



**IN THE COURT OF CHANCERY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE**

DOUGLAS MANLEY,	:	
	:	
Plaintiff,	:	
	:	
v.	:	C.A. No.:
	:	
NAVEED BAQIR, and	:	
CHRISTINA SCHOOL DISTRICT,	:	
	:	
Defendants.	:	

**VERIFIED COMPLAINT AND PETITION**

Plaintiff Douglas Manley (“Manley” or “Plaintiff”), by and through his attorneys, hereby asserts the following as their Complaint against Naveed Baqir (“Baqir”) and the Christina School District of Delaware (“CSD”):

**Nature of the Case**

1. This is a civil action for equitable relief in the form of a declaratory judgment and a permanent injunction stemming from Baqir’s continued false representations to the State of Delaware, and, more specifically, the CSD, and CSD’s failure to redress the active vacancy on the CSD School Board (the “Board”).

2. On or about February 26, 2021, Baqir filed to run as a candidate for the Board, representing the Board’s Nominating District F. He subsequently won election to the Board for a five-year term ending on June 30, 2026.

3. Upon information and belief, at the time that Baqir filed for and ultimately won election to the Board, he maintained his primary residence in Nominating District F, at 13 Buttonwood Ct., Newark, DE 19702.

4. Though Baqir may have resided in Nominating District F when he was elected to his seat in 2021, for the past fourteen (14) months, months, and continuing through the date of the filing of this Verified Complaint, Baqir has resided neither in Nominating District F nor the CSD. Rather, for the past fourteen (14) months, Baqir has not even been present in the United States. Upon information and belief, Baqir has been a resident of Pakistan, where he is currently enrolled in medical school at Dow University of Health Science in Karachi, Pakistan for this entire time period, and he remains a resident of Pakistan at present.

5. Since Baqir has not been physically present in the United States, he has likewise not attended a single Board meeting in person for the past fourteen (14) months, instead attending Board meetings virtually via videoconferencing.

6. Moreover, Baqir has failed to cast a single in-person vote at a Board meeting since January 2024, as he has also participated in voting sessions at Board meetings via videoconference communications during this time.

7. Baqir had a duty of good faith and fair dealing to his constituents as an elected official. In promoting false representations to his constituents, Baqir has breached his duties to the CSD, as a result of which Baqir obtained improper

personal benefits including influence over the Board during meetings and voting sessions to which he is not lawfully entitled, and to the detriment of the Plaintiff as both a member of the board and voter of the CSD, itself.

8. CSD has allowed Baqir to remain an active participant on the Board despite no longer being a member as he is no longer a “resident” of District F under 14 *Del. C.* § 1054(a). According to 14 *Del. C.* § 1054(b)(1), no more than five (5) business days after the vacancy occurs on the Board, the Board is obliged to notify the public and the Department of Elections that conducts elections for the CSD.

9. The Board has failed to inform the public or the Department of Elections of the ongoing vacancy on the Board and, rather, permitted Baqir to continue actively and wrongfully participating at Board meetings to Plaintiff’s detriment.

### **The Parties**

10. The Plaintiff is a member of the Board for the CSD, residing in Nominating District C of the CSD, at 4 Eaton Place, Newark, DE 19711.

11. Upon information and belief, Baqir represents that he maintains his primary residence in Nominating District F of the Christina School District, at 13 Buttonwood Ct., Newark, DE 19702.

12. Upon information and belief, Baqir currently resides in Pakistan, where he is attending Dow University of Health Services in Karachi, Pakistan, at Mission Rd, New Labour Colony Nanakwara, Karachi, Pakistan.

13. CSD is a Reorganized School District under 14 Del. C. § 1002(3), with its primary offices at 1899 South College Ave., Newark, DE 19702.

14. As CSD has permitted Baqir to remain an active member of the School Board, Baqir may be served through CSD and/or its counsel.

### **Jurisdiction and Venue**

15. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction under 10 Del. C. § 341, which provides this Court with jurisdiction “to hear and determine all matters and causes in equity.”

16. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant Baqir under 10 Del. C. § 3104(c)(1) as Baqir is a State employee, and alternatively under 10 Del. C. § 3104(c)(5) because, upon information and belief, Baqir owns real property in the State of Delaware.

17. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Defendant CSD as it is a State public school district located in Newark, Delaware.

### **Background Facts**

18. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth in the preceding paragraphs of this Complaint as if set forth here in full.

19. Baqir is currently holding himself out to the public, the residents of CSD, and the residents of Nominating District F as being a full-time resident of CSD and thus a legitimate representative of the State.

