

MELANIE HUDSON, JAMES SMITH,
GREGORY MINARCHICK, TAHIRA
WASHINGTON, NICHOLAS ZULLO, and
JOSEPH YURCHO, individually and on
behalf of all others similarly situated,

Plaintiffs

v.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION,

Defendant

**IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF
DAUPHIN COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

Civil Action No.: 2025-CV-02411

PRELIMINARY APPROVAL ORDER

This matter came before the Court on Plaintiffs Melanie Hudson, James Smith, Gregory Minarchick, Tahira Washington, Nicholas Zullo, and Joseph Yurcho's ("Plaintiffs" or "Class Representatives") Unopposed Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Settlement Agreement ("Motion"). Plaintiffs, individually, and on behalf of the proposed Settlement Class, and Defendant Pennsylvania State Education Association ("Defendant") (collectively, the "Parties") have entered into a Settlement Agreement (the "Settlement Agreement") that settles the above-captioned litigation.

Having reviewed the Settlement Agreement, including the exhibits attached thereto, and all prior proceedings herein, and for good cause shown, it is hereby ordered that Plaintiffs' Unopposed Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement is **GRANTED** as set forth herein.¹

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, capitalized terms used in this [Proposed] Preliminary Approval Order Granting Unopposed Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlement ("Preliminary Approval Order") have the same meaning as in the Settlement Agreement.

1. **Class Certification for Settlement Purposes Only.** For settlement purposes only and pursuant to Pa. R. Civ. P. 1702 and 1708-1709, the Court conditionally certifies the Settlement Class in this matter defined as follows:

All natural persons in the United States whose Private Information was potentially compromised as a result of the Data Incident, including those who were sent a notification from Defendant of the Data Incident.

Excluded from the Settlement Class are (a) all persons who are governing board members of the Defendant; (b) governmental entities; and (c) the Court and any Judge(s) presiding over this matter, the Court's immediate family, and Court staff.

The class is comprised of approximately 517,487 individuals.

The Court conditionally finds, for settlement purposes only, that: (1) the Settlement Class is so numerous that joinder of all members is impracticable, (2) there are questions of law or facts common to the Settlement Class, (3) the claims or defenses of the Class Representatives are typical of the claims or defenses of the Settlement Class, (4) the Class Representatives and Settlement Class Counsel will fairly and adequately assert and protect the interests of the Settlement Class under the criteria set forth in Pa. R. Civ. P. 1709, and (5) a class action provides a fair and efficient method of adjudication of the controversy under the criteria set forth in Pa. R. Civ. P. 1708.

2. **Class Representatives and Settlement Class Counsel.**

Melanie Hudson, James Smith, Gregory Minarchick, Tahira Washington, Nicholas Zullo, and Joseph Yurcho are hereby designated and appointed as the Class Representatives. The Court provisionally finds that the Class Representatives are similarly situated to absent Settlement Class Members and therefore typical of the Settlement Class and that they will be adequate Class Representatives.

The Court finds that the following counsel is experienced and adequate counsel and is hereby provisionally designated as Class Counsel: Gerald D. Wells, III of Lynch Carpenter, LLP, and Bart D. Cohen of Bailey & Glasser LLP.

3. **Preliminary Settlement Approval.** Upon preliminary review, the Court concludes and finds that the proposed Settlement is fair, reasonable, adequate, and in the best interests of the Settlement Class to warrant providing Notice of the Settlement to the Settlement Class and accordingly the proposed Settlement is preliminarily approved.

4. **Jurisdiction.** The Court concludes that it has subject matter jurisdiction and personal jurisdiction over the Parties before it for the purposes of the Settlement. Additionally, venue is proper in this Court.

