

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Stephen (Steve) Miller

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Education is Key - IL Public School Funding* Oral History project

Interview # EF-A-L-2019-013

Stephen (Steve) Miller, a school auditor who discusses public school funding and school audits was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key-Public School Funding* Oral History project.

Interview Date: Feb. 5, 2019    Location: Naperville, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

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

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

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_    Total Time: 1:30 / 1.5 hrs.

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

Interview being  
processed

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## Abstract

Steve Miller, *Illinois Public School Funding*, EF-A-L-2019-013

**Biographical Information/Overview:** Steve Miller was born in Moline, Illinois in May 1977. He grew up in Geneseo, Illinois and graduated from Geneseo High School in 1991. Steve then went to the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign), majoring in accounting. He earned his BA in 1995 and later earn an MS degree in educational administration from Northern Illinois University (2002). Following graduation, he worked for William F. Gurrie and Co. as an auditor for five years, work that included school audits. In 2000 he became Director of Finance at the Oak Park-River Forest High School. In 2004, Steve joined PMA Financial, serving as a financial consultant. In 2015 he became product manager for Forecast 5 Analytical, where he served at the time of this interview. He also served as President of the Oak Park Education Foundation and is past chair of the Principles of School Finance Professional Development committee. In 2017 he received the “above and beyond” award from the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO). He has made presentations at numerous workshops, conferences and seminars. Steve has worked with over one hundred Illinois School Districts.

Miller discusses the duties of a school auditor, financial planner, school district business official and data analyst. (Schools in Illinois are required to be audited every year.) Steve talks about the process for auditing, typical findings, the sampling required, and the federal grant funding review. He stressed the importance of five-year plans, the overview of debt and restructuring, bond sales and data review allowing for long range planning and budgeting. Finally, he examines the role data played in developing a new evidence-based school funding model. This includes where the data originated, questions asked by the advisory group, best funding models to consider, and unique challenges facing Illinois. Challenges include: three types of school districts (elementary, high school and unit), Chicago’s different funding policies, transportation costs, Poverty Grants used in the former GSA state funding formula, hold harmless considerations (Robin Hood effect), and regional costs of living differences.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** duties of school auditor in Illinois; role of a school financial planner; Illinois school business officials; school bond sales; school funding models; data analysis in school funding; Chicago public school funding

**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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