

I. ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO NEWLY-ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS BY BOARD SECRETARY

Mr. Jonathan Toth, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, had the newly elected board members recite the following Oath of Allegiance:

State of New Jersey Required Oaths for School Board Members
(Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:12-2.1 and R.S. 41:1-1 and 1-3):

I, Joseph Romano, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and to the Governments established in the United States and this State, under the authority of the people. So help me God.

I, Joseph Romano, do solemnly swear that I possess the qualifications prescribed by law for the office of member of a board of education and that I am not disqualified as a voter pursuant to R.S. 19:4-1 nor disqualified due to conviction of a crime or offense listed in N.J.S.A. 18:12-1, and that I will faithfully, impartially and justly perform all duties of that office according to the best of my ability. So help me God.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 2nd day of January AD 2023
/s/ Joseph Romano /s/ Jonathan B. Toth, Secretary
School District of Edison Township
County of Middlesex / State of New Jersey

I, Xiaohan “Shannon” Peng, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and to the Governments established in the United States and this State, under the authority of the people. So help me God.

I, Xiaohan “Shannon” Peng, do solemnly swear that I possess the qualifications prescribed by law for the office of member of a board of education and that I am not disqualified as a voter pursuant to R.S. 19:4-1 nor disqualified due to conviction of a crime or offense listed in N.J.S.A. 18:12-1, and that I will faithfully, impartially and justly perform all duties of that office according to the best of my ability. So help me God.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 2nd day of January AD 2023
/s/ Xiaohan “Shannon” Peng /s/ Jonathan B. Toth, Secretary
School District of Edison Township
County of Middlesex / State of New Jersey

I, Vishal Patel, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and to the Governments established in the United States and this State, under the authority of the people. So help me God.

I, Vishal Patel, do solemnly swear that I possess the qualifications prescribed by law for the office of member of a board of education and that I am not disqualified as a voter pursuant to R.S. 19:4-1 nor disqualified due to conviction of a crime or offense listed in N.J.S.A. 18:12-1, and that I will faithfully, impartially and justly perform all duties of that office according to the best of my ability. So help me God.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 2nd day of January AD 2023
/s/ Vishal Patel /s/ Jonathan B. Toth, Secretary
School District of Edison Township
County of Middlesex / State of New Jersey

II. CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE

The January 2, 2023 Reorganization Meeting of the Edison Board of Education was called to order by Jonathan B. Toth, Business Administrator/Board Secretary at 7:25P.M. at the Education Center, 312 Pierson Avenue, Edison, NJ.

III. ROLL CALL

Mr. Toth took the roll call, and the following members were present:

Mr. Biral Patel, Mr. Mohin Patel, Mr. Vishal Patel, Mrs. Shannon Peng, Mr. Brian Rivera, Mr. Joseph Romano, Mr. Douglas Schneider, Mr. Jingwei (Jerry) Shi, Mrs. Virginia White

Also in attendance were Edward Alderelli Ed.D., Superintendent, Mr. Jonathan B. Toth, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, and Mr. David Rubin, Board Attorney.

IV. OPENING STATEMENT (By Mr. Jonathan Toth, Temporary Chairperson)

“The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this act, the Edison Board of Education has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time and place thereof posted in the Board of Education Administrative Offices. Copies of these notices were sent to the Star Ledger on January 4, 2022.

The Public may participate at regular meetings in accordance with the By-Laws and the applicable State regulations.

V. CERTIFIED ELECTION RESULTS

3 Candidates (3-Year Term)

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>No. of Votes</u>
1 – Kevin Hajduk	6,791
2 – Shivi Prasad-Madhukar	5,913
3 – Manasi Mather	5,407
4 – Joseph Romano	9,265
5 – Xiaohan “Shannon” Peng	8,763
6 – Vishal Patel	7,904
7 – Christo Makropoulos	2,194
8 – Yash Pandya	3,584
9 – Minesh Patel	3,274
10 – Nisha Basnginwar	3,084

VI. NOMINATION & ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President:

Mr. Toth opened the floor for nominations for President of the Board of Education.

Mr. Schneider nominated Mr. Romano for President. Mr. Romano declined the nomination.
Mr. Shi nominated Mrs. Peng for President.