5. **Final Approval Hearing.** A Final Approval Hearing shall be held on **Monday, July 27, 2026 at 9:30 a.m.** before the undersigned judge sitting in **Courtroom No. 5, Third Floor**, Dauphin County Courthouse, 101 Market Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17101, to determine, among other things, whether: (a) this matter should be finally certified as a class action pursuant to Pa. R. Civ. P. 1702 and 1708-1709; (b) the Settlement and Settlement Agreement should be finally approved as fair, reasonable, adequate, and in the best interests of the Settlement Class pursuant to Pa. R. Civ. P. 1714; (c) the action should be dismissed with prejudice pursuant to the terms of the Settlement Agreement; (d) Settlement Class Members (except those who have filed timely and valid requests for exclusion from the Settlement) should be bound by the releases set forth in the Settlement Agreement; (e) Plaintiff's Motion for Attorneys' Fees, Costs, and Service Awards should be granted; (f) Gerald D. Wells, III of Lynch Carpenter, LLP and Bart D. Cohen of Bailey & Glasser LLP should be finally appointed as Settlement

Class Counsel; and (g) Melanie Hudson, James Smith, Gregory Minarchick, Tahira Washington, Nicholas Zullo, and Joseph Yurcho should be finally appointed as Class Representatives.

Plaintiffs' Motion for Final Approval of the Class Action Settlement shall be filed with the Court at least twenty-one (21) Days prior to the date of the Final Approval Hearing, and Plaintiffs' Motion for Attorneys' Fees, Costs, Expenses, and Service Award to Class Representative shall be filed with the Court at least twenty-one (21) Days prior to the date of the Final Approval Hearing.

6. **Administration.** The Court appoints RG/2 Claims Administration LLC as the Settlement Administrator, with responsibility for the Notice Program and Claims Administration and to fulfill the duties of the Settlement Administrator set forth in the Settlement Agreement. Defendant shall pay the Notice and Settlement Administration Costs, including, but not limited to, the Settlement Administrator's fees, as well as the costs associated with the provision of notice to the Settlement Class Members and administration of the Settlement.

7. **Notice to the Class.** The proposed Notice Program set forth in the Settlement Agreement, including the Email Notice, Long Form Notice, Postcard Notice and Publication Notice that are attached to the Settlement Agreement as **Exhibits B, C, D and F**, satisfy the requirements of Pa. R. Civ. P. 1714, constitute reasonable notice of the commencement of the action, provide a fair recital of the subject matter and proposed terms of the Settlement, provide Settlement Class Members with details regarding how to request exclusion from or to object to the Settlement Agreement, and are hereby approved. Non-material modifications to these exhibits may be made without further order

of the Court. The Settlement Administrator and Defendant are directed to carry out the Notice Program in conformance with the Settlement Agreement.

Within **forty-five (45) Days of the entry of this Preliminary Approval Order** (the "Notice Deadline"), the Settlement Administrator shall, as applicable, disseminate or publish the Email Notice, Postcard Notice, Long Form Notice, and Publication Notice, and establish a Settlement Website and settlement telephone line, all as provided for in the Settlement Agreement.

8. **Findings and Conclusions Concerning Notice.** The Court finds that the form, content, and method of giving notice to the Settlement Class as described in Paragraph 7 of this Preliminary Approval Order and the Settlement Agreement (including the exhibits thereto) constitutes reasonable notice of the commencement of the action to the Settlement Class pursuant to Pa. R. Civ. P. 1714. Specifically, the Notices themselves are clear and straightforward. They define the Settlement Class; clearly describe the options available to class members and the deadlines for taking action; describe the essential terms of the Settlement, including a description of the subject matter and the proposed terms of the Settlement, including a summary of the monetary or other benefits the class would receive; disclose the requested Service Awards for the Class Representatives; as well as the amount that Class Counsel intends to seek in fees, costs, and expenses; describe procedures for making claims, objections, and requesting exclusion; provide information that will enable Settlement Class Members to calculate their individual recovery; describe the date, time, and place of the Final Approval Hearing; and prominently display the address and phone number of Class Counsel and the Settlement Administrator for Settlement Class Members to make further inquiry about the

Settlement. Finally, the Notice Program, is designed to be the best reasonable notice of the commencement of the action to reach the Settlement Class Members under the circumstances. The Court concludes that the Notice Program meets all applicable requirements of law pursuant to Pa. R. Civ. P. 1714 and constitutes Due Process under the U.S. and Pennsylvania Constitutions.

