

May 9, 1995

LB 613  
LR 93

formula? Those issues all have real impacts on school finance. As an example, we've had the discussion, all right, ratcheting down 1 percent could be 16 million but if we hear people say no more mandates, we can say here's one back, we no longer will mandate transportation. Do you know that we spend \$37 million in transportation costs? Now, you know we're looking at major, major things as far as savings and what could happen when we're talking about these particular areas that I've just touched on and certainly differences then on how that impacts schools through the equalization formula. For that reason I think it's good that we have this discussion and people realize that I think schools are a little different than the other subdivisions when we talk about how moving that percentage down may impact them. I think it's very difficult for us actually to know how this all fits together. No one has been able to explain it yet to me on how, if we go ahead with LR 93CA and that passes, if we do this special education bill and if we would do this and then this summer we come back and recommend a number of the things that I'm saying we could be touching on, we will be talking about very, very radical changes and so I think it's those things that we have to consider as we proceed with this discussion. And I think people have done a good job of explaining why a school district is a bit different as a political subdivision because you know when people say to me that they want no more unfunded mandates I do remind them that public education is, you know, an unfunded mandate. And so as we talk about our obligation to students in this state I think that the requirements and the things that schools must do put them in a little different light...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR BOHLKE: ...and I think that we need to consider these. I'm not sure if we can work something out to Select File so that we can look at some of the things that we talked about, certainly the allowable growth rate, as this is the first time we've really had a discussion on that and I guess it just goes to show when Senator Withem sometimes has a lot to do and sits there and starts to read and find out things that we have neglected in the past, that there are things that we could do there. There are 110 school districts that went up to the 6.25 percent. Now that's not saying they should or shouldn't have, but that's what the number of school districts that we allowed to go up to that higher allowable growth rate. We, from what is on our desks, we as a Legislature can change those