

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

February 25, 2000 LB 715

a system like Hastings or Holdrege that has just one high school and has one site. This unified system is giving up three school superintendents. They're going to operate with essentially a superintendent at Sandy Creek for the overall system, and an assistant superintendent at Superior. So I'm really excited about what's going on down there but I hate to go down there and tell them that unification...or sparsity, instead of being worth \$760 per student, is now only going to be worth \$300. And maybe that will work, considering you're recognizing size. But maybe there should be something in here to recognize the number of sites this system has to operate. But I don't think the incentive should be enough for schools to operate sites just for the sake of trying to get more state aid either. So that becomes a fine line. I'm willing to listen to what's going on here. I'm skeptical, but I think Senator Raikes has brought something forward that needs to be brought forward. The fact that sparsity started out being a benefit of about a little over \$500 a student and now has gone to \$760,...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.

SENATOR SCHROCK: ...something needs to be done there...and although my schools that are sparse would cringe to hear me say that. But I think we need to stabilize that, get to some point where they can depend on that type of money. And remember, they are making sacrifices also. I think one other thing needs to be brought out here. This new system, this unified system, and I'm kind of shooting from the hip here, I believe it's going to have about 1,200 students. In five years they will lose 20 percent of their student population, it's depopulating that fast. And that state aid that they're getting, for those 200 students they're going to lose, is going to go into the system for schools that are growing. And downsizing is going to be painful for those people, but they're projected to lose over 200 students in the next five years. And I commend those people for doing what they're doing. And they may not be able to continue to operate three school...three high school sites in the future. They may become (microphone malfunction) that. But distances are a factor there.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Time. Senator Raikes.