

be particularly successful at that.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Bernard-Stevens, please. Excuse me.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: I want to give Senator Withem the rest of my time to respond.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Excuse me. About two and a half minutes.

SENATOR WITHEM: I didn't say I was going to take it though, did I? This is a...no, I appreciate the interest. Seriously, I do appreciate the interest and the questions. I'll attempt to answer the two questions that I heard. One is on the grant application process. The bill takes one approach toward this type of program. It sets it up and as says there is an agency of state government that has rule and reg making authority that will set up the procedures. That is the assumption in the bill. If senators, any senator is not comfortable with that procedure and wants it spelled out more specifically, I'm perfectly willing and actually probably delighted to do that. It doesn't concern me that you'd like to see that done and would like to work on that. The question of reallocation of resources, point two, State/District Roles in Restructuring, comment on why this is vital that we spend a lot of money on education in this state. Nebraska, on a per capita basis, we're about at the average. We spend a billion dollars a year educating kids in elementary/secondary schools in our state. We've got, if you read the literature and believe the literature, we've got to begin doing a lot of things differently. Our kids, a lot of our kids, too high a percentage of our kids aren't completing school, and of those that do, too high a percentage of them are leaving the schools not ready to make it either in higher education or out in the workforce. We're probably not going to spend \$2 billion on education here in Nebraska in the foreseeable future, so we're going to have to do some reallocation. We're not talking about necessarily doing reallocation at the state level.

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR WITHEM: We're talking about urging those local districts out there to do some reallocation, some different staff assignments for instance. In a school district that I know of, for instance, they had a neat wonderful program going the teachers were doing on a volunteer basis but weren't able to