

CITY OF NEW YORK
THE SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF INVESTIGATION
FOR THE NEW YORK CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

July 23, 2025

Hon. Melissa Aviles-Ramos
Chancellor
New York City Public Schools
Department of Education
52 Chambers Street, Room 314
New York, NY 10007

Re: Zhengxian Li
SCI Case #: 2024-08711

Dear Chancellor Aviles-Ramos:

An investigation conducted by this office has substantiated that New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) teacher Zhengxian Li (“Li”), formerly assigned to Restoration Academy (“RA”) in Brooklyn, exposed his buttocks and genital area in a DOE Zoom meeting and his buttocks in his RA classroom (during his likely masturbation).¹

I. Investigation & Findings:

In September 2024, the Office of the Special Commissioner of Investigation for the New York City School District (“SCI”) received an online complaint from [REDACTED], who reported that during a recorded virtual parent/teacher meeting, Li stood up and inadvertently exposed himself. Approximately three weeks later, SCI received another complaint from [REDACTED] about Li.² She reported that at approximately 9:10 a.m., she found Li in his classroom at his desk with his sweatpants slightly down and his hand in his pants over his genital area moving in a motion that indicated

¹ Li has been reassigned, and a problem code is associated with his personnel file.

² [REDACTED] first complaint listed the subject as “Remy Li.” [REDACTED] later explained that Li also went by the name “Remy,” and indicated that her two complaints were about the same individual.

that he was masturbating. ██████ wrote that though Li did not initially notice her, when he looked up, he subtly moved his hand.

The assigned investigator interviewed ██████, who explained both of her complaints. She said that during a staff/parent Zoom meeting, Li gave a language department presentation. After he had finished, and while the next person was presenting, Li stood up. He was still on camera and was naked from the waist down. She reported that Li stood up from his desk, walked around the room, and rubbed his stomach before sitting back down. ██████ informed the assigned investigator that she had not discussed this incident with Li, but that the Zoom meeting was recorded. ██████ provided SCI investigators with a copy of the recorded Zoom. At approximately 1:20:24 of the video, Li, who had just finished his presentation, stood up, walked away from the camera, and lifted his shirt, exposing his bare buttocks. Li then rubbed his stomach as he walked back toward the camera, exposing his genital area. Li was not wearing any clothing from the waist down.

██████ further explained that approximately three weeks after the incident during the Zoom meeting, another incident with Li occurred. ██████ said she was conducting her classroom rounds when she walked into the doorway to Li's classroom and saw him sitting behind his desk looking at the screen of an unknown device. She saw that his sweatpants were low, exposing his buttocks. ██████ said that Li did not see her. She told the assigned investigator that she watched his hand in his pants moving back and forth and saw his body gyrating. Li eventually noticed ██████ but stayed in his chair. ██████ left and reported the incident to SCI and the New York City Police Department ("NYPD").³

Through his attorney, and citing his tenured status, Li refused to be interviewed by SCI.⁴

II. Conclusion & Recommendations:

Upon review of the above facts, SCI substantiated that DOE teacher Li exposed himself during a DOE meeting and, separately, in his RA classroom (while he was likely masturbating). Because he declined to be interviewed, Li did not offer any explanation or alternative interpretation of his actions.

Based on the above, SCI recommends that Li's employment be terminated and that the problem code in his file remain in place so that this matter be considered should he seek future employment with DOE or its vendors.

We are sending a copy of this letter to the DOE Office of Legal Services and the New York State Education Department for any action they deem appropriate. Please respond in writing within 30 days of receipt of this letter as to any action taken or contemplated regarding this matter.

³ ██████ said that approximately 20 minutes after leaving Li in his classroom, she returned to confront him. She provided a recording from her phone of this interaction and took SCI investigators to see Li's classroom. ██████ from the 79th precinct declined to take a complaint.

⁴ The assigned investigator confirmed that Li is a tenured employee.

Should you have any inquiries regarding the above, please contact Maya Rich, the assigned attorney for this matter, at (212) 510-1438 or mrich@nycsci.org.

Sincerely,

ANASTASIA COLEMAN
Special Commissioner of Investigation
for the New York City School District

By: /s/ Daniel I. Schlachet
Daniel I. Schlachet
First Deputy Commissioner

AC:DS:MR:lr

cc: Elizabeth Vladeck, Esq.
Karen Antoine, Esq.
Katherine Rodi, Esq.
Monica Davis-Thorne - Director