Interview with Jo Anderson

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Interview: November 17, 2014

Interviewer: Philip Pogue

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Pogue: It's November 17, 2014, and this is Phil Pogue. We're going to be discussing the 1985 Educational Reform Act. This is a project for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. It's part of the Education is Key program and collection at the Presidential Library. I want to welcome Jo Anderson. We're in Lombard, Illinois and will be here at the Illinois Education Association/CEC [Consortium for Educational Change] building. Thank you, Jo for being a participant in our project and telling us more about the experiences you had with the 1985 reforms. Could you begin by reviewing your family history and your educational background?

Jo Anderson

Anderson: Sure. Thank you, Phil. Thank you for this opportunity to be interviewed and talk about the Reform Act of 1985. I grew up in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. I'm the oldest of seven. I grew up in a family of educators, although it was a strong tradition of Catholic education. I went through Catholic schools from grade one through boarding away at a high school in Danvers, Mass [Massachusetts], St. John's Prep, and then went on to Boston College, where I majored in philosophy. It was at that point that I left the East and came to the Midwest. I began graduate work in the fall of 1965 at the

University of Chicago, in a graduate program called the Committee on Social Thought, where I stayed and received a master's degree in 1971.

Pogue: What adjustments were there, coming from the New England area to Illinois?

Anderson: Of course, we have seasons in New England, as we have in Illinois, and of course, I've been in Illinois since 1965, with the exception of three or four years when I was away. My wife grew up here, and my kids have both been born here, grew up here and live here. So Chicago's very much home.

It's flatter. On the other hand, there's a beautiful lake. We live in Chicago, right in the city. It's a great place to be. The fall colors aren't quite as brilliant. The winters may be a little harsher, actually, with the wind off the lake, but it's very similar, really, in lots of ways.

Pogue: What attracted you to the University of Chicago?

Anderson: I am a product of the sixties. I was in college between 1962 and 1965, at Boston College. I became very involved in the civil rights work, something called the Ecumenism. We were in conversation with other denominations, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, whatever. I was very much interested in social change.

I went into Boston College thinking I might want to be a Jesuit. That was a short-lived aspiration, but very much the notion of a calling or vocation to a life of purpose. For me, that was involvement in social action, social change. It was recommended to me, this program at the University of Chicago, interdisciplinary doctoral program. I never did get a doctorate, but it was an opportunity to work on... I guess I had the naïve view that I'd first learn to change the world, then go out and do it. It was a very powerful five or six years for me in interdisciplinary study in philosophy, literature, history.

The chairperson of the Committee on Social Thought was Saul Bellow.[1] I did a little bit of work with him, but the person I did most of my work with was a woman named Hannah Arendt, a German Jewish political philosopher. She had a sense of... The way she thought about politics and the traditions she connected me to were really very helpful to me at that point.

I was involved in the new left, the anti-war movement, on the fringes of SDS [Students for Democratic Society], if you will. Some of the new left at that point, in the late sixties, were really going off the deep end in my view.

[1] The Committee on Social Thought is one of several PhD-granting committees at the University of Chicago. It was started in 1941 by historian John Ulric Nef, along with economist Frank Knight, anthropologist Robert Redfield, and University President Robert Maynard Hutchins. The committee has, since its inception, drawn together noted academics and writers to "foster awareness of the permanent questions at the origin of all learned inquiry. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Committee_on_Social_Thought)

Hannah Arendt's notion of politics, in going back to the Greeks and then Machiavelli and the Federalist Papers… In fact, I did a lot of work. If I'd done a dissertation, it would have been on the Federalist Papers, their concept of interest. The view she had of politics as really opportunities for people to have a public identity—find a public space to gather, create power to shape their collective destinies—made a whole heck of a lot of sense. It was very non-ideological in a certain way, and that was appealing.

At a certain point, she—knowing that I wanted to go on and become involved in the work of change, social change—suggested I look up this person Saul Alinsky.[2] I knew of him. In fact, he was a family friend of my wife's and now a dear friend, family friends, of mine, Ralph Helstein and his family. I began working with the Industrial Areas Foundation [IAF], Saul Alinsky Institute, in the fall, October of 1971.[3] For nine years, I was affiliated with the IAF. Really, that was my training, professional work in learning how to be, first, a community organizer and then a union organizer. I still consider myself, that's my profession, organizing.

The work I continue to do now with the Consortium for Educational Change or even the work I did at the U. S. Department of Education, I've always seen through the lens of organizing, helping to build relationships amongst people, so that they have some ability to impact their lives and their communities.[4]

The IAF, in the early seventies, was also consulting with the NEA, National Education Association, and the Illinois Education Association. That was my opportunity to be referred for a position on the North Shore, working out of the Des Plaines office, but really actually dealing with New Trier High School and its feeders, Glenbrook High School and its feeders, Maine Township High School and its feeders, even down to some smaller districts south of O'Hare [International Airport].

It was a time when the IEA was just in the process of having taken over the association from administrators, having kicked the administrators out, and were embarked on the quest for collective bargaining contracts and a voice for teachers in their work lives. That's kind of my transition.

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[2] Saul David Alinsky (January 30, 1909 – June 12, 1972) was an American community activist and political theorist. His work through the Chicago-based Industrial Areas Foundation helping poor communities organize to press demands upon landlords, politicians and business leaders won him national recognition and notoriety. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saul_Alinsky)

[3] Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) is a network of faith organizations from a variety of religious denominations in primarily low-income communities across the United States, Canada, and Europe. Its mission is to help ordinary citizens participate in the public arena in order to improve conditions in their neighborhoods and cities. (https://www.britannica.com/topic/Industrial-Areas-Foundation)

[4] The Consortium for Educational Change transforms schools and districts by building collaborative relationships between unions, school administrators, and school boards. (https://www.cecweb.org/)

Pogue: You explained a little bit about how you got into the work history. Could you go into a little more detail on the various things that you have done since you got involved with the IEA?

Anderson: Actually, my first couple of years with the IAF, I was doing community organizing. I did some anti-crime work with the Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference. In fact, I worked at that point with people like Al Raby and Steve Perkins.[5, 6] Also, I did some consumer organizing in the south suburbs, in Park Forest and other communities down there, and worked with a young woman named Jan Schakowsky, who was leading, with a woman named Jackie Kendall, something called the National Consumers Union.[7, 8] When the opportunity to work with IEA came up, it was a full-time, steady, well-paid opportunity, so I took it. And I've been very pleased with the opportunity to organize in the field of education.

At that point, working with districts up on the North Shore, we were just beginning the process of trying to get collective bargaining, new contracts, and a voice for teachers in their work. The tension in those early days was with the management, school district administration, school boards, and management attorneys working for school districts, who were, first off, not wanting to have to bargain at all, but if they had to, wanted to curtail and severely limit whatever they did negotiate.

So, they took from the private sector, a frame, a deal really, in the fifties, where the large, industrial unions had essentially worked out an understanding with management, codified in their contracts, that the scope of bargaining would be the terms and conditions of employment, essentially bread and butter security issues, fair treatment issues, but anything having to do with the quality of the work. How the work's done would, in fact, be reserved to management as management rights. That frame was really the frame or point of reference that management came out of.

