

**2019 Board of Education Candidate Biographies**  
**Listed in ballot order**  
*Biographies are published as submitted by the candidates, unedited*

**Unexpired 2-Year Term Candidates for 1 Open Seat**

**Ineda “Corrien” Elmore-Stratton**

**224 Greene Lane**

Corrien Elmore-Stratton is a long time resident of Cherry Hill and a Cherry Hill High School West alum. Upon graduating from Rutgers University with a B.A. in Communications and Journalism and a minor in Spanish, Corrien returned to Cherry Hill to raise her son with support from her family members who still live in the community. Upon returning, she worked in the District both as a one-on-one assistant and as a SACC site leader.

Mrs. Elmore-Stratton attributes her successes and achievements to her hard working parents, both of whom are professionals in the human service sector as a teacher (mother) and attorney (father). It is her parents’ drive that has pushed Corrien to form her career and develop her passion for working with youth and families. Currently, she is the Executive Director of Teen Leadership for the Greater Philadelphia YMCA, where she oversees middle and high school programming for more than 3,000 students across Philadelphia and New Jersey.

While carving her foot print in the YMCA, Mrs. Elmore-Stratton married her longtime friend and had two more sons. She and her husband are happy to continue to make Cherry Hill their home and serve the community in a variety of ways, including being members of the Cherry Hill African American Civic Association.

This is Mrs.Elmore-Stratton’s first time participating in a BOE race however she believes her 15 plus years of experience in Youth Development and working with non-profit Boards makes her an excellent choice to serve on the BOE. Her slogan “Use Your Voice” sums up why she has chosen to serve her community in this manner. She believes that all residents have value and deserve the opportunity to be heard on any issue. She hopes to continue to serve on the Board and work with the team on topics such as; continued increase in Diversity of Staff in certificated positions around the district, continued diversification of strategies that push to close the achievement gap while also increasing the numbers of students pursuing higher learning, and a wider approach to expanding the District’s partnerships and collaborations with outside community organizations or districts to build a larger holistic approach to learning, thriving, and positive youth development.

**Anju Pejavera - “Accountability, Collaboration, Transparency”**

**9 Artisan Way**

Anju Pejavera is a Chemical/Environmental Engineer. Thanks to her background, she approaches problems in a methodical and innovative manner. She received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in engineering from Drexel University and places importance on STEAM education as part of a well-rounded learning experience in order to successfully compete in today’s global economy.

Anju Pejavera was raised in Voorhees. Anju and her husband moved to Cherry Hill over 25 years because of the cultural diversity and its excellent schools. They have three children together. Her oldest child is a 2017 graduate of Cherry Hill East and is now a junior in college studying biology. Her other two children are a rising senior and freshman at Cherry Hill East.

Anju Pejavara comes from a family of engineers. She is a Chemical/Environmental Engineer. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees in engineering from Drexel University and places importance on STEAM education as part of a well-rounded learning experience in order to successfully compete in today's global economy and moving towards 21st century learning. She also believes that green buildings are important for health and well-being of students.

Anju was a PTA volunteer, room parent, booster club supporter and science matters day volunteer. In her free time, she enjoys watching her sons participate in their extracurricular activities, specifically, jazz band, basketball and robotics competition.

### **Ruth Schultz**

#### **1 Elbow Lane**

Ruth Schultz and her husband, Josh, have been residents of Cherry Hill for the last 10 years. Currently, they have two children who both attend Beck Middle School. Both students have been enrolled in the district since first grade. Prior to becoming a board member Mrs. Schultz was an active member of the PTA and Fair Funding Committee. She has been a member of the board for the past two years and is currently serving her final year. As a member of the board she has served on the Curriculum and Instruction, Policy and Legislation, and the Ad Hoc Bond Committees. At present she is a member of the Human Resource Committee and is the chair of the Business and Facilities Committee.

Her desire to run for reelection is fueled by her passion to continue to work with all stakeholders, to develop and pass a bond, which she thinks is crucial to the district's vision. Mrs. Schultz believes that passing this bond will be the most important thing that the board will do over the next few years, it will allow the district to move forward with the important issues some of which include; security, infrastructure and continuing to provide the best possible education for all of our students. It is her belief that we live in a town with great schools filled with highly skilled and passionate teachers. She is looking forward to continuing to foster community communication, giving insight on the development of the district's social media plan and passing the bond.

