

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Corena Steinmeyer

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Alternatives in Illinois Education* Oral History project

Interview # EA-A-L-2018-079

Corena Steinmeyer, director of Special Education for the Lee County Special Education Association, 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.

Date: Dec. 3, 2018    Location: Dixon, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

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

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

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_    Total Time: 1:24 / 1.4 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

## Corena Steinmeyer, *Alternatives in Education*, EA-A-L-2018-079

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Corena (Wallery) Steinmeyer was born in San Francisco in December 1968. The family moved to Idaho and then to Montana during her school years. Corena attended one room schools before graduating from the Columbus, North Dakota High School in 1987. Corena began her college education at Jamestown College (North Dakota), then transferred to Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa, where she graduated in 1993, majoring in elementary education with a minor in physical education and an endorsement in coaching. Her first teaching post was at Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Sioux City, where she taught special education grades 6-8 and coached cheerleading. Corena also earned a special education certification at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion. In 1996 she moved to St. Charles, Illinois, teaching special education classes (grades 6-8) at Thompson Middle School. She also coached track, cheerleading and volleyball. While there, Corena earned a master's degree in educational leadership from Aurora University (1999). This led to a position with the Indian Prairie #204 School District as student services coordinator from 2000-2004. She then became principal at Southeast Elementary School in Sycamore, IL. In 2007, she moved to Dixon, becoming student services coordinator. In 2010 she became the Director of Special Education for the Lee County Special Education Association, a position she held at the time of the interview. Corena has been active in civic groups and has been a presenter at several state conferences.

This interview focuses on the Lee County Special Education Association, which is located in northern Illinois. Currently, two school districts belong to the Association. Steinmeyer discusses the types of special education services provided, the current training of special education and general education staff, staff certification changes, and the importance of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP). She talks about challenges facing more rural special education cooperatives, including shortage of staff, funding constraints and state testing requirements. She also talks about the relationship with the Dixon School District, educational responsibilities from age three to twenty-one, the governance of the Association, and changes the Federal IDEA law has experienced from 1993 to 2018.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Lee County Special Education Association; continuing education and certification requirements for special education staff; professional development for general education teachers and staff; special education in rural special education associations and cooperatives; Individualized Education Plan (IEP); Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

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