[5] Albert Anderson Raby was a teacher at Chicago's Hess Upper Grade Center who secured the support of Martin Luther King Jr. to desegregate schools and housing in Chicago between 1965 and 1967. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Raby)

[6] Dr. Stephen Perkins is senior vice president of the Center for Neighborhood Technology, a Chicago-based organization that promotes sustainable urban communities. (https://parliamentofreligions.org/users/dr-stephen-perkins?qt-pwr_user_profile_tabs=0)

[7] Janice (Jan) Danoff Schakowsky (born May 26, 1944) is the U.S. Representative for Illinois's 9th congressional district, serving since 1999. She is a member of the Democratic Party, representing a district anchored in Chicago's North Side. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan_Schakowsky)

[8] Jackie Kendall is an organizer, trainer, and executive director of the Midwest Academy. She has worked for three decades to develop leaders, train organizers and build the capacity of progressive organizations and institutions at local, state and national levels. (https://keywiki.org/Jackie_Kendall)

My first strike in the East Maine School District was actually kind of a blue flu in '73.[9] We'd already settled money. The issue for me and for the teachers, the people I was organizing, working with, was a voice in decision making. That was the issue we were still working on.

For me, throughout my career and continuing now with the Consortium for Educational Change, but even with my five years with the U. S. Department of Education as a senior advisor to Arne Duncan, for me the quest has always been professionalization, the transformation of teaching into a genuine profession and seeing the union, the association—whether it be the NEA and its affiliates, or AFT [American Federation of Teachers] and its affiliates—as the vehicle for that professionalization.[10]

One of the things I did early on in the work up on the North Shore there, we created a teacher center. My wife has been a lifelong progressive educator, and she'd established the first teacher center in Chicago on the South Side. That idea, a place where teachers could come together, talk together, make curriculum materials together, learn together—which was so sorely lacking in the schools themselves—that was for me a critical, central piece in the work we were doing and has been from that point on. t's a broader, deeper agenda than simply a traditional industrial union frame.

Pogue: You indicated that, as a youth, you went to Catholic education. Now you're involved with public education, dealing with the Illinois Education Association. Was that a major change when you were considering it?

Anderson: No, it was actually a major change. I kind of, in my view, liberalized my way out of the church. The sixties was a time of great ferment. The Vatican Council, the Second Vatican Council, Pope John XXIII. I was also a student of philosophy and history. I just had what I considered a broader perspective. I always have a sense of mission and purpose and, if you will, spirituality as an important dimension in life, my life included. But the Catholic Church was, from my perspective, too confining in a particular way of seeing things.

So, when I did community organizing, in the early seventies, but more... I left IEA at the end of '75 and went back to do some specific work with the IAF. I worked for two years on a rural organizing project in upstate New York, up along the Canadian border. Then another year in Houston, Texas, with one of the most gifted organizers I ever worked with, Ernesto

[9] Blue flu is a type of strike action undertaken by police officers in which a large number simultaneously use sick leave is a preferred strike action by police in some parts of the country where police are prohibited from striking by law. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue_flu)

[10] Arne Starkey Duncan was the United States Secretary of Education from 2009 through December 2015. One of Duncan's initiatives was a $4 billion Race to the Top competition. Previously, Duncan served as chief executive officer of the Chicago Public Schools, having been appointed by Mayor Richard M. Daley. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arne_Duncan)

Cortez, where we were forming a tri-racial, metropolitan, urban, suburban organization.[11] Then back to the northwest side of Chicago, where I took over the leadership... I was lead organizer of something called The Organization of the Northwest, which was a number of parishes, churches and other organizations on the northwest side.

It's kind of curious the coincidence today; Jayne Byrne's [Mayor of Chicago 1979-1983] funeral is today. I can remember one of the actions—as we used to call them—we had with Mayor Byrne. We brought a number of parish priests and pastors and some of their people to have a conversation with her, as we put it, around some of the needs and issues in their communities.

But at a certain point, working with Catholic pastors in particular, day in and day out, and given where I was in my own faith journey, it was more than I wanted to continue. So, when the opportunity presented itself to return to the IEA, in May of 1980, as an organizer, I really was very, very excited about that opportunity.

Then I stayed with IEA from 1980 through April of '09, when I retired—actually through March of '09—given that I had the opportunity to go to work for the U. S. Department of Education, Arne Duncan, as a senior advisor of the secretary and part of the senior leadership team, and started there in April of 2009 and stayed there through this last January of 2014.

Organizing in the education sphere became my passion and area of particular interest, where I spent the vast majority of my career.

Pogue: What were some of the major challenges that you've faced in the field of education? You've talked about the role of collective bargaining and getting that. What are some other areas?

Anderson: I think the basic challenge and tension over the years has been what I referred to as the transformation of teaching into a genuine profession. In my experience, our members... I like Stephen Covey's frame of the four essential human needs: to live, to love, to learn, to leave a legacy.[12] Kind of translating that frame to teaching, obviously teachers want to make a decent living, to live. They want to live comfortably and be treated fairly, et cetera.

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[11] Ernesto Cortés, Jr. is the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) co-chair and executive director of the West/Southwest IAF regional network. Cortés has been instrumental in the building of over thirty grassroots organizations known for developing and training community leaders (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernesto_Cortes)

[12] Stephen R. Cover (October 24, 1932 – July 16, 2012) was an American author of the bestselling book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, as well as other books, including *First Things First*, in which he introduced the phrase, "To Live, To Love, To Learn, To Leave a Legacy." (https://www.brevedy.com/2015/03/12/live-love-learn-and-leave-a-legacy-the-four-human-dimensions/)

They also want the love, in the sense of they want to belong to something larger than themselves. The way teaching has traditionally been organized, and it still is, in this kind of isolated, fragmented, separate classrooms and practice, don't make for a learning environment for teachers, the adults themselves.

That ability to be in relationship to colleagues, to learn, to continue to grow and develop as a professional, is often missing. And finally, teachers want to make a difference in children and young people's lives. They want to leave a legacy.

As I look at the frame of what the union in teaching has often become, it's certainly dealt with the live, the bread and butter and security issues, but hasn't been able to get enough into meeting the needs and aspirations of our members, teachers, in areas of relationships with one another as colleagues, the opportunities to continue to learn and grow and develop as professionals, and the collective and individual ability to make a real impact on the lives of children, especially poor kids and kids of color, who have huge needs that aren't being as well attended to in our society as they should be, education included, but not alone.

The tension, in terms of fighting within the union, to broaden and deepen its sense of purpose and vision to be more than just bread and butter issues and the struggle with school districts over time to build the relationships that could move beyond just tension, but to much more collaboration, and finally, to build relationships with the outside community of partnership around these important objectives, those have been kind of continuing themes.

When I came back to Illinois, the Illinois Education Association, in 1980, I did a lot of one-on-one conversations with teachers, partly in the larger Joliet area, Plainfield, in the southwest area of the metropolitan area. One of the things that struck me is that teachers are deeply frustrated in their ability to make a difference.

Also, because of the battles to get collective bargaining and the fights that ensued, often our schools were armed camps. The relationships were not collegial at all. They were kind of distant to isolated, teachers from one another, except when they are on strike, which is was a kind of a moment of great solidarity. Teachers often say, "For the first time, we feel like faculty." Well, that's a heck of an indictment of the system, that it's only outside of school that teachers feel some sense of deep relationship with each other.

And, of course, there was these continuing adversarial relationships with principals, superintendents, et cetera., communities. The opportunity to begin to build something different presented itself in the mid '80s, very much around the time of the reform legislation, just in the same year.

In 1985, we began in a few districts—starting in Evanston Township High School—a process of what we called then win-win negotiations, to try to transform what had become quite adversarial, in terms of culture, into something much more collaborative. Myself and a fellow named John Wargo, who was at that time the executive director of the Illinois Association of School Administrators, offered ourselves as a team to facilitate in Evanston Township High School their negotiations in a venue of a kind of a win-win process. They accepted, and we did it. It came out quite well.

