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LB 698, 1091

question for Senator Raikes, if he would yield.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Raikes, would you yield?

SENATOR RAIKES: Yes.

SENATOR SMITH: Senator Raikes, the numbers that you use, like the 390, I guess to cut to the chase, why 390?

SENATOR RAIKES: That's a good question. The...there are 13 grades in a K-12, think I'm right on that. And if you took 15 students per class in terms of designated...designating what might be an optimal class size, balancing costs per student, teacher-student ratios with efficiency considerations, if you had two classes of 15 students for 13 grades, that would be 390 students.

SENATOR SMITH: Okay. So there's no geography taken into consideration, no...I mean, I know that 15 students per class is probably a very optimal situation. What...I mean, what bases...are there more than that, if any?

SENATOR RAIKES: Well, there is, and I'll mention another one. We do have a proposal which is actually out of the committee now, LB 698, which is a restructuring of the needs side of the state aid formula, and in that formula there...or that restructuring, I should say, there is a local choice adjustment which would amount to a reduction of needs for any school system that is less than 390 students. This is meant to be a companion piece in the sense that, all right, if you suffer a reduction in needs, and therefore state aid, because you're less than 390 students, then what is available for you to get to 390 students so you don't have that reduction. So that's part of the package and I'm glad you mentioned that, that point. The other thing I would mention is the local choice adjustment or the needs reduction does not apply for school systems that are either sparse or very sparse. So, in that sense, if you were getting to the question of density of student...well, I shouldn't use that word, of the geographic dispersion of students, that's the way it's taken into account.