

Students fail to make the grade in math, reading

Elementary students outperform middle, high school pupils in state tests

CHARLES E. BEGGS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

SALEM — Most students showed little or no improvement on this year's state reading and math tests, the state Education Department reports.

State Schools Superintendent Susan Castillo said elementary school students continue performing well

on the exams but she's worried about low scores in middle schools and high schools.

The 2004 test results were issued for release Thursday.

Just 50 percent of 10th grade students met state goals on this year's reading test, down from 52 percent last year. Only 43 percent of the 10th graders met state standards on the 2004 math multiple choice test, down from 45 percent last year. In other categories, scores have remained flat, or else increased slightly.

Although the scores are higher than four or five years ago, Castillo said she's concerned that recent results are flat.

"Something is clearly wrong here, and we need to take action," she said.

While schools have had to cope with unstable budgets, shortened school years and increasing class sizes, she said, "We need to find ways to better use the resources we have."

Kris Kain, president of the Oregon Education Association, the state's largest teacher's union, said she was pleased that more scores didn't drop in view of the schools' money pinch due to cuts in state aid.

"Maintaining is a good thing in the climate we're facing. The fact we're not declining speaks volumes," Kain said.

The state tests are important because of the federal No Child Left Behind law. Test scores are a major factor in whether schools are making adequate progress under the law.

The department will release preliminary progress reports for all schools next week.

Results are still being calculated for the two other statewide tests in writing and math problem solving, which is separate from the math

multiple choice test.

Tests are given in third, fifth, eighth and 10th grades. Results are compiled for each of the more than 1,200 public schools in the state.

Among third-graders, 82 percent met state standards on the reading test this year, the same as in 2003, and 81 percent passed the math test by at least meeting state standards, up from 78 percent last year.

More than three-fourths of fifth graders passed both reading and math exams this year, about the same as in 2003. Six out of 10 eighth-grade students passed the math and reading tests this year.

Kain said the results are similar to those nationally in which elementary students perform better than pupils in higher grades. An elementary teacher usually deals with no more than 35 students a day while middle and high schools teachers see as many as 120 pupils.

At Parkrose High School, dismal test scores in math are among the state's worst and have led officials to make some major changes, said Principal Roy Reynolds.

Only 20 percent of the high school's 10th-grade students passed

the math test this year, below last year's 27 percent. The Parkrose School District is in east Multnomah County.

The 10th graders at the 1,000-student high school scored at about the state average level on the reading test.

Reynolds said middle school and high school math programs had operated separately and now are being coordinated to pay closer attention to students' needs.

So 9th graders entering high school who were below state standards on their 8th grade tests, he said, will be given more intensive help.

Brad Royle, superintendent of the 360-student Enterprise School District in Walla Walla County, believes small school size plus a strong emphasis on testing helps results.

In the reading test, 73 percent of Enterprise High School's 10th graders passed this year, up from 56 percent in 2003.

"Test scores always have been important, and we feel the state and national governments have put that level of concern into them and we support it," Royle said.

Charles E. Beggs is a writer for the Associated Press.

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寿司
ステーション

LLC
continued from page 1

rule, McBride said.

He said the tennis program recently received that exemption from the Pac-10 to play all tennis matches for the 2004-2005 season indoors at the Student Tennis Center, located behind the Student Recreation Center and McArthur Court.

Playing outdoors or indoors for the varsity tennis players is not being foreseen as a big problem for the athletes, University men's tennis head coach Chris Russell said.

"Some guys like playing outdoors; some guys like playing indoors," Russell said. "Whether they play indoors or outdoors is a matter of preference."

Russell said he first heard about the projected demolition of the tennis courts on East 15th Avenue two summers ago and is looking forward to the construction of a new outdoor tennis facility.

"The tennis courts were old and the

fencing was outdated," Russell said. "The positive is we get brand new courts and it's all for the better. It's definitely a win-win situation for us."

The building of the LLC — which is slated to open in fall 2006 — will largely benefit incoming freshmen, who will live in the 399-bed residence hall that will include three classrooms, faculty offices and a cafe, University Housing Director Mike Eyster said.

"I wouldn't say any residence hall student would identify the tennis courts as a primary resource for students living in the residence halls," Eyster said. "One of the important things that we discovered about the Living Learning Center is the importance of involving faculty."

Eyster said University Housing considered other sites, including the Bean Complex parking lot, but the current location was recommended by the Campus Planning Committee and the design advisory group.

"Proximity to the academic core is significant, so that made this space a

primary consideration," Eyster said. He said the new residence hall will use the area more efficiently than the tennis courts, which were hardly used by people other than the varsity tennis teams.

"This space will be much more heavily used by students than the tennis courts ever were," Eyster said. "The varsity tennis teams are going to probably end up having a nicer facility than they currently have as a result of this."

The original total cost for the tennis courts was \$630,000. University Housing helped pay more than two-thirds of the cost when they contributed \$435,000 to build the courts, Eyster said, adding that he didn't know where the other third came from.

"We concluded that this was the best site for the LLC and that the University would benefit by having this located here and the new tennis courts located somewhere else," Eyster said.

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BURGLAR
continued from page 1

and questioning convinced them he was responsible for at least four burglaries at the stadium between January and June of this year, said Eugene Police Department Detective Scott Thomas.

Computer equipment, jewelry, jerseys and merchandise signed by former Duck quarterback Joey Harrington valued at \$37,500 was stolen from several locations in Autzen Stadium, including the skyboxes, gift shop and operations center.

About two-thirds of the stolen merchandise, valued at about \$25,000, was recovered at Barnard's Beaverton apartment, including most of the Harrington memorabilia, Thomas said.

Barnard lived at Parkgrove Apartments, across the street from the stadium, until his recent move to the Portland area, according to

"If you see somebody that you don't think belongs [there], politely ask them if you can help them ... It would have been nice to have somebody identify him earlier on."

— Scott Thomas
EPD Detective

an EPD press release.

The University of Oregon Bookstore owned much of the stolen merchandise. Jim Williams, who has been general manager of the bookstore since 1976, said this is, as far as he can remember, the first time the Bookstore has ever been burglarized.

"We've never had a burglary," Williams said. "We're really happy that the individual was apprehended. If we do get most of our merchandise back, that's an extraordinary thing."

Thomas said Barnard beat security by using his knowledge of computers and confidence and composure when moving around Autzen facilities. Thomas said Barnard is not a student or University employee, but was able to "move around with almost no confrontation at all."

"Using his skills and his intelligence he was able to study security

and figure out how to beat it," Thomas said. "He did it at all times, daytime and nighttime. He couldn't even tell you how many times he's been in Autzen Stadium, both lawfully and unlawfully ..."

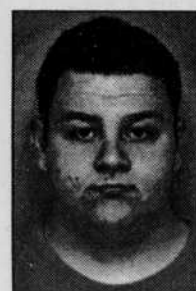
Thomas said he suspected the burglaries were committed by the same person because in all cases there wasn't the usual "brainless vandalism." The Harrington-autographed items were only in the Autzen area temporarily, leading Thomas to believe that whoever stole them had insider knowledge about when and where they were going to be. In reality, "It was just blind luck," Thomas said.

Thomas said he could not give specifics, but that "changes have been made and certain procedures are being reviewed to see what we can do to prevent this sort of thing in the future."

Thomas said it would have been helpful if staff would have approached Barnard, instead of letting him "wander around."

"If you see somebody that you don't think belongs [there], politely ask them if you can help them," Thomas said. "It would have been nice to have somebody identify him earlier on."

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Billy Jess Barnard
Accused burglar