

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Sen. Andy Manar

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Illinois Public School Funding* Oral History project

Interview # EF-A-L-2019-036

Andy Manar, the Illinois State Senator and one of the chief architects of the Evidence Based School Funding formula, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Public School Funding* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: June 24, 2019      Location: Springfield, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

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

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

Interview being  
processed

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_      Total Time: 1:36 / 1.6 hrs.

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

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## Abstract

### Andy Manar, *Education is Key – Funding*, EF-A-L-2019-036

**Biographical Information/Overview of Interview:** Andy Manar was born in Alton, Illinois in November 1975. He grew up and attended schools in Bunker Hill, graduating from high school in 1993. He graduated from Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville in 1997, majoring in history and minoring in political science and teacher education. During the summers while in college he taught at Emmett Elementary School in Chicago. Following college graduation, Andy worked for Sen. Vince Demuzio, Sen. Emil Jones and Sen. John Cullerton and the Illinois Senate Democrats, including as a budget analyst and later as Chief of Staff. Andy also served on the Macoupin County Board and become its Chairman. In addition, he was mayor of Bunker Hill. Andy won a seat in the Illinois Senate in 2012 representing the 48th District, where he continued to serve at the time of this interview. Sen. Manar was a leader in trying to change the school state aid formula to create more school equity. His efforts resulted in the passage of Senate Bill 1947 in 2017, implementing the Evidence Based School Funding model. He has received numerous awards and recommendations during his career.

Sen. Andy Manar discusses the question of public school equity, which has been a major area of interest in Illinois over the past 50 years. His interest in advocating for a more equitable system of funding Illinois Public Schools began in high school and continued through his years in college and during his time as a Senate budget analyst and as Chief of Staff. Sen. Manar talks about his many efforts to improve school district equity through litigation, school funding commissions, listening town halls, and numerous legislative bills (HB 828, SB 16, SB 1, SB 231, and SB 1947). He reviews the efforts by Rev. James Meeks to have a tax swap (state revenue replacing property tax) and the efforts to do away with school district boundaries. Challenges which had to be overcome included solving Chicago Public Schools issues, regionalization costs, hold harmless worries, the negative impact of pro-rating state aid, rising pension and Medicaid costs, and the growing number of low income children found in Illinois Public Schools. Sen. Manar talks about his endorsement of the Evidence Based School Funding Model presented by Vision 20/20. He also highlights the passage Senate Bill 1947 in 2017 and the earlier compromise which was made following the Governor's veto of SB 1, also in 2017. He reviews what the Evidence Based School Model does in helping the poorest funded public-school districts and its accountability piece, which includes the Professional Review Panel. The goal of the new funding model was to increase support for education, have a more equitable system for funding Illinois's public schools and achieve a more equitable distribution of revenue.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Illinois public school funding; Illinois Senate Bill 1, 2017; Illinois Senate Bill 1947, 2017; Vision 20/20; Evidence Based School Funding model; Professional Review Committee; Rev. James Meeks; Chicago Public schools; rising educational expenses

**Notes to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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