

# Admin(istrative) v. Local Users Why and How

A **user** for every season, turn, turn, turn!<sup>1</sup>

©Henry S. Winokur

[pc.hlp@henrywinokur.com](mailto:pc.hlp@henrywinokur.com)

<sup>1</sup> “**Turn, Turn, Turn**” a folksong also known as “**To Everything There Is a Season**”, written by Pete Seeger, 1959

This presentation is going to show you how to set up the two types of **Users** on your Windows 11 computer.

→ Please do not confuse a **USER** with the two **Account** types:  
the **Microsoft Account** (MSA) and the **Local Account**.

Rather than repeat what others have said, please avail yourself of the link to understand the differences between an **Account** and a **User** (they are not the same and you should understand the difference):

<https://windowsforum.com/threads/how-to-change-microsoft-account-on-windows-11-local-vs-msa.387580/>

Also note, that to confuse all of us, Microsoft in their *brilliance* has intermingled the terms (user and account), so it's somewhat difficult to determine what they are referring to. ☹️ Just be aware.

# When a new, never-used-before PC with Windows 11 is powered up for the first time, one must go through the set-up process and gets:

- ❖ The **Administrative user**, (from this point onward, the *Admin*) who has full control over the system

*And if you take the time to set it up*

- ❖ A **Standard User** which has limited privileges for **security purposes** and is the account from which to operate the computer as the “daily driver”.

SO.....

This presentation covers going through the additional steps to set up the **Standard User**. It should be noted that these two users have nothing whatsoever to do with whether one is logged into their Microsoft or a Local account.

**What needs to be done?**

**It's a really good idea to set up a *new* ADMIN user and then change the OLD ADMIN User to a Standard User to retain the folders and files. It sounds more complicated than it is.**

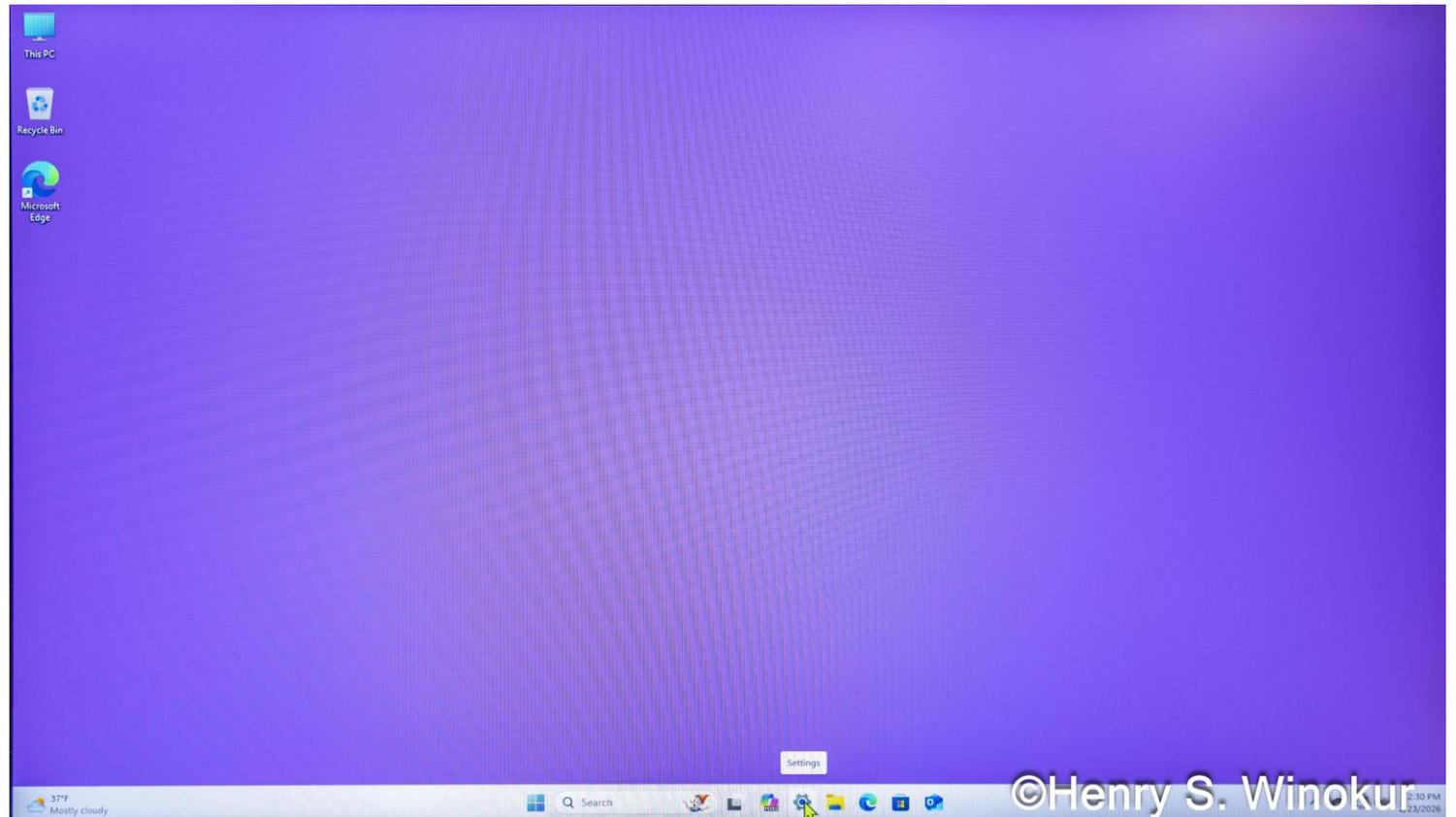
**Follow along .....**

# Here's what the normal screen looks like after you've initially set up Windows:

It is an **ADMIN** user screen, but you wouldn't know from looking.

The task bar is **centered**. That is the default position for Win11.

The mouse pointer is on the **Settings** icon in the middle of the taskbar. The settings icon ***is not part of the original taskbar***. It was added later in this configuration).

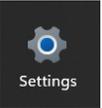


# Steps to Set up **new** ADMIN User.

Do not run other programs while you do this as there is a reboot required in the middle of things....

Warning: the machine being used to create these slides on is in *dark mode*, which means all normally-light-colored backgrounds will be **dark...**. The test machine is in “normal mode” and what you see is what you would get before any customizations are done.

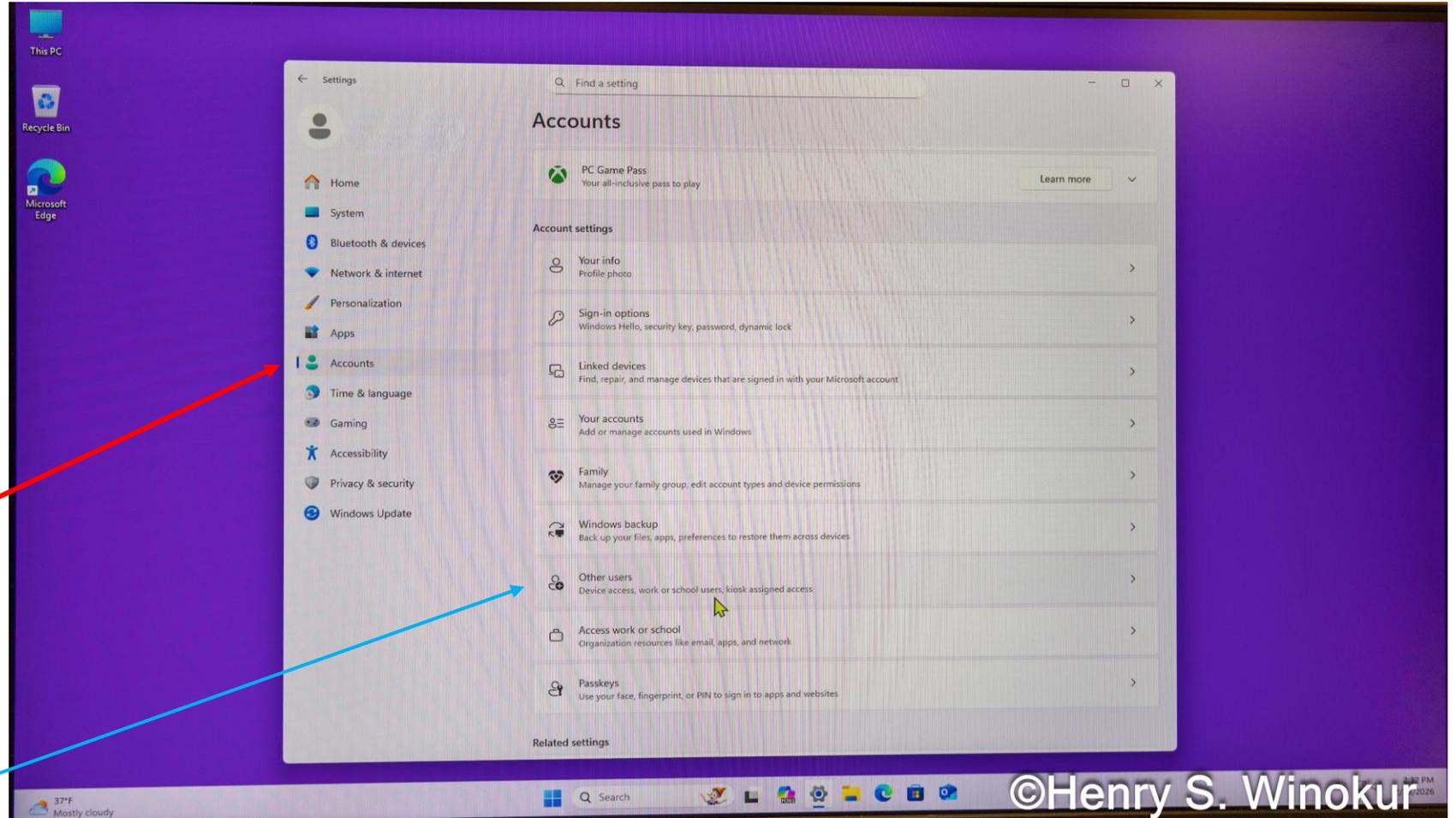
Do remember that there's almost always more than one way to do things in Windows, **so chose #1 or #2...**

1. Go to search box on the task bar and start typing **sett**ings and watch the screen for the SETTINGS item to be listed at the top of the window. When it is, just tap ENTER and the SETTINGS dialog box will open... **OR**
2. Click on **START** button (left end of taskbar icon group) and look for the **settings** icon  in the top section of the menu box.

