

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Dr. Crystal Johnson

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Education is Key-School Reorganization Oral History project

Interview # AIR-A-L-2018-065

Crystal Johnson, who updates her 2012 School Reorganization interview with a discussion on the BHRA Cooperative High School , was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key-School Reorganization* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: October 29, 2018 Location: Rossville-Alvin School District, Rossville IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 0:54 / 0.9 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on March 26, 2019.

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

Interview being
processed

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Abstract

Dr. Crystal Johnson, *School Reorganization*, AIR-A-L-2018-065

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Crystal Johnson was born in Peoria, Illinois in November 1982. She graduated from East Peoria High School in 2001 and earned a B.A in Special Education from Illinois State University in 2001, an MA degree in Educational Leadership in 2009, and a Specialist Degree from Eastern Illinois University in 2010. She completed her doctorate at Western Illinois University in 2015. She began her teaching career at East Peoria and later taught at Pekin High School. In 2009 she became Principal/Assistant Superintendent at Rossville-Alvin # 7 school district. She became the District Superintendent in 2011, the youngest Superintendent in Illinois. In 2012 she was interviewed on issues related to a deactivated high school within the school district. The student grades 9-12 either went to the Bismarck-Henry or Hoopston Area schools on a tuition basis. In 2011 in a non-binding referendum, the public gave voter approval for the Board of Education to reopen the High School if it was deemed in the best interest of the student and community.

This interview updates the status of the Rossville-Alvin School District from our original 2012 interview. Crystal discusses the deactivation of the Rossville-Alvin High School (2005-2017) and the transition to a Cooperative High School (BHRA) with Bismarck-Henning which began in 2017 following a successful referendum approved in both school districts. Thus, BHRA became only the second cooperative high school in Illinois. Dr. Johnson explores why Rossville-Alvin voters favored the cooperative high school model over other reorganization methods, the legal steps needed to create the cooperative high school, modifications from the original agreement, state incentives (\$4000 per certified staff), curriculum changes, and the cooperative high school's impact for the Rossville-Alvin community. Also examined was the new evidenced based state school funding formula which benefits Rossville-Alvin (Tier 1 school), as well as Dr. Johnson's Ph.D. dissertation topic.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Cooperative High School model of Illinois school reorganizations; Rossville-Alvin school district; Bismarck-Henning School District; Bismarck-Henning-Rossville-Alvin (BHRA) School District; legal steps required for the creation of a cooperative high school; Illinois State Board of Education; Paris Cooperative High School; Federal Department of Education; deactivating Illinois schools.

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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