

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Jason Leahy, Ed D.

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

Interview # EF-A-L-2019-066

Jason Leahy, the executive director of the Illinois Principal's Association, 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.

Date: Aug 30, 2019 Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

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

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Abstract

Jason Leahy, Education is Key – Funding, EF-A-L-2019-066

Biographical Information/Overview: Jason Leahy was born in Belleville, Illinois in May 1974. He graduated from Griggsville High School in 1992, then attend Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, majoring in chemistry. Following graduation in 1996, Jason then taught chemistry and physics at Tremont High School near Peoria. During that time, Jason also worked on a Masters' degree in Educational Leadership at Illinois State University, earning that degree in 2000. Leahy then became principal of a consolidated high school, Illini Central. He moved to Highland High School located in 2004. In 2006 he became the executive director of the Illinois Principals Association (IPA) which has over 5,500 members. At the time of this interview Jason still served as its Director. He has also earned degrees as an Education Specialist (2008) and a doctorate in education in 2018 from Western Illinois University. Leahy has received the AdvancEd-Illinois Excellence in Education Award, the Illinois Association of School Administrators James V and Dorothy B. Moon Scholarship Award, and the IPA Central Illinois Valley Herman Graves Award Winner.

Dr. Leahy discusses the issues of Illinois Public School funding from the perspective of a student in a rural school district, a science teacher at a small unit school district, a high school principal in two parts of the state, and as a director of the Illinois Principals Association (IPA). Topics covered include the Vision 20/20 plan supported by the IPA containing four educational pillars. Those include the New Evidence Based Model, which also lays out what is needed to have a high level education for students. Other subjects discussed included budget challenges during economic downturns, the leadership roles of principals, professional development and certification for today's principals, teacher and principal shortages, and the challenges posed by educational mandates, both federal and state. He talked about accountability found under ESSA and the state school report card, and the wide range of programs found in today's schools.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Illinois Principals Association; school funding challenges; Vision 20/20; Evidence Based School Funding model; Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); roles of Illinois principals

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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