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they want to make sure that they are giving every child as much help as they can. But when they spend most of their time with perhaps one or two very, very young children, that it is difficult. I can tell you that I've worked in a classroom with three age...grade levels. And if you have a combination class of first-, second-, and third-graders, that the first-graders have difficulty with the scissors, the second-graders have no problem, and the third-graders are bored if you spend a great deal of time on some of those projects. So it's very difficult for the classroom teacher to keep all of the children engaged when their abilities vary so greatly. So that is why I was not opposed to Senator Stuhr's attachment of this bill onto LB 868. Even though it deals with the other end of the compulsory attendance law, I guess you could say she got them going and I got...or she got them coming and I got them going. So that's where we are with the bill. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Redfield. Senator Stuhr. Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I have appreciated the discussion on the kindergarten issue. And I think one thing that we have not addressed is that today the expectations are much greater for our young students in kindergarten, and also, schools are providing all-day kindergarten. And they have found that this is very beneficial to these young students. But again, just to go over, you know, some of the information, to make sure that we are all clear, that what we are looking at is that the student needs to be five before September 1. But it is a local option then for that school board to provide an assessment for that child if they are five prior to December...or if they become five sometime between September 1 and December 31. Also then, that...as we've been talking about, they must reach six prior to January 1 of the school year in which the child begins. Again, I think what makes this a little bit confusing also is that, as we stated, kindergarten is optional, but all schools must provide kindergarten in their schools. And again, the main purpose was--and we've repeatedly said--was to narrow that gap. I believe education is much more meaningful if students are ready. And there has been actually a great deal of research done, and it does seem to point out, as has been stated, and I believe Senator Wehrbein stated, that the younger the student, that that