

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Jennifer Kolar-Burden

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Education is Key-Alternatives in Education Oral History project

Interview # EA-A-L-2018-057

Jennifer Kolar-Burden, teacher and curriculum coordinator for the on-line Illinois Virtual School, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key, Alternatives in Education* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Aug 29, 2018 Location: Illinois Virtual School, LaGrange, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:40 / 1.67 hrs.

Interview being
processed

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on January 8, 2019.

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

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Abstract

Jennifer Kolar-Burden, *Alternatives in Education*, EA-A-L-2018-057

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: Jennifer Kolar-Burden was born in Rock Hill, South Carolina in 1971. She attended high schools in New Jersey and Missouri, graduating from Lafayette High School outside St. Louis in 1989. Jennifer graduated from the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana in 1993, majoring in marketing and business administration. After college, Jennifer worked at ATT, News Corporation, and MCI. She earned a Masters' degree in 1999 from the University of Illinois-Chicago in history education, with a minor in psychology. Jennifer then taught at Hinsdale Central, Lake Forest, and Thomas Kelly High School (Chicago Public). In 2003, she began teaching for the Illinois Virtual School and in 2009 took on the role of Coordinator of Curriculum for the school. Jennifer has taught classes for the Virtual Learning School in American history, world history, art history, psychology, economics, business marketing, computer education, and consumer education. She also does reviews for *Quality Matters* and has been the chair of the iNACOL Midwestern Committee. Jennifer has been a speaker at many on-line conferences, has written numerous publications on this subject, and is considered a leader in community activities associated with on-line learning.

Kolar-Burden explains the history of the Illinois Virtual School, which is designed to allow students who are enrolled in a public or private school to supplement their education by taking courses that are educationally appropriate. Established in 2001, its growth was first administered by the Illinois Math-Science Academy and now is done by the Peoria County Regional Office. Jennifer notes the 164 credit courses and the 28 credit recovery classes which are available for Illinois students grades 5 thru 12. She also talks about the school's mission (high quality expanded opportunities to all Illinois students enrolled in private, public or home schools), the types of courses available, the most popular courses, teacher selection for on-line learning, school partnerships, student enrollment, tuition, funding and on-line accreditation. She explains how one teaches on-line courses, including parental involvement, student discussion and questioning, assessing student participation, and lesson plan design.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Illinois Virtual Learning School; course offerings for secondary level on-line schools; teaching strategies for on-line courses; accrediting the Virtual Learning School; Quality Matters magazine; NAACP; Illinois State board of Education

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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