[We] did a few more, and then we kind of institutionalized that whole process, creating teams that always involved an IEA staff person, but then either a management person or a management attorney. It was out of those early win-win negotiations, that the parties, whether it was teacher leaders or superintendents or school board members, would say, "Hey, this is an improvement. How do we continue this kind of communication, day in and day out, so that we can continue to work and build this relationship, so we can have some impact on kids?"

That was the opportunity to organize what's called the Consortium for Educational Change. It began in February of '87. It's still going strong, in fact, much stronger and deeper than ever. It became a vehicle for the union and partners to work collaboratively, build a collaborative culture to then transform systems to continuously improve teaching and learning.

It was a very, I think, important opportunity for IEA, as well, over the years. It was fought in the beginning by some of the leadership of IEA, the whole notion of the win-win and what we then called interest-based bargaining after that, and then this Consortium for Educational Change. It kind of challenged the current mindset around. Well, wait a second, we're more of an industrial frame kind of union, and we're not supposed to be collaborating with the enemy. That's like being in bed with the enemy. So, it challenged some of those mindsets that become somewhat institutionalized.

But frankly, by the mid '90s, the new president of the IEA, a guy named Bob Haisman, said, "Not only does this make sense,"—and we were primarily in the suburbs at that point—he said, "but this is something we ought to expand statewide." The IEA then created, within the IEA, something called the Center for Educational Innovation, and I became its director. I had been part of the IEA management team since '83, the fall of '83. I then moved to be the director of this, and in that capacity, was an in-kind contribution to CEC to continue as executive director of CEC, really from '87 through 2005, when I left that role to become the executive director of the IEA, which I served in until I became senior advisor to Secretary Duncan.

Then at the end of January, having left the U. S. Department of Education, I returned to CEC that I helped organize twenty-seven years ago. Now eight, ten months into it, it's very exciting to be back to something that

continues to grow and develop, and in fact, not only works in Illinois, but we're doing significant work in other parts of the country, as well as at the national level.

The theme throughout all of that, I think, has been professionalization of teaching and building of collaborative partnerships with administrators, school boards and communities and others at the state level, to in fact, create the culture and climate where we can do the serious work of improving what we do with kids

Pogue: What kinds of tasks did you have in your five years with the Department of Education?

Anderson: When I became executive director of IEA in November of 2005, I worked with a number of people to organize something we called the Dialogue Group. Max McGee, former state superintendent, was one of the kind of organizers with me, as was Bill O'Connor, a former Republican legislator and attorney in Chicago, and Charlie Rose, who was actually the school management attorney and the school management person to Arne Duncan at the Chicago Public Schools, on the management side. I got to meet Arne through Charlie. Charlie and Peter Cunningham also went on to the department, worked with this Dialogue Group.[13]

The whole point of that Dialogue Group was to create this kind of container, where we could have frank and open generative conversations around, what's some shared vision we have for Illinois public education? Out of that came something called the Burnham Plan for World Class Education, after Daniel Burnham's notion of a city plan for Chicago and the catch phrase, "Make no small plans that do not have the power to stir men's souls and imagination."

We came up with some shared vision for Illinois public education. It was kind of a vision document for about twenty pages, but then there were also about 150 pages of proposed legislation. We never did get any of that passed at that point. But after I left, the IEA and other partners, I think, really have made some major changes in the legislative landscape through the PERA [Professional Educational Reform Act] on evaluation, a Teacher and Administrative Evaluation Act, Senate Bill 7—which changed some of the ways we deal with seniority—and other major pieces of legislation that I think have moved Illinois in a very progressive school reform direction.

[13] Peter Cunningham is founder of Education Post and serves on its board. He served as assistant secretary for communications and outreach in the U.S. Department of Education during the Obama administration's first term. Prior to that he was CEO of the Chicago Public Schools. (https://educationpost.org/network/peter-cunningham/)

In any case, having worked with that Dialogue Group, I became known to Arne. When Arne was asked to become secretary of education by the newly-elected President Barack Obama, he reached out to me and asked if I would join him as part of his senior leadership team, with particular point person responsibilities to both national unions and their affiliates, to keep the lines of communication and involvement with the unions open and developing. That's how I came to Arne's attention, how I got into that role, and the kind of work I was responsible for at the U. S. Department of Education.

Pogue: From your experiences at the U. S. Department of Education, do you feel that that agency, because of the limited funding it actually gives to schools, is a key player?

Anderson: I think it's become an incredibly key player. In fact, it became a key player... It's become more and more key over the years. One of the most important things that happened in the '60s, as part of the Civil Rights Movement and the war on poverty, was in fact, the first Elementary and Secondary Education Act that began to put significant monies into funding education for poor kids, kids of color. It came out of the federal government's experience that states couldn't be trusted on their own to deal well by those student populations.

When it came to 1995, maybe thirty-five years later, and Ted Kennedy, having been a young, new senator from Massachusetts in the '60s, was now, thirty-five years later, chair of the Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee in the Senate, having seen billions of dollars gone through both Title I, under ESEA [Elementary and Secondary Education Act] for kids in need but also billions of dollars through IDEA [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act], the special education legislation that passed in, I think, 1973. Yet, the gaps between well-to-do kids and poor kids were still pretty severe. That really was the genesis, and that's one of the things I learned in my work in the department.

Some of the staff of Ted Kennedy really framed the initial No Child Left Behind reauthorization of the ESEA. When George W. Bush became president, he was on a similar way of thinking about education reform. That's when No Child Left Behind passed. The federal Department of Education, the U. S. government, was putting in 10 percent of the total pie, but had some significant leverage because 10 percent's about $60 billion plus, out of a $600 billion total K-12 [kindergarten through grade 12] price tag.

When Arne came in, we're in the depth of the recession. The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act was passed, the Stimulus Bill, as it was called. Arne became secretary January 20 of 2009. Two weeks later, an additional $100 billion was given to the U. S. Department of Education to invest in education. The annual budget of the department's about $68 billion, so an additional hundred were significant monies, especially at a time when

districts and states were having to slash and cut severely and were struggling to have resources. So, it became an opportunity for dramatic change, for stimulating significant change and innovation.

A lot of the money, $40 billion out of the hundred, went to save jobs, about 350,000 K-12 jobs, mainly teachers, but some support staff. Another $40 billion went to increase the amount for Pell Grants for kids in need to go on to further education beyond high school, community college, college.[14]

Another twenty billion was there to, in fact, stimulate innovation. That then led to the creation of Race to the Top, the Invest in Innovation program, the School Improvement Grants, and a number of initiatives that began to offer significant monies to states and districts if, in turn, they embraced some key elements of reform, one of which was adopting college and career ready standards, a higher set of standards than what were existing in many states, which differed greatly from state to state, a new set of assessments that would be beyond the basic skill of rote bubble tests.[15, 16]

Also, they really focused on how to improve the quality of teachers and leaders. Those continued to be some of the themes, I think, in the Obama-Duncan administration.

To your original question, "Does the federal government have much of a role?" It's been an increasing and growing role. I think, especially in this administration, with such an influx of significant additional dollars, it's stimulating incredible change. I like to go back to what Alinsky said about organizing, "The first step in organizing is disorganizing." I think we disrupted the status quo big time. Over thirty states passed major changes in legislation, including Illinois, with things like PERA and Senate Bill 7, changes to how teaching and the profession of teaching and leading in schools is organized.

