

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

January 16, 2002
8:10 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Con Bunde, Chair
Representative Joe Green
Representative Peggy Wilson
Representative Gary Stevens
Representative Reggie Joule
Representative Gretchen Guess

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Brian Porter

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

WORK SESSION - TEACHER SHORTAGE ISSUES

PREVIOUS ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

BETH NORDLUND, Special Assistant
Office of the Commissioner
Department of Education and Early Development
801 West 10th Street, Suite 200
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1894
POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions.

ACTION NARRATIVE

TAPE 02-1, SIDE A
Number 0001

CHAIR CON BUNDE called the House Special Committee on Education meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. He noted this meeting was a work session and that he anticipated the discussion would be "free-ranging" in order to identify legislation the committee may wish to sponsor.

Number 0335

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS expressed his opinion that as a result of the committee's interim meetings held in Kodiak, Kotzebue, Wasilla, and Anchorage, members had learned a great deal. He stated that the issue of mentoring was consistently mentioned by witnesses at these hearings. No statewide mentoring program currently exists. He acknowledged that it will be more difficult in the future to attract new teachers and to keep the good teachers. He wondered if it was possible to draft legislation to encourage districts to have a mentoring program.

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS referenced a conversation with Representative Guess regarding the possibility that a portion of a school district's administration budget could be dedicated to teacher mentoring programs. [According to Department of Education and Early Development (EED) personnel, school districts must allocate 70 percent of state funds for instruction; administration, facility, and other non-instructional costs must be budgeted from the remaining 30 percent.] He asked whether this would be an issue the committee might like to tackle.

Number 0447

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON said she thought it wise to let the local school board have as much control of the school system [as possible]. The Wrangell School District has a mentoring program for which it receives no extra funding. Mentors are set up with new teachers as they arrive. She believed there must be other districts in the state with mentoring programs. She noted that she thought some of those [mentoring program] decisions might be best left at the local level.

Number 0480

CHAIR BUNDE said the state spends \$4.7 million per school day to operate schools. He continued, "The state has, certainly, a role in the funding, but local control is so incredibly important to ... the basis of Alaska government. So it's ... an interesting tightrope."

CHAIR BUNDE concurred that mentoring was one of the issues heard about most consistently during the interim hearings across the state regarding teacher retention and recruitment. Mentoring, he surmised, would address shortage issues by giving accomplished teachers new goals and opportunities and by

preventing new teachers from feeling as though they were "thrown to the wolves."

Number 0600

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN indicated that both the Lexington Institute handout ["Indispensable Tests: How a Value-Added Approach to School Testing Could Identify and Bolster Exceptional Teaching" by Robert Holland, December 2001] and Milken Family Foundation studies have found that the "biggest return on their buck" is quality teachers. He noted that quality teachers overshadow kids' backgrounds, broken homes, pay - "anything."

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN said, "There is a direct correlation between good teachers and good grades." He noted this has been witnessed in ghettos, cities, rural areas, and everywhere. He stated that this research indicates mentoring is a critical component for the first one to three years. He added that nationwide, schools lose half the teachers because, "they claim," they were "thrown to the wolves, ... [or] in over their head[s]." Some of that [attrition] is because teachers have chosen the wrong field, he indicated.

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN continued:

I think the new culture is that you're going to change job professions three or four times in your lifetime. So, even with those things, I think it's imperative that we do establish something. And what I would suggest is to maybe piggyback on what Representative Stevens has said If that truly is one of the largest problems we have with retention of teachers, and maybe even securing teachers, "we have this wonderful mentoring program in Alaska, guys. Y'all come." Maybe that would help.

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN suggested a subcommittee should study various mentoring programs and methods of funding them.

Number 0765

CHAIR BUNDE sought committee consensus to form a subcommittee addressing mentoring programs. He said he thought that mentoring might be something the committee could address that involves relatively small amounts of money with a large return for the investment.

Number 0825

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE wondered how broad or narrow [a view] the committee would be taking of a mentoring-type program. He mentioned both new teachers coming through "our university system" and teachers coming from outside the state to rural Alaska. Was the committee limiting discussion to classroom mentoring, or will it include an introduction to the [region and culture]?

