

INVESTIGATION REPORT

Denver Public Schools Board of Education

Director Vice President Monica Hunter Investigation

October 8, 2026

BACKGROUND

Holland & Knight LLP retained Denise Maes of Maes Solutions, LLC to investigate the scope set forth in a Board resolution dealing with alleged antisemitic and other inappropriate comments Director Vice President Hunter used when referring to Director Amy Klein Molk. The resolution was passed on October 1, 2026. Maes began work immediately upon being retained. Her investigation involved review of the statements and declarations made by certain Board members, review of relevant news stories on the matter, and interviews with Board members Director President Xochitl Gaytan, Director Vice President Monica Hunter, Director Amy Klein Molk, and Superintendent Dr. Alex Marrero.

SCOPE

During the Board's October 1 meeting, the Board passed a motion approving an investigation into Hunter for potential Board policy violations related to alleged inappropriate and antisemitic comments. Initially, the motion limited the investigation to interviews with Hunter, Board President Xochitl Gaytan, Klein Molk and the Superintendent. The investigation was to be completed by October 8. Ultimately, the motion the Board passed permitted the investigator to interview any witness necessary to determine whether the alleged comments were made. Although the Board permitted the investigator to interview witnesses other than the individuals named in the initial motion, given the timeline permitted for the investigation and a report, interviewing other individuals was not feasible.

THE INVESTIGATION

The investigation began with interviews of those who had prepared statements related to reported antisemitic and inappropriate remarks directed at Director Klein Molk. The investigator began with a meeting with Hunter. The meeting took place in a meeting room at the Blair Caldwell Library on Monday, October 5 at 10am. We began our conversation by reviewing the allegations made against her. We began with allegations made by Superintendent Marrero

Superintendent Marrero statement

After pleasant exchanges, the interview began by reviewing Superintendent Marrero's statement alleging that Hunter referred to Director Amy Klein Molk as a "Zionist bitch." Hunter denied making such a statement and that "there is no such version where that is true."

The Superintendent's statement does not provide a date when these comments were allegedly made. However, in my meeting with Hunter, and later corroborated by the Superintendent, the two met in the Superintendent's office in the afternoon of January 27, 2026.

The Superintendent's statement is brief and he acknowledged during his interview that his statement (or declaration as he referred to it) does not state exactly what Hunter said to him,

“but very similar.” His calendar shows that he met 1-1 with Hunter on January 27 at 12:30. He prepared an agenda, which consisted primarily of upcoming and current matters. The meeting was intended to be brief. According to the Superintendent, he mentioned to Hunter the need to appoint two board members to a City school ordinance committee and the two expressing an interest were Klein Molk and Director Secretary Marlene de la Rosa.

In discussing this matter, according to the Superintendent, Hunter said, “Amy, don’t trust her, she’s a Zionist bitch.” The Superintendent did not respond to the comment and continued with the meeting. The Superintendent’s notes, taken contemporaneously with this meeting include an entry, “Vice President Hunter referred to Director Klein-Molk as a ‘Zionist b...’ and said she did not want to sit next to her. She also told me she had previously expressed that sentiment to Board President Xochitl Gaytan.”

The Superintendent claims, and his notes show, that following the meeting, the Superintendent “contacted President Gaytan and shared what Vice President shared with me. President Gaytan confirmed that Vice President Hunter had previously told her that she did not want to sit next to Director Klein-Molk in connection with the Board’s seating arrangements.” Although the Superintendent’s notes reflect that his conversation with Gaytan took place on January 27, the Superintendent clarified and confirmed that he called Gaytan on the 27th, but did not reach her. Instead, the two spoke about this briefly while attending a DPS Foundation lunch the following day and that is when the exchange between the two occurred. Calendars for both Gaytan and the Superintendent confirm that they both attended the lunch reference but there is no written record of this conversation.

Hunter denies making any such statements and that “there is no such version where that is true.” She proceeded to articulate her belief that these allegations were (and are) in retaliation for what some perceive as her initiating conversations about the Superintendent’s continued employment. (She provided much detail about events in June and July around conversations some Board members were having about convening a meeting to discuss the Superintendent’s employment. Much of this back and forth is not relevant to the focus of this investigation except her claim that her role or perceived role in trying to convene such a meeting is the basis for retaliation against her.) She continually asks that if these allegations are true, why did it take so long “after she tried to fire him” for them to surface.