9. **Exclusion from Class.** Any Settlement Class Member who wishes to be excluded from the Settlement Class must personally sign, and timely submit, complete, and mail a request for exclusion ("Opt-Out Request") to the Settlement Administrator at the address in the Notice. The opt-out request must be in writing and must identify the case name "*Hudson, et al. v. Pennsylvania State Education Association*," be personally signed by the Settlement Class member and contain the name, address, telephone number, and email address (if any), and unique identifier of the Settlement Class Member seeking exclusion; identify any lawyer representing the Class Member seeking to opt out; and must include a statement indicating a request to be excluded from the Settlement Class. Any individual in the Settlement Class who does not timely and validly request to opt out shall be bound by the terms of this Agreement even if he or she does not submit a Valid Claim. Opt-outs may only be on an individual basis, and no person may request to be excluded from the Settlement Class through "mass" or "class" opt outs. Any Settlement Class Member who timely requests exclusion shall not (i) be bound by any Final Approval Order or Judgment; (ii) be entitled to the Settlement Benefits under the Settlement Agreement; (iii) gain any rights by virtue of the Settlement Agreement; or (iv) be entitled to object to any aspect of the Settlement Agreement.

To be effective, an Opt-Out Request must be postmarked ***no later than the Opt-Out Deadline, which is sixty (60) days after the Notice Date.***

10. **Objections.** A Settlement Class Member who complies with the requirements of this Paragraph may object to the Settlement and to Plaintiffs' Motion for Attorneys' Fees, Costs, and Service Award for the Class Representative. Objections must be mailed to the Clerk of the Court, Class Counsel, Defendant's Counsel, and the Settlement Administrator. For an objection to be considered by the Court, the objection must be submitted no later than the last day of the ***Objection Deadline, which is sixty (60) days after the Notice Date.*** If submitted by mail, an objection shall be deemed to have been submitted when posted if received with a postmark date indicated on the envelope if mailed first-class postage prepaid and addressed in accordance with the instructions. If submitted by private courier (e.g., Federal Express), an objection shall be deemed to have been submitted on the shipping date reflected on the shipping label.

For an objection to be considered by the Court, the objection must also set forth:

- a. the objector's full name, mailing address, telephone number, and email address (if any);
- b. all grounds for the objection, accompanied by any legal support for the objection known to the objector or objector's counsel;
- c. the number of times the objector has objected to a class action settlement within the five years preceding the date that the objector files the objection, the caption of each case in which the objector has made such objection, and a copy of any orders related to or ruling upon the

- objector's prior objections that were issued by the trial and appellate courts in each listed case;
- d. the identity of all counsel who represent the objector, including any former or current counsel who may be entitled to compensation for any reason related to the objection to the Settlement and/or Application for Attorneys' Fees, Costs, and Service Award;
 - e. the number of times in which the objector's counsel and/or counsel's law firm have objected to a class action settlement within the 5 years preceding the date of the filed objection, the caption of each case in which counsel or the firm has made such objection and a copy of any orders related to or ruling upon counsel's or the counsel's law firm's prior objections that were issued by the trial and appellate courts in each listed case in which the objector's counsel and/or counsel's law firm have objected to a class action settlement within the preceding five years;
 - f. any and all agreements that relate to the objection or the process of objecting—whether written or oral—between objector or objector's counsel and any other person or entity;
 - g. the identity of all counsel (if any) representing the objector who will appear at the Final Approval Hearing;
 - h. a list of all persons who will be called to testify at the Final Approval Hearing in support of the objection (if any);

- i. a statement confirming whether the objector intends to personally appear and/or testify at the Final Approval Hearing; and
- j. the objector's signature (an attorney's signature is not sufficient).

Class Counsel and/or Defendant's Counsel may conduct limited discovery on any objector or objector's counsel.