20. Pursuant to 14 *Del. C.* § 1054(a) any member of a school board who ceases to be a resident of that school district also ceases to be a member of the school district's board.

21. Baqir is no longer a resident of the United States, let alone the State of Delaware or the CSD, so he has ceased to be a CSD Board member by operation of law.

22. Pursuant to 15 *Del. C.* § 4941(1), if any person who had resided in the State of Delaware moves outside of the State of Delaware “with the intention of remaining there for an indefinite time as a place of present domicile,” that individual “shall lose [their] own qualification of residence within the State [of Delaware], notwithstanding any floating intention [they] may entertain to return at some future time.” As Baqir has moved outside of the State of Delaware with the intention of remaining there for an indefinite period of time, he has lost his qualification as a Delaware resident by operation of law.

23. In *In re Joseph E. Churchman Guardianship*, 1987 WL 10013, at \*3–4 (Del. Ch. Apr. 28, 1987), this Court held that “the word ‘resident’ has different connotations in different statutes and must be construed in light of the purpose of the

statute in which it appears.” Likewise, the Delaware Attorney General has recognized that the language of 14 Del. C. § 1054(a) (*see*, ¶10, *supra*) is “clear and unambiguous.”<sup>1</sup>

24. The plain language of 14 *Del. C.* §1054(a) makes clear the importance of school board members being active participants in the communities that they are serving. Baqir is no longer present in CSD and has not been an active participant in the CSD community for over fourteen (14) months. Thus, under 14 *Del. C.* § 1054(a), he is no longer eligible to be a member of the CSD Board.<sup>2</sup>

25. In addition Article V § 2 of the Delaware Constitution provides that “[e]very citizen of this State of the age of twenty-one years who shall have been a resident thereof one year next preceding an election, and for the last three months a resident of the county, and for the last thirty days a resident of the hundred or election district in which he or she may offer to vote, and in which he or she shall have been registered..., shall be entitled to vote at such election in the hundred or election

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<sup>1</sup> Del. Op. Atty. Gen. 00-IB01 (2000).

<sup>2</sup> To this point, on March 18, 2025, the 153<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly introduced House Bill 82, which proposed to amend Title 14 of the Delaware Code. Under this proposed legislation, both school board candidates and members would be required to be an “inhabitant” of the district, or designated portion of a district, that they represent. The term “inhabitant” would be defined as “a person who both claims legal residence *and physically resides in a designated area or school district*” (emphasis added). Further, the bill provides that if a school board member is not physically present in their district for more than 75% of the days in any yearlong period of that member’s term, that member ceases to qualify as an inhabitant. On March 26, 2025, the House Education Committee found that House Bill 82 was agreeable, with eleven members voting on its merits, two voting in favor, and no member voting unfavorably. House Bill 82 has now been voted out of Committee and placed on the Ready List.

district of which he or she shall at the time be a resident...for all officers that now are or hereafter may be elected....”

26. Baqir lacks the requisite qualifications to serve as a voting Board member under both the Delaware Constitution and the Delaware Code.

27. Baqir’s “participation” in voting sessions of the Board via virtual means since January of 2024 – that is, giving the illusion that he is an active participant of the CSD community in spite of the fact that he has chosen to remove himself from that community in order to attend medical school in a foreign country – has caused harm and damages to Plaintiff as both a resident of CSD and a member of the CSD School Board.

28. Baqir’s conduct has caused damages to Plaintiff as a resident of CSD, as Plaintiff’s interests as a resident – and, indeed, the interests of all constituents of CSD – are not adequately represented by a School Board consisting entirely of members who maintain residents in the Christina School District.

29. Likewise, Baqir’s conduct has caused damages to Plaintiff as a member of the CSD School Board, as Baqir’s absenteeism has rendered it impossible for Plaintiff and his fellow board members to properly discharge their duties as contemplated and required by Delaware law.

30. Upon information and belief, Plaintiff is aware that Baqir currently intends to continue participating and voting remotely in board meetings for the

foreseeable future in spite of the fact that he is unqualified to do so under 14 *Del. C.* § 1054(a), thus causing irreparable harm to Plaintiff and the CSD community at large.

### **COUNT I – DECLARATORY JUDGMENT**

31. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth in the preceding paragraphs of this Complaint as if set forth here in full.

32. Since January 2024, Defendant has utilized the false and misleading representation that he was an active member and resident of the Christina School District to acquire a benefit of continued membership on the Board, to the detriment of Plaintiff as both a member of the Board and as a resident of CSD.

33. Since January 2024, Defendant has repeatedly relied upon false or misleading representations to vote at Board meetings, causing Plaintiff harm as a voter on the Board and as a resident of the CSD.