To the right is what you might see on your screen (Windows is constantly being updated, so it might be a bit different).

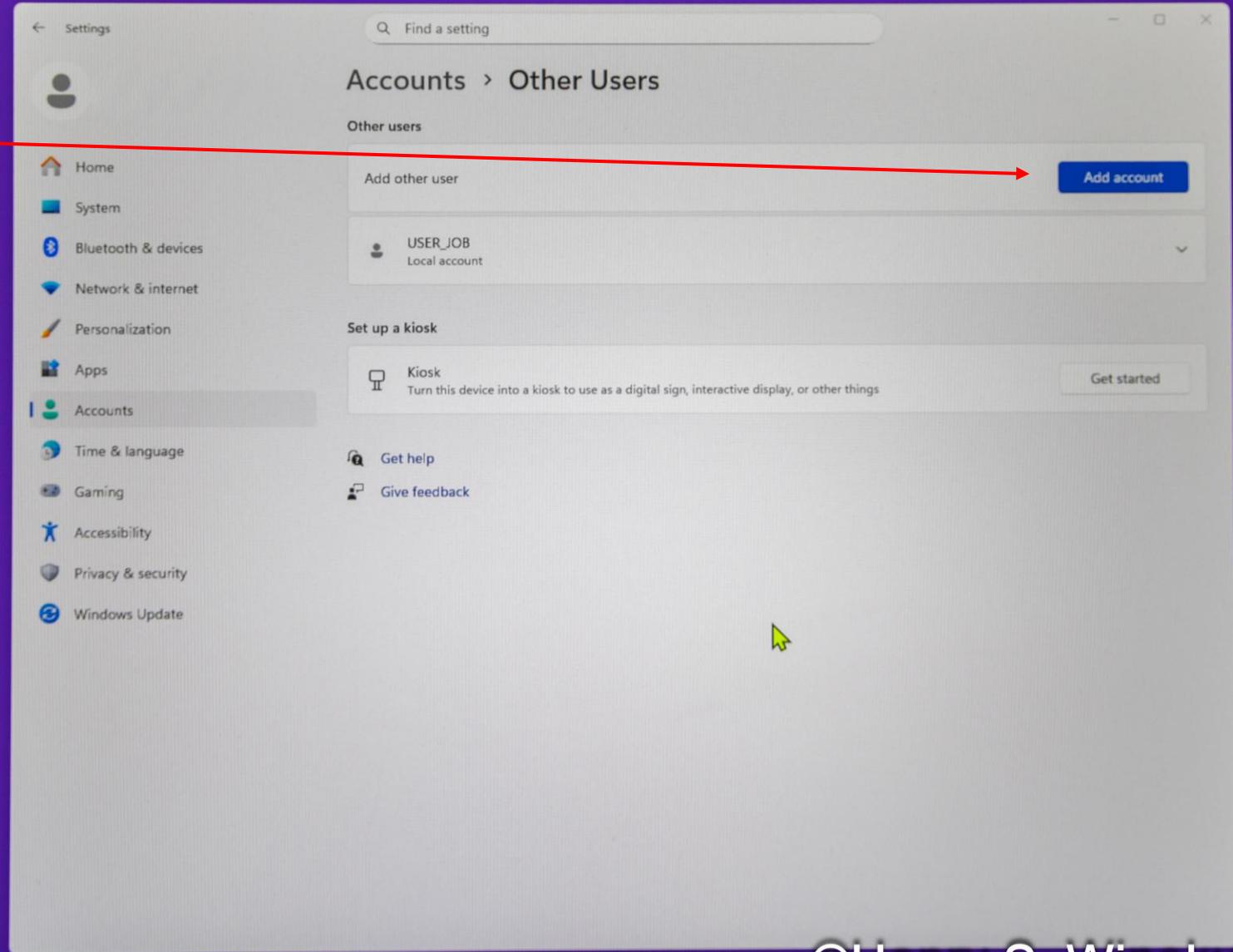
Note that there is a LEFT pane and a RIGHT pane in the window. In the **LEFT** pane, click on **Accounts**.

Then in the RIGHT pane, scroll down, if necessary (depends on your screen size) and click on **Other Users**.

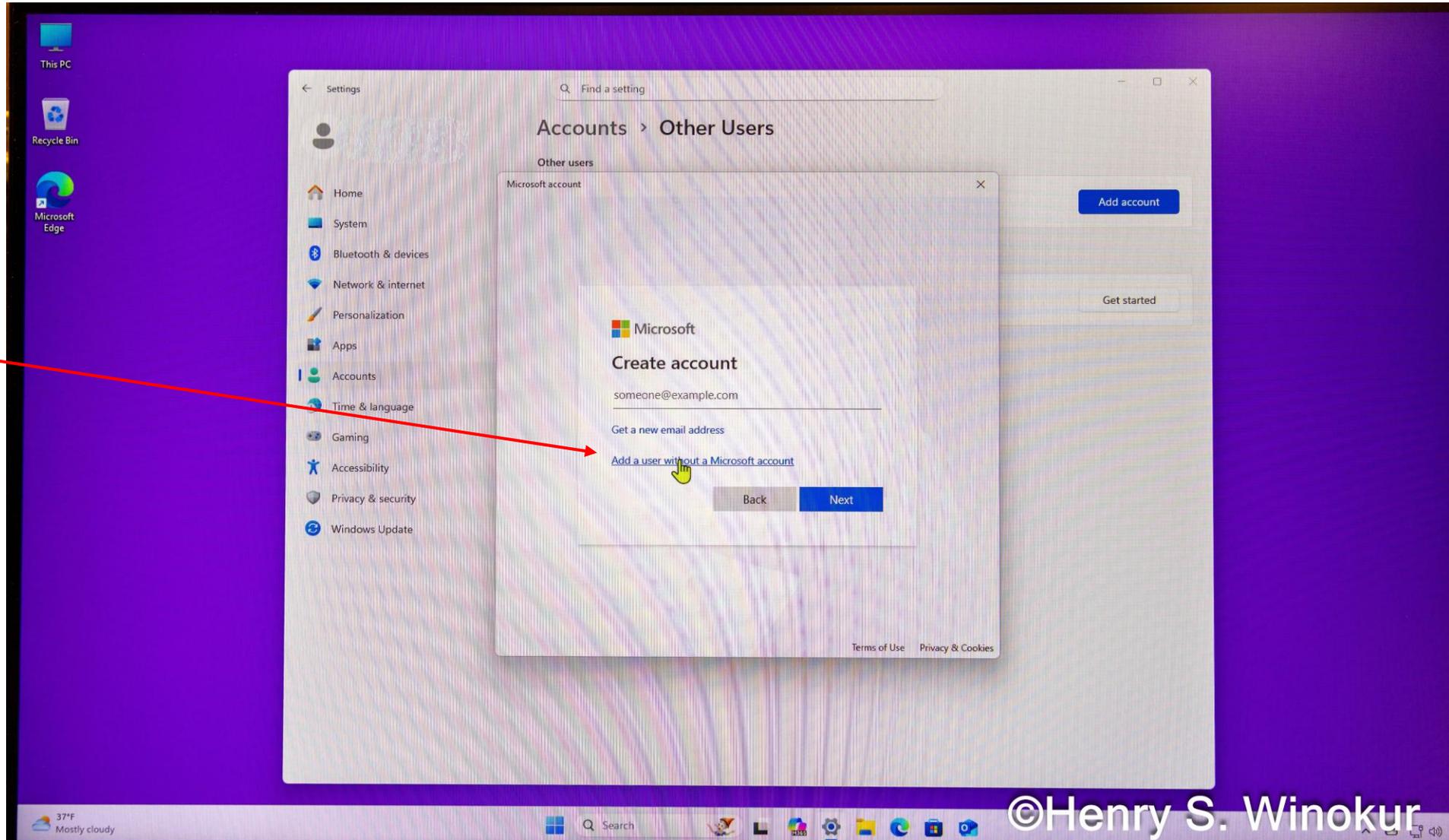


On this screen, notice the blue button that says **“Add account”**.

Click it.....



