

about the serious problems that schools face when it comes to dropouts but on further consideration, when you think of the practical applications of raising the mandatory or compulsory school age to seventeen, I think there is a lot left to be desired. First of all, most school systems are having difficulties in forcing the compulsory age at sixteen, let alone raising to seventeen. I think most important, when we consider this issue, is remember the old statements you know that you can lead a horse to water but you can't force it to drink. I don't think the answer is going to be found in forcing students to drink another year of high school education. As a high school teacher myself I think the answer for retaining youth in our school systems is done through other less restrictive, more direct and personal means, such as, better counseling, better programs and curriculum within the schools so students find the high school environment attractive, better alternatives for those that have difficulties coping certainly with a large school system, more sensitivity to the differences among children. Raising the school age will not necessarily lower the amount of dropouts. I sincerely feel that the answer is found in each institution addressing the dropout problem in its own terms and doing what is necessary to reach out and touch that child's life. Thank you, members.

SPEAKER MARVEL: The Chair recognizes Senator Koch.

SENATOR KOCH: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I rise to oppose Senator Vickers amendment and Senator Beutler's proposed law. We heard the Chief Justice speak this morning. He talked about those who are incarcerated as being illiterates and that may be true but I would submit to you that other dropouts in this nation from the time of the beginning of public schools were not incarcerated but, indeed, as time went by availed themselves of educational opportunities and did succeed. I submit to you if you know the rule on mandatory attendance, it is up to the superintendent to notify the parents and advise them that they are guilty of violating a law which says that their child shall remain in school until age sixteen. If the parent is then unresponsive, it is then the administrations's job to report to the county attorney. The county attorney will then bring charges against the parents because of the fact they are disobeying the law which says you shall stay in school until you have reached your sixteenth birthday. That is the way the procedure operates. Senator Beutler is generalizing when he says that when you look at unemployment this is all due to dropouts. It is not necessarily all due to dropouts. They may be underskilled, that is true. But it was rather interesting last year when I had legislation here to try