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because of higher pay and better benefits. One applicant has not made up his mind and the other applicant we just interviewed this morning. In caps, this principal says, THE TEACHER SHORTAGE IS HERE. Our superintendent and myself see our situation as critical. Another principal says it is impossible to find teacher applicants for special education in middle school grades. This is from another principal, we are a K-12 school district in the southwest corner of the state. At the present time, we are in need of math, special education, business education technology. As of this morning, we have had one application for the business education position, this is a student finishing student teaching right now; one application for special education, and this was one of five interviews the applicant had with their district; and no applications for their math position. I have had people tell me that there is no teacher shortage, but our schools sure are struggling to attract any applicants. This one I got this afternoon. I'm a school administrator for 33 years in search of replacement staff. As a school administrator for 33 years in search of replacement staff, I can assure you that it is a lot more difficult to find teachers today than years ago, especially quality people. The more rural parts of Nebraska have great difficulty recruiting people and I'll skip down. Please understand I am also concerned about taxes. But if we wait too long, we will lose desperately needed professionals in health and other areas who want a quality education for their families and don't perceive that they can get that in a low salary school system. I am very concerned that before the Legislature and Governor get around to providing needed assistance our once proud nationwide academic reputation will greatly suffer and it may be too little too late. And I think that's a very good point and one I'm just going to repeat because I think this is the essence of what we need to be looking at as a Legislature and the responsibility we have at this point in our history. We can't grow teachers overnight and we can't turn this around if we don't weigh in soon. Again, I am very concerned that before the Legislature and Governor get around to providing needed assistance...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR THOMPSON: ...our once proud nationwide academic