

think, what Senator Hefner has suggested by putting it on the Executive Board. If we want it to get lost in the middle of a tremendous amount of activity and complexity in the Department of Education budget, then we should do so with the understanding that it probably, not against the department, but it would probably not get the attention that we intended for it to be. Simply, they are overworked to some degree, understaffed to some degree, and have enough problems with doing what they need to be doing right now as effectively and efficiently as possible. I would say...suggest, however, that it would be something for us to think about in the future is there might be a joint effort to be made by some of the community colleges and a regional effort in combination with the Legislature pursuing the program, and I think that is something that can be worked on and talked about over the interim, and the time to talk about those type of changes would be when the new biennial budget comes out on the floor and we can look at joint efforts and seeing that there is a better way to deliver that which we, I believe, want to do. So at this point, I would be opposed to the Nelson amendment to the amendment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens. Senator Pirsch.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you. I also support Senator Hefner's amendment as opposed to Senator Nelson's. I think that adding it to the Department of Education would be a mistake. But I do...I am troubled by the fact that when we talk about interest in this program, it is the students that I feel perhaps don't feel that this is worth being involved in, and I am not sure why. I had only one student listed in District 10, and when I called the high school to find out why we didn't have more or have at least the two that we were allowed, they did try to scurry up another student, but it never materialized. There was only one student from District 10. Now maybe that was my fault but, quite frankly, the responsibility we give to the schools to advertise this legislative academy, maybe we need to try and do some more things to promote participation by the students in this. Maybe we need to follow some new leads to get the schools interested or involved in making sure that we have participation from all of the legislative districts. I am not quite sure why, but it seemed to me that this was not a very important thing with the educators and, because of that, maybe the students. So I would hope that if we do spend this reduced amount that perhaps we could try, on the front end, to promote some