

Adam Witkiewicz - Candidate for East Troy School Board

Thank you for the opportunity to answer these questions. Please see my responses below.

- What is your vision for education in this community?

My vision includes meeting each child's needs in a way that empowers them to reach their full potential, whatever that might look like. Whether they end up wanting to go to college, enter into the trades, start their own business, or even excel at sports and go into athletics. An East Troy education should provide an equal opportunity for ALL children, no matter their abilities or home situation. Whether it's a traditional family situation, coming from a troubled home, having special needs, all would be provided the tools and skills they need to pursue their dreams. East Troy should be a place where the sky is the limit.

- What makes an effective school board member?

An effective board member listens to and is accountable their constituents. They must understand to put aside personal interest biases to prioritize what's best for the community, the district, children, and parents alike. They must take into account ALL members of the community when making decisions. It's a monumental task which will not be easy but I am up for the challenge. Engagement with the community is also a what makes an effective board member. Ive already spoken with numerous community members of all stripes. Its allowed me to learn so much and gain invaluable perspective to broaden my approach to the issues of the day.

- What motivated you to run for a school board seat, and what tools from your personal and professional world will lead to your success in this role?

Motivation:

My wife and I have three children. One in Little Prairie and the younger two will be in the district in the next few years so I am a concerned parent. We moved here ten years ago and loved it so much that when our family grew, we moved 5 houses down on the same street. So I am also a concerned property owner. When I started attending school board meetings in person I noticed there was usually no one else from the public at the meetings. This was shocking to me and I wondered how someone might come out of the woodwork to run for the election that was coming up. If no one else was coming to these meetings, how are they really going to understand the issues or the ins-and-outs of what was happening in the district? There only seemed to be an audience when there was some big topic being covered but I knew the work of the district had to occur whether or not a big issue was on the agenda. The time in between was when the real work happened. So I decided to run because I am confident that my background and proven track record in life and in the private sector could be useful when making decisions on the school board. Im also not originally from

East Troy, I grew up partly in the City of Milwaukee and partly in Hales Corners. I can provide a level of diversity to the board and voice offering a different perspective.

Tools from personal and professional world:

I lived in Madison for 5 years during my college years. There I had the opportunity to become immersed in a diverse world of all different viewpoints of people from all different backgrounds in our country and countries around the world. It helped me gain an appreciation for respecting others opinions who had viewpoints and backgrounds vastly different from my own. An appreciation I will carry with me and use for the rest of my life.

As an engineer I have made a career from solving problems, not only in product design, but in continuous improvement, cost savings, process streamlining, and working to make the companies I've worked for more simple and efficient to operate. To do this I use analytical methods where specs are rigid and well defined, digging down to discover problem root causes, and creative problem solving skills when an out-of-the box solution might be necessary.

Working in Oil & Gas and Aerospace provided me with experience solving problems in a heavily regulated environment where government and agency rules were 100% non-negotiable. In more retail environments where the requirements are more nebulous and solutions need to be creative and unique, I thrived by thinking outside the box and challenging the "old way" or "that's how we have always done it" mentality. There was also an intense focus on a diverse set of wants and needs which I had to understand and cater to for people of all sorts of backgrounds, skill levels, and opinions.

In these jobs I also had opportunities on multiple occasions to manage other Engineers and now I head up the Co-op program where I work. This is college students coming in to learn real world Engineering and other skills that aren't necessarily taught in school, for roughly a 7 month term. I am in tune with what current day employers are looking for in future employees because I am constantly hiring to fill positions. I know firsthand the big challenge today with a skills gap between what jobs require and the skill sets of young people coming out of college.

In addition to my engineer position, my wife owns and operates a child care center. Ive been a resource for her handling finances, including payroll, and helping with the business decisions of where to spend money and at what level. This has allowed me to gain further experience operating under government rules and regulations, understanding the challenges of finding and retaining quality staff, maintaining programming for the children, all while finding a way to make ends meet from a financial perspective.

Its a bit lengthy but all these things are directly relevant when it comes to why I have the background and skills to be a successful board member.

- What do you believe the school district's role is in the community, and how do you intend to maintain relationships with all members of the community?

The district's role in the community is to provide an equal opportunity for all children to receive a quality education. It must provide equal opportunity no matter the individual family situation of the child. For example, if the child needs transportation, the district provides transportation. If the child has special needs, the district meets those needs so that they are able to receive the education in a way that maximizes the ability to be successful. The district must be responsive to state rules, but also to local families and community members. I intend to maintain relationships with all members of the community by being accessible and responsive to the questions and concerns of ALL community members. This includes the children in the schools, their parents or guardians, the teachers in the schools, members of the community who may not have children, and even those members who choose not to send children to the public schools. Open, honest, and respectful communication is the primary key to this relationship.

- How does a school board positively impact the educational environment and culture of the district's children and staff?

The school board can positively impact the educational environment and culture by considering the diverse needs of the children and dedication of the staff. They can work to meet those needs and appreciate the dedication and hard work of the staff. The board members can also positively impact the environment and culture by fostering trust between the community and the district. With this trust come support, financially and otherwise. This trust will come as the board addresses concerns of the community as vigorously as it recognizes the needs of the students and staff.