

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Nelson, followed by Senator Schellpeper and Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR NELSON: Yes, to respond to Senator Beyer's question, I honestly don't know of any school that provides any curriculum at all, and particularly in Gretna and some of those schools, that the students would not qualify or that they would not... a school would not take advantage of it for vocational education, if nothing more than through the counseling and to let them know that there are alternatives than to drop out of school. Back to Senator Scofield, I admit this is not a lot of money or a great amount of money, but, again, these students have to know that there is something besides being a dropout, and they simply have to be able to go out and make a living and maybe they don't have the money or will not go on to further their education until they are 25, 29 or 30 years of age. I might also, and this was very important in the public hearing, the gentleman from Union Pacific Railroad provided this information to us, and they do use a lot of people, and a lot of skill, and a recent study commission by the Nebraska Council on Vocational Education concerning the training needs related to LB 775, now as we know, we are talking about millions of dollars there, or LB 270, as we discussed earlier today. Of the 16,000 entry level jobs, and this is important, created by LB 775, clerical and machine operators combined will account for 64.4 percent or 10,300 of the positions created in LB 775. And then, here we are today, and as Nebraska, as I said, if vocational education is not important, why is it that all of these other states, and I sometimes hate to see senators stand on the floor and say, well, one state gives this, one state gives another, but we are talking about enticing people back into our state, and retraining our workers, and they do change about seven times in their lifetime. But we give less than \$3, and most of the states, \$100 to 300 or 400; California, I think, \$400 per student for vocational ed training. So it is important and we need to be competitive, and these students need to know that there are alternatives and what jobs are available, and it does expose them to the basic thinking skills. I know Senator Scofield mentioned that, and they do have to be trained, and as I said, back, again, my Principal Financial Group at Grand Island employed over 100 new employees right out of high school that they would train. So with that, I might mention, too, the StarVenture group in Lincoln research showed that several factors, and that is a large group of business people, that