



Edwardsville | Glen Carbon  
Chamber of Commerce

## **ECUSD#7: SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Candidate:** Robert "Bob" Paty

**Position Sought:** Edwardsville District 7 School Board

### **1. Please provide us with some basic information. Tell us briefly about:**

#### **a. your family:**

- Married to Dr. Michele Meckfessel, PhD, CPA – Associate Professor – University of Missouri Saint Louis
- 3 Children – Margaret and Jack attend EHS, Maribel attends Liberty Middle School

#### **b. how long you've lived in District 7:**

- Moved to Glen Carbon, IL from Ohio in 2014. In 2018 we moved to 12 acres near Hamel.

#### **c. your education:**

- BA-Economics: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- MBA – Virginia Tech
- MS Information Systems – University of Missouri Saint Louis

#### **d. your employment:**

- 4 years active duty as a Naval Officer
- 2 years of Industrial Sales Experience - Swaglok
- 3 years Strategic Analyst and IT Manager – Corning Cable Systems
- 4 years Corporate Finance Management – Lowe's Companies
- 4 years – Store Operations Management – Lowe's Companies
- 7 years – Stay-at-Home Dad
- 5 Years – IT Program Manager – National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency

### **2. Why are you seeking this office?**

- First, I want to be an example for my children.
- Second, I have seen District 7 make decisions without measuring the impact of those decisions. I want to fix that.

**3. What education, skills and experiences have prepared you to deal with the complex financial, technical and legal issues that regularly come before the school board?**

As a Corporate Finance Manager in the Financial Planning and Analysis group for Lowe's Companies at their corporate offices in North Carolina. I developed an understanding of how metrics can be used to drive success and highlight issues that need to be addressed.

Also, as the Treasure of the Glen Carbon Centennial Library, I developed an understanding of how municipalities are organized and function financially in the state of Illinois.

Both experiences will make me an effective board member.

**4. Identify and prioritize the three most important challenges facing District 7. Please justify your prioritization. How do you propose to pay for these projects?**

1. Learning Loss –We need to start leveraging the Special Education expertise that already exists in the district. By creating a volunteer network of parents and community members we can work together to address the issue of learning loss.
2. Teacher & Substitute Teacher recruitment – You can't have a school without teachers. The struggles to find adequate numbers of substitute teachers is putting a strain on current teachers and staff. As a result, students are negatively impacted. Once I am on the board, I will have more visibility into the root causes and how we might address the issue.
3. Lincoln Middle School Renovation/Rebuild – It's hard to learn in a building that leaks and drips. The current bond plan answers the question of how to pay for it, but I have lots of questions about how much inflation and interest rate fluctuations will impact this plan by the time construction starts.

**5. What are your thoughts on school district finances?**

- a. Are there opportunities to cut expenses?  
Specifically, where are those opportunities?**
- b. Is there a need for new or additional revenue?  
Specifically, where would it come from?**
- c. Are there areas where spending needs to be increased?  
Specifically, where does spending need to increase?  
Specifically, where would the money come from?**

Without access to the full District financial picture, it is hard to know where opportunities exist to cut expenses. I don't feel additional revenue is needed past what the bond referendum would provide. We are trailing O'Fallon in US News & World Report's High School rankings. According to

Illinoisreportcard.com, O'Fallon's teachers are paid more per student than those in our district. More research is needed to understand how strong of a correlation there is between pay and the quality of education we provide. This could also be an area where we explore grant and development opportunities to help increase the resources we give teachers.

**6. The April 4 school district bond proposition reads, "Shall the Board of Education of Edwardsville Community Unit School District Number 7, Madison County, Illinois, improve the sites of, build and equip additions to and alter, repair and equip school buildings, including constructing security improvements and secured entryways, and issue bonds of said School District to the amount of \$100,000,000 for the purpose of paying the costs thereof?" What is your position on the bond proposal and why?**

Because I feel Lincoln Middle School is in real need of renovation and because there will be no increase in taxes, I'm for the bond referendum.

**7. In March 2018 the 1% county-wide school facilities sales tax appeared on the ballot for the third time, and Madison County voters resoundingly opposed the implementation of this additional sales tax. If elected, would you support putting this tax before voters for a fourth time? Why or why not?**

I'm not in favor of the 1% increase, because District 7 would not be in control of those funds and our priorities would be ranked among other districts.

**8. If you're the incumbent, what have been your significant accomplishments during your term? If you're the challenger, what do you believe have been the significant disappointments of the incumbents, and how would your term in office be different?**

As the challenger, I would like to hear more about the District Scorecard and how those metrics impact the perception of District 7 as the community of choice in the Metro East. Currently, Edwardsville High School is ranked 34<sup>th</sup> behind O'Fallon in US News & World Report's St. Louis Metro Area rankings.

[https://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/illinois/districts/edwardsville-community-unified-school-district-7/edwardsville-high-school-6711?fbclid=IwAR1sqb9UqGePIG3zRu041GEps24SBD3qhK3Ms5c\\_qRQwwliHM7NJof2iRzQ](https://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/illinois/districts/edwardsville-community-unified-school-district-7/edwardsville-high-school-6711?fbclid=IwAR1sqb9UqGePIG3zRu041GEps24SBD3qhK3Ms5c_qRQwwliHM7NJof2iRzQ)

**9. If elected, how would you engage with the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce as a conduit to the business community?**

I would like to meet with and listen to the concerns of the Chamber of Commerce and discuss how the District might better support the local economy.

**10. At the end of your term in office, how will you know if you've been successful?**

I would consider it a success if there was an increase in test scores across the district.

**11. What changes you would like to see regarding:**

- a. how District 7 functions as a whole?**
- b. how District 7 addresses unfunded mandates?**
- c. how District 7 approaches curricula innovation?**
- d. how District 7 prepares students for entry into the workforce?**
- e. how District 7 has managed the pandemic?**

I feel all these areas listed can be addressed in one statement. District 7 does not have a mission statement that is measurable.