Mrs. Schultz has over 14 years' experience in inside sales and relationship management working with both Fortune 500 companies and small/medium businesses, with extensive market knowledge in both healthcare distribution and vendor finance. Her experience includes business development, program management, sales/revenue growth and team building/development. Throughout her career she has managed teams from as small as ten to as large as thirty-six; this experience has taught her the importance of active listening, putting aside personal opinions and finding an equitable solution which is the best for the greater good. She is currently employed by McKesson Medical Surgical where she is a Strategic Inside Sales Manager, specializing in Long Term Care, Home Infusion and eCommerce markets. Mrs. Schultz earned her Bachelor's degree in Finance and Information System Science from Salve Regina University in 2000.

### **3-Year Term Candidates for 3 Open Seats**

#### **Sanjay Sharma – “Education for Enlightenment”**

##### **30 W. High Ridge Road**

Sanjay Sharma is a proud resident of Cherry Hill Township for over 8 years, where he and his wife, Indu, are raising their two beautiful children Aarav and Samaira. Both his kids attend Cherry Hill public school.

He is a Director of Data, Applications & Platforms for a global Philadelphia based company. Before the aforesaid role, Sanjay worked in several Fortune 500 companies as a Project Team Lead and Software

Developer. He has been working in the Health Care, Insurance, and Finance, Retail, Manufacturing and IT consulting sector for more than 22 years. As a leader, he leads his team for Envisioning the Win and Exceeding any Goals.

Sanjay has a BSc Degree in Mathematics and Physics with a minor in Chemistry from the University of Gorakhpur.

Sanjay immigrated from INDIA in the year 1999 to the USA and became a naturalized US citizen in the year 2009. He lived in many states before deciding to make Cherry Hill their home and raise his family here.

Sanjay is running for Cherry Hill Board of Education because he thinks Education is a kid's fundamental right. With so much competition and hard work needed by the kids to succeed in their personal and professional lives, he wants to contribute to the future of all of the children with innovative and cutting edge education curriculum and pedagogy. For the kids to realize their full and inherent potential, they need a holistic approach to imparting education. No kid should be left behind.

#### **4 Principles for Enlightened Education**

1. **Inquisitive students**, with a love of learning, who cherish independent thought;
2. **Reflective educators**, with a love of their subject, who are fascinated by the science and art of teaching;
3. **Mission-oriented schools** with a clear sense of their own identity, values and goals;
4. **Supportive communities** that provide opportunities for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities to learn, develop and contribute.

The Enlightenment left us with a belief in the value of learning, of the comprehensive role and scope of education and of its fundamental role in society.

#### **Rosy Arroyo - "Accountability, Collaboration, Transparency"**

##### **105 Forest Road**

Rosy Arroyo has always been a strong advocate for the children, youth and families of the community. Rosy is employed by the Camden County Department of Corrections as the Youth Services Commission Administrator and Community Engagement Re-Entry Coordinator. She previously focused on strengthening communities as a senior human services planner at Community Planning & Advocacy Council. Rosy Arroyo and her Husband, Isaac, are proud parents of two children Isaac Alexander (7) and Lila Rose (4,) and have been Cherry Hill residents since 2010. Rosy enjoys spending her time with her children in impromptu dance parties and playing at the park.

In 2015, Rosy became Co-Chair of the New Jersey Association County Youth Service Commission Administrators (NJACYSCA), where she is responsible for the oversight and direction of the youth services programs in 21 counties. Rosy has overseen the data design and planning management of the Youth Service Commission, Juvenile Detention Alternative Innovations, Prevention Programming, Children's Inter-Agency Coordinating Council, Family Engagement Strategies, and Youth and Law Enforcement Engagement. She also supports the planning and design of Positive Youth Development efforts for Camden County. Rosy also has a passion for environmental and sustainable building practices and social justice policy. Recently Rosy participated in hill days focusing on comprehensive immigration discussions with local and national Latino communities.

Rosy is a proud first-generation Mexican American who received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Economics from Rutgers University and her Master of Science degree in Public Policy from Drexel University with a Certificate in Sustainable Building and Green Construction.

Rosy's extensive professional and personal experiences have given her a unique understanding of the needs that youth and their families are facing in Cherry Hill. Her top priority is to ensure Cherry Hill Public School students and their families have the resources they need to achieve success, and that the District's policies are based on best practices that bring value to all students in our schools.

