

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

March 27, 2000 LB 812

SENATOR CUDABACK: The Chambers amendment to AM3090 is adopted. Mr. Clerk, next item. Senator Beutler. Excuse me, Senator Redfield, on the Beutler amendment to LB 812.

SENATOR REDFIELD: Thank you, Senator Cudaback, members of the body. We are back to the original amendment. And I want to speak to that because I think what Senator Beutler has done is mesh together the area of state control, state standards, a minimum standard, and local control. What he has said is we have a minimum standard here in our state and you can meet that or you can exceed it. And, Senator Stuhr, this is completely consistent with the school districts that you mentioned on your list earlier because, in fact, in order to be on that list those school districts had to submit documents to the Department of Education proving that they had met or exceeded the state standards that had been adopted by the State Board of Education. So in fact this is extremely consistent. The only change that this would do is it would allow those few districts that have not yet adopted either the state standards or their own standards, those very few, it would say they must meet this minimum standard. It would not allow them to set the bar below. Now I don't know how many of you read the series that was in the World-Herald on the Native American schools. And one of the things that was consistently stated throughout that series is that the schools that had succeeded are those who had high expectations and those who had failed their students had not expected very much of their students. Now I think we owe it to every child in Nebraska to have high expectations because children can learn, children do learn every day. The only thing that differs is what they're going to learn. And the state standards or the standards set by the body in their own local district will determine what they're going to learn, what kind of curriculum they're going to propose. Can they leave out the multiplication tables? Well, probably not. Should they? Probably not. These are not standards that any of us would not agree with. If you've ever studied them or read them, you know that what they have done has been a good thing. I think that every one of us would want every student in Nebraska to be able to meet these standards, to read well, to be able to compute, and to be able to know a broader body of knowledge so that they can compete with students from other districts throughout the