In response, the Superintendent points to the fact that he relayed the comments to Gaytan one day later after the statements were made and it is not his role to file complaints against board members. That rests solely with the board. So, in his view, he made the comments known shortly after he heard them and did not wait to relay them to the Board President He also says that it has only come to his attention recently that Hunter was key behind an effort to call a

special meeting in July 2026 to discuss his performance. At the time, he perceived that Klein Molk was his harshest critic, as she was portrayed as such in the press.

Statement of Board President Xochitl Gaytan

We next turn to Board President Xochitl Gaytan's statement that Hunter said to her "AKM just said she's a Zionist. Can you believe that? I am not going to vote for her for any officer role. So don't consider bringing her up for consideration for an officer role because she doesn't have my vote." Here, Hunter noted that she didn't want an officer position and then proceeded to discuss a training session scheduled by the Denver Classroom Teachers Association, which had backed the individuals who won the election. According to Hunter, the training was scheduled to be at the offices of the Colorado Education Association but was moved to the home of Lisa Calderon. According to a Denver Post article that discusses this meeting at Calderon's home, the training was on ethical communication. The Denver Post further states that Calderon stated the "the new board members were struggling to work together even before being sworn in because, in particular, Hunter had expressed concerns about Klein Molk being a Zionist." (The Denver Post, September 15, 2026). With additional time, Lisa Calderon would have been an individual to interview.

According to Hunter, the day before this training, which was held November 18, 2025, Klein Molk called Hunter to let her know she wasn't going to attend the training because "she didn't feel safe". According to Hunter, Klein Molk said "I wasn't endorsed by the Working Families Party because I was a Zionist." Hunter asked if they [WFP] called her that and Klein Molk said, "I am one....and WFP is not endorsing Zionists." In my interview with Klein Molk, she categorically denies declaring or ever referring to herself as a Zionist and she further denies the specifics of this conversation with Hunter. Hunter expressed to me that she was shocked because her beliefs are pro-Palestinian. "Zionism is a political group. That's how it's defined in Webster, too. Some people go into Jewish....but others hold Zionist beliefs...Israel is an apartheid state." She continued, "those aren't the beliefs I hold, but I would never blame any Jewish person individually for what's happening." (Also, according to Hunter, the gathering at Calderon's house turned into a discussion about officer roles and no more.)

As to why she didn't support or vote for Klein Molk for an officer position, Hunter says that was because Hunter had heard of inappropriate behavior Klein Molk exhibited toward a CEA employee. Hunter viewed this as disrespectful and ungrateful. This according to Hunter, informed her no vote and nothing to do with "her [Klein Molk's] Jewishness or whiteness." Although not in Gaytan's statement, Gaytan claims that Hunter further articulated not wanting to vote for Klein Molk "because it confirmed what she [Hunter] thought she [Hunter] knew about her [Klein Molk]." In clarifying what Hunter was referring to, Gaytan is convinced Hunter was referring to Klein Molk being a Zionist.

We next turned to Gaytan's statement alleging that when Hunter learned that she would be seated next to Klein Molk, Hunter said, "I'm not sitting next to that racist bitch." Gaytan confirmed in our interview that Hunter did make that statement. Hunter disputes this claim and states that she never heard from Gaytan about any seating arrangements. Gaytan recalls having a telephone conversation with Hunter about seating arrangements, which Hunter denies took place. Hunter and Klein Molk sit next to each other at meetings as of this date.

Gaytan is unclear when this conversation took place, except to write in her statement that it took place in mid-December and by telephone. Gaytan has no telephone record of that call and surmises that the call may have taken place via Signal and record of those calls disappear after a certain time period. Hunter claims that Gaytan made several calls to her, but Hunter was in the hospital at that time and did not take her calls.

In my interview with Gaytan, I asked for further detail about what Hunter said with regard to the proposed seating arrangements. Gaytan asked, "what she told me or staff? Because she told staff and the Superintendent she didn't want to sit by Amy." Upon further inquiry about Hunter's comments to staff, Gaytan was unclear whether she herself conveyed those comments to staff or Hunter made the statements to staff, Gaytan was clear who those staff members would be and I would have sought to interview them if given time. As a side note, Gaytan explained that she adhered to Roberts Rules of Order in determining seating arrangements.

