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educational issue, with a philosophical discussion, and this is one. We aren't talking about state aid. This is a very philosophical discussion about what we believe the direction the state should go in the whole area of assessment. And so I look forward to the discussion and I'm happy that Senator Beutler raised the issue, and I think it's something that we need to have all of you think about and understand the direction that we are currently planning to go with the amendment as opposed to what Senator Beutler was laying out for you. Before we do that, and I really hope, and I...we will come back to discuss the NAEP before it's over. I want to lay out some information on that. But before we just debate that, I hope that your comments, if you want to take on the NAEP issue, you may wait a little bit until we have a chance to discuss this other assessment and then come back to that. My fear, and when I met with the Education Committee this morning, was that we would start debating this NAEP piece and never get to the important issues and concerns, such as Senator Beutler has raised, that need to be resolved in his mind as to what direction we're going. So the other part, questions that have been asked that I think are important for you to know about why, why did Nebraska not participate in the NAEP last year, the public schools? As I said, the private schools did participate. We do not have factual data on why Nebraska's public schools did not participate in 1998 reading assessment. But, because of an unwillingness to participate, NAEP could not get an appropriate sampling of schools. Omaha or Lincoln Public Schools must participate in order to get an appropriate sampling. NAEP selects only a small number of students in a selected number of schools...Nebraska schools for the assessment. The projected sample size in each state is 2,500 students in each grade tested. NAEP state assessments focus on grades and four and eight, as I said before, and that means that about one in ten students, at grades four and eight, would take the test. Those students who are selected at random take only one section of the test, not the whole thing. No school results or individual scores, no school results or individual scores are determined. Again, not all Nebraska schools are asked to participate, only those needed to get an appropriate sampling. Through the Appropriations Committee, there is \$80,000 for the Department of Education to provide the substitutes for this, because at one time that was one of the criticisms the schools would give us is that it was costing them