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LB 495

last five years. And these monies are only 25 percent of the total lottery funds, and of that 25 percent, 49.5 goes to the Education Fund, and 49.5 percent goes to the Environmental Trust Fund. A couple other points that...we have always had...the entire amount, until last year, was all designated for Innovative Grant Funds. I have talked to a number of schools who really feel that the purpose of the Innovative Grant Fund is not as prominent as it was five years ago, because we have done something in the technology area as far as providing some computers and Internet access to schools. So that any time you have an innovative program, that means it takes continuous funding for a new program, and that's what these grants are presently used for, are new programs. Schools simply don't have the funds to, once they apply for these funds, then to continue a new program. So I think that that is some of the difficulty. One question I might ask, if...you know, if senators aren't willing to use the lottery funds, are you willing to use General Funds? Because, as I said, there are three point...there is \$3.2 million remaining in this fund. As far as funding a continuous program, again this is a grant concept. This 3.2 million isn't by any means going to fund a program. What we're talking about are 640 approved programs throughout this state, so this will provide about \$20 per student to those schools that would apply to the funds, and then also a base amount. But, again, just emphasizing that we are not changing the funding stream,...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR STUHR: ...it is still going to continue to go to schools. It is going to go to an area that we do see a great need. I think that all of us would agree that times have changed, that students are required to have more involvement in technology, in whatever career that they might pursue. I also wanted to mention a couple things about the bill--that it does provide for an Advisory Committee to the State Board of Vocational Education, which is actually the State Board of Education, and this would help in the administration of...and they are going to be doing that on a voluntary basis, again just wanting to assist in directing and providing these funds to schools.