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LB 126

suggest that it allows, although I have to give up quite a bit, "I" meaning my district, it does allow for some give and take along the way. I'm very mindful of Senator Synowiecki's comments about resources for the classroom. In fact, I'm so mindful of that that I've introduced an interim study on administrative costs across Nebraska relating to education. Since 1970, and there's been a handout in the past on this, since 1970 we have seen the number of school districts in Nebraska decrease by two-thirds. Right now we have one-third the number of school districts than we had in 1970, but we have three times the number of administrators since 1970. Let's talk about resources for the classroom. What are the causes? I would say one cause was the state mandate that forced every Class I school to have a full-fledged administrator instead of a head teacher. And maybe those were some academic issues at the time. I'm not quite certain, but nonetheless, I'll bet it was a state mandate that forced the schools to expend more resources on administrators. But it concerns me a lot anytime I see such an increase in spending on education, but it's not reaching the places it needs to reach, primarily the students or as close to the students as possible. That's why I'm concerned when I hear about educators and the morale because of all the paperwork being piled on teachers relating to testing and other mandates, federal and state. So we're seeing more paperwork on teachers and more administration across the board. What have we gotten for it? Low morale is what we've gotten, low morale from taxpayers, low morale from the classroom teachers, those folks on the front lines of education who feel somewhat left out of the whole issue. And LB 126 will place a much larger divide between taxpayers and school districts. When we look at communities thriving around Nebraska and the school at the center concept, and then it's really...it's truly the intent, perhaps not quite the hammer of locking the doors but certainly the financial hammer, to close those buildings across rural Nebraska, the Class I buildings, and I'd ask what's next? But it is certainly the intent. I've seen it in my own district where some of the larger districts have already said they want to close the Class I schools; close, not use the facility for another reason, they use the term "close." Those were their words, not mine. And then we hear an advocate or two of LB 126 or perhaps all of them say, well, it's not going to close those