With any such disruption, when you open Pandora's box, some good things happened, but some pretty bad things happen. I think we've seen a mix of both, across the country. I think Illinois's been more on the good side than not, because they've had their own act together in a collaborative way and have stayed the course that they've set for themselves. All in all, there's been some tremendous change. I don't think we would have had forty plus states adopting the new college and career ready standards, what have been called

[14] A Pell Grant is a subsidy the U.S. federal government provides for students who need it to pay for college. Federal Pell Grants are limited to students with financial need who have not earned their first bachelor's degree or who are enrolled in certain post-baccalaureate programs. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pell_Grant)
[15] Race to the Top, abbreviated R2T, RTTT, or RTT, was a $4.35 billion U.S. Department of Education competitive grant created to spur and reward innovation and reforms in state and local district K-12 education. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Race_to_the_Top)
[16] An optical answer sheet or bubble sheet is a special type of form used in multiple choice question examinations…Optical answer sheets usually have a set of blank ovals or boxes that correspond to each question. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optical_mark_recognition)

the Common Core standards, or seen such an attention to how to improve the profession of teaching. I think it's gotten narrow and sidetracked in certain ways and certainly in some states, but it's been a major provoker of change and activity.

Pogue: Now we'll go back to the 1980s. What were you doing? You were involved with the IEA at that time and, as we're talking about now, Nation at Risk and all of the studies that were going on.

Anderson: Nation at Risk was the first salvo, if you will, in the reform effort that's been now going on thirty years, a little more than thirty years. In the '70s, we were organizing for teachers to have a meaningful role and voice in their work. But there was not a lot of credence on some parties' part in the value of teachers, okay? It was like you could teacher-proof a system. If you had the scripted curriculum, and you kind of drove it from on high, teachers just went through the kind of mechanical motions of administering the curriculum while kids would learn. Well, that's not true.

One of the biggest things that happened, I think, with the Nation at Risk in '83, was the call to action really coming out of the business community, saying, "Hey, we're having our heads handed to us in international competition. We've got to do a better job of educating our young people for the world to come." It's not enough for kids to go through eighth grade or maybe even drop out of high school and then drop into a job on the assembly line in the auto industry or the rubber industry or whatever. Those jobs were disappearing fast.

A whole new challenge to educating all kids to high standards was the clarion call that A Nation at Risk began to sound. But there was a subtext there, which was the importance of teaching and teachers, that you couldn't do this without good teachers. There was finally an economic imperative, as well as a social and civil imperative, for focusing on teachers and teaching and improving the conditions that support good teachers and teaching. So, it opened up this continuing conversation for the last thirty years on how to do that.

The 1985 Reform Act was Illinois' beginning response to that. They began to say, "Well, wait a second, the state has some role here." It's not enough for just 900 different school districts across the state to determine what the purpose of education is. There's a state purpose, and it was nicely, broadly framed, I think, in that 1985 legislation. It was far more than just literacy and math; it was educating the whole child, as we might say about today.

But coming with that expectation, that vision and mission, was a sense of what were going to be the learning outcomes? Let's get clear about this, not just nice, flowery language, but what does that actually mean? What is it

going to look like for kids to reach these kinds of levels of attainment? In turn, how will we know, and how will we begin to put in place assessments of various sorts or ask districts and schools to put in assessments so we can tell? You get the beginnings of a sense of higher expectations, that all kids will learn at the levels we've only been educating a few, that if you have such high expectations, the state has a role because ultimately the state's the creator of the education system. It's given that power under the U. S. Constitution; it's one of the reserved rights in Article X.

In turn, school districts, school code, what happens at the local level, what people call local control, is all a creature of state statute and governance. So the state's now stepping up, in this context of international competition and the global economy that's beginning to emerge, and saying, we've got a legitimate right here, an obligation, to articulate our needs, expectations, and then how we're going to begin to hold people accountable for that.

In that context, you also had, in this 1985 legislation, the first time really addressing in a serious way the whole notion of teacher and principal evaluation. It's the beginning. That's been a thirty-year conversation. It continues now, unabated.

But in 1985, it was said, "Look, every tenured teacher ought to be evaluated at least every two years. There ought to be some differentiated ratings, four, in particular." Unsatisfactory, needs improvement, proficient and excellent, I think were the ratings. There needs to be a process. In fact, if the teacher isn't up to snuff, then we need some process of support, a remediation plan. In fact, there should be a consulting teaching, a peer, who doesn't do the evaluation, but provides coaching and support so that this teacher has every opportunity to get better. But if after that one-year remediation the teacher isn't better, then the teacher should be let go. That's all in the legislation, and it's all reflecting some of the things coming out of the Nation at Risk. It's the first movement in a multi-movement symphony, if you will, that's been playing for the last thirty years. The 1985 reform legislation in Illinois was that first movement here.

Pogue: Prior to the '85 Education Reform Act, you had a lot of activity. You had Illinois Senator Art Berman's commission that was part of, I think, the school problems approach.[17] You had Speaker Mike Madigan holding hearings around that state with the Illinois Education Association. In February of '85, Governor Jim Thompson gave his State of the State Address on education. What did you think about all these activities that were going on prior to enacting the legislation?

[17] Arthur L. "Art" Berman (born May 4, 1935) is a retired American lawyer and politician, born in Chicago, Illinois. Berman served in the Illinois House of Representatives from 1967 to 1976 and then served in the Illinois Senate from 1977 until 2000. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Berman)

Anderson: Having come back to IEA in 1980, I'd begun to see more clearly—perhaps even than when I was with IEA in the '70s—the need to respond to our members', teachers' and other school staffs' interests and aspirations to make more of a difference. I welcomed all of these changes and the focus on teaching and teachers and the important role they have to play and the opportunities to talk about how we could, in fact, transform Illinois public education. I saw all of those as opportunities to, in fact, advance the needs and interests of our teachers and their students, in terms of transforming teaching into a real profession and the union into a real vehicle for that professionalization.

I can remember being a part of some of the hearings, obviously, that IEA did. I was a part of—I can remember, at least, I think—attending some of the Art Berman meetings. I was part of something Mike Bakalis convened around some of these conversations, Mike having been a former state superintendent [of education] in the '70s. There was some other group that was trying to figure out how to develop these ideas together, that had multi-stakeholders. It was my first time that I actually met Bob Healey, who was then president of the Chicago Teachers Union.

We had a guy as executive director in IEA at that time, John Ryor, who had been president of NEA in the late '70s and then worked at the Carter White House for a year and was involved, I think, in the launch of the U. S. Department of Education, which was created in the Carter administration and went into effect for the first time, I believe, in 1980, 1981, with the Reagan administration. John was a teacher, a teacher's teacher, and really, I think, was very supportive of our getting much more involved in professional issues, not just the bread and butter kind of traditional industrial union issues. Knowing my interest in that and beginning to do some organizing in the field around that, and then as part of the management team, asked me to be involved in some of those conversations.

At the same time, we're beginning to do some of this, new approaches to negotiations, to move our negotiations from something adversarial to much more collaborative. So, I was kind of in the right place at the right time to begin this journey, although I really built on some vision and aspirations I had coming out of the '70s.

Pogue: I'd like to get your comments and your involvement with some of the parts of the Reform Act. First, we'll talk whether the reforms created a purpose for schooling that was supposed to then drive time allocation, the resources, the use of personnel, and the use of facilities. What did you think about those?

Anderson: I thought that was an eloquent articulation of the purpose of schooling. I wish, in fact, we could go back to it in some ways. We've gotten, in the last thirty years, really narrow around literacy and math. Common core begins to expand and explode that to a much broader, but still academic [position]. I think

we've lost a lot of the focus on the whole child, some of the social, emotional, even though we know far more about those areas now than we did thirty years ago. So, I think the purpose articulated the legislation was wonderful, eloquent and uplifting. I think it's just the beginning. It's one thing to have a vision. It's another to bring it to fruition. This was just the beginning of trying to do that.

I think everybody underestimates, or a lot of people have, the difficulty of moving such a complex system. If you look at it from the federal level, as a whole country, what do we have? Fifty million students, 95,000 d schools, 14,000 school districts, regulated by fifty different state entities, and then a federal bureaucracy sitting on top of that. This is a very entrenched system that knows how to not change and is organized in that frame to, in fact, resist change.

