not used as exhibits is maintained in the investigator's files.

III. RELEVANT DISTRICT POLICIES

A. Policies regarding non-discrimination

District policies broadly prohibit discrimination in the District's educational programs.

[Policy AC – Nondiscrimination](#) prohibits discrimination on “any basis protected by law, including but not limited to*** religion [and] national or ethnic origin.” Policy AC provides that “[t]he district prohibits discrimination and harassment in, but not limited to, employment, assignment and promotion of personnel; educational opportunities and services offered students; student assignment to schools and classes; student discipline; location and use of facilities; educational offerings and materials; and accommodating the public at public meetings.”

[Policy ACB - Every Student Belongs - Hate Symbols and Bias Incidents](#) establishes that

The district prohibits the use or display of any symbols of hate on district property or an education program, except where used in teaching curriculum that is aligned with state standards of education for public schools.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions will apply:

“Bias incident” means a person's hostile expression of animus toward another person, relating to the other person's perceived race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or national origin, of which criminal investigation or prosecution is impossible or inappropriate. Bias incidents may include derogatory language or behavior directed at or about any of the preceding demographic groups. This applies to in-person, hybrid, or distance learning environments.

[Policy JFCF/AR - Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, Menacing, Cyberbullying, Teen Dating Violence or Domestic Violence – Students](#) provides that “Hazing, harassment, intimidation menacing, bullying and cyberbullying by students, staff, or third parties towards students is strictly prohibited.” Policy JFCF establishes the following relevant definitions:

“Third parties” include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, or others engaged in district business.

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any act that substantially interferes with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities or performance that takes place on or immediately adjacent to district grounds, at any district-sponsored activity, or district-approved transportation, or at any official district bus stop, that may be based on, but not limited to, the protected class status of a person, having the effect of:

1. Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property;
2. Knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student’s property; or
3. Creating a hostile educational environment including interfering with the psychological well-being of the student.

[Policy GBNA/AR - Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, Menacing, Cyberbullying – Staff](#) provides the same protections for staff.

B. Policies and agreements regarding Board member roles and expectations

District policies and the Board's Operating Agreements establish that Board members must identify their opinions as their own and also address the expected standards of conduct for Board members.

[Policy BBAA - Individual Board Member's Authority and Responsibility](#) provides that, “[a] Board member has the right to express personal opinions. When expressing such opinions in public, the Board member must clearly identify the opinions as their own.”

[Policy BBF – Board Member Standards of Conduct](#) reiterates that, “When a board member expresses a personal opinion in public, the board member should clearly identify the opinions as personal.”

The Operating Agreements provide that:

- The board will serve as a model for positive and constructive public dialogue by communicating in a polite and respectful manner to and about fellow board members, staff, students and the public."
- Board members will utilize social media websites judiciously and will not denigrate the district, district staff or fellow board members, nor post confidential information about students, staff or district business.

Ex. 2.

IV. REVIEW OF EVIDENCE

A. Ms. Greenberg's Opinion

Ms. Greenberg's Opinion was clearly labeled as an "opinion" piece. Following are excerpts:

- The Beaverton Education Association has increasingly overstepped its proper role by attempting to inject divisive, one-sided political viewpoints into our curriculum.
- I have previously been proud to earn the BEA's endorsement, recognizing the vital work the union does for teachers. My voting record often aligns with their positions.
- [F]or the first time, BEA has pushed an alternative curriculum that has neither been recommended by the district nor approved by the school board. This marks a concerning shift towards attempting to override the district's authority in curriculum development, deepening community divisions.
- That's why as ballots head to Beaverton area voters, I strongly urge voters to reject the candidates being backed by the BEA and send a statement to the union to refocus its efforts on teacher's well-being and student success instead of biased curriculum.
- The general tone in the Beaverton School District has been remarkably more collegial and respectful by and large compared to the politically charged environment in Portland, and this election Beaverton voters have an opportunity to keep our district on that track.
- Board meetings that should be squarely focused on student achievement and district operations now devolve into contentious, ideologically divisive debates. This division serves no one — not our teachers, not our community, and certainly not our students.
- Our schools must remain safe places where students can feel comfortable to be themselves, free to encounter diverse viewpoints and develop critical thinking skills to form their own informed opinions.
- The vast majority of Beaverton educators navigate sensitive topics with remarkable skill and fairness every day. They deserve our full support for their professional autonomy within appropriate guardrails and not the disrespect or confusion of a union promoting a certain way to teach on the most sensitive topics.

Ex. 1.

No specific staff person or student was named in the Opinion.

In her interview, Ms. Greenberg stated that she is deeply dedicated to BSD. She stated that she decided to submit the Opinion because she was concerned about the increasing divisiveness on the Board, and because she believed that BEA should not be involved in promoting particular curriculum about the Israeli/Gaza war. Ms. Greenberg said that she was aware of teachers who felt ostracized and not safe because of their beliefs or culture. She also expressed concern about Muslim students feeling unsafe in the District.

Ms. Greenberg stated that did not think the Opinion would quell speech and that she stood by her statements in the Opinion.

B. Concerns expressed in the complaints

The written complaints in general objected to the content of the Opinion, and accused Ms. Greenberg of Islamophobia and antisemitism. For instance, one complaint stated, "Susan Greenberg wrote a racially charged and factually incorrect article that was published in the Beaverton Valley Times. It unfairly targeted Palestinian and Muslim people and beliefs. Her actions have directly led to harm and contributed to the already large issue of Islamophobia and Muslim people not feeling welcome in our district." Ex. 3. The same complaint also asserted that "She has made it unsafe for anyone, student, parent, teacher, staff, admin to speak out (private or publicly) against the internationally recognized genocidal actions of the state of Israel. There are families and teachers in this district who have survived this violence first hand and should not be silenced by a board member misusing her power." Ex. 3.

