

VOTE

March 26th, 2019
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION

School Committee - 2 Positions Available



**Ginny Sinkel
KREMER**
(Candidate for
Re-Election)



**Yi
ZHANG**
(Candidate for
Re-Election)



**John S.
PETERSEN**

Please refer to the brochure of candidates statements
prepared by ACACS for details.

Ginny Sinkel Kremer

Dear Members of ACACS:

I am running to keep my School Committee seat because I believe that I have a unique and relevant skill set to offer to our District. As a former Assistant Attorney General and current municipal attorney, I have over two decades of government legal experience and expertise that can help our District avoid costly legal blunders. As the mother of two girls, I have skin in the game.

Our schools are our community's most precious and important asset. Our District is recognized for its academic rigor and excellence, and we all benefit from that recognition. There are major issues, however, that we need to meet head on. One is what some perceive as the conflict between student achievement and wellness. I think we can all agree that "wellness" is an important goal for our kids. I do not think, however, that "wellness" must mean the absence of any stress. Stress is a part of life that people experience from infancy until death. When children are toddlers, we don't try to remove all stressors and frustrations—if we did, or our children would not learn. Learning to walk is frustrating! Learning to express oneself in language and failing is stressful! Parents and teachers respond by encouraging and celebrating successes, and our toddlers learn to cope with the stress of learning new skills. This is a lifelong process and certainly K-12 should be no exception. That said, however, I do support many of the wellness initiatives, such as later school start times for junior high and high school. The developing science around sleep and adolescent brain development is pretty clear at this point, so in my opinion, arranging later start times to the extent possible is a common sense wellness initiative. I have seen its benefits first hand in my own home.

I believe that we need to look at each wellness initiative on its own merits, and to the extent that an initiative may interfere with excellent or achievement, we need to have that discussion. In these discussions, I welcome the perspectives of all communities and have especially appreciated the input from Eileen Zhang and Angie Tso. I believe that our District's cultural diversity is one of our greatest assets, and that all voices need to be at the table. That is why I think it is crucial that Eileen remain on the School Committee.

Another tough issues facing our district is the impact of elementary "school choice." I believe that we need to talk honestly about whether the advantages of this unique aspect of our District justify its continuation--and if so, how we can recognize and respond to the issues it creates. A third pressing issue is the sharp increase in families coping with serious economic disadvantages, and the impacts that can have on our schools and on students' ability to learn and thrive. I think that there needs to be

Ginny Sinkel Kremer

more recognition that our schools and teachers cannot address all of our children's problems. We need to make connections with other community leaders and organizations to assist with some of these issues.

I am a passionate advocate of public education, and over the last year I have put my energy to work bringing your voice to the table. I have assessed the District's past and current legal counsel and worked with the Chair, Co-Chairs, and Superintendent to ensure that, going forward, our legal counsel will be qualified, reasonably priced, and philosophically aligned with our District's values. I have worked to become deeply informed about special education issues in our District, and will continue to evaluate problems and build consensus to make needed improvements so we ensure that decisions are driven only by student need. I am also a passionate advocate of high-quality early childhood education, and will work toward universal access to all day kindergarten for all families who want it. I serve as the School Committee's legislative liaison, meeting regularly with our state delegation to keep informed of developments on Beacon Hill that will impact our District. I have relationships with key players and will continue to advocate for fair state financing for underfunded mandates, such as programs and services for English language learners and students needing special education.

I believe that I bring a unique skill set that is valuable to our District. I have built a broad coalition of diverse supporters, and I am always ready to listen – I'm truly interested in your experiences and perspective. I would be honored to have your vote on Tuesday March 26. With your support, I will continue to bring your voice to the table.

Please re-elect Yi (Eileen) Zhang for School Committee

I'm running for School Committee because I believe in public education. Acton is a town known for excellent schools and I want to continue our tradition. From talking with people in town, I heard different perspectives with changes in recent years. I will continue to support filling any gap between our community goals and our district goals.

