

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Dr. Rene Noppe

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Illinois Statecraft Oral History project

Interview # ISC-A-L-2016-019

Dr. Rene Noppe, retired Superintendent for Silvis School District #34 and a professor at Western Illinois University-Quad City Campus at the time of the interview, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Illinois Statecraft – Pension Crisis in Illinois* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: March 10, 2016 Location: Western Illinois University Quad City Campus,
Moline, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

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

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on May 31, 2016.

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

Transcript
being processed

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Abstract

Rene Noppe, *Illinois Statecraft-Pension Crisis*, ISC-A-L-2016-019

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Dr. Rene Noppe was born on September 2nd, 1945 in Rock Island, Illinois. Rene graduated from Alleman Catholic High School in Rock Island, Illinois in 1963. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in history and education from St. Ambrose College in 1968, an MA in 1975 and an Ed.S in Educational Administration in 1979, both from Western Illinois University. In 2001 Rene earned an ED.D degree from Illinois State University. Dr. Noppe's work experience began in the Silvis, Illinois School District, first as a junior high history teacher for twelve years, then moving into administration. Dr. Noppe then became the elementary school principal for ten years, followed by his service as the Superintendent at Silvis for 16 years. Upon retiring, Dr. Noppe did adjunct teaching at area universities before being hired at Western Illinois University. He has now worked full time at WIU teaching school finance, leadership, and evaluation courses. Dr. Noppe also has conducted several consolidation studies and has made presentations at various national conferences on the topic of Illinois State pension systems.

This interview details the role of pension in local school districts. This include tax levies, contract pension language, pension bumps, pension penalties (6%), early retirement plans (5+5, 2+2, and Early Retirement Options), & collective bargaining. Dr. Noppe also explains the difference in funding for the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) and the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRS) pensions. Also covered were the basic features for the various state systems (SURS, TRS, SRS, GARS, and JARS plus IMRF). Dr. Noppe discussed the benefits provided, qualification of membership, assets and liabilities, funding sources, and funding ratios that provide the framework for each pension. Difference exist in contribution level, social security eligibility, required participation, and ability to levy. Currently IMRF is the best funded while GARS is the worst. Also included in the interview were Tier 2 legislation, the 1995 Pension Reform and its ramp, pension holidays, recession impact on investments, and the court debate over Senate Bill 1 in 2013. Finally, Dr. Noppe discussed possible pension solutions, including pension cost shifting and taxing retirement pay.

Subject Headings/Key Words: State University Retirement System; Teacher Retirement System; Tier 2 retirement system in Illinois; impact of pension holidays; pension reform in 1995; early retirement plans; pension bumps; cost shifting to local school districts; compare and contrast between IL public pension systems; finance a Illinois state universities;

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Dr. Rene Noppe EXCERPTS

40-Description of the five state pension systems and IMRF

116-challenges facing state universities due to the budget stalemate

102-solutions to the pension crisis

50-teacher shortages are found in some areas of the state