

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

April 6, 2006

LB 1024

second is, what do you do about diversification or integration of students with surrounding districts? This allows, in my view, for the accomplishment of both of those objectives. This is a unique, maybe, opportunity to do something like this. We are talking here about the formation of a learning community which is a collaborative effort among school districts. There is common financing arrangement involved. It makes it possible that something like this could succeed financially. And in addition, all of the reorganization statute that would be needed is a part of this proposal. Make no mistake, it would involve some significant change. It would involve the creation of two additional school boards and two additional administrative units. That change would be involved. It's not like you're blowing a school district into smithereens. These...if this were to happen, this would result in the third, fourth, and fifth largest school districts in the state. OPS is about 45,000 students, some more. If it were divided into thirds, that would be 15,000-student districts. There are only two districts in the state that have more than 15,000 students now, Millard is one and OPS is the other. The final point I'll mention quickly is that this is not an idea that is first introduced at this point. Senator Redfield introduced this idea to the committee. Her proposal was a little bit different in that she had more school districts being created. But it does, I think, follow along the lines of what she has proposed. So I will be happy to try to address questions, but again, I think this moves us in the right direction. I think this is something we should do and I do support it. Thank you.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Raikes. Senator Kruse, you're recognized.

SENATOR KRUSE: Madam Chair and members, I'll take quite an opposite point of view. This is an outrageous proposal on the face of it. And when you dig into it, it's more so. What it seeks to do is to negate the work of OPS in providing integration within a district. We're all well aware of that struggle because that's why we're here. They have called us here to say, how do we deal with this across the total area? And this particular amendment is, give up. We'll just give up on integration, on movement between high schools and so on. Now