CHAIR BUNDE indicated that indeed, the definition of mentoring and the job of a mentor would vary between Sand Lake Elementary School in Anchorage and an elementary school in Kotzebue or Noatak, for example. He pointed out that there may be two or three new teachers in a school; would there then need to be regional opportunities for mentoring? He referenced an earlier conversation with the university community, EED, and the Anchorage School District. He said his impression was that the university would like to provide more substance for mentoring [programs]. He thought that should be part of the discussion and, perhaps, part of the funding mechanism.

Number 0990

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN emphasized that the biggest issue was making new teachers feel at home, showing them where the opera is or how they can go after caribou, for example. He said the most success with mentoring has been where the community leaders get involved to help a new teacher, far from home, to help her feel "like she's one of us."

Number 1055

REPRESENTATIVE GUESS added that principals need mentoring as well. Often new principals are isolated in their new positions and need support and guidance.

Number 1080

CHAIR BUNDE noted that the teacher shortage includes principals. He appointed Representative Stevens as chair of the subcommittee on mentoring. He welcomed any members to attend and asked Representatives Green and Guess to "provide the core" of the committee. He suggested members read the materials Representative Green had referenced. He noted that there will be an education roundtable in Juneau later this month; he hoped all members of the committee would be involved.

Number 1170

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON suggested approaching teachers to ask, "What do you think would've helped?" She added, "Perhaps there's a class at the university level that the teachers could take. ... Times are changing, and the teachers have to change with the times." She noted that teachers "wear so many more hats nowadays." She wondered if the university needed to make some changes in instruction as well.

Number 1224

CHAIR BUNDE recounted conversations in which the university had expressed interest in looking at mentoring; it currently offers no certificate or degree in that area. He encouraged committee members to be creative in their thinking but fiscally realistic. "Where can we get the greatest return?" he asked.

Number 1264

REPRESENTATIVE GUESS suggested EED compile information on what districts are currently doing with mentoring.

Number 1290

CHAIR BUNDE confirmed with the mentoring subcommittee chair, Representative Stevens, that the subcommittee would have a report for the committee in two weeks.

Number 1320

REPRESENTATIVE GUESS said health care had been an issue in the interim hearings. She speculated this was an area that may have a zero fiscal impact. She said most of Kotzebue's [state funding] increase was allocated to increased health care costs. She wondered if it was possible for districts to buy in to the state's health care system at cost to enable them to be part of a bigger pool.

Number 1370

CHAIR BUNDE agreed this would be a logical and cost-saving measure. He requested that Representative Guess check with the Division of Retirement & Benefits to see what obstacles might be in the way of [such an arrangement].

Number 1392

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS expressed his concern that health care is a negotiated issue with union contracts in each district. He also wondered if the state program was a package.

Number 1410

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN noted that he had heard recruitment and retention of teachers was an issue at the interim hearings. Many experienced teachers are retiring after 20 years. He said a couple of retired teachers in his district have been asked to return to teaching. He noted the problem was they would have to pay back the [retirement] package they took before they could return. He wondered if it would be to the state's advantage to rehire retired teachers at the rate of a new teacher's salary. He also wondered if these teachers would be "out-of-phase" with new teaching techniques. He said the Anchorage School District has looked into this, but has taken no action to date.

Number 1508

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON added that she thought it made a difference how teachers retired, whether it was through an early retirement or a normal retirement.

Number 1533

CHAIR BUNDE noted that Beth Nordlund, Special Assistant, EED, had confirmed by a nod that this was indeed true.

Number 1550

BETH NORDLUND, Special Assistant, Office of the Commissioner, Department of Education and Early Development, stated that she thought each package differed.

Number 1560

CHAIR BUNDE suggested the committee talk to the Division of Retirement & Benefits regarding rehiring retired teachers to determine what the fiscal impact would be. He volunteered to research and answer the question of recertification of retired teachers.

Number 1605

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN noted that retired teachers starting over at a new teacher's salary don't cost the state any more. The cost was incurred when the teacher retired, "but that's a done deal," he concluded. Furthermore, it is already known whether the former teacher was a good teacher.

Number 1660

CHAIR BUNDE noted that some teachers need to change professions, but that their success is also based on their supervision and teaching assignments.

Number 1686

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS noted that he wanted any system to be fair. "People have got to somehow take care of that advantage they got [by] retiring early," he said. He pointed out that other states are benefiting by hiring Alaska's retired teachers. Some of these teachers are wanted back by Alaskan districts, but are unable to return because of the retirement rules.

Number 1720

CHAIR BUNDE requested EED to comment on recertification options at the next committee meeting in two weeks.