A dialog box will come up. Click on **Add a user without a Microsoft account**

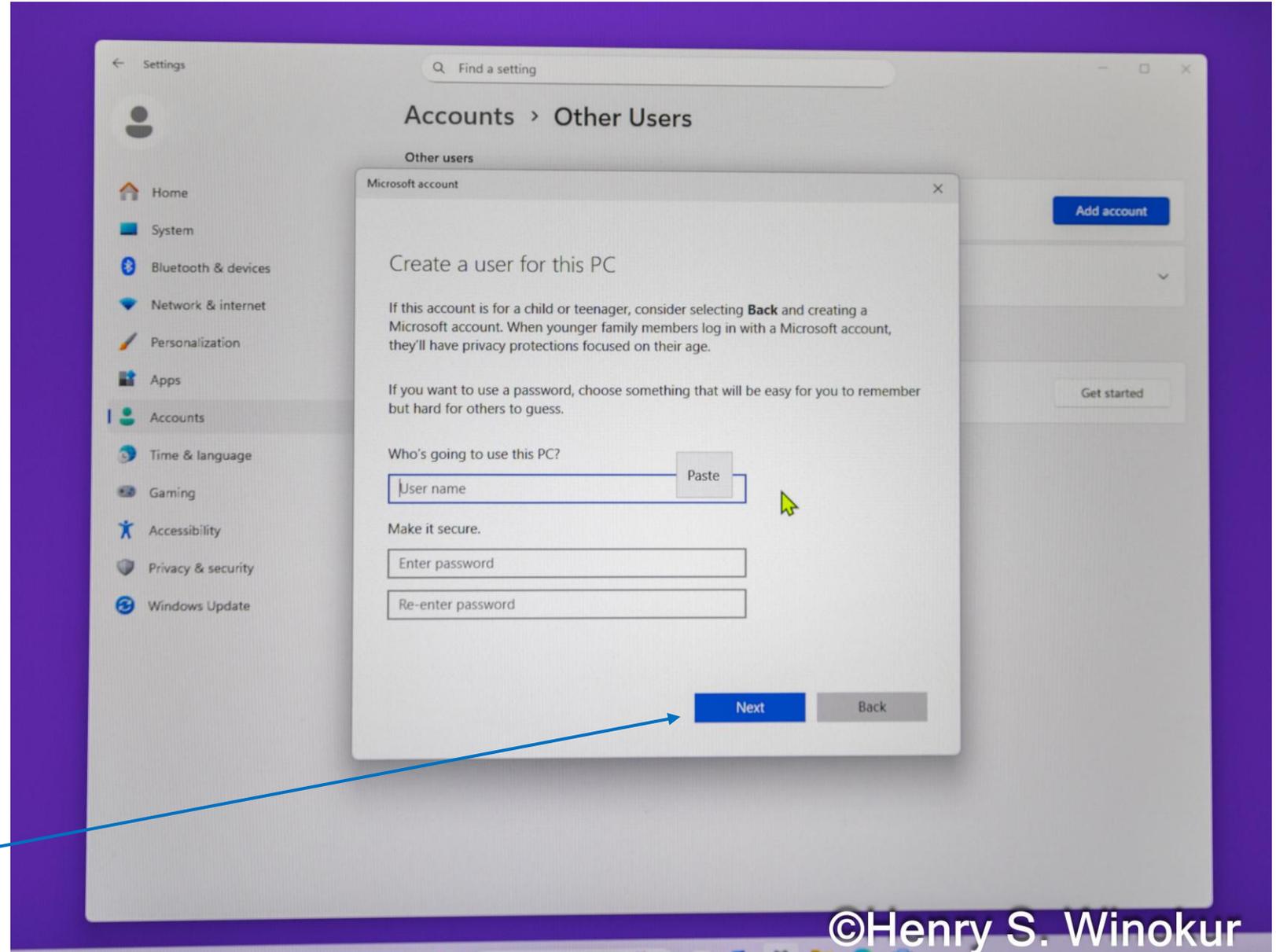


This is the screen where you give the account its name and password.

It is suggested something along the lines of **ADMIN\_XXXX**, where **XXXX** is the name of the person who will be that Admin for the computer. This is not a time for any kind of confusion about who that is.

Make sure you record the password. There's more info about passwords on the next slide.

When done, click **Next**



The reason for using a name like **ADMIN\_XXXX** is you want to very clearly define this user as the **Admin**.

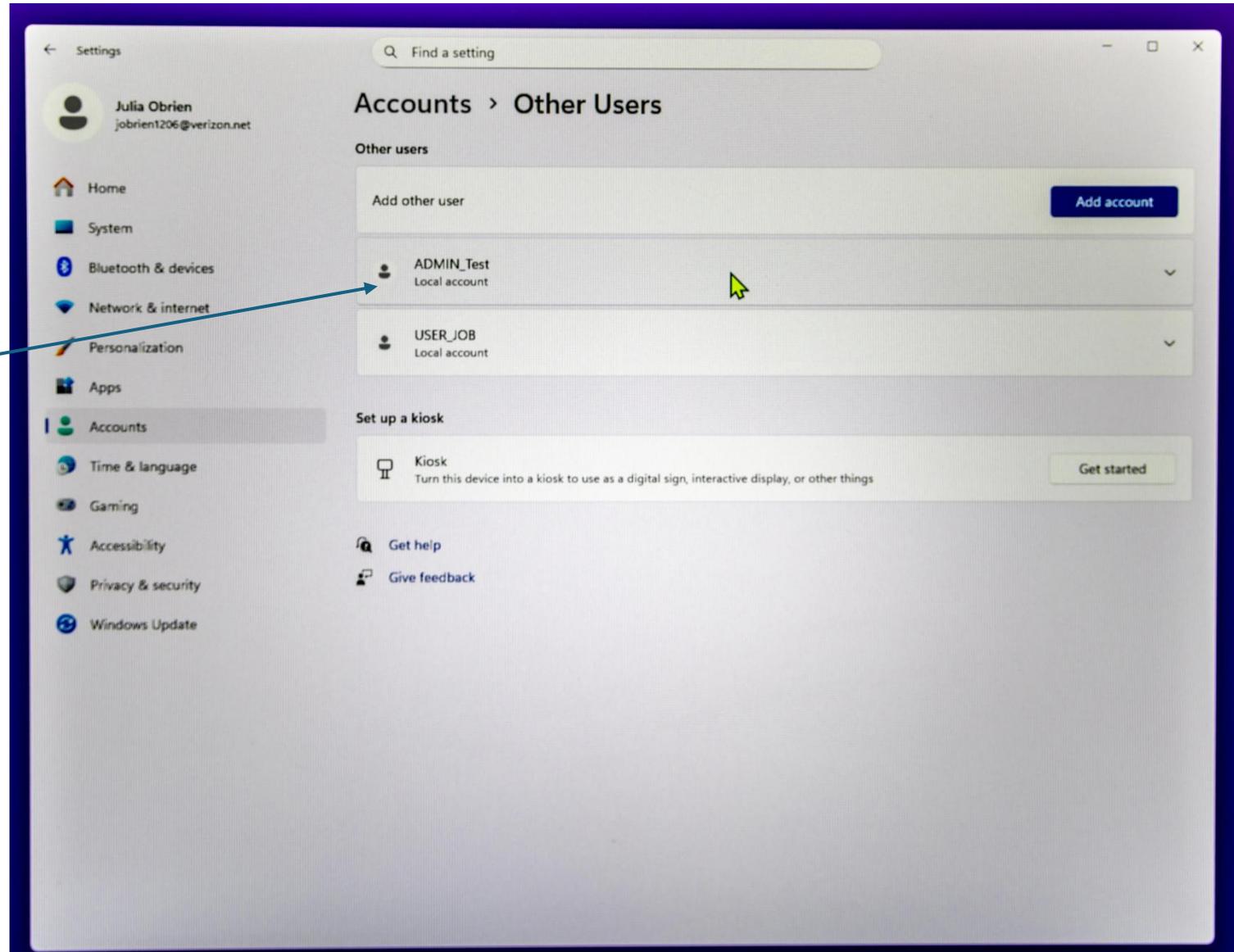
Assigning a password is highly recommended. If this is a desktop machine, it doesn't have to be long or complicated—on the assumption the device won't be leaving your home. If it's a laptop, you can use the same password as you use currently for the current Admin User. You can remove the password altogether if you desire—but **only** if it's a desktop machine—and it's certainly not recommended if others are going to be using the machine.

In Windows 11 there are many different ways to sign in. Did you know that you can use a PIN instead of a password? To use a PIN, you must assign a password, *first*. After you have assigned a password, to assign a PIN, go to **Settings\Accounts** and then locate the **Sign-in Options** selection in the right pane, under **Account Settings**. Under **Ways to sign in**, again in the right pane, select PIN. Your PIN can be alpha-numeric and up to six characters long, but you must tick the box below the field in order to enable the alpha function, otherwise it's just a standard pin with up to a six-digit value.