Any Settlement Class Member who fails to comply in full with the requirements for objecting in the Settlement Agreement, the Notice, and any Court orders will forever waive and forfeit any and all rights he or she may have to raise any objection to the Settlement Agreement, will not be permitted to object to the approval of the Settlement at the Final Approval Hearing, will be foreclosed from seeking any review of the Settlement or the terms of the Settlement Agreement by appeal or other means, and will be bound by the Settlement Agreement and by all proceedings, orders, and judgments in the Lawsuit.

11. **Claims Process and Settlement Administration.** The Court preliminarily approves the plan for remuneration described in Section IV of the Settlement Agreement.

Settlement Class Members who qualify for and wish to submit a Claim Form shall do so in accordance with the requirements and procedures specified in the Notice and the Claim Form. If the Final Order and Judgment is entered, all Settlement Class Members who qualify for any benefit under the Settlement, but fail to submit a claim in accordance with the requirements and procedures specified in the Notice and the Claim Form, shall be forever barred from receiving any such benefit, but will in all other respects be subject to and bound by the provisions in the Settlement Agreement, the Release included in that Settlement Agreement, and the Final Order and Judgment.

12. **Termination of Settlement.** This Preliminary Approval Order shall become null and void and shall be without prejudice to the rights of the Parties, all of whom shall be restored to their respective positions existing as of the date of the execution of the Settlement Agreement, if the Settlement is not finally approved by the Court or is terminated in accordance with the Settlement Agreement. In such event, the Settlement and Settlement Agreement shall become null and void and be of no further force and effect, and neither the Settlement Agreement nor the Court's orders, including this Preliminary Approval Order, relating to the Settlement shall be used or referred to for any purpose whatsoever.

13. **Use of Order.** This Preliminary Approval Order shall be of no force or effect if a Final Order and Judgment is not entered or there is no Effective Date and shall not be construed or used as an admission, concession, or declaration by or against Defendant of any fault, wrongdoing, breach, liability, or the certifiability of any class. Nor shall this Preliminary Approval Order be construed or used as an admission, concession, or declaration by or against the Class Representative or any other Settlement Class Member that his or her claim lacks merit or that the relief requested is inappropriate, improper, unavailable, or as a waiver by any Party of any defense or claim he, she, or it may have in this Lawsuit or in any other lawsuit.

14. **Stay of Proceedings.** Except as necessary to effectuate this Preliminary Approval Order, all proceedings and deadlines in this matter are stayed and suspended pending the Final Approval Hearing and issuance of the Final Order and Judgment, or until such further order of this Court. Further, any actions brought by Settlement Class Members concerning the Released Claims are hereby enjoined and stayed pending the

Final Approval Hearing and issuance of the Final Order and Judgment, or until such further order of this Court.

15. **Continuance of Hearing.** The Court reserves the right to adjourn or continue the Final Approval Hearing and related deadlines without further written notice to the Settlement Class. If the Court alters any of those dates or times, the revised dates and times shall be posted on the Settlement Website maintained by the Settlement Administrator.

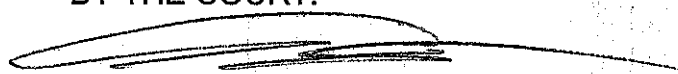
16. **Summary of Deadlines.** The preliminarily approved Settlement shall be administered according to its terms pending the Final Approval Hearing. Deadlines arising under the Settlement Agreement and this Preliminary Approval Order include, but are not limited to:

EVENT	DATE
Notice Deadline	45 Days after Preliminary Approval
Deadline for Plaintiff to File Motion for Attorneys' Fees, Costs, Expenses, and Service Award	14 Days before the Objection Deadline and Opt-Out Deadline
Deadline for Settlement Class Members to Opt-Out of or Object to Settlement Agreement	60 Days after Notice Deadline

Deadline for Class Members to Submit Claim Forms (Electronically or Postmarked by Mail)	60 Days after Notice Deadline
Deadline for Plaintiffs to File Motion for Final Approval of Settlement	21 Days before the original date set for the Final Approval Hearing
Final Approval Hearing	Not less than 105 days after Preliminary Approval – Monday, July 27, 2026 at 9:30 a.m.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 18th day of March, 2026.

