

do you wish to close?

SENATOR CONWAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members, Senator Moore raised a good point, that being local control. And two years ago that was a great concern of ours. What I think we found in operation, though, was that by taking the Conway amendment and using that as the distribution methodology, when we are talking local control, I think we're talking about local control in terms of elected officials at the local level making policy decisions relative to their schools. What we found with LB 89 is that the local school boards had no interest, whatsoever, in those monies, those bonus monies that were sent to them, and they basically turned it over to the teachers organization and say, hey, this is a bonus from the state, it's not a part of your basis, it's got nothing to do with the local school system, so have at it, do what you want, and they negotiated out in whatever fashion. So as far as us giving up any local control I don't think any school board out there is going to say we usurped some of their local control by having a formula or a specific dollar amount put into the bill, in terms of how it's going to be distributed. They're not losing any of their local control whatsoever, because they don't have any on this issue anyway. As far as increases, and again that goes back to...and I appreciate what Senator Moore was saying in terms of that entry level teacher, trying to entice people in. I can remember several years ago when I first went into the education profession myself, my first job, was paid \$9,900. There were a couple individuals who were there ahead of me by about two years that I think probably were at about a \$12,500 level at that time. From that point on those teachers that were there two years ahead of me never had more than two years experience more than I did, because I was getting the experience as I went. But year, after year, after year there were percentage increases. And so if you had a 5 percent increase against a \$10,000 base, and you end up with that specific dollar amount, and a 5 percent also dedicated to people who were making 12-5, they had considerably more dollars. The next year that went into the base and it rolled again. And as time went on what I found is there's as much as 16, 17 thousand dollars, over the course of 15 years, difference between an individual, when they started out only having a \$2,500 difference. And the \$2,500 was probably valid at the time. Those people were probably worth \$2,500 more than somebody who came two years later. They probably deserved a little salary enhancement by virtue of the fact that they'd shown some tenacity, they'd stuck in with that