

## Standardized U.S. tests weaker than other nations

WASHINGTON (AP) — Achievement tests give U.S. students little chance to show what they've learned in the classroom, while Japanese and European students are forced to prove they've mastered various subjects, a study released Sunday said.

"Our most common, high-stakes examinations ... do little to advance the notion that hard work in school matters," said Lynne V. Cheney, chairwoman of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

While American students are asked multiple-choice questions, Japanese students may be asked to identify European thinkers such as Euclid, Ptolemy, Bacon, Newton and Locke. And British students may have to argue in an essay whether Woodrow Wilson was "unbelievably naive" or "a dogged man of principle."

Cheney said NEH, an independent federal agency, looked at national tests in France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan and the European Community schools. High school students in those countries must prove mastery of subject matter by organizing their thoughts, analyzing and mounting arguments.

The United States has no equivalent exam, although the Scholastic Aptitude Test and the American College Testing Program come close, Cheney said.

But, she said, both the SAT and the ACT are basically multiple-choice, have an "arm's length relationship to curricula" and avoid assessing factual knowledge that a student might have learned in the classroom.

"Examinations assessing performance are harder to grade than those that rely exclusively on multiple-choice, but the experience of other countries shows that it can be done," Cheney said.

The SAT and ACT measure aptitude rather than achievement, Cheney said. Achievement tests, she said, convey the idea that mastery of school subjects is important and makes student accountable for what they have learned.

President Bush and Education Secretary Lamar Alexander have called for voluntary national achievement tests as part of an "America 2000" education strategy.

The examinations would be made available to all fourth, eighth and 12th grade students in the subjects of math, science, English, history and geography.

## Police misconduct costs L.A. more than \$13 million in 1990

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The city has lost judgments totaling more than \$13.8 million so far this year in police misconduct cases, surpassing the record \$9.5 million it was ordered to pay in all of 1990, records show.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, the city has already used up a \$17 million fund to settle lawsuits and will have to pay new awards from a reserve fund, said Jeff Druyun, assistant chief legislative analyst.

Citizen claims alleging Police Department misconduct rose from an average of nine per week in March and April 1990 to 13 a week following the videotaped March 3 police beating of black motorist Rodney G. King.

City officials blame the widely publicized beating for the increase in claims and damage awards.

In April, a jury awarded \$8.75 million to Adelaido Altamirano, who was left paraplegic when he was shot by an off-duty police officer in 1987.

"Eight million dollars was an extraordinary amount. I would say the amount was inflated because of circumstances surrounding the King case," said City Councilwoman Joy Picus.

In other jury awards this year, former Black Panther Michael Zinzun was awarded \$3.83 million in a lawsuit that alleged Assistant Police Chief Robert Vernon supplied information on Zinzun to a political opponent in a 1989 campaign for the Pasadena Board of Directors.

Baseball Hall of Famer Joe Morgan received a \$540,000 judgment in a federal lawsuit that alleged a police officer falsely arrested him at Los Angeles International Airport in 1988 because he is black.

Police misconduct cases include allegations of false arrest, civil rights abuses, excessive force and unnecessary shootings. The judgment and settlement amounts are recorded by the City Council's Budget and Finance Committee and the city attorney.

Between 1987 and 1990, black complaints of excessive police force were more likely to be upheld than were similar complaints by whites or Hispanics. But blacks also were more likely to be unsuccessful in their complaints about other misconduct, including improper tactics and verbal abuse.

Nine percent of white complaints against police were sustained, compared to 7 percent for Hispanics and 5 percent for blacks, according to department records. The department upheld 7 percent of all citizen complaints for the period.

The figures were included in a *Los Angeles Times* study of 4,400 misconduct complaints that was published Sunday.

Black officers accused of misconduct were twice as likely as white officers to be found guilty in department administrative proceedings. Black officers also were more likely to be disciplined for misconduct, although they were no more likely to be the targets of complaints.

Musa Camara, a police officer who has represented colleagues accused of wrongdoing, said there is "a double standard in this department in many instances when dealing with black officers and black citizens."

Inside and outside the department, the word of African-Americans is not given as much weight, he said.

## Appeal halts right-to-die decision

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — A severely brain-damaged woman whose feeding tubes were removed more than two weeks ago was fed again Sunday while a Christian group prepared to appeal a judge's ruling affirming her right to die.

A civil liberties lawyer said Sunday the dispute goes a step beyond the Nancy Cruzan case in Missouri, which last year resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court's first right-to-die ruling.

Cruzan, who died in December after her feeding tubes were removed, had told family and friends before she suffered severe brain damage in a 1983 car crash that she wouldn't want to be kept alive in that condition.

But in the Indiana case, Sue Ann Lawrance has suffered mental disorders since childhood, and there has been no evidence about whether she would want to be kept alive in the persistent vegetative state she has been in since 1987, the Christian group's lawyer said.

Lawrance, 42, had been expected to die within a few days, but the judge allowed for an appeal by granting a 21-day stay Saturday

of an earlier order permitting her parents to remove the life-sustaining tubes.


Patti Mullins, a lawyer for Christian Fellowship with the Disabled, said she plans to contact the Indiana Supreme Court and Court of Appeals on Monday to decide where she should file an appeal.

"I received a tremendous number of hateful calls this morning," Mullins said Sunday. "I'm not trying to cause trouble. I have trained and trained and trained to be a peacemaker and a problem solver, as well as an attorney, and that was the approach I intended to take."

Feedings resumed Saturday night at St. Vincent Hospice Center, where Lawrance was transferred from a nursing home May 3, the day her feeding tubes were removed.

In a meeting earlier Saturday in the chamber of Hamilton County Superior Court Judge Jerry M. Barr, the woman's family agreed to resume feeding Lawrance for 21 days.

Lawrance has suffered progressively debilitating brain disorders since childhood and lapsed into a persistent vegetative state after a 1987 fall.



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