34. Plaintiff's voting rights on the Board have been diluted as a result of Defendant's misrepresentations to the State of Delaware in his continued participation in Board meetings in violation of 14 *Del. C.* § 1077, despite not being a member under 14 *Del. C.* § 1054(a). Moreover, Defendant's absenteeism has made it impossible for Plaintiff to appropriately discharge his duties as contemplated and required by Delaware law. In addition, Plaintiff's trust in the CSD as voting member of its community has been rendered misplaced and resulted in harm to him as a voter

therein, as his interests are now inadequately represented by a Board member who is required to maintain a regular presence in the CSD, as required by Delaware Law.

## **COUNT II – PERMANENT INJUNCTION**

35. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth in the preceding paragraphs of this Complaint as if set forth here in full.

36. As detailed in the preceding Count I, Baqir wrongfully, impermissibly, and illegally maintains his membership on the Board. Moreover, CSD has permitted the illicit activity of Baqir to Plaintiff's detriment. Plaintiff will likely succeed on the merits of this Complaint as his voting power on the Board has been unquestionably diluted and his duties as a Board member have been rendered impossible to discharge as a result of Baqir's continued illicit participation on the Board and due to CSD's acquiescence in the face of such participation. Moreover, Baqir's misrepresentations have caused Plaintiff harm as a voter in the CSD community in that his trust in the CSD has diminished and by not having his interests adequately represented by the Board due to Defendant's absenteeism.

37. Consequently, Baqir intends to continue causing Plaintiff harm by voting at another Board meeting to Plaintiff's detriment.

38. Accordingly, CSD shall permit an ongoing violation of Title 14 of the Delaware Code by, again, allowing Baqir to vote to the Plaintiff's detriment.

39. Plaintiff now seeks a permanent injunction to prevent Defendants from diluting his voting interest on the Board and causing further misrepresentations to the constituents of the CSD, in violation of Title 14 of the Delaware Code.

40. The hardship on Baqir in having to forgo voting and the CSD in preventing Baqir from voting at Board meetings is minimal, especially in light of the fact that Baqir does not reside in the State, let alone the district he purports to represent. On the other hand, the hardship on Plaintiff if an injunction is not granted is greater in that he will continue to lose potential voting power at upcoming elections and, in particular, the upcoming election in which a new superintendent for the CSD will be voted upon. Moreover, Plaintiff will continue to suffer harm as a voting member of the CSD at large, whereunder his trust and confidence in the CSD has been materially diminished as he has been falsely led to believe that the Board representative, Baqir, actually lives or resides in the district he purports to represent causing his interests to be inadequately represented by a Board member.

### **REQUESTED RELIEF**

**WHEREFORE**, Plaintiffs respectfully request that this Court enter a judgment in their favor against Defendants, as follows:

1. Enter judgment in his favor and against Defendants, Naveed Baqir and the Christina School District;

2. Enter a declaratory judgment that Naveed Baqir is no longer a resident of the State of Delaware and, thus, cannot continue as a member of the Christina School District Board;

3. Enter a Mandatory Injunction directing that Naveed Baqir refrain from taking any further action as a member of the Christina School District Board and directing that all necessary action be taken to such that Naveed Baqir refrains from voting at any future Christina School District Board meetings;

4. Enter a Mandatory Injunction directing that Christina School District prevent Naveed Baqir from participating at Christina School District Board meeting or voting therefor;

5. Enter a Mandatory Injunction directing that Christina School District take all necessary steps to fill Baqir's now-vacant seat on the School Board in accordance with Delaware law; and

5. Award Plaintiff all reasonable costs and attorney's fees related to bringing the instant action, together with such other and further equitable relief as the Court may deem just and proper.

**OFFIT KURMAN, P.A.**

*By: /s/ Anthony Delcollo* \_\_\_\_\_

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*Attorneys for Plaintiff, Douglas  
Manley*

Dated: April 23, 2025



**IN THE COURT OF CHANCERY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE**

DOUGLAS MANLEY,

Plaintiff,

v.

NAVEED BAQIR, and  
CHRISTINA SCHOOL DISTRICT,

Defendant.

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: C.A. No.:  
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**VERIFICATION**

I, Douglas Manley, am the Plaintiff in the above-captioned action. I have read the foregoing Verified Complaint and Petition. The contents thereof are based upon my personal knowledge, except as to matter alleged upon information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe them to be true.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Douglas Manley

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me, a Notary Public, this 18<sup>th</sup>  
day of April, 2025.

