

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Gary Tipsord

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

Interview # EF-A-L-2019-086

Gary Tipsord, superintendent of the LeRoy Community Unit School District, 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 dates & location:

Date: Nov. 5, 2019    Location: LeRoy, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

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

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

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_    Total Time: 1:32 / 1.53 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on February 19, 2020.

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

Interview being  
processed

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## Abstract

Gary Tipsord, *Education is Key – Funding*, EF-A-L-2019-086

**Biographical Information/Overview of Interview:** Gary Tipsord was born in Bloomington, Illinois in 1968. He graduated from then Octavia High School (now Ridgeview) in rural McClean County in 1986. He then attended Illinois State University (ISU) where he also playing baseball, earning a degree in science education in 1990. In 201 he earned an MS degree in education administration from ISU, and in 2006 an Ed.S. degree in educational administration from Eastern Illinois University. Gary has spent his entire educational career at LeRoy beginning in 1991, serving as a high school science teacher, assistant high school principal, high school principal and at the time of the interview as superintendent. Gary serves on the Evidence Based Funding Professional Review Panel, has been a member of the P-20 Council since 2015, and is on the Illinois Association of School Administrators Board of Directors. He was involved in a successful referendum leading to a new high school faculty in 2005, a geothermal installation in 2009 and gym renovations in 2011.

Tipsord looks at a rural unit school district and its sources of revenue, and the impact that the new Evidence Based Funding model will have on the district. Illinois's financial difficulties and its impact upon this district were also discussed. Gary also looks at how school officials around the state became supportive of the Evidence Based Funding model, as well as Vision 20/20's four pillars: effective educators, 21st century learning, accountability and leadership. He also discusses the processes to be met on reporting (budgets, school plans, school report card, levy, expenditure reports, end of year reports, referendums, and audits), and sources of revenue for the district. The issues of funding equity and adequacy were also reviewed, as well as potential future fiscal challenges. These include rising pension costs, mandates, teacher shortages and increasing special education costs.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** LeRoy, Illinois Community Unit School District (CUSD); Evidence Based Funding Model; public school funding in Illinois; Vision 20/20; consolidation and district sharing in McClean County, Illinois

**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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