About me

My husband and I have lived in Acton for thirteen years with three children attending the schools. I have a master degree in Computer Science. After my kids started school, I quit my engineering job to spend more time with my children. Since then, I have volunteered in the community as a

School council member

School enrichment program teacher

Language teacher

School classroom helper

In the past three years, besides the bi-weekly school committee meetings, I have actively worked on Budget, Calendar and Policy subcommittees, I was a key member in recent Interim and Superintendent search subcommittee. I have had the unique opportunity to help with our district's crucial transition and I have effectively worked with three superintendents.

Why I'm running again

I believe education is the foundation upon which we build our future. Acton has excellent schools and wonderfully diverse community. I will continue to listen and represent your concerns and goals. With the second term opportunity, I will be able to further contribute ways to leverage our diverse community resources into opportunities. I want to continue serving on the school committee also because I will be able to contribute more to the schools and community since with the first three years of experience and knowledge have given me valuable asset.

Why vote for me? What makes me different?

I believe that your vote for me is a right choice for the following reasons:

A member of the school community. As a parent of three children in schools, I share your concerns and priorities for our students.

Yi Zhang

Experience and passion. The first three years of serving on School Committee built a solid experience and knowledge for me to serve second term. I am also passionate about education and have consistently provided creative ways to learn, share and give.

Strong Voice. I have been a strong voice on the School committee to advocate for better education for students and I will continue to speak up on School committee to promote students' wellness, quality of education, and safety, and to provide opportunity for all students accordingly to pursue their dreams and desires equally.

Focus on education, wellness, and safety. I support the later school start time. Education is not just school but life itself, we help to build character, develop GRIP. Students should not be pressured to take more challenge courses, yet we should not discourage students from taking challenges.

Global perspective and awareness. I support initiatives such as foreign language education at younger age level. I will continue to support any opportunities that help students achieve global perspectives.

Diverse cultural background. I also will continue to be a bridge for Eastern and Western cultures and mobilize the support from all parents in our district.

I humbly ask for your vote and for the votes of the people of Acton on March 26. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. You can reach me at ezhang@abschools.org.

John Petersen for Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

Education is the foundation of our future. Many of us moved to the wonderful community of Acton for the superior school system. When we vote to fund a new school building later this year, we will be voting on the biggest financial commitment in the history of the Town. The new Twin School should be a cornerstone in our school system. I will support the School Committee effort to make sure that this proposal and the operating budgets that come to Town Meeting are transparent, meet our educational needs, and are respectful of our resources.

Core Principles and Positions

- **People are different!** Our students and our families are diverse and lead varied lives. There can be no one-size fits all or policy for an “average” student that will meet our communal need.

I will help the SC distribute resources to serve all students and celebrate our multifactorial accomplishments.

- **Common Goals.** We all want a physically and mentally healthy community. We all want our school system to prepare our children to lead good lives.

I will speak to the value of a broad education and community well-being.

- **Freedom of Choice.** Elementary school choice, curriculum choices, and extracurricular activity choices provide individual pathways that let each student and family create the whole of our great school system.

I will affirm the decisions of students and families to follow their unique journeys.

- **Money is important.** The Regional School Assessment is by far the largest part of Acton and Boxborough town budgets. The school committee must lead the determination of the balance between educational needs and the financial resources of the communities.

I will drive vigorous analysis of budgets and the financial decisions of the schools.

Previous Community Experience

- Acton School Committee member 2009-2012 (APS Chair 2011, ABRSD chair 2012)
- Acton Health Insurance Trust SC representative 2009-2012
- Scout Troop 32 committee member 2013-present (past committee chair)

- Scout Troop 12 committee member 2019-present (newly formed Troop for girls in scouting)
- Acton-Boxborough PIP (promoting STEM activities), volunteer and co-chair

Employment Background

Currently consulting on drug development; non-profit for manufacture of oncology drugs
Previous chemistry and Pharmaceutical R&D for Akebia, SynDevRx, Genzyme, GelTex
Pharmaceuticals

Education - Chemistry

University of California – Berkeley, PhD 1984; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, BS
1976

Personal

My wife, Cheryl, and I moved to Acton in 1986. Our two children were both educated at
AB; K-12. Erika graduated in 2015 and her most important extracurricular activity was
Proscenium Circus. Jack graduated in 2018 and found his home in the Band.