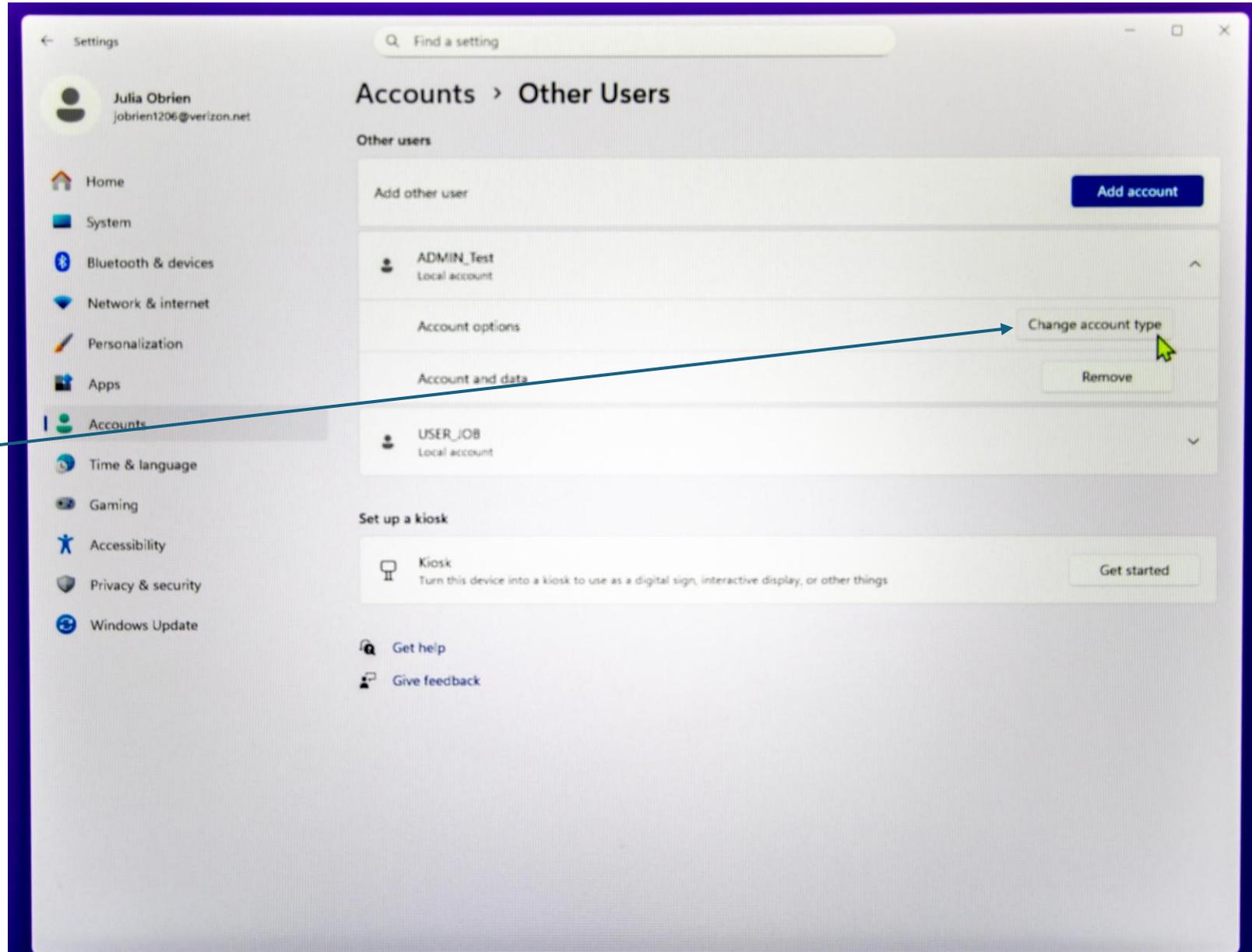
**A note:** at this point, Microsoft starts to mix the words “user” and “account”. The notes follow what you see on your screen, not the proper nomenclature. Follow these steps and you'll be OK.

The new account has been created: **ADMIN\_Test**.

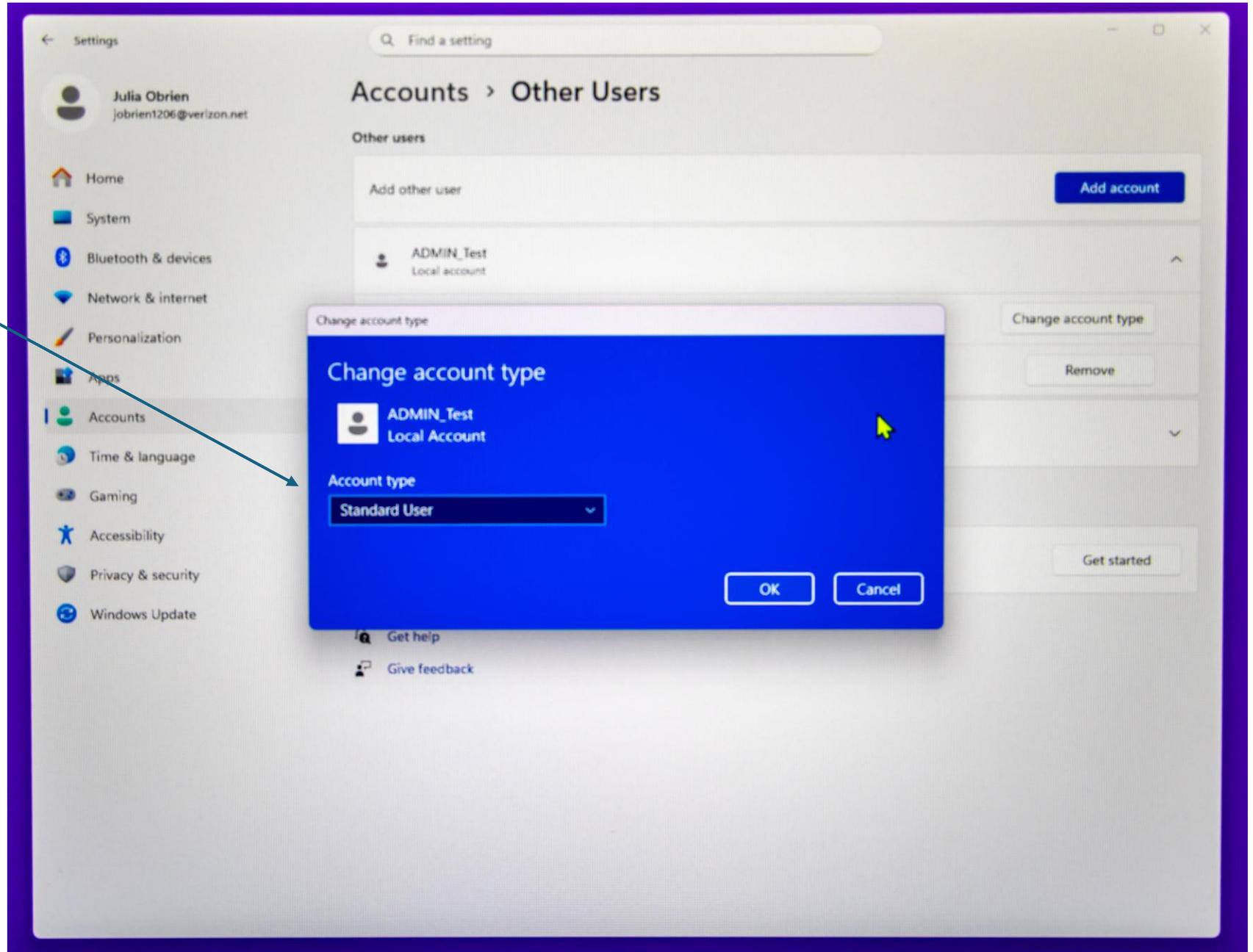
But it needs to be set up as an ADMIN user. To do that click on the item to drop the menu down (notice where the mouse pointer is... The mouse is already in the correct place so the user would click to drop the menu.



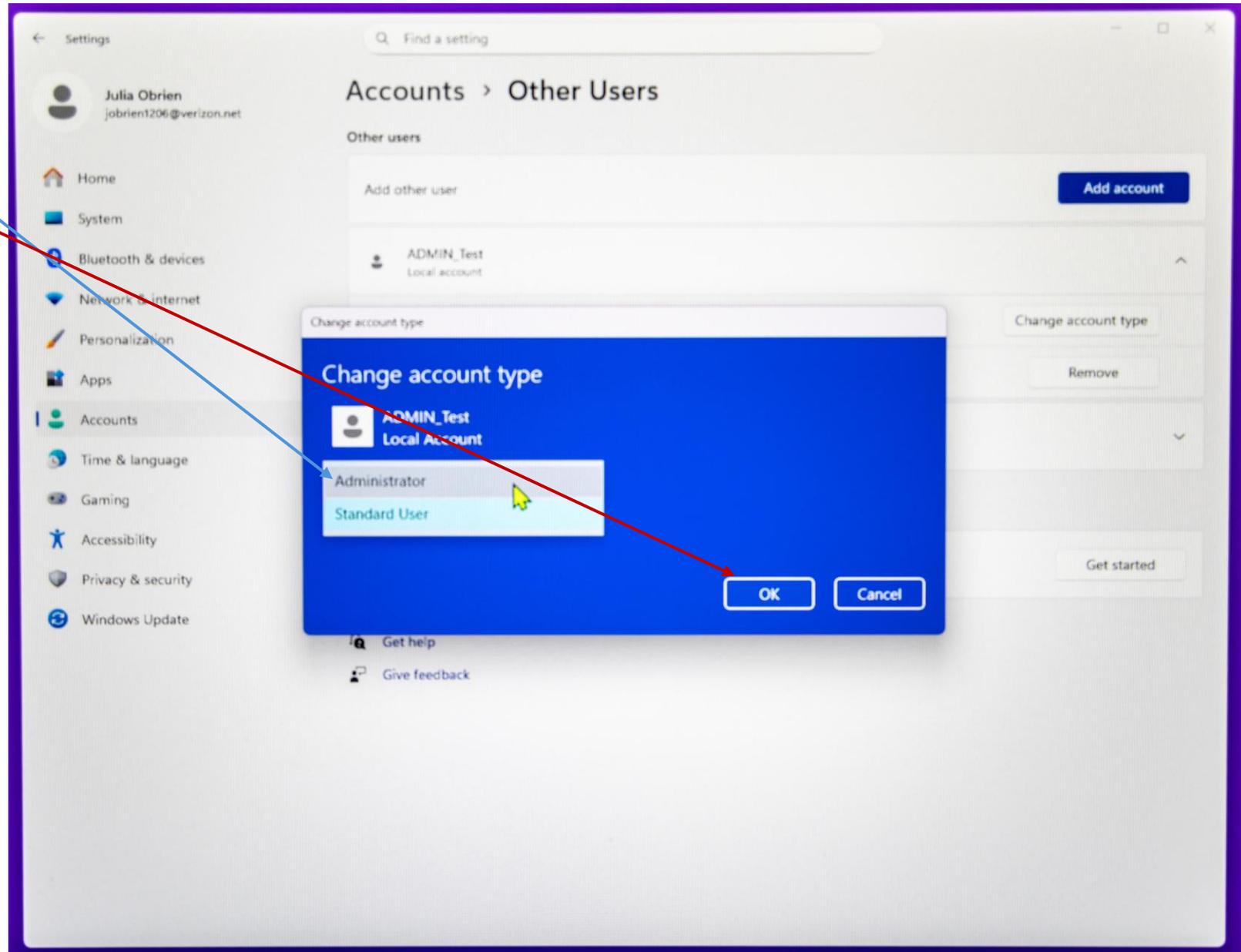
After clicking on the **Admin\_Test** item, the menu choices below are available. Since changing the account to an ADMIN User is required, click on the **Change account type** button.



