

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

March 27, 2000 LB 812

enough to graduate and there are significant numbers of them, it's a problem of the school system, not a problem of the student. But I'm getting off track. What does this tell you about state standards? Ninety-three percent of them say you should apply those standards to keep a kid from graduating. Now can anyone surmise an attitude that would say, given this response, that people are not in favor of rigorous state standards? I don't think so. But let me...let me explore the logic of not having a state standard again with you and what can happen. If you're requiring an assessment and therefore logically, under the present condition of the bill, an assessment of each separate school district standards, first of all, you're going to have to have 600 different sets of standards and I have a serious question about why you want to put the teacher labor force, which is short already, through the process of developing 600 or so sets of standards, but we'll get back to that another time. Let's say they do. Well, if they're setting a standard and it can be as high or as low as you want, and they're giving the test and it can be as tough or as easy as you want, then what is the result going to tell you? You don't know if they made the standard high enough. You don't know if they made the test tough enough. So you have no idea whether the result that they report on their report card has any meaning whatsoever. Maybe they made their standard so low, and remember they don't have to have any at all, maybe they made their standard so low that even a tough test gave a good result. Or maybe they made the test so easy that an easy test gave a good result. How do you know these things? How can the public know these things? Having a statewide assessment, having statewide standards doesn't mean that's your only standard. It doesn't do away with the possibility of additional school assessments of different types if they want to employ those other mechanisms. They can have a separate test too. They can have oral kinds of expressions of assessment. There are a number of different things they can do. But unless...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...you have some statewide standard the public is never going to be able to compare scores among school districts, obviously, and, secondarily, won't even have a good idea of what a score that's completely internal means because