

excess cost formula. I think that Senator Morehead will have some more comments on it because she chaired the subcommittee on the excess cost formula.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Thank you. Senator Morehead, please.

SENATOR MOREHEAD: Mr. President and members of the body, I am sure that you are all painfully aware of this particular budget figure for the State of Nebraska. Many of us feel a great frustration with it because we do, in fact, want to meet the requirements that the federal government is presenting to us in giving services to the handicapped children of our state. In fact those services now go from zero to age 21, not as you would traditionally think of education services going from school age of 5 or 6. We now are required to give these services to children from time of birth until age 21. So this is no small budget figure that we are talking about. In previous years, as a member of the Appropriations Committee, I know that I have felt the frustration in coming in with deficit appropriations for this program. These appropriations are not diminishing but, in fact, they are growing. I know that everyone is wanting to attempt to have a justification and a control on this particular budget figure. Now this summer, as a subcommittee of Senator Baack's committee, we talked about the funding formulas. Members of that committee came from across the state. We had Larry Ross from West Point. We had Ken Echtenkamp... I mean Ken Echtenkamp from West Point and Larry Ross from Weeping Water. We had a representative from Westside. We had a representative from Omaha. We had Marge Beatty from Educational Service Unit at Ogallala, and Bill Kelley from the Educational Service Unit at Sidney. So I think we had a diverse representation on the committee. Additionally we had Corliss Young representing Senator Warner's office, and members of our fiscal staff there working with us, too. We looked at all the different formulas. The thing that we found in these formulas was the fact that what was fair to the metropolitan school districts was not always fair to those districts in greater Nebraska, if you will, or in smaller units. Now the total dollars in the formula we could adjust. Maybe we don't want to go at 90 percent of excess allowable costs. Maybe you want to put a lid on the total budget figure which would then be distributed among these schools. But the underlying thing that came from this was the fact that the actual formula itself is fair to both small school districts and larger