Each board member filled out a ballot with their choice of President and returned the ballots to Mr. Toth.

Mr. Toth read the ballots off and the results were as follows:

MR. ROMANO: Mr. Schneider

MRS. PENG: Mr. V. Patel, Mr. M. Patel, Mr. B. Patel, Mrs. Peng, Mr. Rivera, Mr. Shi, Mrs. White,
Mr. Romano

Mrs. Peng was elected President.

Vice President:

Mrs. Peng opened the floor for nominations for Vice President of the Board of Education.

Mr. Shi nominated Mr. Romano. Mr. Rivera nominated Mrs. White.

Each board member filled out a ballot with their choice of Vice President and returned the ballots to Mr. Toth.

Mr. Toth read the ballots off and the result was as follows:

MR. ROMANO: Mr. Romano, Mrs. Shi, Mr. M. Patel, Mrs. Peng, Mr. V. Patel

MRS. WHITE: Mrs. White, Mr. Rivera, Mr. Schneider, Mr. B. Patel

Mr. Romano was elected Vice President.

VII. RESOLUTIONS

Approval of Parliamentary Procedures

BE IT

RESOLVED: that the Edison Board of Education, in the County of Middlesex, New Jersey, to the extent consistent with State Law, Policies and By-Laws of the Board will be guided by "Robert's Rules of Order."

Mrs. Peng asked for a motion to approve the resolution for the approval of the Parliamentary Procedures resolution. Mr. M. Patel made the motion, seconded by Mr. Romano. Mr. Toth took a roll call vote, and the result was as follows:

AYES: Mr. B. Patel, Mr. M. Patel, Mr. V. Patel, Mrs. Peng, Mr. Rivera,
Mr. Romano, Mr. Schneider, Mr. Shi, Mrs. White

NAYS: None

The motion was carried.

VIII. ADOPTION OF STATE MANDATED CODE OF ETHICS

Mr. Rubin read each of the ten provisions of the Code of Ethics to the board members and asked them to inquire about the meaning and intent of each, if they were not perfectly clear on their rationale. Mr. Rubin, Board Attorney, and Mr. Toth were available to clarify any concerns or questions. Each board member was given a copy of the Code Of Ethics and asked to sign a document that they received them and understood their content.

Code of Ethics

Title 18A:12-24.1 Code of Ethics for School Board Members requires that a board member shall abide by the following Code of Ethics for School Board Members:

- a. I will uphold and enforce all laws, rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes shall be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures.
- b. I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain public schools that meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, or social standing.
- c. I will confine my board action to policy making, planning, and appraisal, and I will help to frame policies and plans only after the board has consulted those who will be affected by them.
- d. I will carry out my responsibility, not to administer the schools, but, together with my fellow board members, to see that they are well run.
- e. I will recognize that authority rests with the board of education and will make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the board.
- f. I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.
- g. I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. In all other matters, I will provide accurate information, and, in concert with my fellow board members, interpret to the staff the aspirations of the community for its school.
- h. I will vote to appoint the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer.
- i. I will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.
- j. I will refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on the complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

Mrs. Peng asked for a motion to approve the State Mandated Code of Ethics resolution. Mr. Rivera made the motion, seconded by Mr. B. Patel. Mr. Toth took a roll call vote, and the result was as follows:

AYES: Mr. B. Patel, Mr. M. Patel, Mr. V. Patel, Mrs. Peng, Mr. Rivera,
Mr. Romano, Mr. Schneider, Mr. Shi, Mrs. White

NAYS: None The motion was carried.

Mrs. Peng made a motion for the Business Administrator/Board Secretary to prepare a Request for Proposal for Legal Counsel, seconded by Mr. B. Patel. Mr. Toth took a roll call vote, and the result was as follows:

AYES: Mr. B. Patel, Mr. M. Patel, Mr. V. Patel, Mrs. Peng, Mr. Rivera,
Mr. Romano, Mr. Schneider, Mr. Shi, Mrs. White

NAYS: None The motion was carried.

