

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Ted Sanders

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Educational Reform Act of 1985 Oral History project

Interview # E85-A-L-2014-023

Ted Sanders, a career educator and Illinois's State Superintendent in the mid-1980s, during the period when the 1985 Educational Reform Act was adopted, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Educational Reform Act of 1985* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

July 30, 2014 Location: Telephone interview conducted at the Abraham Lincoln
Presidential Library

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:51 / 1.83 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on November 18, 2014.

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

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Abstract

State Superintendent Ted Sanders, *Educational Reform Act of 1985*, E85-A-L-2014-023

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Ted Sanders was born in Littlefield, Texas (1941). The son of early west Texas settlers, he graduated from Friona High School in Texas. He earned a BA in Mathematics from Wayland Baptist and earned advanced degrees from Washington State and the University of Nevada. His teaching career started in Idaho. Later, he worked in New Mexico and then became part of the New Mexico State Education Department. From there he became State Superintendent of Nevada in 1979. In 1985, he became State Superintendent of Illinois, and then progressed through several positions, including the acting director of the Department of Education, State Superintendent of Ohio, President of Southern Illinois University, and Executive Direction of the Educational Commission of the States. He now serves as a Trustee for Wayland Baptist.

Ted Sanders describes the movement in the United States in the early 1980's toward educational changes. These included many reports and studies such as "The Nation at Risk, the Yipsilanti Study," John Goodland's "A Place Called School," and the "Illinois Commission for the Improvement of Elementary and Secondary Education." Dr. Sanders details the process from spring 1985 Illinois legislative session which led to the passage of 169 reforms and additional revenues to support them, and to increase regular state school funding. He then describes how the Illinois State Board of Education was organized. At the end he talks about some of the reforms which are still active in Illinois: purpose of schooling, learner goals/assessments, prekindergarten, reading improvement, the Illinois Math-Science Academy, principal leadership, teacher evaluation, staff development, bilingual education, the school as the change location, and the Principal Academy. Several areas did not survive including School Reorganization and Educational Service Centers. Sanders discusses his involvement in the passage of the 1985 Educational Reform Act and then in the implementation strategy used for the 169 reforms. He highlights the movement of the country toward educational changes and then covers how Illinois Reforms impacted other states,

Subject Headings/Key Words: Lead up to Educational Reform Act of 1985; Passage of the 1985 Educational Reform Act; Illinois State Board of Education; Illinois Math-Science Academy; teacher evaluation; School Reorganization and Educational Service Centers.

Note 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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