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An Interview with Dan Cox

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

Interview # EF-A-L-2020-014

Dan Cox, school superintendent for the Rochester 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: Jan 29, 2020 Location: Staunton, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Transcript
being processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:35 / 1.58 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on August 12, 2020.

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

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Abstract

Dan Cox, *Education is Key -School Funding*, EF-A-L-2020-014

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: Dan Cox was born in Olney, Illinois in 1976. He graduated from Newton High School in 1994 (Jasper County #1) where he played football, basketball and track. Cox then attended Milliken University in Decatur, Illinois, where he majored in education and played football. Upon graduating in 1998, Dan worked at Argenta-Oreana High School, teaching physical education, health and driver education. He also coach football and track. In 2001, Dan became Dean of Students and Athletic Director at the school. In 2005, Dan became assistant principal at East Richland Middle School in Olney and in 2007 the intermediate principal at East Richland Elementary School. In 2010, Dan returned to his home district, Jasper County CUSD #1, as Superintendent of Schools. In 2015, Dan became Superintendent of Staunton CUSD #6. Effective July 1, 2020 Dan will become the Superintendent of the Rochester School District. Dan earned his MS in educational administration from Eastern Illinois University in 2003 and an educational specialists' degree, also from EIU 2009. At the time of the interview he was working on an Ed.D. in educational administration from Illinois State University. Cox was active in providing testimony supporting Illinois's new Evidence Based School Funding Model.

Cox discusses Illinois school funding from his perspective as a school superintendent who served in two school districts in eastern Illinois and south-central Illinois. Topics discussed included the challenges in school funding from 2010-2017 which led to declines in state aid, cuts in categorical funding, and major expenditure cutbacks including staff reductions, building maintenance, and the inability to balance budgets. Dan talks about how the new money coming due to the Evidence Based School Funding is being used, specifically by reducing class size and adding programs. He also covered the impact of being a tax cap county, and the use of the county sales taxes for school facilities. Cox also addressed the current school funding lawsuit on the need for more dollars going to Evidence Based Funding, moving schools faster toward adequacy, and also the future challenges in school resources (pensions, minimum wage, state mandates, and building upkeep).

Subject Headings/Key Words: Illinois school funding crisis from 2010-2017; Evidence Based School Funding Model (EBF); school pension expenses; county sales tax for school facilities; tax cap impacts; Staunton School District demographics

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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