Number 1738

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN added that he thought the committee could suggest changes that would circumvent obstacles which prevent modifying the current retirement system.

Number 1761

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON agreed with Representative Guess's idea of the insurance pool. She noted that the Wrangell School District's building and liability insurance increased 130 percent this year alone. She continued, "That makes a huge difference for school districts; that makes the difference between a teacher's pay."

Number 1790

CHAIR BUNDE confirmed that Representative Guess would broaden her insurance inquiry to include other forms of insurance beyond health care.

Number 1814

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS added that some districts are pooling with their local government.

Number 1820

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE mentioned that the Alaska Association of School Boards offers insurance through [Alaska Public Entity Insurance (APEI), formerly Alaska Schools Insurance Company (ASIC)]. He said that the teacher housing shortage was another issue heard at the interim committee hearings. He thought the committee should look at this as a subject related to recruitment and retention of teachers, especially for outlying districts. He noted that rural districts have a higher turnover rate than urban areas which is partially due to housing issues.

Number 1888

CHAIR BUNDE informed the committee it will be hearing a bill sponsored by Representative Rokeberg [HB 293-AHFC LOANS TO TEACHERS] that will help teachers buy homes. Some areas of the state, he noted, have no homes available to purchase, and that needs to be addressed as well. He suggested discussing housing when the committee hears Representative Rokeberg's bill.

Number 1926

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN urged the committee to come up with ideas [to solve education problems], and perhaps introduce legislation, without worrying about the fiscal ramifications. He recommended that the committee members let the finance committee or this committee review that [later.] He emphasized the importance of these discussions and suggested there may be creative ways to finance the solutions. On the other hand, some ideas just require money.

Number 1990

CHAIR BUNDE reminded the committee that the Benchmark Tests and High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE) have taken 3 teaching days away from the school year; this has decreased students' "time on task." He noted that in other countries, students spend more time in school than American and Alaskan students. He remarked that the average attendance in Alaska had increased from 140 days a year to 180 days a year since the

inception of the testing which provides teachers and students more opportunity to be productive.

CHAIR BUNDE said:

So I had this great notion We've taken three days away for testing, let's just add 3 days to the Alaska school year. In my heart of hearts, I think we should add 10, maybe 15 or 20. But 3, what a minor thing!

Number 2074

CHAIR BUNDE distributed "Estimated Cost of Additional School Days," prepared by Eddy Jeans, School Finance Manager, EED. According to the report, it costs \$4.7 million a day to run Alaska's schools. He noted that Anchorage alone costs the state about \$1 million a day. Chair Bunde expressed that, in spite of the cost, he's unwilling to say, "This just can't be done." The legislature has, in the past, added substantial amounts to the Foundation Formula. This would cost, he said, around \$15 million to add 3 days.

CHAIR BUNDE expressed his desire for the committee to talk about adding days and for it to become an issue on the public agenda. He related his reservation, saying, "In the best of all worlds we could add another \$15 million to our Foundation Formula - would that be the best way to spend that money? Or are there other ways that would be more productive?"

Number 2166

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN questioned whether the projected cost per day would be less, given that the salaries are already paid for.

Number 2175

CHAIR BUNDE stated that Anchorage teachers' contracts cover a 188-day school year. There would be 3 days in addition to that. He stated that these numbers from Eddy Jeans took the total cost for the school year and divided it by the number of days to determine a daily rate. He noted that there may be some creative ways to reduce that amount. He added that transportation costs would be significant for districts that transport students.

CHAIR BUNDE said he'd hoped to encourage schools to use the [proposed] three additional days for testing. Students who were not testing would have in-service days; teaching time would be saved. He continued:

One of the things I've heard - and it's a fair criticism, particularly at the high school [level] - ... [is that] the students who are not being tested aren't having quality education, because [teachers] are just having to do crowd control.

CHAIR BUNDE remarked that "at first blush" it seems [adding 3 days] can't be done. Maybe we need to "find some way around this roadblock." He would like feedback from school districts and EED. Maybe school districts will have more productive ways of spending the \$15 million than just extending the school year, he noted.

Number 2313

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON remarked that the benchmarks require teachers to teach to the standards. Some school districts she has spoken with need more money for in-service training for teachers. She said, "It's easy to say, 'Well, you've got these days.' But to fly somebody in to do the in-service teaching or a specialist to come in and do something, ... that costs a lot of money for a school system to do. But it's very, very necessary." She noted that the standards require a change in the teaching method and that many teachers have not had that training.

