



Dr. Amber Baker is the principal of Kimberley Park Elementary School.

Core

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proficient in reading, 40.4 percent were proficient in math. Only 39.6 percent of local high school students were proficient in Biology, while 48.1 percent were proficient in English II and 42.3 percent were proficient in Math I. Nearly all of the local averages were slightly lower than the average state percentages.

"I don't believe the tests reflect either the ability of our teachers to teach or the ability of our children to learn," Collins said.

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Superintendent Dr. Beverly Emory said the scores came as no surprise to school system officials.

"These results are what we expected," Emory said in a statement.

"Our performance compared to state averages is in line with where we've been the past several years. This is a baseline year using new standards, and now we can work on the areas where we need the most improvement."

Seventy one local schools did meet or exceed expected growth under the new standards.

"I'm encouraged that many of our schools showed growth," Emory said. "If parents wonder what their children accomplished last year, that shows teaching and learning were taking place. It's our job to work with all schools to make their growth goals and improve their proficiencies."

Twenty-one schools, however, did not meet growth goals; nine schools did not receive a growth rating.

Although there is a good reason for the decline in scores, Baker expressed concern that the lower scores could be damaging for the morale of her students and staff.

"The biggest piece that really is unfair and unreal-

istic is that the state did not think about how to roll this out," said Baker, whose school met expected growth. "From an administrative standpoint, it's going to be hard to keep our teachers motivated and keep them moving forward when they're still dealing with the sting from last year."

Collins said the curriculum could widen the achievement gap for at-risk students, who already face myriad challenges in trying to keep pace with their more privileged peers. Increased community support is needed to address the societal issues that impact at risk youth, from hunger to poverty, and remove the barriers that they face in learning under any curriculum, Collins said.

"You can't assume that just by laying an increased rigor in K-3, all the students, whether they're at risk or not, will be able to meet those standards ... there has to be a way to make up the deficit and have some homogeneity," he remarked. "... If we're going to hold children to this level of rigor, then we have to place the resources necessary in the classroom to make sure that the children are going to be successful."

Regardless of whether folks in the support or oppose Common Core, children in public schools need their help, Petitjean said.

"Every child deserves a free, quality education and we have to be vigilant, we have to be their champions," she said. "We need to start bonding together as a community to get this done."

For more information about Common Core State Standards in North Carolina, visit <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/acre/standards>.



Emory

RAMS READY TO PUT FOCUS BACK ON PLAYING FOOTBALL

BY LAYLA GARMS
THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem State University is beginning the slow process of repairing its reputation and forging ahead.

WSSU gained national attention last week after its starting quarterback, Rudy Johnson, was attacked the day before the CIAA Championship game by members of the opposing team, Virginia State University. The game was cancelled, denying WSSU an impressive third-straight CIAA crown.

WSSU Chancellor Donald Reaves told members of the media Monday that the university will need the support of fans and alumni in order to overcome the negativity that surrounded the incident and the school as a result.

"It's going to be hard. People are going to form their opinions, and have already formed their opinions, based on what's happened," he declared. "But we are who we are. We stand for integrity and honesty and we expect that from our players, and we get that from our players."

Johnson said that he was punched and kicked in the restroom of the WSSU Anderson Center, where a pre-championship luncheon was taking place, by a group of VSU players.

"I'm just trying to get over this experience, take it one day at a time," Johnson said of the attack, which left him with a black eye. "I'm in shock still. I wish it



Photo by Layla Garms

Rudy Johnson speaks as WSSU Chancellor Donald Reaves looks on.

never happened. I was willing to play them on the field, I just don't think they were."

WSSU Head Coach Connell Maynor said his team was outraged when they witnessed their star quarterback exiting the bathroom distraught, with blood running down his face, but they kept their calm, even in the face of extreme adversity.

"Our guys were able to restrain themselves ... even though they wanted to fight," said Maynor. "... I think it shows

the discipline that our teams have, that we've been trying to instill in these guys since they came."

Maynor said the judiciousness the players displayed in a difficult situation is indicative of the higher standard of behavior that the members of the Rams Football program are held to and known for all

across the country.

Reaves said he is calling for VSU to forfeit the game and the title to WSSU, which made it to the NCAA Division II finals last year, but says VSU President Keith Miller has declined to do so thus far. The local community has rallied around WSSU in its time of need, Reaves said.

"This institution has tremendous support from this community," he said.

Johnson said his spirits have been lifted by the outpouring of support and encouragement he's experienced in the days after the harrowing attack.

"I've received a lot of support. A lot of people have kept me in their prayers," he related. "I couldn't ask for a better family when it comes to Ram pride."

Despite the heartbreak and disappointment of having been robbed of the chance to compete in the CIAA Championship game, Johnson, who returned to practice on Monday, said the team is

more determined than ever to end the season on a high note.

"Believe it or not, it's brought us closer as a family," he said. "When something happens to one of us, it happens to us all."

The team is focusing its energy on the future, Johnson said.

"We're just willing to play harder to get to the national championship," he said.

Maynor said the setback won't stop the team, which has only lost one game this season, from achieving its dream of capturing the DII national title. In fact, they are already looking ahead to the next game against Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania during the first round of the NCAA Division II playoffs at Bowman Gray Stadium on Saturday.

"It was a long, long weekend," he admitted. "We're just glad we can get back to a normal day's work of practice and class and get back to what we do best."

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