**Kimberly Friddell – “Accountability, Collaboration, Transparency”**

**9 Gately Court**

Kimberly Friddell oversees a healthcare system department that collaborates with school districts and implements programs to support the needs of children and families. These grant funded programs include Early Intervention, Family Success Centers, and School Based Youth Service Programs. Previously, as a manager for the New Jersey Department of Education, she was responsible for the development of the state funded preschools. Her experience in this role included inter-agency collaboration, policy and administrative code development, technical assistance, and operational plan and budget review.

Kim was raised in Cherry Hill and attended Cherry Hill Public schools (Erlton, Clara Barton, Brainerd and Cherry Hill West). She holds a BA in Criminal Justice from the American University, a Masters Degree in Education from Marymount University and studied Educational Leadership at Rowan University.

Kim is a single, adoptive parent of two daughters who attend Cherry Hill Public Schools. The oldest is a freshman at Cherry Hill West and the youngest is in sixth grade at Carusi Middle School. Kim served as the Fair Funding Representative for Clara Barton for two years, and was able to meet with the Commissioner of Education to discuss our districts funding needs. She has been the Vice President for Cherry Hill Special Education PTA for five years. She is a member of CHSEPTA, Carusi and West PTA's. In her free time, Kim enjoys spending time with her friends at the Cherry Valley Swim Club, attending events all year round in Cherry Hill and traveling with her daughters

She holds NJ Elementary Teacher (N-8), Principal and Chief School Administrator certificates. She has taught preschool and 3rd grade, as well as, college level courses. Grateful for the education she received, she's excited for the opportunity to run for the Cherry Hill Board of Education and embraces the values of Accountability, Collaboration and Transparency.

**Benjamin Ovdia - “Accountability, Collaboration, Transparency”**

**100 Roanoke Road**

Benjamin Ovdia has been working in the nonprofit field for over a decade, and received his MBA from Rutgers University. For the past 7 years and currently, he is the Development Manager for a large, local nonprofit.

Mr. Ovdia is committed to serving the children, families and community of Cherry Hill. Prior to serving on the Board of Education as a vacancy appointee, Mr. Ovdia served in various roles in PTA through Sharp Elementary School, including PTA President and chair of various committees including Advocacy, Bylaws, Audit and Nominating. Mr. Ovdia has been an active member of the Cherry Hill Fair Funding campaign for a number of years, including originating and messaging the major petition that received

2,000 signatures. He has advocated for a number of issues at the community level and for the last bond referendum was part of the Bond Key Communicators Committee.

For years, Mr. Ovadia regularly attended Board of Education meetings, spoke up during public comment and encouraged community voice including meeting with dozens of parent and community advocates. He believes that parent and community voice has a real place in District discourse, especially around good information and engagement. He is excited to continue his volunteer service to Cherry Hill Public Schools, an amazing school district filled with incredible opportunities.

Mr. Ovadia and his wife Rosa, a Cherry Hill High School West graduate, have been residents of Cherry Hill for over a decade. They have three children, two currently attending Rosa International Middle School and the youngest on pace to enroll in 2023-2024 Kindergarten.

**Matthew Brinn**  
**1924 Pippin Circle**

Matthew Brinn is running for Cherry Hill School Board to be a voice for civically-minded young families in Cherry Hill. His focus is working cooperatively to provide the best possible educational opportunities for Cherry Hill youth. He is the Communications Director for the District Office of Assembly Majority Leader Louis Greenwald and Assemblywoman Pamela Lampitt in New Jersey's 6th Legislative District. In his role, Mr. Brinn works with a team of policy experts and constituent services specialists to advance legislation that improves the lives of New Jersey residents.

Previously, Mr. Brinn was the Recruitment Manager at Girl Scouts of Central & Southern NJ, headquartered in Cherry Hill, where he led a team of specialists in recruiting adult volunteer mentors to build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. Earlier, as Corporate and Foundation Relations Coordinator and as a Community Development Specialist, Mr. Brinn secured partnerships with local organizations to increase funding and provide educational programming opportunities for children in under-served areas.

In his spare time, Mr. Brinn facilitates classic literature themed tabletop roleplaying adventures for middle school students at the Cherry Hill Public Library. His programs promote literacy and allow adolescents to explore their interests in a safe and supportive group setting.