MANISHA M. MODI  
Notary Public



MANISHA M MODI  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
STATE OF DELAWARE  
My Commission Expires 04-14-2029



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April 23, 2025

**VIA -FILE & SERVEXPRESS**

Register in Chancery  
New Castle County Courthouse  
500 N. King Street, Suite 1551  
Wilmington, DE 19801

**Re: Douglas Manley vs. Naveed Baqir and Christina School  
District; Case No. 2025-\_\_\_\_\_**

Dear Sir or Madam:

Please prepare Summonses for service on defendants Naveed Baqir and Christina School District in this matter. Parcels, Inc. will be acting as Special Process Server, and will be picking up the Summonses and serving it and the Complaint as follows.

- Naveed Baqir is being served under 10 Del. C. §3114 through his attorney Daniel A. Griffith, Esquire, Whiteford, Taylor & Preston LLP, 600 North King Street, Suite 300, Wilmington, DE 19801.
- Christina School District is being served under 10 Del. C. §3114 through the Delaware Department of Education Townsend Building, 401 Federal Street, #2, Dover, DE 19901.

Parcels Inc. is being provided with its own copies of the Complaint for Service.

Respectfully yours,

/s/ Michael K. DeSantis  
Michael K. DeSantis (4847)  
Words 125/1000

MKD/rlg

cc: Parcels, Inc. (by email)

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION PURSUANT TO RULE 3(A)  
OF THE RULES OF THE COURT OF CHANCERY

EFiled: Apr 23 2025 05:08PM EDT  
Transaction ID 76136673  
Case No. 2025-0440-



The information contained herein is for the use by the Court for statistical and administrative purpose in this document shall be deemed binding for purposes of the merits of the case.

1. Case caption: *Douglas Manley v. Naveed Baqir and Christina School District*

2. Date filed: **April 23, 2025**

3. Name and address of counsel for plaintiff(s):

**Anthony N. Delcollo, Esq. (DE 5688); Michael K. DeSantis, Esq. (DE 4847); Bradley T. Meyer, Esq. (DE 7431); Offit Kurman, P.A., 222 Delaware Avenue, Suite 1105, Wilmington, DE 19801**

4. Short statement and nature of claim(s) asserted: **Plaintiff Douglas Manley prays that this Court enter a declaratory judgment finding that Defendant Naveed Baqir is no longer permitted to serve on the board of Defendant Christina School District and entering injunctive relief in accordance with that ruling.**

5. Substantive field of law involved (check one):

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative law                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Labor law            | <input type="checkbox"/> Trusts, Wills and Estates       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial law   | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Property        | <input type="checkbox"/> Consent trust petitions         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Constitutional law                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 348 Deed Restriction | <input type="checkbox"/> Partition                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporation law  | <input type="checkbox"/> Zoning               | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid Arbitration (Rules 96,97) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trade secrets/trademark/or other intellectual property |   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other                |

6. Identify any related cases, including any Register of Wills matter. This question is intended to promote jurisdiction efficiency by assigning cases involving similar parties or issues to a single judicial officer. By signing this form, an attorney represents that the attorney has done reasonable diligence sufficient to respond to this question. **N/A**

7. State all bases for the court's exercise of subject matter jurisdiction by citing to the relevant statute. Specify if 8 *Del. C.* § 111, 6 *Del. C.* § 17-111, or 6 *Del. C.* § 18-111. State if the case seeks monetary relief, even if secondarily or in the alternative, under a merger agreement, asset purchase agreement, or equity purchase agreement. **10 *Del. C.* §341. The only monetary relief sought in the instant matter is an award of attorney's fees.**

8. If the complaint initiates a summary proceeding under Sections 8 *Del. C.* §§ 145(k), 205, 211(c), 220, or comparable statutes, check here \_\_\_\_\_. (If #8 is checked, you must either (i) file a motion to expedite with a proposed form of order identifying the schedule requested or (ii) submit a letter stating that you do not seek an expedited schedule and the reason(s)—e.g., you have filed to preserve standing and do not seek immediate relief.)

9. If the complaint is accompanied by a request for a temporary restraining order, a preliminary injunction, a status quo order, or expedited proceedings other than in a summary proceeding, check here \_\_\_\_\_. (If #9 is checked, a motion to expedite must accompany the transaction with a proposed form of order identifying the schedule requested.)

10. If counsel believe that the case should not be assigned to a Magistrate in the first instance, check here and attach a statement of good cause. \_\_\_\_\_

/s/Michael K. DeSantis, Esq., #4847

Signature of Attorney of Record & Bar ID

4924-3279-8778, v. 1