I asked Gaytan to respond to Hunter's claim that these allegations are in retaliation to her being perceived as wanting to replace the Superintendent and asked why she didn't come forward with these allegations sooner. Gaytan responded that, at the time the alleged comments were made, she was unaware of Hunter's views toward the Superintendent. Gaytan also claims that she simply wanted to ignore the comments and dismissed them as bad behavior. She wanted to ignore and "not give into this bad behavior." In a separate conversation with Klein Molk on the same topic, Gaytan acknowledged to Klein Molk that she should have come forward sooner and regrets not doing so.

Statement of Director Amy Klein Molk

Klein Molk's statement includes a conversation allegedly between herself and Hunter during a lunch on December 4, 2025, which both individuals confirm occurred. According to Klein Molk, after their lunch and during their walk back to a Board training, Hunter asked Klein Molk whether she identified as Zionist. According to Klein Molk, she merely expressed her belief in an Israeli state and that she was a proud Jew. According to Klein Molk, Hunter expressed the inability to understand how Klein Molk or Jewish people generally could be "okay with the killing of innocent babies." Again, according to Klein Molk, Hunter continued to express her inability to support Israel or Jewish people who support Israel's existence. When Klein Molk

pushed back on these comments, Hunter dismissed Klein Molk's comments saying, "let's just agree to disagree."

Here, Hunter said many things that are somewhat difficult to discern. She said, "I don't agree with her." I asked specifically what she disagrees with and she replied, "I can't justify in the belief, in like what's happening right now, like genocide. Zionism is, a lot of it is rooted in from what I understand, rooted in the belief, I don't know. Like that's also the thing. A lot of people have a different understanding of it. I don't agree with the concept of Zionism. I don't also, but also within that, there are folks who are Zionists that don't like Netanyahu."

She continued, "I told Amy I don't agree with Zionism and I don't agree with, I can't justify with what's happening in Palestine." According to Hunter, Amy replied that after October 7, Israel had to defend itself and in response, Hunter said, "so many innocent people are being killed. But we're not necessarily going to agree. We just have to agree to disagree."

Hunter continues to believe it's retaliation. She said, "eventually, I hope Amy sees that they don't even necessarily care about your faith or things like that. While I don't agree with it, I've been very supportive of her." I asked her to clarify her disagreement with Amy's faith and she said, "I don't mean faith, but like she calls it her faith. I don't, I don't know if it's faith or not. Zionism, I don't know her, I don't know if she's orthodox. I don't know if she goes to synagogue or not. I shouldn't say faith. I know that is her belief, her political belief. That's you know, some people call it political, some people call it religious. The longer I think about it, some people see it as political, some see it as religion and some see it as race." She clarified the "it" was referring to Zionism.

Hunter recites many examples that allegations against her are false and in particular, she points to examples of support for Klein Molk. They campaigned together, traveled to a conference together along with former Director Torres, and Hunter put in a positive word for Klein Molk for a City of Denver committee. Hunter also claims to send her children to a school that has a heavy Jewish population.

Klein Molk claims that Hunter even during the campaign persistently asked Klein Molk whether she was a Zionist and Klein Molk repeated her support for Israeli existence. In August of this year, Klein Molk claims to have heard from seven people in community that Hunter was referring to her as either a "racist bitch" or a "Zionist bitch." Time did not permit me to seek out and interview any of these individuals. In August, Klein Molk sought a meeting with Hunter to discuss what Klein Molk had been hearing in community. According to Hunter, she was unable to meet with Klein Molk at the time because of work demands and instead, the two exchanged a series of text messages where Hunter denied the allegations but did reiterate her claim that

Klein Molk refers to herself as a Zionist, which Klein Molk continues to deny. The two have not spoken since that exchange of text messages, which ended September 1 of this year.

CONCLUSION

Many of the allegations of Hunter making antisemitic and inappropriate remarks boil down to a “she said, she said, he said”, except for the Superintendent’s notes taken contemporaneously with the alleged comments made by Hunter and relayed to Gaytan soon in time. What remains unclear in the investigation is whether Hunter’s concern or prejudice lie with Zionism and whether she equates that with Judaism for purposes of rendering those alleged statements as antisemitic. As you can see from Hunter’s own statements, she appears fixated on the matter. The questions for the Board are whether 1) Hunter’s problems or fixation with Klein Molk and Zionism are censurable because they are inappropriate and negatively affect decorum in violation of Board policy given the context those statements are made; and 2) whether the statements made by Gaytan, the Superintendent and Klein Molk are true and honest or whether Hunter’s denials are true and honest, and 3) whether terms like “racist” and “bitch” are censurable because they negatively affect decorum in violation of Board policy.