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important one that we sometimes lose track of. This is, indeed, a partnership between the citizens together, as the state, and each local district. We're working at this together and we, both the state and the local have financial obligations and have authority to make certain decisions. Fourth, we need to make sure that we provide funding that assures the quality we want to maintain in our K-12 system and sustainability of that system. Now I would mention that the aim here is a midcourse revision. This is not an attempt to undue LB 806 or the statutes that preceded it. And, as an example, LB 149 last year was a revision in somewhat the same sense this would be a revision. The issues, and I do believe...the reason I brought this bill is that I think there are some issues that remain to be addressed with the way that we distribute aid in...K-12 aid in the state. Certainly, one of them that always comes up is predictability and complexity. This is a continuing effort. LB 149 last year made some significant progress along this line, but I think always there's progress, additional progress that could be made. A second issue is cost group cost differences, and there's a handout, I hope, coming around which will demonstrate to you what is our recent experience on this matter, and let me just take a moment here to explain to you. In our current formula, as you know, we have three cost groupings--standard, sparse, and very sparse. In effect, there is a cost per student calculated for each one of those sparsity groups and this is the basic component of the needs calculation. This is kind of what is the fundamental element that determines what the needs for a student...or for a school system are going to be. I would point out to you on this chart, and I hope you can...you can follow along, I have represented on one axis standard, sparse, and very sparse cost groups, and then on another axis the three years, school years '89...or '98-99 up through 2000-2001. These are the three years that the current procedure has been in place. Now, if you'll notice on that chart, we have had a significant event occur. In the first year, the standard sparse group or standard cost group, that is, had a cost per student, a basic need component, of \$4,311. That same year the very sparse cost group was \$4,900, less than \$600 more, or about 14 percent more. What has happened in the most current certification, which occurred February 1, is that the standard cost group has risen to \$4,530 but the very sparse has gone to \$5,949. So what has happened, we have gone from a 14 percent advantage of very