BY THE COURT:



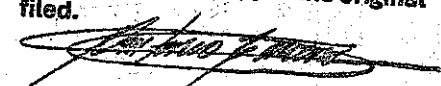
Andrew H. Dowling, Judge

Distribution:

- The Honorable Andrew H. Dowling
- Sara Shaffer, Deputy Court Administrator (Civil)
- Benjamin F. Johns, Esquire & Samantha E. Holbrook, Esquire, SHUB JOHNS & HOLBROOK LLC, Four Tower Bridge, 200 Barr Harbor Drive, Suite 400, Conshohocken, PA 19428 (Counsel for Plaintiff Melanie Hudson)
- Bart D. Cohen, Esquire, BAILEY & GLASSER LLP, 1622 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103 (Counsel for Plaintiff Melanie Hudson)
- Charles E. Schaffer, Esquire & Nicholas J. Elia, Esquire, LEVIN SEDRAN & BERMAN LLP, 510 Walnut Street, Suite 500, Philadelphia, PA 19106 (Attorneys for Plaintiff Robert Twaddell)
- David K. Lietz, Esquire, MILBERG COLEMAN BRYSON PHILLIPS GROSSMAN, PLLC, 5335 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20015-2052 (Attorneys for Plaintiff Robert Twaddell)

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DATE: **MAR 19 2020**
 I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original filed.



DAUPHIN COUNTY PROTHONOTARY

Patrick Howard, Esquire, SALTZ MONGELUZZI BENDESKY P.C., 1650 Market Street,
One Liberty Place, 52nd Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Samuel J. Strauss, Esquire & Raina Borelli, Esquire, STRAUSS BORRELLI PLLC, 980
N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1610, Chicago, IL 60611 (*Attorneys for Plaintiff
Gregory Minarchick*)

Gerald D. Wells, III, Esquire, LYNCH CARPENTER, 1133 Penn Avenue, 5th Floor,
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Courtney Maccarone, Esquire & Mark Svensson, Esquire, LEVI & KORSINSKY, LLP,
33 Whitehall Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10004 (*Attorneys for Plaintiff
Audrey Plassio*)

Kenneth J. Grunfeld, Esquire, KOPELOWITZ OSTROW FERGUSON WEISELBERG
GILBERT, 65 Overhill Road, Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

Gary E. Mason, Esquire, Danielle L. Perry, Esquire & Lisa A. White, Esquire, MASON
LLP, 5335 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Suite 640, Washington, DC 20015
(*Attorneys for Plaintiff Tara Dusko*)

Andrew W. Ferich, Esquire, AHDOOT & WOLFSON, PC, 201 King of Prussia Road,
Suite 650, Radnor, PA 19087 (*Attorney for Plaintiff Joseph Yurcho & Plaintiff
Carol Blount*)

William B. Federman, Esquire & Tanner R. Hilton, Esquire, FEDERMAN &
SHERWOOD, 10205 North Pennsylvania Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73120

William B. Federman, Esquire & Tanner R. Hilton, Esquire, FEDERMAN &
SHERWOOD, 4131 North Central Expressway, Suite 900, Dallas, Texas 75204
(*Attorneys for Plaintiff Tahira Washington*)

Amber L. Schubert, Esquire, SCHUBERT JONCKHEER & KOLBE LLP, 2001 Union
Street, Suite 200, San Francisco, CA 94123 (*Attorney for Plaintiff Annette
Eubank*)

Marc H. Edelson, Esquire, EDELSON LECHTZIN LLP, 411 S. State Street, Suite N300,
Newtown, PA 18940 (*Attorney for Plaintiff Nicholas Zullo*)

John B. Consevage, Esquire, DILWORTH PAXSON LLP, 2 N. 2nd Street, Suite 1101,
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Jeffrey S. Haut, Esquire & Christopher G. Dean, Esquire, MCDONALD HOPKINS LLC,
600 Superior Avenue, East, Suite 2100, Cleveland, OH 44114 (*Attorneys for
Defendant Pennsylvania State Education Association*)