

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

February 15, 2005 LB 126

summer, and it's 0 in the winter. So averages really don't tell you a whole lot. Of the 231 or 235 or 241, however many Class I schools that there are...or that there were during the 2002-2003 year--and remember, we keep telling you that these schools are closing at the rate of one every two weeks. If their school is no longer viable, they are closing. But 94 of those operate at expense levels below state average. We didn't hear about them. All we heard about in the committee hearing and in the introductory remarks were the ones that cost over the state average. More than 60 percent of all Class I students attend schools which operate at expense levels below state averages. Statement number four: There is not documentation that student performance is significantly better under this high-cost system, especially given the demographics of the students served. Well, there is no foundational evidence to support the assertion that Class I schools are a, quote, high-cost system. In December 2004, the...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR HUDKINS: ...Nebraska Department of Education released its 2003-04 state of the schools report. In regard to the operating Class I's, the report found that nearly half of Class I districts achieved an assessment quality rating of exemplary, together with earning an exemplary performance rating. An additional 9 percent of Class I districts earned an exemplary assessment quality rating with a very good performance rating, so on and so forth. These kids are, in these Class I's, getting a good education. I asked the secretary at Malcolm Public Schools, in the last 20 years, to figure up how many valedictorians and salutatorians came from a Class I school that comes into Malcolm. One-third of them did. That tells me that those kids are getting a good education. Statement number five: And there is little evidence that...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time.

SENATOR HUDKINS: Thank you. I'll be back.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Hudkins. Senator Foley, followed by Senators McDonald, Fischer, Baker, Janssen,