

price that we are paying for not having a more efficient school system. What you'll see first off is that we're sixth in the nation in the staffing that we have; that we have eight students to every staff, which is too much staff for students. The national average is 9.3 students to staff. It also shows that we have a higher cost as a result. Those schools that have a lower student-to-staff ratio, they end up with a \$6,957 cost while those that have a higher ratio than ten to one, so they have a lower number of staff, they get only 4,453. So there's a \$2,500 difference right there when you have an ability to have a lower staff ratio. We also talk about the cost of administration for a K through 12 district with less than 250 students, it's \$866. You get to a school district with 1,400 to 4,900 students and you're talking \$427. That's a difference of \$450 per student. Well, right off the bat you have a significant savings. Even though this bill doesn't call for that large a district,...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...what it does point out is that you do have some efficiencies when you get a larger district in some cases. Likewise, the national average on superintendent salaries would indicate Nebraska is at 169, United States at 128, a 32 percent difference. We have too much staff, we have too much expense on administration. We can reduce the cost there and still maintain our schools, still maintain our local input. We can end up, I think, maintaining the quality of our education in this state and do so a much more efficient, lower cost to our property tax payers. I don't often like to compare Nebraska to Wyoming, but the blue sheet you have will show that they have 48 school districts, we have 668, and it will show that they have been able to increase the number of teachers and decrease the number of staff. And their results in terms of the ACT are very comparable to ours. So there is, in fact, a way for us to reduce cost and maintain quality.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Time.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Bohlke.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Yes, Madam President, members, first of all I