Mrs. Peng made a motion for the Business Administrator/Board Secretary to prepare a Request for Proposal for Banking Depositories, seconded by Mr. Romano. Mr. Toth took a roll call vote, and the result was as follows:

AYES: Mr. B. Patel, Mr. M. Patel, Mr. V. Patel, Mrs. Peng, Mr. Rivera,
Mr. Romano, Mr. Schneider, Mr. Shi, Mrs. White

NAYS: None The motion was carried.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS (RESOLUTIONS)

Mr. Venkat, resident discussed ethics regarding the Board of Education members.

X. REORGANIZATION MEETING RESOLUTIONS

i. Designation of Depositories – 2022-2023 School Year (Revised)

BE IT

RESOLVED: that upon the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent of Schools, the Edison Board of Education approves that all checks, notes, drafts and warrants be signed by all of the following: appointment of the following:

1. Xiaohan “Shannon” Peng, President
2. Jonathan Toth, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
3. Christopher Mullins, Treasurer of School Monies

whose signatures shall be duly certified to said banks, and that all checks, drafts, notes and warrants issued by the Board of Education will not be honored unless so signed.

ii Meeting Dates

BE IT

RESOLVED: that upon the recommendation of the Acting Superintendent of Schools, the Edison Board of Education designates the dates for the Caucus and Regular Action Meetings of the Board of Education as listed below:

<u>CAUCUS MEETINGS</u>		<u>PUBLIC MEETINGS</u>		
Education Center		Alternating Locations Both High Schools		
Thursday	01/19/23	Tuesday	01/24/23	John P. Stevens HS
Thursday	02/23/23	Tuesday	02/28/23	Edison HS
Thursday	03/16/23 Preliminary Budget Approval	Tuesday	03/21/23	John P. Stevens HS
Thursday	04/13/23	Tuesday	04/18/23	Edison HS
		Wednesday	05/03/23	Budget Hearing/Personnel Reappointments at John P Stevens HS
Thursday	05/18/23	Tuesday	05/23/23	John P. Stevens HS
Thursday	06/08/23	Tuesday	06/13/23	Edison HS
Thursday	---	Tuesday	07/25/23	One Monthly Meeting in Summer – Education Center *6:00 PM Start Time
Thursday	---	Tuesday	08/22/23	One Monthly Meeting in Summer – Education Center *6:00 PM Start Time
Thursday	09/14/23	Tuesday	09/19/23	John P. Steven HS
Thursday	10/12/23	Tuesday	10/17/23	Edison HS
Thursday	11/16/23	Tuesday	11/21/23	John P. Stevens HS
Thursday	12/14/23	Tuesday	12/21/21	Edison HS
-----	REORGANIZA- TION MEETING	Tuesday	01/02/24	Education Center

School Locations:

Edison High School – 50 Boulevard of Eagles, Edison, NJ

John P. Stevens High School – 855 Grove Avenue, Edison, NJ

BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: that all meetings of the Board of Education commence at 7:00 PM on the date set forth, with the exception of the July and August Meetings which will commence at 6:00 PM, but in no case, later than 8:99 PM and formal action may be taken by the Board at any and all meetings; and

BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: that the board meetings and information for the youtube live stream will be posted on the district website at www.edison.k12.nj.us; and

BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: that the agenda of each meeting, to the extent known, is to conduct the monthly caucus and all public meetings of the Edison Board of Education and any other matter that may come to the attention of the Board. Formal action will be taken by the Board; and

BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: that the Edison Board of Education reserves the right to go into privileged session at any time to discuss personnel and/or legal matters if necessary; and

BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: that pursuant to the Public Meetings Act, the Board Secretary is hereby directed to publish these dates in the official newspaper of the Board of Education and to post notices of the foregoing dates at the offices of the Board of Education, the Municipal Town Hall and in all schools of the district.

Mrs. Peng asked for a motion to approve the resolution for the Designation of Depositories for 2022-2023 – Signatures (Revised) and the Meeting Dates. Mr. Shi made the motion, seconded by Mr. M. Patel. Mr. Toth took a roll call vote, and the result was as follows:

AYES: Mr. B. Patel, Mr. M. Patel, Mr. V. Patel, Mrs. Peng, Mr. Rivera,
Mr. Romano, Mr. Schneider, Mr. Shi, Mrs. White

NAYS: None

The motion was carried.

XI. BOARD MEMBERS – OPEN DISCUSSION

Mr. Shi congratulated the new Board President and stated that he was looking forward to working with her. He wished everyone a happy new year.

