

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Brian Liska

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Sports Stories - IHSA* Oral History project

Interview #SIH-A-L-2017-064

Brian Liska, band director at East Aurora High School, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Sports Stories – Illinois High School Association* Oral History project.

Date: Jul 5, 2017    Location: Santori Public Library, Aurora, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

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

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

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_    Total Time: 1:26 / 1.43 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on September 13, 2017.

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

Interview being  
processed

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## Abstract

### Brian Liska, *Sports Stories-IHSA*, SIH-A-L-2017-064

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Brian Liska was born in Naperville, Illinois in September, 1982. He attended schools in Naperville and first participated in band while in the 4th grade. He graduated from Naperville North High School in 2001. While at North, Brian was part of the school's band program, playing the bassoon. He also competed in wrestling for three years. Brian then attended North Central College in Naperville, where he majored in instrumental music education and participated in many different band groups. He received the college's Outstanding Band Music Award, and graduated in 2005. Liska then began teaching high school band at East Aurora High School, where he still taught at the time of this interview. Currently, Brian is involved with an ambitious high school construction project that will include a new music wing. The upgraded facilities could lead to East Aurora serving as a host for many types of music competition.

This interview covers the experiences of a band director at a large minority enrolled west suburban Illinois high school. Liska discussed how band and choir programs help promote student interest, school pride, community involvement, and academic achievement. He talks about the Illinois High School Association music solo and ensemble competition, as well as by-laws for IHSA contests, categories of individual and organization competitions, selection of participants for the contests, contest structure, judging of performances, and criteria for determining IHSA music sweepstakes winners. He also discussed how IHSA music contests support the school's band program, and the benefits these contests provide for those competing. Liska talks about the challenges of having a growing band program in a high school that is often not well funded by the state, and the importance of facility upgrades for a growing program. Finally, he discusses the band program's recent centennial celebration. In fact, a special piece was commissioned to commemorate that event.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** East Aurora High School; Illinois High School Association music competitions; IHSA music solo and ensemble contest; new construction (new music wing and stadium/artificial turf renovation) at East Aurora High School; importance of music education in the schools' curriculum

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