

For Immediate Release

July 5th, 2023

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RYH Executive Director Appointed to CPS Board

Raise Your Hand is pleased to congratulate Jianan Shi on his appointment to the Chicago Board of Education as Board President. Shi will be stepping down from his position as Executive Director of Raise Your Hand to accept the appointment. To his new position, Shi brings four years of experience empowering parents and caregivers to strengthen public education and to eliminate inequities that plague the system. Some of the campaigns Shi has helped support include pushing for an equitable school funding formula, eliminating police officers from schools, and advocating for better support for special education. Prior to serving as the Executive Director, Shi was a science teacher at Eric Solorio Academy High School where he built strong relationships with many students, organized fundraisers with the Undocumented Dream Team committee, and created the school's first Coming Out of the Shadows event.

RYH also congratulates Mary Fahey Hughes on her appointment to the CBOE. Hughes was formerly a Special Education Organizer for RYH.

Shi's appointment to the Chicago Board of Education will begin on 14 July. "Leading Raise Your Hand these past four years has been a tremendous honor and privilege. For me, there has been no better way to love Chicago than to love its families. I am excited about the opportunity to continue to center families in this new position," Shi said.

Natasha Erskine and Joy Clendenning will become interim Co-Executive Directors upon Shi's resignation. Erskine is currently RYH's LSC Director, and Clendenning was formerly RYH's Managing Director and interim Executive Director. "The RYH board is excited to welcome Natasha and Joy as interim co-Executive Directors with their joint focus on empowering parents and LSCs, and RYH will continue to advocate for the well-resourced public education that every child in Chicago deserves," said RYH board president Brenda Delgado.

RYH has long been a strong advocate for an elected school board representative of the Chicagoans. We believe that Shi will be a powerful steward of the public interest as an appointed member until the first school board elections are held in Nov. 2024.

As staff and board members of RYH, we worked through these complex circumstances together and remain committed to empowering parents and protecting public education as a public good. We will continue forward with our important work around school funding, LSCs, the elected school board, and much more for the generations of parents and students to come.

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About Raise Your Hand for Public Education IL

Raise Your Hand for Illinois Public Education engages, informs, and empowers parents to protect and strengthen public education for all children in Chicago and Illinois, eliminate inequities in public schools, and work at the grassroots for the public good that is public education.