

are trying to do here is give back local control. We are trying to say, we are going to give you money to do what you need to do. We're going to trust that you, as a district, know the resources that you have. You have every teacher in your district who has a dual degree, special education and elementary education, or some other combination, and you don't need to have a specialized classroom over here, you can use your special education teacher as a consultant. We want to give some flexibility back to allow districts to make those decisions, to allow districts to collaborate in ways they haven't been before and to allow regular classroom teachers, and I will challenge you to read the history of special education, it was always intended to be a partnership, a partnership between general education and specialized teachers. What has happened in the 20 years is we have two separate bureaucracies and in Nebraska two separate funding systems, two separate accountability systems, two separate classrooms. If I can't handle the child in my classroom and I'm the third grade teacher, then I can go to the special ed director and ask for an SAT meeting and the team gets together and we talk about the problems and we refer that child for special education and they're verified, then we can deliver services, then we start talking about what to change. And what I really love in Nebraska's process is that we say, if you're a Level 1, you get three hours a week, you get Monday, Wednesday, Friday, an hour a week, somehow in this wonderful, wonderful hour today, an hour Wednesday, an hour Friday, you are going to come back to the regular classroom and be just fine. You're special education three hours a week and the rest of the day and the rest of the week you're in the regular classroom doing the same thing as everyone else. This amendment and this study process, I remind you, this is not the specifics, this is how do we change what has become a rigid system into one that makes more sense for kids...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR MCKENZIE: ...so that we can turn around and actually see some accomplishment and that we can see where regular classroom teachers can be as important as the person who carries the title of specialist. But it is not about taking control away, it is about giving control back. It is about a process that will involve hundreds and thousands of people from now until next December and into next session to find a better way, a better way to fund. We're not...we're not limiting...we're not cutting funding, I remind you, we're allowing funding to