

what we're talking about is we're testing how well kids are meeting what it is we want them to learn in schools. And why are we doing this? Because we really don't know in Nebraska how well our kids are doing in terms of academic achievement, in terms of the things that they really need to be doing.

SENATOR CROSBY: Now when you say that we really don't know, you mean as a composite or...?

SENATOR WITHEM: As a composite, we do not have good data about how well our students are doing.

SENATOR CROSBY: Okay. Another reason I bring this up is that I was at a meeting Friday and I was in an education panel with 200 students from the Third District and I was really impressed with the students. And they brought up a lot of questions that some people might not think they would even think of. So it was on my mind again, Senator Withem. The other thing, would you very quickly explain what the NAEP tests are and why we need to have those used in Nebraska?

SENATOR WITHEM: First of all, I will explain that, but I would like to, if I may, jump in ahead of time and say this bill has nothing to do with the NAEP test.

SENATOR CROSBY: They still think it does, so...

SENATOR WITHEM: The NAEP test is a test that was commissioned by Congress. It's a National Assessment of Educational Progress. The Department of Education has used that in the past and can continue to use that without this test. There are apparently some concerns about...in asking background questions about students it pries too much into the personal lives and I would hope this commission would take that into consideration and look at other assessment instruments other than one that appears to be controversial.

SENATOR CROSBY: Are not the valuation or the...when they...

SENATOR LAMB: One minute, Senator.

SENATOR CROSBY: ...get the...when they get the composite, I mean, names are not part of that (interruption).

SENATOR WITHEM: The data we're talking about is aggregated