It can't be bludgeoned into changing from the outside; it will just hunker down and stave off and resist it. You can't legislate it into improvement, either from a federal level or a state level, or even from a district top-down level. It's got to be some of that kind of pressure coming from the top, but it also has to be a lot of empowerment and support and capacity building at the bottom, in some mix of all of these together.

The art and science of systemic change is complex, and [has] partly been kind of my learning quest, if you will, over the last almost forty years in this work, to figure out how to do that, along with a lot of colleagues across the country and the world. There are ways to do it, but it's up against a system that's pretty entrenched.

The 1985 legislation, the best of intentions, began this journey, [but] was hardly sufficient. The purpose is wonderful, but then it doesn't really get moved too much, in terms of either what's expected, in terms of learner outcomes or how we're going to assess that or how we're going to support people in moving that way.

Pogue: Two other areas that became part of the reforms were that the schools were to set learner goals and have some sort of accountability through assessments and eventually the school report cards.

Anderson: Yes, to make the whole operation more transparent, so that the public knows what it's getting, the report cards. All of those are very important initiatives, but they're at the initial stage. They have, each of them, grown sometimes to be way too rigid and draconian, if you will.

The learning objectives become the standards. The accountability systems became No Child Left Behind. The ISAT [Illinois Standards Achievement Test], the Prairie State. Accountability beyond just transparency was what happens to schools when they don't make the grade.

Some of the consequences coming out of No Child Left Behind, or some of the more specific consequences that come out of Race to the Top and other initiatives, where in exchange for money, you agree to certain kinds of ways to step up to things that aren't working. It began a conversation around all these areas that then got played out over time, as we still try to figure out how to do this well.

Pogue: Before we leave this topic, the issue of creating learner goals led to a lot of teacher involvement, night meetings, et cetera, because this was kind of an overwhelming task. How did the IEA deal with all of these time commitments that the teachers were now getting involved in, either late at night, in the summers, whatever?

Anderson: We were very supportive of that and of our teachers. Many, many were involved. There were two problems with it. Often, they came up with binders full of learner objectives that sat on the shelf, and that was about it, because there was no support to really figure out how to make them come alive. And in some ways, it just had... You have too many goals; you have no goals, okay?

Anybody in any field wanted all of what they thought were the most important learner objectives included. So, what we got was just an orgy of goals and objectives that you couldn't possibly attend to all of them. It was diffuse, and then not much came of it. Over time, teachers putting in all this energy get a little discouraged, even some get cynical that there's not going to be much meaning to this. But at the same time, they'll keep stepping to the plate, and we were trying to be as supportive as we could.

The IEA also—throughout its history I think it's gotten a whole lot better—but coming out of the '70s and the whole battle to become recognized as a political entity and as a partner also gets quite defensive. How do we prevent things from happening? Even reading some of the publications we put out at the time of the passage of the 1985 legislation, there's a stress on, here's what we defeated.

They wanted merit pay, and we didn't let that happen. They wanted fingerprinting of all current employees; we stopped that from happening. It was kind of a defensive mentality because essentially the system was dysfunctional in many ways. The union's role was to protect our members from dysfunction, as opposed to seeing our role as to work with others to make the system functional, not dysfunctional. But that defensive posture was very much there.

At the same time, we would try to say, okay, let's help our people get involved and support them in that, although we have to be careful (laughs) that we don't get involved in doing the wrong stuff or stupid stuff that could

hurt us. It's always that kind of an almost schizophrenic mentality, especially in those days.

Pogue: Other areas that were part of the reforms were dealing with the transitional programs for limited English, the ability to have full-day kindergarten programs and getting state reimbursement, the growth of the pre-kindergarten at risk, and the experiment with birth to three pilot program.

Anderson: All great things. Illinois, to its credit—especially, I think, in the early years of this century—was a pioneer in early childhood education, and that's a crying need. We know that kids don't come to the kindergarten door on equal terms. Some have far more vocabulary than others have been exposed to, all kinds of experiences, versus other kids who haven't. Those gaps are there in the very beginning, from kindergarten on. We have a hard time closing them, if they don't, in fact, become even larger. In some ways, if we don't start from birth through five and do more there, we're not going to succeed. So, these were some beginning efforts in this important area that Illinois then fouled up in later years.

Unfortunately, during the depths of this current recession... We used to have, I believe, 90,000 early childhood placements, four-year-olds, pre-school. I think it's down to like 45,000 now or something. That's because of the loss of state funding. We have a long, long way to go. There are far more kids beyond 90,000 that have these needs. It gets back to a fundamental question of funding.

English language learners is also... That's more and more of an issue. I think Illinois is now the fifth largest state, in terms of a Hispanic or a Spanish speaking population. That's just is an ever-growing need, and we began to understand and recognize that need back in '85, but still have a long, long way to go.

Pogue: Another area that was part of the program was discouraging social promotions. Opportunities were provided by summer school, extended day, tutoring, retention, trying to reduce class size, special homework, program modifications; those activities were encouraged. What did you see there?

Anderson: I thought that was a very astute and thoughtful way of coming at that issue, where kids, in moving from one grade to the next, aren't really ready. They're behind. That gap we've talked about is there. So, they talked about not simply passing kids through, social promotion, just because they've reached another birthday or another year of age, but that we need to do far more to intervene and help them catch up.

I think, since then, too many places got fixated on no social promotions and holding kids at grade, without the kinds of interventions that

were talked about in the legislation. What that does is to accelerate, further down the road, these kids dropping out of school. They never catch up.

I think this legislation... The vision in the 1985 legislation, the process of bringing so many stakeholders together into dialogue, into conversation, some of the wonderful ideas and insights that came out of that, it was the beginning. I think we've not always kept on the same path or with as much kind of multi-stakeholder support, but it was a really good beginning in lots of these areas.

Pogue: Future teachers, at this time, were going to be seeing the issue of basic skills testing and testing in their areas of interest that they were going to get their certification in. These were changes that were put at the college level. Did you have any involvement with that?

Anderson: I think... I can remember saying... I just was rereading some of the promotional pieces that IEA put out around the legislation. I can remember reading President Reg Weaver at the time—president of the IEA, went on to become NEA president—talking about, we need to attract the best and the brightest into teaching. [For] too many of the preparation programs in colleges and universities, it was not the case at all. It was a cash cow for the universities.[18] It was a place where you didn't need as much academic achievement or background to get into the programs, and there wasn't that much academic rigor in the programs. These were the beginning [of] salvos in this effort to reform teacher preparation.

You can't reform K-12 if you don't do all kinds of other things. You've got to do something with early childhood before kids get to kindergarten. In turn, you've got to do something with teachers before they become teachers. That's how do we recruit the best, how we prepare them most effectively. This legislation began to attend to some of those needs of raising the bar to both get into preparation programs—having some basic minimum level of literacy and academic currency, in terms of after preparation—then being ready for certification. It all moved in the right direction.

Pogue: Another area you've touched on in the 1985 Education Reform Act is the principal and teacher evaluation tools. Madeline Hunter was one of the models that was quite popular back then.[19] Now Charlotte Danielson is one that's

[18] A cash cow is in a mature, slow-growth business unit that has a large share of the market and requires little investment. As a result, its return on assets is far greater than its market growth rate. (https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/cashcow.asp)

[19] The Madeline Hunter method is a kind of direct instruction model and method, mostly applied to lesson planning. This model is quite closely associated with typical general behaviorist/cognitivist instructional design models, and it incorporates mastery learning concepts. (http://edutechwiki.unige.ch/en/Madeline_Hunter_method)

currently popular today.[20] Also, the principal was recognized as the instructional leader. School districts were to document how much time the principal was spending on instruction and having to keep records related to that. Then later on, the Chicago system was a major player in who had keys to the building. That was a challenge, whether it'd be the engineers or the principal. What involvement did you see with that, from the IEA's point?

