

### **By Shelby Friesz**

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Schools across Nebraska could have a more uniform process of purchasing supplies if a bill proposed by Sen. Scott Lautenbaugh of Omaha is passed.

Brent Smoyer, Lautenbaugh's aide, described the bill (LB401) to the Education Committee Tuesday.

The bill would require a school district to have a purchasing officer who oversees the spending done within that district. He said it would increase transparency in the schools.

Nobody testified for the bill, two testified against it, and one testified neutral to it. The committee also had one letter of opposition from Mark Adler, superintendent of Ralston Public Schools.

Virgil Harden, executive director for business for Grand Island Public Schools, said that he worried it would cost the public schools more money because they would need to hire another person to do what his school system is already doing.

"Dollars that would be taken away from our budget to hire another administrator to be a purchasing agent is not in the best interest of school," Harden said. "It would take dollars away from the classroom."

He added that Grand Island Public Schools already stresses accountability and transparency in their spending.

Many school districts have positions similar to Harden's in Grand Island, so many of them would have two people doing the same job, he said.

Smoyer said that Lautenbaugh was open to changing the bill to an interim study of having school district purchasing agents.