

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

March 8, 1999

LB 149

great deal...we've also discussed the time line before and the importance of getting this done for schools so that they will know how to make some important decisions in their district. I could go back and review for you why this happened. I think that you all are aware of that. As I said previously, it was our miss. Schools were certified the amount of aid. That aid went out, and when the doors opened this year, they had budgeted, they had hired staff, they began to spend that money. I had asked school districts to let me know the importance of the April 1 date, and I thought I had an excellent letter. I have tons of them, but one very good one from Crete School District, and they say, the passage of 149 is definitely extremely important to Crete Public Schools and every other school district in the state. Let me share with you what sequence of events is possible if we do not have an answer on the state aid issue by that date. We must notify teachers of any reduction in force by April 15. If we don't, the continuing contract clause guarantees they have a contract with us for the following year. So on April 1, we will have to be making plans on staffing for next year that would allow our budget to come in under the levy lid and a worse case scenario state aid figure. We will have to rif any positions that are questionable. We may rescind that rif later, but the teachers, and this is important, may have started looking for another job, and we may lose good teachers that we really need to keep. If we do not know the official results of the respin by April 1, we also may have to make rif decisions based on that. Rif notices lower morale and cause teachers that aren't in imminent danger of being rifed to look elsewhere, mainly out of Nebraska, for employment. Good teachers in hard to fill areas are the ones that may leave because they can find a job elsewhere. Crete lost a good teacher to Texas last year, partly because of uncertainty about school funding in Nebraska. Would you please share...would you please also share with your colleagues that the best way to meet Governor Johanns' goal of stability...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR BOHLKE: ...in state aid to schools is by fixing the local effort rate as LB 149 requires. I can figure out...I can figure our projected state aid well in advance of the certification date if I could predict that one number. That