Anderson: Actually, helping our locals and their members implement the new evaluation processes, that was a major area of work for IEA. I was involved in that as well, to a significant extent.

Again, teachers were given very little feedback. Let's think about what was going on here. Who got into teaching was not very competitive. The preparation was not very rigorous. When they started teaching, they were kind of in a sink or swim kind of situation, very little in the way of induction and mentoring support, and then weak professional development systems. This law also tried to ramp up some of the professional development teachers get. But they also were to get, if they did get evaluated, pretty meaningless feedback that wasn't very useful.

Over the years, having talked to teachers and principals, they both say that this wasn't a very useful activity. This was an effort to give people feedback around their work, up against some standards. I like the comparison, or the mentioning of...What's the first anticipatory set? Not Charlotte Danielson, but…

Pogue: Madeline Hunter.

Anderson: Madeline Hunter. Madeline Hunter's work was... There were kind of like eight specific things that a teacher should do to do a lesson well, but it was pretty much of an outline, okay? It was the beginnings of articulating, what does good teaching look like? How do you help teachers become better if we haven't defined what is good practice, okay? In other fields, like medicine, it's an ever-moving target, but there's a definition of what's good practice. We didn't have that in education, and that is something that's happened over the last thirty years.

Charlotte Danielson's work, which really came out of the work to create the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, began out of research to codify, what does good practice look like? What are the elements, all of the aspects and criteria and dimensions to it? It went far beyond Madeline Hunter.

[20] Charlotte Danielson designed a meticulous outline for evaluating teachers, in hopes to ensure only quality educators in the educational system. (http://assessingteachers.weebly.com/charlotte-danielson-method1.html)

We didn't at that point have enough understanding of, what is good teaching? Essentially, you have all these principals doing evaluations, who don't themselves have a good sense of teaching, having all these different notions as the criteria they look for. That's where we started; we needed to start somewhere, and we started there. But we've added all the components, I think. I think when you get to PERA, it adds still others, which is also evidence of student learning. How do you look at some way to see if students are getting it?

Ultimately, the point of teaching is learning. You may be scoring well on this framework of Danielson, but then maybe your kids, for some reason, aren't doing that well. There's a disconnect there. Professionals ought to reflect on it and say, why? Maybe it's because the kids I'm getting are harder to educate than others and do less well on these tests, or maybe I missed something in looking at your practice that I should have attended to as an administrator. Anyway, it's gotten increasingly sophisticated and complex. This was the beginning.

Principals, by the way—let me just add this—many principals were not evaluated at all. Even prior to PERA they weren't being evaluated. It didn't require, I don't think, that principals be evaluated every two years. It required tenured teachers be evaluated, but it began to at least mention that as a need.

Pogue: One of the issues with the evaluation plan called for the consulting teacher. What was the IEA's view of the idea that you've got a consulting teacher helping the person on remediation?

Anderson: I think we liked that idea. It would involve our own peers because there was not a lot of confidence in a lot of principals in lots of places that they'd be able to help. When a teacher was in trouble, we wanted to make sure they got help, good help. The consulting teacher was a nice addition to the mix. We wanted to help our people become consulting teachers. We wanted to help teachers who were members and were having difficulties to have that kind of resource to draw on.

Our mindset was both defensive and supportive. We also were wanting to make sure that the consulting teacher didn't get sucked in—I think as we would have said then—into actually doing the evaluation or what the consulting teacher found being used as evidence that the principal would use in finding the teacher hadn't made the grade.

I know the thinking of the IEA has moved light years in that respect. Now the IEA would be supportive of peer assistance and review, which means that peers, like consulting teachers, could actually be the final evaluators in determining whether somebody should go on or be let go. But that wasn't in the… In fact, until PERA, it was illegal for somebody other than a principal

with a principal's endorsement to evaluate a teacher. That was something that the IEA had been supportive of. Now that's changed.

Other states were ahead of us on this. The AFT was probably ahead of NEA on this, of understanding that, in a profession, profession takes responsibility for the quality of its work. That means that other professionals evaluate professionals. Peer assistance and review grew up in Toledo, Ohio, in the early '80s and then spread to AFT locals in Cincinnati and Rochester, but not to the number of NEA locals. In fact, now it's a program supported and advanced by both national unions. Illinois Education Association has been supportive of that. In fact, here at CEC we help districts implement peer assistance and review programs. We're doing that currently in the Rockford School District. That was something that would have been unheard of in the '80s, '90s, even in the early part of the 2000s.

(pause in interview.)

Anderson: Can I just add to my comment around consulting teachers and wanting to insulate them from any directly evaluative role? That's an example of the industrial frame that the teachers' unions have become caught up in. Because if you look at the crafts and the other side of the unionization equation, which is AFL versus CIO, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, it's the unions that actually train apprentices and certify that they're able to do the work. They take responsibility for the quality of the people doing the work in their crafts and professions. That's the role of the union. That became lost in lots of ways with teacher unions as they got, in my view, coerced into this industrial frame and then kind of made it their own and owned it over time. It became institutionalized as how they saw their work.

Pogue: You've talked a little bit about the staff development programs. There was some funding for that, and eventually to this day now, we have teachers who, for their certification, have to keep all sorts of documentation on approved workshops, in-services. You indicated that that was something good, to start to include in the training of teachers and keeping them abreast of what's happening.

Anderson: Yeah, professional development. When I have had conversations with teachers over the years, one of the things they would constantly bemoan and lament about was the quality of the professional development they were getting. Whether it was these drive-by institutes or in-services, whatever, it was not very high quality; it was kind of one-shot deals, no follow-up, and not real growth and development in the way of impact. To attend to the area of professional development as an area of real need was important.

The notion that it could happen with these kinds of episodic interventions or alone, by just continuing to get continuing professional development units (CPDUs), or whatever, what really needed to be

transformed—and we're just getting to that now—is the opportunity for teachers to have time with each other in schools, to get out of their isolation, their isolated practice behind closed doors, into a relationship with each other, much more public practice with each other, where they, in fact, get feedback from each other, see each other teach and learn from one another.

We haven't organized schools that way. We're beginning to think about how to do that. It's going to take far more time for teachers to really learn and talk with each other, learn from and talk with each other, and we now call those efforts professional learning communities, things like that. In some ways, that wasn't even envisioned in the reform legislation. We still had pretty fixated in our minds this kind of isolated individual practice, not much in community of practice with other educators.

Pogue: Let's talk about the salary compensation studies that were part of the reform. There were a few piloted programs going on with different ways to pay teachers that were tried from some of the bigger schools to some of the smaller ones, like Alden-Hebron. What experience did you have with that?

Anderson: I think the IEA was pretty much on a strictly defensive mode on this issue. They felt that they were successful and that it didn't require merit pay. It didn't require that people move away from the single salary system, which paid people in a very objective way. That's in the legislation, that whatever pay systems are put in place ought to be objective.

Well, years of experience over time and hours of academic credit over time—those are the two axis that make up the single salary's matrix or system—they were pretty sacrosanct. And frankly, what experiences there'd been with merit pay were rife with abuse, where it was really an opportunity for administrators to reward the people they liked with no solid basis one way or another, other than what they liked about the person. And if they didn't like you, then you're at that risk. So, it really was used as a tool to keep people in line and subordinate (laughs) and compliant. That's where the IEA's mindset was on this.