One complaint asserted that the Opinion was a "screed motivated by a desired to silence Palestinian voices." Ex. 4. Another complaint asserted that Ms. Greenberg's editorial "stoked fears amongst our Jewish community members that teachers wanting to educate about Palestine and the history are not safe for our Jewish community in Beaverton." Ex. 5.

Other than these generalized statements, the complaints did not provide any details or instances in which the Opinion caused specific harm in BSD or otherwise violated District policy.²

As a remedy, the complaints called for a recall, asked Ms. Greenberg to apologize for the Opinion or have it removed, and requested that the Board repair the harm caused by the Opinion. Ex. 6.

V. FACTUAL FINDINGS

Based on the preponderance of the evidence standard, I make the following factual findings:

- On May 5, 2025, the Beaverton Valley Times published an opinion by Ms. Greenberg entitled "Opinion: Voters should reject divisive politics pushed by Beaverton teachers' union."
- The Opinion expressed concerns about the BEA's advocacy for certain curriculum regarding the Israeli/Gaza war, warned against divisiveness on the Board, commended the ability of "the vast majority" of District educators, and encouraged readers to not vote for the slate of school board candidates endorsed by the BEA.
- The Opinion did not mention any specific staff or student, or express hostility or use derogatory language in relation to a BSD staff or student, or otherwise denigrate a BSD staff or student.
- The Opinion was clearly marked as Ms. Greenberg's "opinion."
- Eight anonymous complaints were filed that generally asserted that the Opinion was evidence of Islamophobia and antisemitism, and generally made staff and students in BSD feel unsafe.
- The complaints contained no specific examples of instances in which the Opinion made individuals feel unsafe or otherwise violated District policy.

VI. DISCUSSION

Ms. Greenberg's Opinion reflected her beliefs about issues that were directly connected to her duties as a Board member, including the role of the BEA, reflections on how controversial issues are taught, and concerns about divisiveness on the school board operates. It also contained her recommendation regarding school board candidates. The Opinion expressed concern about

² Some of the complaints raised concerns that some of the statements in the Opinion contain factual inaccuracies. Determining the factual accuracy of the statements in the Opinion is outside the scope of this investigation. This investigation focuses on whether there is evidence that District policies were violated

students feeling safe in District schools and included appreciation for District educators. The Opinion did not target any individual, and was not hostile or derogatory towards any individual. The anonymous complaints provided no examples of how the Opinion created a hostile environment in BSD or otherwise violated any District policy.

Opinion pieces or editorials are one of the longest-standing and most fundamental ways that community leaders express themselves. Freedom of expression is essential to a functioning democracy. While free expression is broadly protected under the United States and Oregon constitutions, the speech of elected officials is especially protected under the First Amendment. "The manifest function of the First Amendment in a representative government requires that legislators be given the widest latitude to express their views on issues of policy. The central commitment of the First Amendment, as summarized in the opinion of the Court in *New York Times v. Sullivan*, 376 U.S. 254, 270 (1964), is that 'debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide-open.'" *Bond v. Floyd*, 385 U.S. 116, 135–36, 87 S. Ct. 339, 349 (1966).

Speech that constitutes harassment or creates a hostile environment is not protected, but there must be some causal connection between the speech and the harassment or hostile environment. The fact that complainants may disagree with the Opinion or even find it offensive is not a basis to sanction or suppress such speech.

VII. APPLICATION OF FACTUAL FINDINGS TO DISTRICT POLICY

A. Policies prohibiting discrimination and harassment

As indicated above, several District policies prohibit discrimination and harassment in BSD. In applying the factual findings to these policies, there is no evidence that Ms. Greenberg's Opinion violated District policy.

Policy AC (Nondiscrimination) prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion and national or ethnic origin. There is no evidence that the Opinion caused or constituted discrimination against any BSD student or staff person.

Policy ACB (Hate Symbols and Bias Incidents) prohibits bias incidents. There is no evidence the Opinion contained "derogatory language or behavior directed at" any District student based on a protected category.

Policy JFCF/AR (Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, Menacing, Cyberbullying, Teen Dating Violence or Domestic Violence – Students) and Policy GBNA/AR (Hazing, Harassment,

Intimidation, Bullying, Menacing, Cyberbullying – Staff) both prohibit harassment. There is no evidence that the Opinion constituted harassment under District policy.

B. Policies and agreements regarding Board member roles and expectations

As indicated above, District policies and the Board's Operating Agreements establish that Board members must identify their opinions as their own and also establish the expected standards of conduct for Board members.

Policies BBAA (Individual Board Member's Authority and Responsibility), BBF (Board Member Standards of Conduct), and the Operating Agreements provide that Board members have the right to express their own opinions and that they must clearly identify such opinions as their own. The Opinion was clearly marked as an "opinion." There is no evidence that Ms. Greenberg violated the requirements of Policy BBAA or BBF, or of the Operating Agreements.

The Operating Agreements also provide that "Board members *** will not denigrate the district, district staff or fellow board members, nor post confidential information about students, staff or district business." There is no evidence that the Opinion denigrated the district or any individual.

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