On this screen one can change the **user type** (which MS mistakenly calls an “account”). From the dark blue field, click on **Standard User**. Drop that menu down and change it to (see next slide).

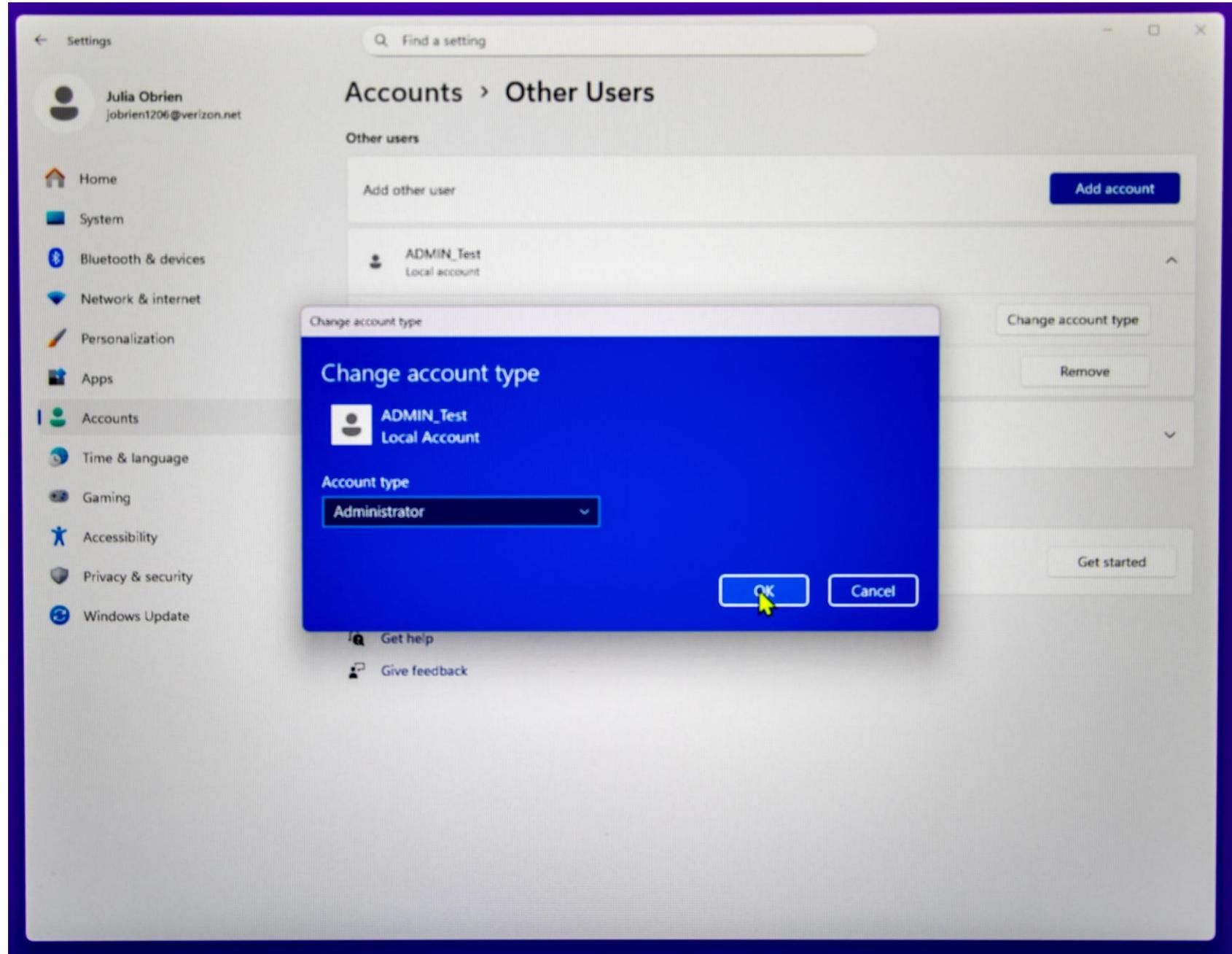


**Administrator**, as the mouse is pointing. When done, click OK.

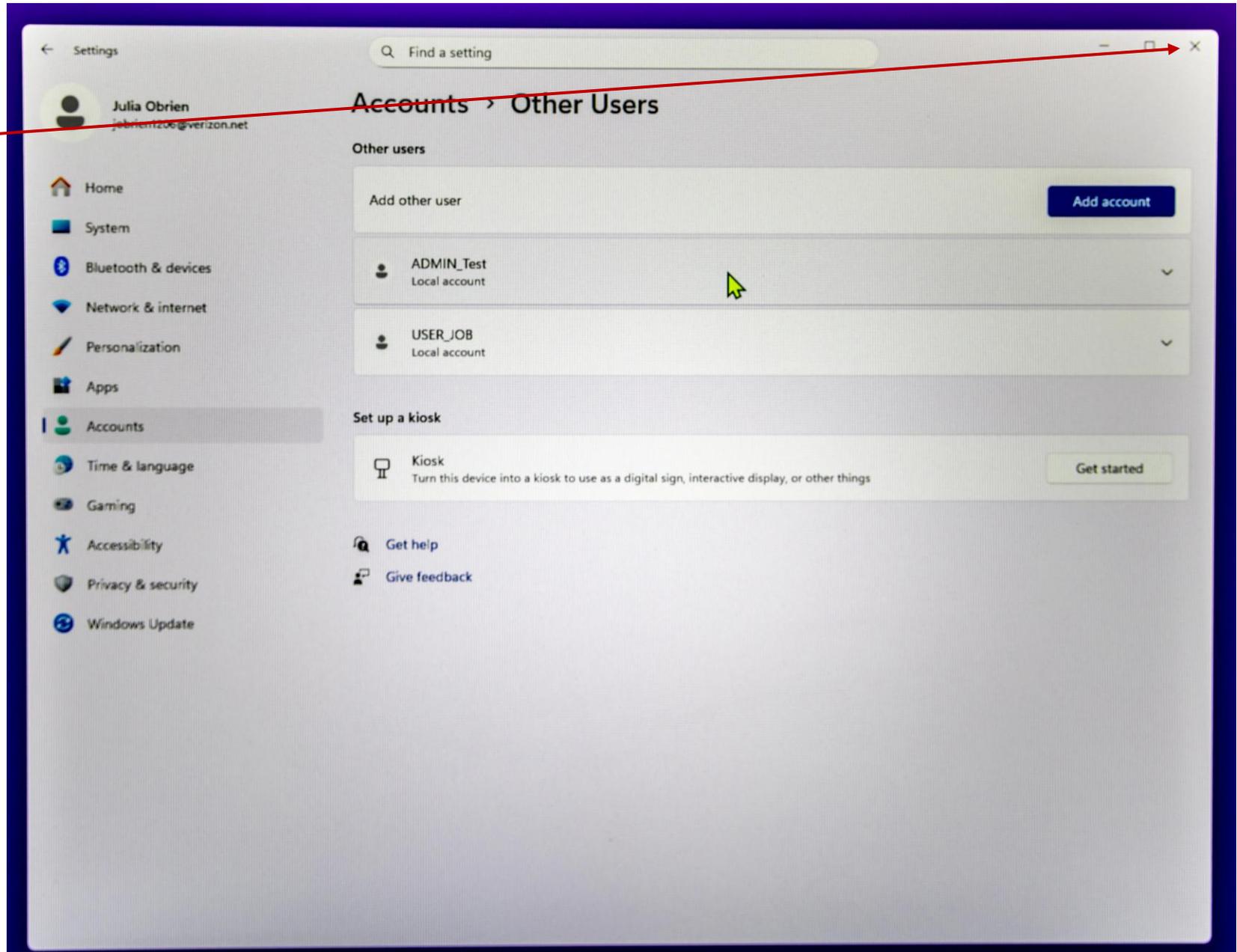


Just illustrating that the type has been changed to **Administrator** and just about to click OK!

On your screen click OK.



You'll be returned to this window. Close it by clicking the X in the upper right corner.

