

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Angela Smith

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

Interview # EF-A-L-2019-102

Angela Smith, a West Aurora School District assistant superintendent, 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: Dec. 11, 2019      Location : West Aurora School District Office, Aurora, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

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

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

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_      Total Time: 1:37 / 1.62 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on March 3, 2020.

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

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## Abstract

Angela Smith, *Education is Key-Funding*, EF-A-L-2019-102

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Angela Smith was born in Sycamore, Illinois in June 1968. She attended school in DeKalb through 5th grade before relocating to the Rochelle area. Angela graduated from Rochelle High School in 1986 where she was active in drama, speech, student council, band, chorus, and softball. She spent her freshmen year at Marquette University before transferring to Northern Illinois University, majoring in finance. She graduated from NIU in 1990. She later earned a Master of Business Administration from Columbia College and was working on her doctorate at Aurora University at the time of the interview. Her work experiences include First National Bank of DeKalb (1991-2000), Oswego School District (2009-2012), Plainfield School District (2012-2014), and West Aurora School District (2014-). Angela served on the West Aurora School Board for seven years prior to working for the district. Her current position is Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Chief School Business Official at West Aurora School District #129.

Smith looks at school funding for a Tier 1 west suburban unit school district prior to and after the new Evidence Based Funding (EBF) became law in 2017. She discusses the importance of two school referendums, on operations in 2007 and on capital in 2015. These enabled the district to survive during the recession and to upgrade and build new facilities. The improved funding established by the EBF has helped by adding more nurses, counselors, and vocational classes. This also has helped district officials do better long-range planning. Smith also discussed the shortage of teachers in some fields (special education, vocational, bilingual, and math), the challenges of minimum wage increases, plus the increase of special needs students. She also discusses site-based financial reporting, which was part of the federal law Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Finally, the impact of future enrollment projections was discussed as well as the importance of the Federal Qualified Construction bonds which greatly helped tax rates.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Pro-rationing of school funds; Evidence Based Funding (EBF); school referendums; Qualified Construction Bonds; building a vocational center; funding challenges during recessions;

**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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