Number 2370

CHAIR BUNDE noted that he's been told that "in-service, at least at the elementary, frequently leaves something to be desired." In-services are not always the most productive use of the teachers' time, he noted. Perhaps the committee would like to address the subject of in-service. He continued, "How do we tread that fine line between being helpful at the state level and then being so prescriptive that we're taking away the local control and causing more problems than we're helping [to] solve."

Number 2401

REPRESENTATIVE GUESS questioned how many requirements for in-service are on the statutes. Are all of these necessary each

year? What burden is the legislature currently placing on school districts? That issue came out of the university meeting. Her impression from people in the schools was that there are a lot of requirements.

Number 2435

CHAIR BUNDE noted his impression that it's done by local and state regulation, and not much is done legislatively to prescribe in-service requirements. He requested a report in two weeks' time on the status of state requirements for in-service training. He also asked Representative Guess to report on additional requirements in the Anchorage School District.

Number 2450

REPRESENTATIVE GUESS pointed out that the committee had heard a lot about extending the school year and about the three days of testing. She noted that the "Estimated Cost of School Days" was a linear analysis, but that most things in life aren't linear, and it was a good starting place. The actual cost is unknown, but the committee must make a best estimate and then make a policy decision, she offered.

Number 2486

CHAIR BUNDE stated that the committee would be required to share this with colleagues, who would request some "pretty linear" answers. He continued, "I'm sure there will be, in the House alone, 40 ideas of how we might better invest in our schools, and how much that ought to be, and where it ought to go."

TAPE 02-1

SIDE B

Number 2499

CHAIR BUNDE noted he was hopeful that price alone will not be the only criterion in making this decision. He said he didn't think Eddy Jeans would try to "price this high" to discourage the committee; if anything, he would try to encourage members.

Number 2475

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS referred to HB 293 and indicated the committee should look beyond the purchase of homes to the shortage of houses. He stated that the university has built dormitories with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban

Development (HUD) funds. Could the legislature pursue with HUD the building of housing for districts? He said, "It's a great payback. You know you're going to get your money if you build a house on Akhiok and you've got one teacher down there."

Number 2442

CHAIR BUNDE emphasized that dormitories do not pay for themselves.

Number 2436

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS noted that teacher housing will pay for itself. It is difficult for districts to find the funding to build new houses in small villages when, in fact, they are needed. He recommended that the committee pursue the idea with HUD.

Number 2425

CHAIR BUNDE concurred, saying, "When the bill's before us ... I think it's an excellent idea. If we're going to say, 'We'd like to provide a mechanism to help individuals finance a home.' Why not a district finance a home?"

Number 2416

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE recalled that two years ago the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee explored the idea of regional high schools. He suggested the committee should revisit the regional high school concept. He continued, "Attached to that, maybe something that isn't the regional high school, but a stepping stone, or mid-point, and that would be ... regional learning centers. And the possibility of extending past the twelfth grade, i.e., grade fourteen." He said he thought this would be "a time well spent." He noted that not all rural parts of the state would embrace this concept, but proposed that the committee should entertain the idea for those areas that are interested.

Number 2345

CHAIR BUNDE commented that many committee members know very successful Native and rural residents who have gained "significant advantage from their experience of going to a regional school." One of the problems with this idea, he noted, was the need to have local schools. He noted that this idea

would generate some interesting discussion. Chair Bunde said that he has seen the value of people being able to attend a [regional] school.

Number 2296

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE offered that he thought sufficient time had passed, and that people in some parts of the state were willing to entertain the discussion. He continued:

If we look at why we want to educate people in the first place, ... it's to help our younger generation move into areas of economic opportunities. And by getting into regional hub areas, I think we'd better have the opportunity to showcase the opportunities that may not exist in the smaller villages. How can you live in a small village and still work in a hub center? Maybe on a rotating work schedule in a profession, whether it's in medicine, aviation, or anything else. And I think it has the added benefit of creating an environment where the expectations are such that they would not be a huge surprise by the time one got onto a college campus or to a [vocational-technical school], wherever they chose to go as a postsecondary experience.