Mr., M. Patel congratulated Mrs. Peng and Mr. Romano and stated that he was looking forward to working with everyone.

Mr. B. Patel congratulated Mrs. Peng and Mr. Romano and wished everyone a happy new year.

Mr. V. Patel congratulated and thanked everyone for electing him to the Board of Education.

Mr. B. Patel congratulated Mrs. Peng and Mr. Romano and wished everyone a happy new year.

Mr. Schneider congratulated Mr. Peng and Mr. Romano and wished everyone a healthy and prosperous new year.

Mrs. Peng wished her fellow board members, the school administrators, educators, school staff, parents, residents, and most importantly Edison's students, a very happy new year.

She thanked her fellow board members for placing their faith in her and giving her this opportunity to serve as Board President and stated that everyone has their own talents and specialties and believes in collaboration and looks forward to working with each member collectively.

Mrs. Peng felt confident that the Board can tackle and solve the issues impacting Edison's students. No issue is too big or small for all to work on.

The New Year, she continued, presents the Board with a new hope and a new start. This year, this Board must ensure long term stability for the District. That begins with hiring a qualified, competent, energetic Superintendent that is committed to the District, that knows our schools and understands the needs of the students and staff.

She submitted that everyone must double down on their efforts to solve school overcrowding, in a way that provides what the students need, but also mindful of the taxpayers of Edison. This includes resuming the discussion on Stelton School. Mrs. Peng stated that she is hopeful that the Township administration will have a substantive dialogue with this Board to move forward with that plan. Also, on overcrowding, she asked that this Board engage in discussions relating to the implementation of an automated residency verification process.

There were several curriculum changes last year, such as middle school AB schedule, that impacted the students' art and foreign language programs. The parents and educators have spoken, and she wanted to say "we heard you" – we will re-examine the curriculum change and rectify as necessary.

Similarly, several committees were eliminated last year, including transportation and special ed committees. 12,000 students and their parents rely on school transportation every day and it is critical to restore the transportation committee to oversee that it is well done. Also, 10-12% of the students need individualized special care by the district and we must restore the special ed committee so their needs will not be ignored.

Finally, she asked her fellow board members for their support in making Edison's school district more transparent. From issues on school district finances, to its operations, to the curriculum being taught in classrooms, it is so important that parents and residents have accurate, complete and timely information.

In closing, Mrs. Peng stated that these are just a few of the many issues the Board will have to work on. She is eager to hear from her fellow board members, as well as from administrators, educators and resident on how the Board can continue to improve the school district and ensure that each student has the tools and resources necessary to succeed. After all, she said, that is the only reason the Board is here.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Venkat, resident, thanked the Board for standing up to all the bullies and hopes the new board will focus on the children. He also spoke about the relocation of the Clara Barton Library, and the 6-minute clock for public comments.

Anthony DeAmorin, resident, discussed residency issues in Edison and told everyone to pay attention to the State Board of Education members. He also congratulated the new board members.

Elizabeth Conway, resident, discussed the Code of Ethics and stated that the biggest job the Board has is to hire a Superintendent. She asked the Board to move forward to get a permanent Superintendent and to move forward to eliminate overcrowding and to expand the schools.

A resident asked the Board to give the public respect once again.

Shanda Edwards, resident, asked all the people getting up to speak to state their names first. She congratulated all and wished everyone a happy new year.

Richard Brescher, resident, congratulated everyone and asked for a committee to deal with construction and wished everyone a happy new year.

Matt Hrevnak, ETEA Vice President, wished everyone a happy new year and congratulated the new board members. He asked that the public only speak about school issues and felt a time limit is important.

Mr. Venkat, resident, agreed with a time limit but felt the public should be able to return to the podium if they had additional issues to discuss. He congratulated Mr. V. Patel and told the Board to focus on spending money on the students.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further questions or comments forthcoming, Mrs. Peng asked for a motion to adjourn this January 2, 2023 Reorganization Meeting of the Edison Board of Education at 8:11 P.M. Mr. Shi made the motion, seconded by Mr. M. Patel and approved by all members present.

Respectfully submitted,



Jonathan B. Toth
Board Secretary

JBT:JMC