Mr. Brinn holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and Professional Writing from The College of New Jersey and lives with his wife, Melissa, and daughter, Penelope, in Downs Farm, Cherry Hill, NJ.

**Yoni Yares – “Alumni Giving Back”**  
**329 Cherry Hill Blvd**

Yoni Yares has been a Cherry Hill resident for most of his life, having only spent 6 years of his life not living in Cherry Hill! He is a proud alum of:

- Sharp (first 5<sup>th</sup> grade graduating class – 1999)
- Rosa (member of the inaugural 6<sup>th</sup> grade class and the first group of students to complete all three years at Rosa – 1999-2002)
- East class of 2006 where he is also a member of the Hall of Fame.

Mr. Yares and his wife Ilana have 4 children with three already attending Cherry Hill Public Schools. Their youngest child will graduate from high school in 2036! Yoni's family has lived in Cherry Hill for over 40 years and all of his siblings graduated from Cherry Hill East. From 1983 to 2006 there was a Yares attending the Cherry Hill School District.

Mr. Yares is running for School Board to give back to the incredible Cherry Hill Public Schools and to pay it forward to the next generation of students. When Yoni graduated from East he made a promise to his former teachers and principals that one day he would return and give back to the school district. Since returning to Cherry Hill, he has been very active in the community. He serves as the inaugural Kilmer representative to the Special Education Advisory Group (SEPAG), a member of the Board of Trustees for the Cherry Hill Education Foundation, the Recording Secretary for the Cultural Proficiency and Character Education Committee, Interim Zone PTA Representative for Barclay and was a member of the Key Communicators Committee for the 2018 Bond.

Mr. Yares is committed to maintaining and growing the District's reputation for quality education and a community of learners. As a former student he is deeply committed to making the 12 plus years a student spends in Cherry Hill school a quality experience. As a communications professional he is passionate for keeping the community engaged with the process.

Mr. Yares graduated from Rutgers University in 2010 with a BA in Labor Studies and Employment Relations and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Student Services Administration (Higher Education) at Fairleigh Dickenson University. Professionally, he currently provides consulting services in the areas of safety and security, grant writing, marketing/communication, fundraising, and 21<sup>st</sup> century technology.

In addition to his services to the Cherry Hill Public Schools, Yoni has served on the board of his synagogue and enjoys hiking/creek walking, spending time at Croft Farm and other amazing Cherry Hill landmarks, and spending time with his family.

**Jessica Rodriguez – “Alumni Giving Back”**  
**522 Bancroft Road**

Jessica Rodriguez has been a Cherry Hill resident since 1990, when her family relocated from Brooklyn, NY. She entered Cherry Hill West as a freshman, as her younger brother started 2nd grade at Kingston Elementary School. Jessica graduated West Class of '94, with her brother a few years behind, West Class of '00. The Moya Family (Jessica's maiden name) have continued to reside in the same house for the past 29 years, which Jessica now shares with them, in Kingston Estates.

Jessica's professional life, as a small business/dance studio owner, allows her to service the Cherry Hill community in the area of arts and culture. She, and her husband, have been able to use their dance program as a cultural exchange with their children's elementary school, as well as a field trip experience for one of the middle schools. Her work, as the VP of the Cherry Hill Hispanic Civic Association, has also been paramount in her mission to service our diverse community, while at the same time ensuring an equitable learning environment for all students.

For the past 5 years, Jessica has been a strong presence at Kingston Elementary School, often found volunteering during school activities. Being a member of the PTA has helped her to foster a strong bond with the administration at her children's school. But being a member of the Districts Cultural Proficiency/Equity/Character Education Committee, for the past 2 years, is what drives her to want more for the Cherry Hill Public Schools. Increasing cultural proficiency of all staff, and increasing outreach for the purpose of improved student achievement through community engagement, are key elements to Jessica's platform of closing the achievement gaps in our schools. Communication, and

community involvement, are essential to create a healthy, thriving school district that helps identify students in need, and provide the necessary services for them to be as successful as possible.

Jessica is running for Cherry Hill Public Schools Board of Education to give back to the incredible school district she graduated from. She is committed to maintaining the districts reputation as a quality school district that provides a quality education to all of its students. If elected to the board, Jessica hopes to work with the administration, the community, and the current board members to help make sound decisions that will benefit all of our children in the long run.