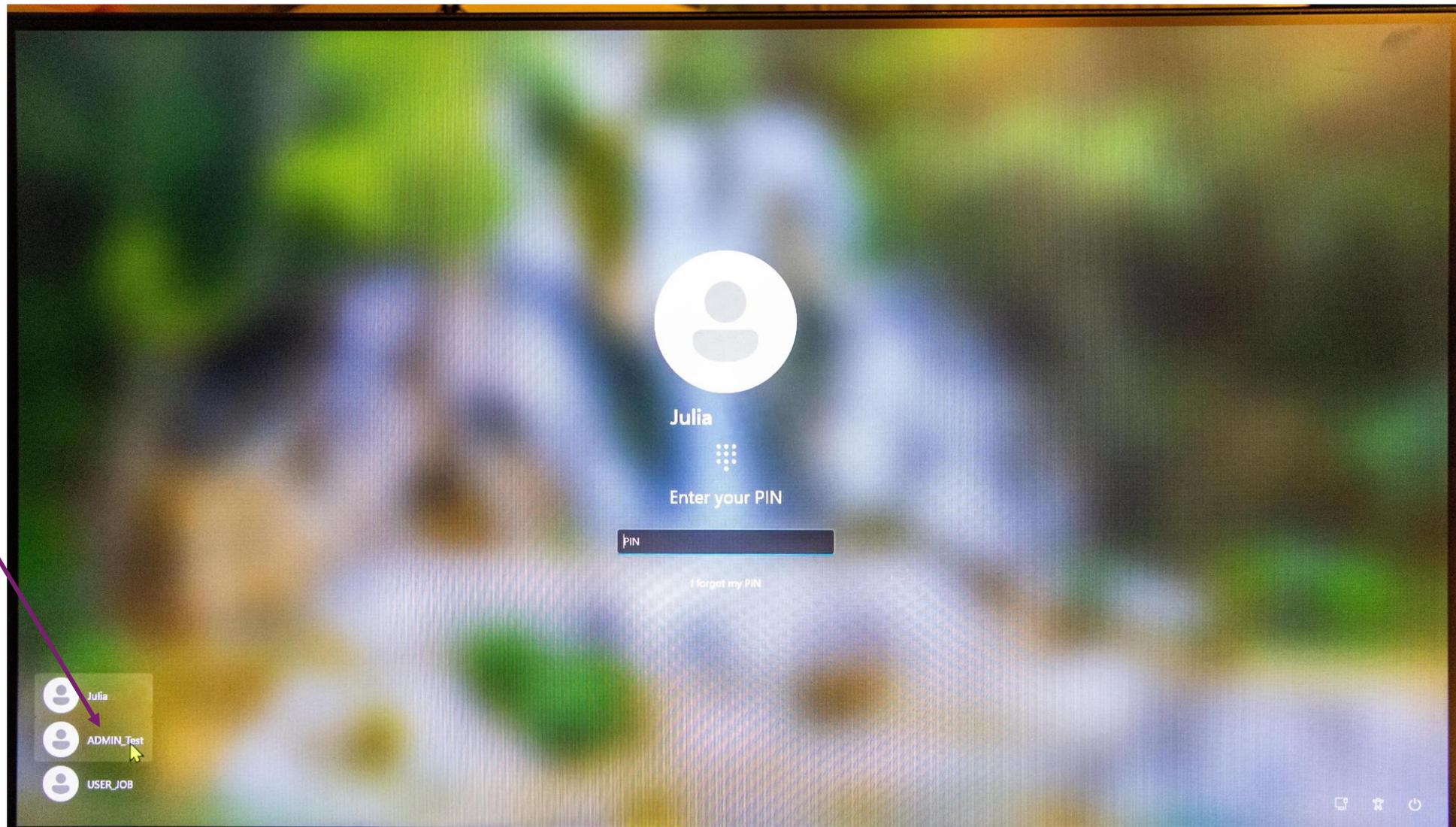


Reboot/restart the computer and eventually you will get to a screen that looks somewhat like this, except the background will likely be different. Tap any key. The **space bar is recommended** because it won't trigger something unexpected.

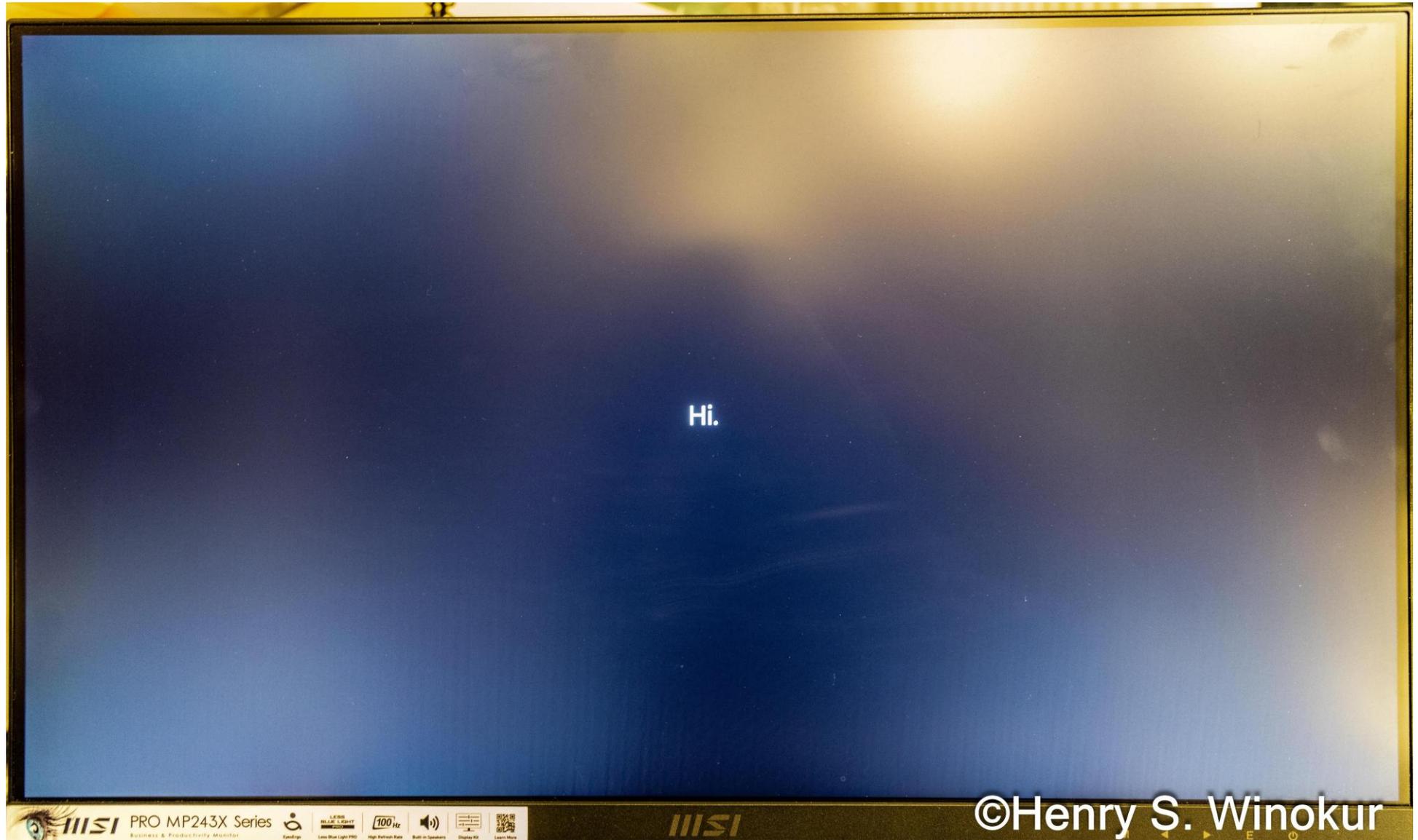


On the next screen you will see something like this sign-on screen. In the **lower left corner** notice the **ADMIN\_Test** selection. That is the newly created account.

On your machine, click your new account name...



The computer will go through several screens as it sets up the new user.



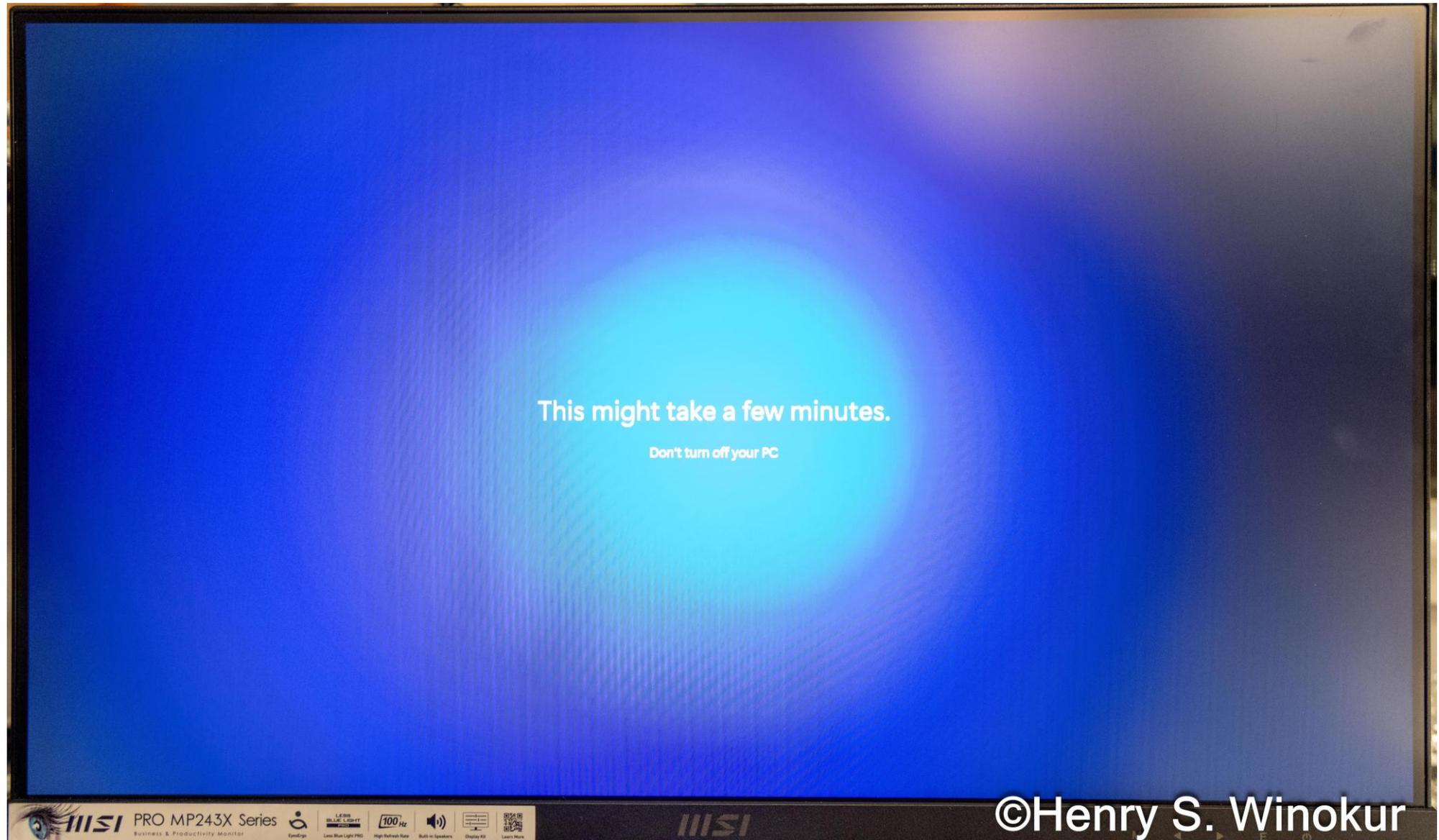
Set up  
continues...

