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students who have a 3.0 grade point average or higher. So we're trying to recruit the students who go to college who may or may not have decided they want to go into teaching, or people who are thinking about going into teaching, or people who have made that commitment to teaching. We want them to stay in Nebraska and so that's the purpose for the way the program was set up. And I would just add a few more e-mails that I've gotten this morning. This one is from the Elkhorn Public Schools: Elkhorn Public Schools has 33 teaching vacancies this year. All categories of vacancies except elementary teachers are down in quantity compared with past years. This is a disturbing three-year trend. The two vacancy areas that we have experienced inadequate pools of candidates, zero to five per position, have been secondary, special education, and elementary counselor. I hope this brief memo is helpful to you; Roger Breed, Superintendent. From McCook: McCook Public Schools has had a difficult, extremely difficult time in finding applicants for special education, early childhood, speech and drama, speech pathologists, Spanish, science, and mathematics; also special education visually handicapped, and special education behavior disorder. From Franklin Schools I have four: Found it extremely difficult to fill the following positions--music, special education, math, science. I strongly support a loan forgiveness program to encourage individuals to consider teaching as a career. I believe it is the incentive we need to encourage graduating educators to consider teaching in our rural communities. Once they are here, many realize what a great way of life this is and they stay. Teaching is a wonderful profession and a great way to make a living and live one's life. I believe that many teachers realize this, but it is a hard sell to young people. I support any program that encourages high school students to consider this occupation. This one is from ESU 8: We have had very few applicants in special education. In fact, one of my current staff is leaving and we may not be able to fill a position. If I can find a...I could find a teacher that would do a great job, but if they are not certified in special education there is no funding. This one is from Beatrice: This year, Beatrice is somewhat an anomaly. We have had only six vacancies and it appears we will fill all six. We usually have over twice this amount. Having said this, it is the feeling that most administrators have that a two-step