

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Julie Theisz

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Tumultuous 2020 Oral History project

Interview # T20-A-L-2021-055

Julie Theisz, school social worker at Jefferson School, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Tumultuous 2020* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: November 1, 2021 Location: Jefferson Elementary School, Harvard, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPLM volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:02 / 1.03 hrs.

Interview being
processed.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on January 6, 2022

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

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Abstract

Julie Theisz, *Tumultuous 2020*, T20-A-L-2021-055

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Julie Theisz was born in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. She graduated from Badger High School in 1984. While in high school, Julie participated in choir and played the piano. She attended Carthage College where she majored in social work and psychology, graduating in 1988. Theisz continued her education at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where she earned a Master of Social Work in 1991. She has worked her entire career as a school social worker for Harvard Community Unit School District #50. She is the Jefferson Elementary School Social Worker at the fourth and fifth grade building.

Over the course of the interview, Theisz discusses the challenges school social workers faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In March of 2020, Theisz worked to continue contact with parents regarding Internet connection, ensured the needs of special education families were being met, supported meal deliveries for students, and managed all the other concerns that arose from the closure of the school. The challenges continued for the 2020 and 2021 school year as plans for reopening were blocked by state orders. In January of 2021, some high-risk students returned to a hybrid setting followed by a third quarter hybrid return of the entire school. Finally, Theisz also covers the reopening of in-person learning for the 2021-22 year, with a number of new safety procedures involving masks, social distancing, hallway and locker limits, bathroom/cafeteria changes, and transportation rules.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Jefferson Elementary School; Harvard, Illinois; COVID-19 pandemic; school social worker; public schools; remote learning; virtual learning; in-person learning

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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