Getting things ready for you.

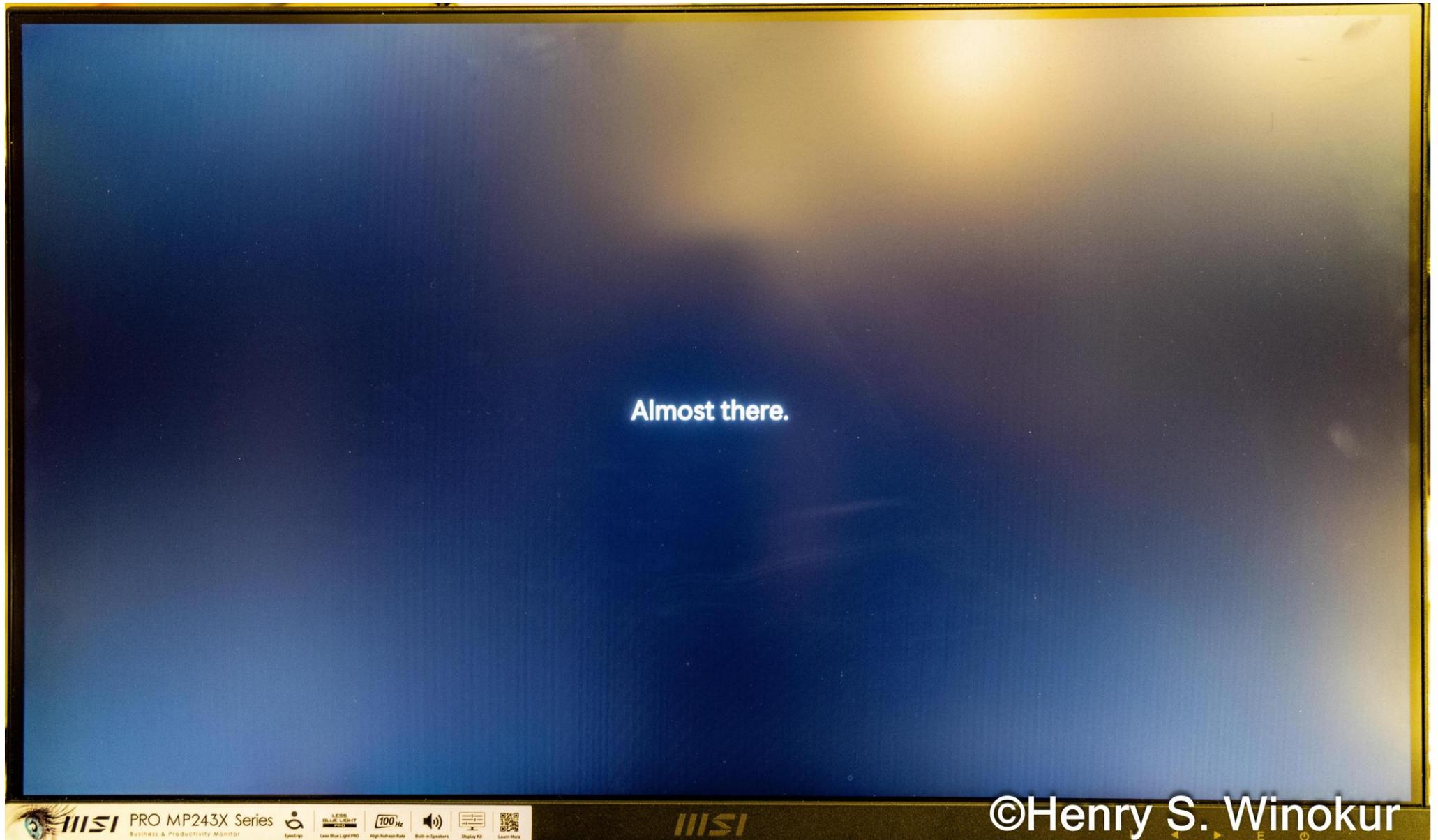


©Henry S. Winokur

How long set up takes depends on your computer's CPU speed, amount of RAM, and whether your machine uses an SSD as it's primary drive.



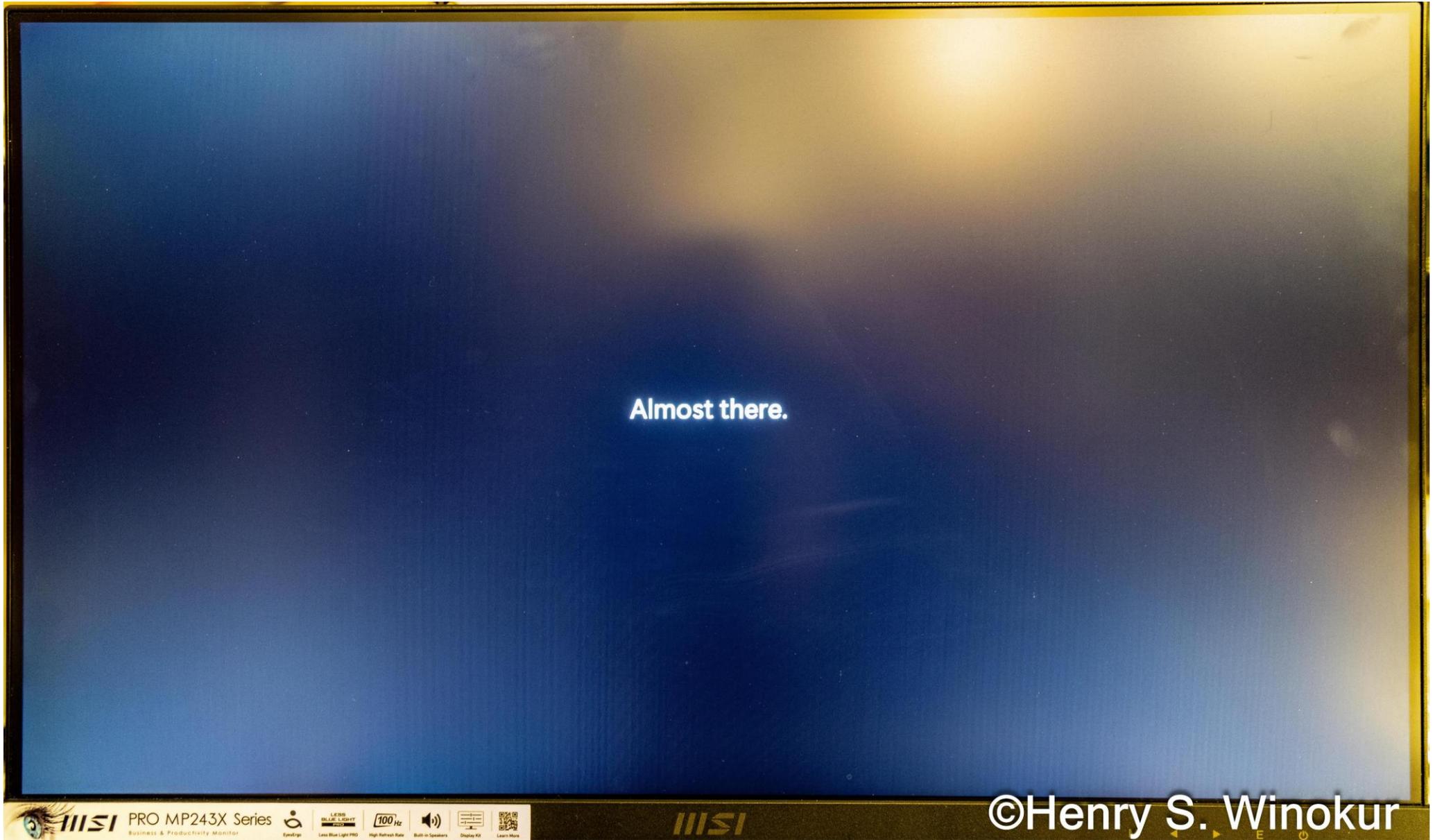
“Just you  
wait, 'enry  
'iggins...”<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> “just you wait 'enry 'iggins” from **My Fair Lady** Written by: Alan Jay Lerner, Frederick Loewe, 2007

