



Kevin Abbott

1. What particular experiences or skills have prepared you to serve as a school board member?

My wife and I live in Germantown Hills with two children in the district and one that will enter in 2025. We are also licensed foster parents. I have a Bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where I studied political science and chemistry. I have a Juris Doctorate from the DePaul University College of Law (Chicago) where I graduated *summa cum laude* and served on the *DePaul Law Review*. I am currently in house counsel for OSF Healthcare System, where I provide legal counsel to the entire organization and litigate cases in trial courts throughout the State of Illinois. Prior to joining OSF, I was a Partner at Hinshaw & Culbertson's Peoria office. Hinshaw is a national law firm with over 400 lawyers nationwide.

I am first and foremost a husband and a father. I have a passion for education for not only my own children, but for all of the children in the district. I am invested in the district, irrespective of whether I am on the board. My experience as an attorney will give the School Board a different perspective to each issue it addresses, with an added emphasis on legal implications and compliance with applicable state and federal laws.

2. What do you see as the primary work of the Board of Education?

The Board of Education is responsible for the direction, goals, and priorities of the school district. It is responsible for policy and budget. It provides leadership and administration for the entire district. It takes into account resources, needs, and the core values of the district and community. It is responsible for providing a clear mission/vision for the district and goals to achieve that objective. It is ultimately accountable to the community.

3. What is a school board members role and responsibility?

The member's role is to work in conjunction with the other members and superintendent to carry out the work of the board in a time effective, responsible, and diligent manner. The member's responsibility is to consider the district's needs as a whole, the community values, and the resources available when carrying out the work of the board. The member has a responsibility to make well-informed decisions, fairly considering all relevant information when taking action. The member has an obligation to put the best interests of the entire district ahead of any one particular area of the district.

4. What is your vision for education in the Germantown Hills School District Community?

My vision is a comprehensive education experience for every single child in the district regardless of his or her background or socioeconomic status. Each child deserves the best comprehensive educational experience that the district can provide with the resources that it has. One of the Board's priorities should be to emphasize allocation of resources to reach this goal. I envision the Board accomplishing this goal through meaningful meetings, professionalism, lively but respectful debate, and well-informed members.

5. What do you see as major issue(s) facing our school district? Public Education?

Resources will always be a major issue facing public education. Even when a school district has all of the resources it needs, i.e. money, labor, community involvement, allocating those resources will always include some level of friction. Allocating resources will always require a holistic evaluation of the state of the district and the district's needs.

Our district is financially sound, but that is not guaranteed for the future. Therefore, a major issue for the district, and public education in general, is to monitor all resources and ensure they are being deployed in the most efficient manner possible. This will help ensure not only the solvency of the school district, but also the quality of the educational experience for the students, teachers, and families.

6. How does a school board balance the need to provide for a quality education with the need to respond to the tax payers burden?

The school board is accountable not only for the quality of the comprehensive education the students receive but also to the community for how it allocates its own resources to achieve that end. I suspect there is a perfect balance between the exact right amounts of resources and the best educational experience possible. I also believe that this perfect balance is, in practice, not attainable. The emphasis is on "perfect" there. I believe that our district can provide the best educational experience possible through fiscally responsible management of reasonable taxpayer funds. I intend to find this balance and keep us there. Everyone can do more with more money. The real work is doing more with the resources that we already have, so that we avoid imposing an unnecessary burden on the taxpayer.

7. Why should you be elected to the Board of Education?

I think largely for the reasons outlined in the previous questions. I believe I have the background and experiences necessary to be an effective board member. I can work effectively with the community, teachers, other board members, and superintendent to reach a fiscally responsible yet excellent comprehensive educational experience for our students. My vision is to do this for the present student body and for the future generations to come.