Number 2229

CHAIR BUNDE paraphrased Representative Moses and said that the lives of young people in rural Alaska would be greatly facilitated if they would get a business degree and a modem; they could telecommute anywhere in the world. Chair Bunde observed that this is an option becoming more available. Some would physically commute from a small community to a hub, while others may live in a small community and run their own schedules via e-mail. He explained that he maintains an office in Juneau year-round, and he telecommutes every day [during the interim].

Number 2146

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON said she thought Representative Joule had a very good suggestion. She noted that college and "big city" life can be very traumatic for students. It is also very hard on the family back home; they are used to a tight, cohesive family. She said she has known parents to call their children and beg them to come back. A regional center would allow a student to go for short periods and enable the family to get

used to his/her absence. She noted that sometimes the family doesn't encourage the child to stay [in college] because "they're just dying inside themselves." This would help both the student and the family to get used to the idea of separation.

Number 2073

CHAIR BUNDE observed that he thought the tenor of the relationship [among committee members] was one of cooperation. He speculated this might be because "the problems are big enough that our individual differences aren't that important."

Number 2009

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS mentioned that [HB 171-ALASKA HISTORY CURRICULUM] is now in the House Finance Committee. He indicated that the Anchorage School District has included Alaskan history in its curriculum. He said he would like to see members encourage the House Finance Committee to move HB 171 out of committee.

Number 1965

CHAIR BUNDE commented that he thought that the discussion needed to continue regarding how "heavy-handed" the state wants to be in being prescriptive. It would be interesting, he said, to find out how many districts do not [require] Alaskan history.

CHAIR BUNDE noted his concern regarding the "general disconnect" that young people have from society. He said, "There may be more of ... 'What can society do for me?' and 'Why should you ever ask me to do anything?' out there than is healthy." He reported that some school districts have added a service component to graduation requirements. He re-emphasized, "How much should the state require, and how much should be local?"

CHAIR BUNDE said he thought that the topic of "service learning" should be discussed by the committee. He noted that while he wasn't prepared to write legislation making [service learning] a state requirement, he thought it a topic worthy of discussion. It gives young people an opportunity to "buy in." He said, "You're less likely to 'trash' something when you've helped create it." Service learning gives students a pattern for life-long behavior and gets them more involved in communities and in government.

CHAIR BUNDE said:

Obviously, I am guilty of criticizing a society that expects our schools to do everything and become surrogate parents And so I tread cautiously here, though I would be interested in getting feedback both from our schools and from the committee as to your view of what service learning might ... entail, and whether that's even someplace we should think about going.

Number 1838

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN said he thought Chair Bunde was "right on target." He thought it imperative to "get across" to young people a sense of responsibility. He expressed his opinion that a "giveaway" state takes away a sense of responsibility when it "picks up the tab" for everything. If people have a buy-in, they're going to take more sense of responsibility, and they're going to do a lot of good things for society.

Number 1800

CHAIR BUNDE remarked on a program he saw about inner city Philadelphia. In this program, college students mentored high school students who mentored elementary students. He noted, "If you didn't show up for school, there were some folks wondering about you. And if you had a problem at school, there was someone ... wanting to do something to help." He continued, "It's, again, ... that old adage, that 'locks just keep the honest people out.' ... If there's some light shone on something - that we feel like what we do matters to someone - maybe there are some second thoughts before we do a rash thing."

Number 1750

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE referred to a conversation with a Juneau teacher regarding the issue of attendance. Some of the larger communities may have truant officers, he noted, but the smaller communities do not have them; Juneau does not have a truant officer. He said he was unsure about the need for a "policy" driven by the state; he thought it warranted dialogue with school districts and communities to see how Alaska can keep its students in the classroom.

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE described his experience since the advent of the HSGQE, saying, "The number of students that graduate from

the eighth grade versus those numbers that make it though high school; there's a huge variation." He wondered if that was a discussion the committee should be having.

Number 1681

CHAIR BUNDE indicated that extending the school year would do little for kids who aren't attending now. He mentioned a community that decided that "this was unacceptable and they tightened up their attendance." He continued, "What's the state role, and how can we help? ... It's another question I don't have an answer to, but one that is worth discussing."

Number 1660

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON said she thought that the student gained a lot of insight and direction for his/her life by doing community [service]. She reported that Wrangell has seen big benefits from students involved in community service; it is a graduation requirement, and athletes in any sport must serve a minimum number of community hours. She said she has seen students assist elderly patients, work with Head Start children, or provide a new service to the community. The school board, teachers, and parents have worked together to make these decisions, and they believe it has made a difference, she noted.

