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poisoning, leukemia or diabetes, which affects the child's educational performance.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Uh-huh.

SENATOR McKENZIE: It has grown 300 percent. It was added as a new category in 1988 at the federal level and we now have 1,500 children identified in the state as special education for other health impairments. We have 38,792 children identified. It's 11.8 percent of the total school population.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Total.

SENATOR McKENZIE: This is K through 12.

SENATOR HARTNETT: That's in the...

SENATOR McKENZIE: K through 12.

SENATOR HARTNETT: K-12. Yeah. Have you looked at categorizing the different, you know, given dollar amounts per certain categorization in your...as the, you know, as the Education Committee has looked at this issue of special ed and its growth?

SENATOR McKENZIE: No, and one of the reasons we...I think the commission has talked about the block grant is that allows local districts to make some decisions about which child has high cost needs and which might they be able to collaborate with the classroom teacher to provide services for, to allow a little more flexibility.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Thank you very much.

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute. Although you don't have to use it, Senator Hartnett. Senator Robinson.

SENATOR ROBINSON: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, Senator McKenzie, I want you...I'm going to make a statement here and I want you to tell me whether it's true or not. The only way we're going to accomplish lowering the cost of special education would be by having fewer teachers, less money spent on administration, fewer children selected for special education and fewer mandates. Would you say that's a true statement?

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator McKenzie.