

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Dr. Susan Shea

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*1985 EDUCATION REFORM ACT* Oral History project

Interview # E85-A-L-2015-025

Dr. Susan Shea was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education Is Key: the 1985 Education Reform Act* Oral History project. Dr. Shea discusses her involvement with the Act from 1985-2005 as a member of the Illinois State Board of Education and as the Policy Director for the Illinois Education Association.

Interview dates & location:

July 14, 2015 conducted at the Abraham Presidential Library, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL Volunteer

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time: 1:32 / 1.53 hrs.

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The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Transcript  
being processed

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# Abstract

## Dr. Susan Shea-1985 Education Reform Act

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Susan Shea was born in Springfield, Illinois in 1949. Her parents then moved to the Peoria area where she graduated from Metamora High School in 1967. Susan then attended Western Illinois University and earned a BS degree in 1971 and an MS degree in 1974, majoring in education and then administration. She later earned a Ph.D. from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale in 1986. Her career began as a 3rd Grade Teacher at LaHarpe Illinois. During that first year of teaching, she was named Head Teacher due to the illness of the Principal. Susan then moved to the Peoria area to teach at Germantown Hills and later returned to her home area of Metamora. She taught reading and special education, and then became a director of special education. Following this, Susan took a position with the Illinois State Board of Education in the field of special education. Later, she took a newly created position with the Illinois Education Association that included working with teachers on meeting the requirements of the 1985 Education Reform Act, especially in the fields of teacher evaluation, recertification, staff development, learning goals, state assessment, pre-kindergarten, child abuse reporting, and special education. Her dissertation work helped provide guidance to those drafting the reforms, calling for more instruction in women's history and black history. She was also on the first evaluation team to review the work being done at the Illinois Math Science Academy which had been created by the Reform Act. After fifteen years, Susan moved to become Director of the State Aviation System, retiring in 2014.

Susan describes how the passage of the 1985 Education Reform Act (169 reforms) was implemented, both from the state and the local school district perspective through her role working at the Illinois State Board of Education and then the Illinois Education Association. She saw the need for coalitions to work together to carry out the reform mandates. She was a hands on person working mainly with district teachers. Susan provides an in-depth discussion on the impact on staff development, recertification, special education, pre-kindergarten programs, learning goal creation, state assessment, teacher evaluation, and the creation of after school/tutoring programs. In addition, Susan talks about the newly created Illinois Math-Science Academy through her eyes as a team evaluator.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** implementing the 1985 Educational Reform Act; Special Education and the 1985 Reform Act; teacher evaluation and remediation; staff development in Illinois schools; day programs in Illinois schools; creating learning goals for Illinois schools;

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