I remember working with one of the districts that was one of the pilots, I think, Carpentersville-Dundee, District 300. They did some interesting things, beginning to look at career ladders, things like that. But frankly, like all grant-funded programs, when the grant ran out, the effort ran out, and nothing much came of it.

At the same time, in that period in the middle to late '80s, I was working with a system in Glenview, Illinois, Glenview District 34, a K-8 [kindergarten through eighth grade] system. They had begun to put in place, without state funding or support, what they called PEER program. I forget what the acronyms stand for, but essentially was teacher leaders who would be coaches in developing curriculum, coaching other teachers in certain areas.

That became the basis of a rethinking of their whole approach to compensation and the whole approach of the union and its relationship with the district. I was very involved there in the late ‘80s.

We developed something called a constitution, where we transformed the traditional collective bargaining agreement into a constitution, which really institutionalized the notion of the union as partner, the union as a vehicle for professionalization, and the vehicle for the profession to partner with the community around the vision they shared around the schools and the needs of their students and parents and families. I saw much more come of that, where it was kind of locally grown and had some institutionalization.

But frankly, at that point, there was not a lot of readiness in the IEA to rethink compensation systems. There was more of an interest in using the single salary system and in compacting it, so it didn’t take as long to get to the top, and maybe in reducing the number of lanes, so it didn’t take as long to get over to the highest academic area, but not a lot of thought around incorporating leadership roles into that. That’s something we began to do in Glenview, and that was pretty interesting and controversial work within the IEA, at that time.

Pogue: Criminal background checks, child abuse reporting were also part of the reforms. What did you feel about those?

Anderson: I think I was pretty much in agreement with our own leaders and members on that, that it just seemed like an insult to have all of the current teachers, who’d been teaching for years, some of them, have to go through fingerprinting. The idea that, on the front end, before somebody got into profession that ought to happen, that seemed reasonable, and that was the compromise that was struck. I didn’t have a big issue with that and didn’t want to get vested in a big fight internally. There were other issues I was much more concerned about. That’s one of the issues that the IEA was pretty much on a defensive footing and was successful with some compromise on the front-end, but keeping current employees from having to go through fingerprinting was the way it was framed.

Pogue: Two areas that were part of the original reform but ran eventually into political challenges were the issue of school reorganization and the educational service centers that were to provide training. They were created using the old technology center district boundaries.

Anderson: Right. School reorganization in Illinois (laughs) is a huge, compelling need that we’ve been unable to respond to very effectively, in my experience over many years. We have now, what, 860 school districts, which is the third largest in the country. California has the most, Texas next, then us. Some other states, like Maryland and Florida, have under 100 because they have

county systems. So, there's a lot of inefficiencies in our way of organizing the work.

On the other hand, [there's] the political investment that communities have in their community school and a school board that has the governance and responsibility or the administrative investment in having all these different superintendents and central offices, then some of the differences between the pay in high schools versus elementaries. All of those make for very difficult political ground, getting any kind of consensus on how to make a system more effective and efficient.

Within the IEA, we had all of those tensions because we had all of those same constituents, high school districts versus elementary or elementary versus high school or communities [where] the teachers were invested in keeping their community identity, and they somehow saw the identity of their communities as totally wrapped up in having their local school with its own school board. It's been a long fight.

Then when we talk about the educational service centers, I think that was a very good introduction and innovation, to bring that kind of capacity building and support. If there's anything that this country lacks, it's a decent system for building capacity for the people doing the work to do it well. The federal government hasn't done very much, although we started to try to move to build more capacity and support for Race to the Top states. But states themselves reflect a mirror of the federal funding streams they receive. They're much more into making, managing grants and monitoring compliance, as opposed to building capacity.

In addition, in Illinois we had the Regional Offices of Education, still have them. They've been somewhat cut back. We had at one point, forty-five ROEs, Regional Office of Education, with elected regional superintendents. They became political fiefdoms, I think, more often patronage spots for retired administrators, perhaps. That's overly harsh, maybe. There were some very good ones, but in the main, it wasn't a very good system of support.

I think the Educational Service Centers were an effort to, in spite of that system, build some support and capacity building for districts and schools. Unfortunately, they've, I think, particularly gone by the wayside, with some of the funding duress that the state's been in, and I think that's a loss.

How to build capacity to support districts and schools doing this hard work is a critical need. It's frankly the vision of the Consortium for Educational Change, the organization I helped organize and now continue to work for. We're a prototype, it seems to me, of what a system of support or a capacity building entity ought to be. That's a critical need, not only in Illinois,

but across the country. The ESCs, the educational service centers, were a beginning first step in trying to move in that direction.

Pogue: Funding was available for the reforms, as well as an increase to state aid, as a sales tax was passed, a phone tax was passed. So there was, at the beginning, funding for it, as well as some Build Illinois money to provide math, science, vocational equipment.[21] What did the IEA think about this funding, and could it last?

Anderson: The IEA was very excited about the funding gains. I think that was one of the biggest selling points in talking about the reforms to our members, was it came with significant new monies, both in formula grants and categorical grants and support for different special programs, ELL, English language learners; early childhood; monies for summer school enrichment or remediation; a lot of different supports. Those were all very needed and highly welcomed on the part of the IEA.

I think there's always a challenge, every year to the next year, to maintain and expand and increase. But at that point, we felt that was a really good year, with a banner increase that we were very excited about.

Pogue: Casimir Pulaski became part of the law; that was thrown in.[22] Reading the transcript of some of the debates on the promotion of Casimir Pulaski Day—which became a holiday in March—on the floor of the General Assembly was quite interesting. It was also about the time of the state assessment and everything else that was going on. What did the IEA feel about this holiday?

Anderson: I don't think we were against it, for sure. I don't think it was a big priority on the other hand, either. I'm sure, as it came into play, teachers were glad to have that day in March, when it can be pretty rugged, well into the school year, [and] have a long weekend, because it's usually on a Monday, I think, and I think we still have it, don't we?

Pogue: Right now, you can waive it.

Anderson: As we struggle to have more time for learning... That's the other argument, we have too many days we could be spending, either teachers working with each other or students and teachers working together. So, we've got to find ways to find time, expand the year, not shorten it. In that respect, this was one of the

[21] Build Illinois was Gov. James R. Thompson's grand plan to build, and in some cases rebuild, the state's infrastructure. The $2.3 billion Build Illinois plan was a complex program and only part of a grander, state-backed financing web, designed to attract more cash into Illinois' economy. (https://www.lib.niu.edu/1986/ii860115.html)

[22] Casimir Pulaski is an American Revolutionary War hero of Polish descent, who arrived in Philadelphia in 1777 and served as a general in the Continental Army until 1779, when he died in Georgia from wounds received during the Battle of Savannah. (https://www.history.com/news/casimir-pulaski-intersex-discovery)

ways that... Though they didn't shorten the entire year, but it just took a day away. So, I think there's... It's not a big issue; it certainly wasn't a big issue there. There are as many people that would probably say, " I like having that day off," as there are people saying, "We could really use that day for additional work with each other or instruction."

Pogue: There were a few Chicago reforms in this particular legislation that would not be the significant Chicago School Reform Act that would happen later, but it did create the advisory councils, allowing multi-year contracts, giving the principal greater responsibility.[23] There were counselor ratios to students. There was a building fund tax levy, even an issue with teachers who were over seventy. Chicago was a CTU-AFT [Chicago Teachers Union-American Federation of Teachers] group. What did the IEA feel about the Chicago reforms?