Number 1597

CHAIR BUNDE requested that Representative Wilson inquire about and report on Wrangell's service-learning program and how it evolved. He also wondered what the Wrangell School District's reaction to state involvement would be. He reiterated that schools have so much to do; a service learning component would add "another thing" before a high school student could go on to college or get a decent job. Is the time available?

Number 1510

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN referred to a hand-drawn graph showing crime rates and time of day. The highest crime rate among juveniles is from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. The rate is two to four times as high during those two hours after school. He wondered if it is possible to start the school day two hours later to avoid tired students in the morning and reduce crime in the afternoon. He noted that he has never heard a satisfactory answer as to why that [later starting time] couldn't work.

Number 1432

REPRESENTATIVE GUESS commented that she's been told that in the Anchorage School District it's a transportation issue. Elementary students are up early, and there is a problem with appropriate daycare until they go to school at 9 a.m. She said the children at Mountain View Elementary were at school before it opened when the unfortunate slashing occurred last year. She indicated that she'd not received a satisfactory answer from [the Anchorage School District] on switching the staggered starting times.

REPRESENTATIVE GUESS continued, "Why don't we have the elementary school kids go early - they're up The high school kids go later; you wouldn't have extra transportation issues." She suggested the committee could ask the Anchorage School District superintendent. She concluded by saying, "Teenagers won't get up early to get in trouble."

Number 1367

CHAIR BUNDE added that many students' senior year is not "time-intensive in the classroom." Many have met their graduation requirements, they're working half time, and they're coming or going and taking only one or two classes. This is the trouble with the notion of closed campuses, he stated. He queried, "How do we not unfairly burden those students who are working their fannies off in their senior year and encourage those that aren't spending a lot of time in school in their senior year to spend more time [in school]?"

Number 1300

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS expressed his need for a better understanding of how Alaska's school districts were developed. He said he would like to hear from EED and to explore the issue of consolidation of districts.

Number 1247

CHAIR BUNDE noted that single-site school districts have "provoked a good deal of interesting conversation in my career in the legislature."

Number 1240

MS. NORDLUND responded that she would research the history of school district formation for the committee.

Number 1218

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON referred to Representative Green's sketched graph of juvenile crime and noted that research shows that the majority of pregnant teenagers get pregnant during those same hours of 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. She noted that some schools in her district [House District 2] do schedule the high school starting time later than the primary and elementary. She offered to check to see if these schools have noted a difference with this change.

Number 1132

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN asked about the purpose of the "significant amount of information" given to committee members.

Number 1122

CHAIR BUNDE replied that the information was for the committee members' continuing education.

Number 1112

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON referred to "Statistics Left Out of Tolerance Commission's Take on Rural, Urban School Funding" by Dermot Cole [in the committee packet]. She said that according to the article, Senator Wilken is preparing a detailed report on funding sources in education. She said she would like the committee to get that report.

Number 1080

CHAIR BUNDE responded that he would talk with Senator Wilken at their upcoming appointment, and he would get the committee more information. He reminded the committee that it had requested a new cost differential study. That information will not be available until next year. He added that should the House Special Committee on Education continue to exist next session, members should spend some time discussing that study.

Number 1003

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS commented:

This has been a really valuable experience for me - this committee - and it has served a tremendous purpose. And I can't imagine if it were folded into [the House Health, Education and Social Services Standing Committee (HHES)], how we would cover all of the issues that we have covered this past year. So, I don't know where we go from here, but with your leadership, I would hope that we would let our leadership know the importance of this committee. I would hope to see this become a standing committee, or, if not, continue as a subcommittee.

Number 0956

CHAIR BUNDE agreed that he would like the committee to come up with a recommendation or a resolution if the members agree that the committee ought to remain separate from HHES, as in many other states. Having chaired both committees, he stated that he sees the value of keeping them separate. He noted that according to Chair Dyson, the HHES plate is full. The Senate doesn't have enough people to create another standing committee. He noted that Representative Guess has shared with him a proposal "to that effect," and told the committee he would bring that to the next meeting.

Number 0874

REPRESENTATIVE GREEN added that the state spends over \$700 million per year on education and that he thought it worthy of "undivided attention."

Number 0850

CHAIR BUNDE noted that education is the largest single item of the state's budget, and that the second largest single item is corrections. He added that he thought the morning had been very successful and productive.

Number 0832

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Education meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.