

Edwardsville School District #7 Announces Leadership Hirings

by Mary Ann Mitchell
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EDWARDSVILLE – In preparation for the 2024-25 school year, Edwardsville Community Unit School District #7 has announced the hiring of five administrators.

The hirings were approved April 22, 2024, by the District #7 Board of Education and include Dr. Allen Duncan, Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Brian Lane, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Dana Bivens, Worden Elementary Principal; Ms. Laura Rogers, Glen Carbon Elementary Principal; and Ms. Tirsha LeNoir, Curriculum Coordinator.

All five will assume their positions July 1, 2024.

Dr. Allen Duncan, Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Duncan has been with District #7 for the entirety of his career. Currently, he serves as principal of Liberty Middle School, where he is in his fourth year. He was named the 2022 Illinois Principals Association Southwest Region Middle School Principal of the Year.

“Dr. Duncan’s extensive experience in District #7, along with his commitment to the success and well-being of both students and staff makes him an ideal fit for this position,” said Superintendent Dr. Patrick Shelton. “He is also an approachable leader, whose experiences will serve our district well.”

Dr. Duncan was an assistant principal at Liberty for five years before assuming the position of principal. He began his education career as a social studies teacher at Edwardsville High School.

“Being named Assistant Superintendent of District #7 is a role I do not take for granted,” said Dr. Duncan. “This role provides me the opportunity give back to the school district that supported me as a new teacher finding my way, as an assistant principal new to the middle school level, and as a first- year building principal navigating the COVID pandemic. Being an educator has never been more challenging, and I look forward to the opportunity to support our teachers, principals, and the families of District I will miss the daily interactions and opportunities to mentor, support, and love my students and staff, but as the Assistant Superintendent, I welcome the opportunity to leave a lasting impact on all of District #7.”

Dr. Duncan has a bachelor’s degree in education from Illinois State University. He also holds a master’s degree in education, an education specialist degree, and a doctoral degree in education, all obtained from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Dr. Brian Lane, Director of Human Resources

Dr. Lane brings 27 years of educational experience to District #7. He currently serves as Superintendent of the Brentwood (Mo.) School District and will retire from that position at the end of the 2023-24 school year after seven years.

“We are excited to welcome Dr. Lane to our District #7 team,” said Dr. Shelton. “He is an accomplished educational leader with decades of experience in public education. That experience, along with his passion for supporting staff, and developing employee relationships make Dr. Lane a natural fit for this position.”

Dr. Lane also spent 15 years in the Mehlville School District as deputy superintendent, assistant superintendent, and principal. He began his career in education as an English teacher.

"I am so excited to join the Edwardsville School District #7 team and become part of this wonderful community," said Dr. Lane. "I look forward to building relationships and helping contribute to the continued success of the Edwardsville School District."

Dr. Lane has a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Missouri-St. Louis and earned his master's and doctoral degrees from St. Louis University.

Ms. Dana Bivens, Worden Elementary Principal

Ms. Bivens comes to District #7 from Vandalia Community Unit School District #203 where she is principal of Vandalia Elementary.

"Ms. Bivens has a passion for education and an unwavering commitment to her students and staff," said Dr. Shelton. "We are confident that her expertise and leadership will contribute to the continued success and growth of Worden Elementary."

Ms. Bivens also served as special education coordinator/assistant principal at Vandalia before transitioning to the district MTSS coordinator/assistant principal. She also spent four years at Highland Community Unit School District #5 as the pre-K coordinator /Family Engagement, applied behavior analysis instructor and early childhood special education teacher. Ms. Bivens began her career with the Belleville Area Special Services Cooperative as a teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing and as a sign language interpreter.

"My goal is to create a safe and engaging environment for the students of Worden Elementary to grow academically, socially, and emotionally," said Ms. Bivens. "Together, with an amazing group of educators and families, I am confident that we will be able to set the foundation for student success."

Ms. Bivens holds degrees in elementary education, deaf education, and early childhood special education from Illinois State University and a master's degree in education administration from McKendree University.

Ms. Laura Rogers, Glen Carbon Elementary Principal

Ms. Rogers comes to District #7 after spending the last 19 years in Ridgeland School District #122 in Oak Lawn, Ill., including the last six as Early Childhood Principal /Director.

“Ms. Rogers is an experienced educator who is dedicated to building positive relationships and encouraging a growth mindset,” said Dr. Shelton. “We look forward to seeing our students and staff at Glen Carbon Elementary thrive under her leadership.”

In addition to her current role at Ridgeland 122, Ms. Rogers served as assistant principal for Harnew Elementary School after 10 years as a classroom teacher (third, fifth, and sixth grades) and technology instructor.

“I am excited to continue my administrative career at Glen Carbon Elementary School,” said Ms. Rogers. “It is evident that many great educational opportunities are provided for students and their families. I look forward to further supporting the students and staff.”

Ms. Rogers earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Illinois State University and has a master's degree in education administration from Governors State University.

Ms. Tirsha LeNoir, Curriculum Coordinator

Ms. LeNoir comes to District #7 from Jennings (Mo.) School District where she is an instructional coach.

“We are excited to welcome Ms. LeNoir to the District #7 family,” said Dr. Shelton. “Her experience with curriculum and instruction makes her a great fit for this position and she will be a wonderful asset to our curriculum team.”

Ms. LeNoir began her professional career teaching rehabilitation exercise to patients in cardiac and pulmonary rehab at West Jefferson Medical Center Fitness Facility in Marrero, La., before relocating to the St. Louis metro area after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and began teaching high school students. Ms. LeNoir worked for the Hazelwood (Mo.) School District as a STEM support teacher and as a biology teacher.

“I believe that teaching is my passion and my purpose,” said Ms. LeNoir. “Education and acquiring knowledge inspired me to want to become a teacher.”

In her academic career, Ms. LeNoir has been able to amplify her craft through science curriculum writing, writing Missouri state standardized biology end of course questions,

facilitating district-wide professional development on assessment writing, serving as a first-year teacher's mentor, becoming a NSTA Regional Committee member (2019), and a member of the Nourish the Future Cohort (2020-21).

Ms. LeNoir earned a bachelor's degree in exercise physiology from the University of New Orleans and a master's degree in educational leadership from Western Governors University.