

A Word I Wanted to Say Directly

From 'Ryan Miller' <CulturalContrarian@protonmail.com>

To jhardy@octorara.org, jpropper@octorara.org

Date Tuesday, August 11th, 2026 at 11:26 AM

Subject: A Word I Wanted to Say Directly

Dear [Jill / John],

I've thought about whether to write this for a while, and I keep landing in the same place: you deserve to hear this from me directly, not filtered through anyone else's account of it.

I don't know exactly what you've seen or been told about the last several years. I know your name came up recently in a public meeting, in a context I imagine was not entirely of your choosing. I'm not writing to relitigate any of that, and I'm not asking you to take a position on it.

What I wanted to say is simpler than that. Whatever you've witnessed — directly or at a distance — I've tried, as best I could, to meet all of it honestly: to document rather than assume, to ask rather than accuse, and to attempt to advocate through the actual, lawful channels available to me, even when those channels were slow, or silent, or difficult. I have not always gotten that right. But it has been the genuine effort.

I also want to be honest that I've sent information — copyright notices, cease and desist notices among them — to a distribution list that included you, and heard nothing back. I don't say that with resentment. I understand there are real institutional pressures that come with your position, and I'm not asking you to set those aside. I just didn't want that silence to be the only thing standing between us, without you ever having heard, in my own words, what this has actually looked like from where I'm standing. I have not been permitted to set foot on district property, in any capacity, for a long time now — including on behalf of any other family's child. That has been one of the harder parts of all of this.

Mr. Proper, we only met once, when I learned that a school board meeting had been canceled — and later understood it may have been connected to my possible arrival. Ms. Hardy, I have never had the pleasure of directly engaging with you, and can only speak respectfully in honor of the way others attribute your professionalism in service.

It is unfortunate that things reached this point, well in advance of me even attempting to bring unity to the relationship between school professionals, parents, and children.

I hold no ill will toward either of you. I mean that plainly, not as a formality. If there's ever anything you'd want to say — to me, or simply for your own clarity — the door is open. If not, I understand that too, and I wish you well regardless.

With respect,
John Ryan Miller