

for grants would rather see what kind of things that they would have the opportunity to do some of these innovative programs. Thank you.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Senator Korshoj, I believe you were giving the rest of your time to Senator Withem and Pirsch. There is some time left, Senator Withem. You have approximately two minutes.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes. One of the criticism of the school restructuring movement, Senator Pirsch, is that there is not a good definition, if you and I would like to get together and put that definition in. I think what committee counsel did, when they made the summary they put in a definition of the types of things that go into school restructuring. If you feel comfortable having those in the bill, let's get an amendment drafted and put them in. I think it's a good idea.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Bernard-Stevens, you are next to speak, but before you do I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the guests in the south balcony. From Senator Kristensen's district we have 20 eighth graders from the Blue Hill Public Schools and their teacher. Would you all please rise and be welcomed to the Legislature. Thank you for joining us today. Senator Bernard-Stevens, please.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Hannibal. Members of the body, it's been, I think, a very good discussion this morning. There have been a lot of good points brought out and good questions asked for clarifications. I think Senator Pirsch and Senator Peterson and others have offered some good ideas to the bill that came out of the Education Committee, LB 960. I do want to kind of refocus, if we can, because sometimes we get off on this idea and another idea and then before we get to vote maybe we kind of lose the focus of what we're trying to actually accomplish. In the Education Committee, one of the things that was a concern of the committee and I think to the Nebraska Legislature is that we can't continue with the status quo the way it is now. When you start comparing our students with other students, and I'm not even talking about a global economy, but when we start comparing our students with others we're beginning to see some warning...some warning bells out there. There are some warning signs out there that some changes may be made...may have to be made. One of the problems we have in this particular