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

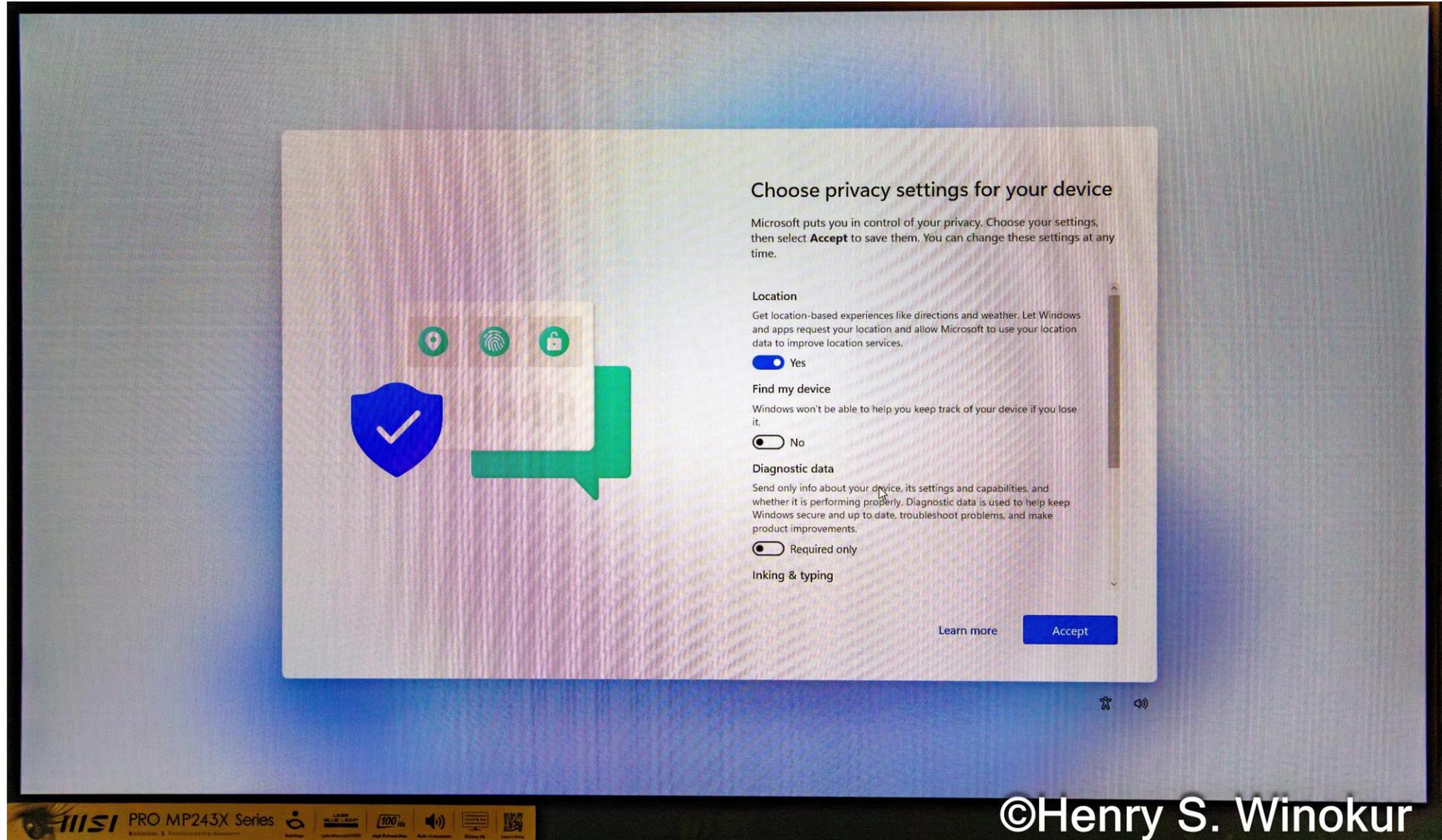
(on the machine used for creating the slides, it was an Intel i-5, with 16GB RAM, and an SSD. The sequence actually took less than 5 minutes.)



©Henry S. Winokur

When you get to this screen, I recommend that you set all of the choices to NO unless you want Microsoft (MS) to track you.

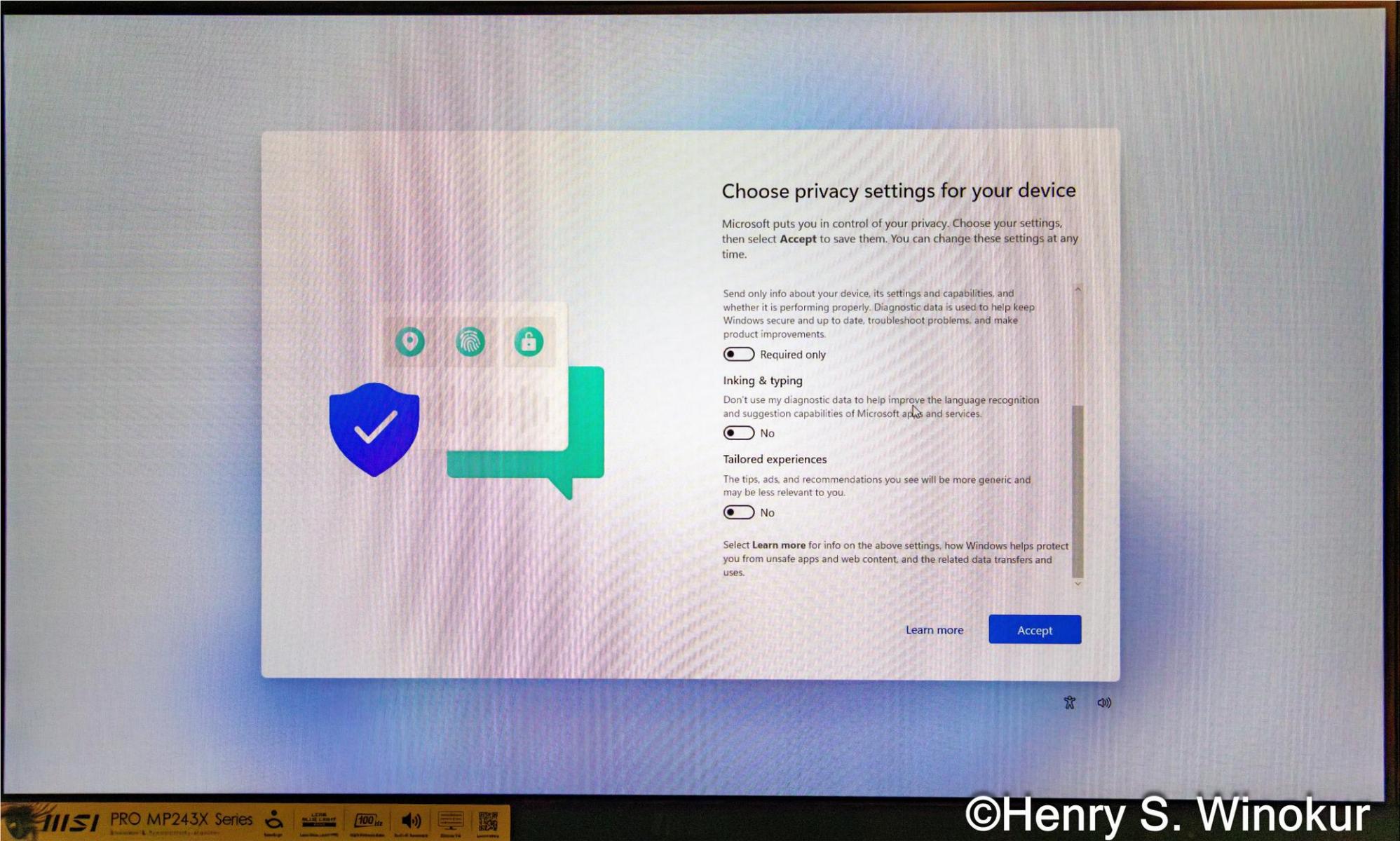
The list has five items on it, so the next slide is part of this screen, too.



©Henry S. Winokur

Continuation of previous slide.

When you've chosen, click the **Accept** button in the lower right corner.



This should be the next screen you see. Notice, in the lower left corner of the Start Menu, who's signed in... it's the new **ADMIN\_Test** account.



→ The next step is to go back to **Settings>Accounts>Other Users** and change the account type for the **OLD Admin** account to **STANDARD**.

That completes the job of adding a new ADMIN account and changing the old account from ADMIN to Standard User.

Restart/reboot.

Make sure you log into your **NON Admin** account. You can still install software or hardware, but you will be asked for your Admin password/PIN/Windows Hello. This, of course does not guarantee that you won't get malware on your computer, but it'll be a lot harder. If you get a dialog box asking for your password,

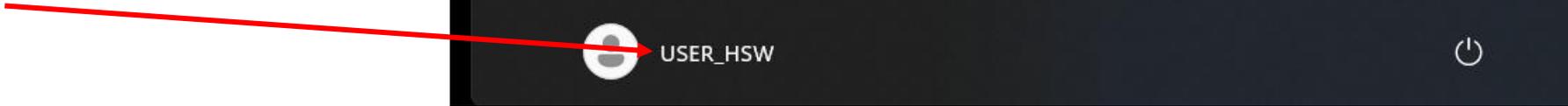
**STOP!** And figure out why. Maybe you don't want to say "OK, go ahead and install..." unless you are sure.

Suggestions on how to differentiate the **ADMIN user** from your **STANDARD user**:

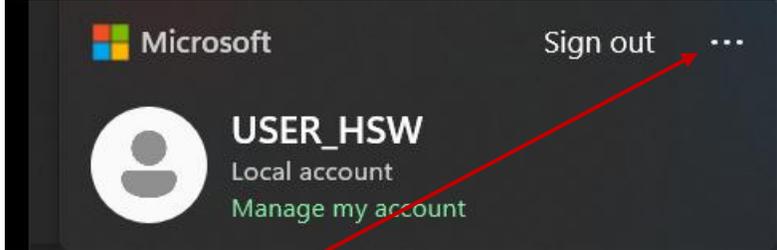
1. Leave the **ADMIN** user's taskbar **centered**.
2. Set the **ADMIN** user's screen background to an ugly color that you don't want to look at  
([settings>system>personalization>background](#)).
3. Set the **STANDARD USER**'s taskbar to the **left**, as in Windows 10.  
(right click on taskbar & select [taskbar settings>taskbar behaviors>taskbar alignment](#)).
4. Set the **STANDARD USER**'s screen background to something that is enjoyable to look at  
([settings>system>personalization>background](#)).
5. Enable seconds on the **STANDARD USER**'s clock  
([settings>personalization>Date & Time>Show time and date in the system tray](#)).

(next slide)

To switch to your ADMIN user, click on the start button , then **right click** on the currently logged in user's name.



You'll get this:



Then *left* click on the ellipses (...) in the right corner. You'll get a choice of users. You can log into your Admin user without logging out of the account you are currently in. Once you're done in the Admin account, LOG OUT and return to the **Standard User**. Always work as the **Standard User**.