Anderson: Probably had no opinion. We pretty much stayed out of issues that were specific to Chicago, the Chicago public schools, Chicago Teachers Union. There was a lot of fighting between the two unions in the late '70s, early '80s. We would make sure that nothing they did for Chicago could ultimately come back to haunt the rest of us. On the other hand, we'd pretty much leave that to the Chicago people to fight out. I don't think we had any strong opinions one way or the other on that.

Pogue: We talked a little bit earlier about the Educational Labor Relations Act that came about in '83.[24] There were a couple of points in this legislation that talked about the unfair labor practice. How did things progress from the '83 legislation?

Anderson: I think the basic agreement with the reform packages [was] that they would leave the new Educational Labor Relations Act alone, that that had just passed. Let's see how it plays out, let's not try to come back at it. We had Jim Thompson, Republican governor, very strongly in support of it. He signed it, had Democrat and Republican support in the legislature. Probably the IEA reached new levels of political influence, I think, at that time. So that was pretty much agreed that that was off the table, in terms of any changes, probably to expand it or to weaken it. It was more or less let's see how it plays out; let's implement this new law and see how it works.

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[23] In 1988, the Illinois legislature passed the Chicago School Reform Act, which initiated a period of aggressive reform and created the local school council system with significant power that included sole authority to select and evaluate principals, approval of annual school improvement plans and help developing and approving school budgets, as well as major control over an average of $500,000 per year in flexible funds from the state. (https://www.ilraiseyourhand.org/a_brief_history_of_the_board_of_education)

[24] The Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act of 1983 was intended to regulate labor relations between educational employers and educational employees, including the designation of educational employee representatives, negotiation of wages, hours, and other conditions of employment and resolution of disputes arising under collective bargaining agreements. (http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=1177&ChapterID=19)

Pogue: In Aurora, they started the Illinois Math Science Academy. This was unique. There were a few other states that had math-science academies, but this one was going to be residential; they were going to use the school that existed, Blackhawk High School, part of the West Aurora School District. How was the IEA feeling about the math-science academy?

Anderson: I think, again, this was not a big issue to us. We were supportive of it. I actually worked in the West Aurora School District as an IEA field staff in the early '80s, so I know the situation well. It was an opportunity for that district to get somebody to buy a facility they didn't any longer need. It was a good thing for the Aurora public school system and the community and the teachers in West Aurora, in terms of the revenue that [it] brought in and the facility it took off the books that it didn't need anymore.

I think we always had hoped that it would be a place that would... I think this was in some ways the thinking originally around charters, that you'd have an opportunity to do some really quality, innovative work that others could learn from. It's not clear to me that it's been an opportunity for the rest of the state to learn from and benefit from, as much as it's been a superior opportunity for really gifted kids to have a really extraordinary high school education.

Pogue: Were there any other reforms that were part of that '85 act that you wanted to touch base on?

Anderson: I don't think so. I have a hard time remembering them all. I guess I would say one other thing, going back to the notion of collective bargaining evaluation law. One of the things that was kind of a compromise, I think the IEA would have liked to have required the bargaining of the entire new evaluation process. I think the legislation said it had to be worked out in cooperation with, which is a step less than having to collectively bargain it. It became an issue from that point on. To what extent was it mandatory or permissive, subject to bargaining?

I think over time it became the procedures that were mandatory. What was actually the content around? What are the expectations of teaching? That is, the quality expectations were not required subjects of bargaining, could be but not required. I think that tension about keeping the union, at that point, out of the quality issues just reinforced an industrial frame rather than a professional frame. That was part of the conversation. The IEA would have, I'm sure, wanted to... We at that time would have wanted to have the right to bargain the entire evaluation process.

Pogue: This act included 169 pieces. Some of them were a little different, like the Pulaski day, but it had the term "reform." We've had a lot of reforms brought up since, in education as well as in other areas, tort reform, workers'

compensation reform. From your own experience, as well as what you were learning at the college level, what makes a reform?

Anderson: I don't think it's as much what makes a reform...or as important as what's being reformed is how and who and why. That means you have to have multi-stakeholder conversations. You need a mix of pressure and support and venues for people to really come together. In many ways, this reform legislation had a lot of that, alright? I don't see it in the main as missteps at all. In fact, I see it as a really good first steps, but just the beginning of a process that had to play out in a particularly complex endeavor, which is to reform public education in Illinois, as well as in the country.

We know the why, although we sometimes argue about the why. The why is the new economic imperative, but it's also the global economy and society we live in and the complexity of the world we live in, that if we don't prepare our young people to have some future beyond high school, in terms of education, they won't have much of a future. In turn, they won't have much of a future in terms of economic well-being, but also being good citizens or having full and rich lives.

So, I think the why... The vision in this legislation is wonderful. It still, in my view, plays well today. It had the how of bringing a whole lot of people together, and clearly, it's got some of the what, but it...probably if anything, it was just the beginning of the what and didn't sustain enough over time the process, the how, the bringing people together to continue the work.

I think we've seen Illinois come back to that in the 2000s, and I think with some real success in the last four or five years, in terms of some of the major pieces of legislation, educational reform legislation, that have been passed and now supported and jointly implemented. Part of that ability to do that is the legacy coming out of that '85 reform legislation, which had the beginning notions of what were the right steps, and also some really good sense of the how of bringing people together to do this, perhaps not maybe the institutionalization of that how. We're still probably struggling to do that, but Illinois's gotten a lot better at that.

Pogue: I just have a couple more questions. You talked about the legacy and that the reforms were actually kind of the first step. You've talked to us about Senate Bill 7 and PERA. What were those?

Anderson: Well, PERA's Professional Evaluation Reform Act, I'm not sure of the exact acronym [Performance Evaluation Review Act]. That really talked about how to really transform teacher evaluation in the state, with frameworks like Danielson. They had some frameworks; Danielson's one. It could be others.

Then then how to incorporate elements of student growth, evidence of student learning into the process as well. The how this would be done at the

local level, collaboratively, through joint committees with the teachers' union and the district. Then a default model if, in fact, they couldn't come to agreement, then they would default to something that was worked out at the state level. So, a significant reform.

I know the U. S. Department of Education Arne Duncan, and the rest of us were very impressed and excited by the work that Illinois did. They also put in place a very reasonable timeframe. Ambitious, but more reasonable than what a lot of states did. In fact, the federal government tried to push Illinois into shortening its timeframe, but the partners stuck by their guns and said, "We worked this out collaboratively; we think it makes sense. Just because you want us to do it or are making that a condition of additional federal monies, we're not. We agreed to do what we think is the right way to do it and in the best interest of Illinois," and they stuck to their guns, to their credit.

Senate Bill 7 began to deal with the topic of last in, first out, which was state legislation. This changed that legislation, where seniority became a secondary factor. First one looked at the performance of teachers and their evaluation ratings. Then they would be placed in those rating categories and then would be laid off, if there were a need to lay off people, in the reverse order of their seniority within those categories. That was something that—when I was at the U.S. federal level, Department of Education, at that point—Arne Duncan called out as remarkable for what it was content-wise, the what, but also the how that had been worked out collaboratively.

Then there were also legislation in the last few years that the stakeholders have worked on in Illinois to improve preparation programs for teachers and principals, to some changes in charter school legislation, to, I think, increase the cap, but some requirements for accountability, more accountability, a number of good things that the state's done on a pretty impressive piece of legislation around creating a longitudinal student data system, a lot of good things done collaboratively that I think are in response to the federal agenda but done in a way that made sense in Illinois and done collaboratively, a lot of good things.

Pogue: Jo, I want to thank you very much for sharing your involvement during this time period and talking to us about how the IEA looked at some of the specific topics and reforms. Do you have anything else that you'd like to add?

Anderson: No. I'd just say, I thank you for the opportunity, Phil, to have this conversation. It's been an absolute pleasure.

(end of transcript)