

MOST SCORES SHOWS GAINS

Test Results Show Need For Reading Improvement

BY TERRY POPE

Average scores for Brunswick County school students showed gains over last year in most areas on the California Achievement Test except for reading and math in the lower grades.

"We feel good about most of our scores," said Patricia Ward, county schools testing coordinator. "We do feel a need to look at our reading scores, especially in the lower grades."

The state requires that the standard California Achievement Test be given to students in grades 1, 2, 3, 6 and 9 each year; however, Brunswick County schools also tests its students in grades 4, 5, 7 and 8. The tests were given in March.

The scores are provided in two parts, a grade equivalent and a percentile formed by comparing the raw test results with a national norm of students tested across the nation. State averages also allows the county to compare its scores with those of other students across the state.

For example, Brunswick County's first-graders scored 1.7 in reading at 48 percent, which means they

are reading at a first grade, seventh month level and scored better than 48 percent of students taking the test.

The 1.7 score is a slight decrease from last year's first-graders who scored 1.8. As second-graders this year, those students scored 2.8 in reading. The state average for first-graders in reading this year was 1.9 while for second-graders the average was 3.2.

Waccamaw Elementary first-graders scored 1.9 in reading, higher than other school scores of 1.8 for Lincoln Primary and 1.6 for the others. In the second grade, Southport Elementary scored a 3.3 in reading, or higher than the state average of 3.2, which was the score for Waccamaw Elementary second-graders.

Test results are used to help follow students along grade-by-grade in the school system, to "determine how well they are progressing," said Ms. Ward. "Overall, we feel our students are showing improvement."

Third-graders scored 3.6 in reading, below the state average of 4.0. Other reading scores by grade were: fourth, 4.7; fifth, 5.8; sixth, 6.7, below the state's 7.2;

seventh, 7.6; eighth, 8.7 and ninth, 9.6 or below the state's 10.3. State averages for grades 4, 5, 7, and 8 are not available since testing for those grades are not required.

Spelling Scores

Students fared better in spelling, with most grades scoring at or just slightly below the state averages. Grade scores and state averages were: second, 3.4, below the state's 3.5; third, 4.5, below the state's 4.8; fourth, 6.0; fifth, 6.9; sixth, 8.5, same as state; seventh, 8.5; eighth, 9.5.

Students in first and ninth grades are not tested in spelling. Last year's third-graders scored 4.6 in spelling while second-graders scored 3.4

Language Scores

Students in all grades scored close to the state average in language. Scores by grade were: first, 1.7, below state average of 1.8; second, 3.4, the state average; third, 4.3, below state's 4.6; fourth, 5.4; fifth, 6.7; sixth, 8.2, below state's 8.4, seventh, 8.3; eighth, 9.5 and ninth, 10.3, below state's 11.5.

However, the scores do show improvement over last year's scores, which were: first, 1.8; second, 3.2; third, 4.3, sixth, 7.8 and ninth, 10.1.

Math Scores

Math scores also increased over last year's scores in the second, sixth and ninth grades, but are still below the state's averages. Math scores by grade were: first, 1.7, state 2.1; second, 2.9, state, 3.3; third, 3.7, state, 4.1; fourth, 4.7; fifth, 5.6; sixth, 6.8, state 7.5; seventh, 7.7; eighth, 8.5 and ninth, 9.1, state, 10.4.

"We're pleased with the scores in the sixth and ninth grades," Ms. Ward said. "It kind of gives us a base of where to start from next year."

Other Notes

Waccamaw Elementary first-graders scored at the state average in math, 2.1, higher than the rest of the county. Waccamaw and Bolivia third-graders scored 5.0 in spelling, or higher than the state average of 4.8.

Shalotte Middle sixth-graders scored 9.5 in spelling, or one grade level higher than the state average of 8.5. All other schools scored 8.5.



STAFF PHOTOS BY TERRY POPE

Supply Fire Van Ready To Begin Active Duty

BY TERRY POPE

Although it hasn't been forced into active duty yet, the Supply Volunteer Fire Department's newest vehicle is equipped and ready to roll.

The freshly-painted, red van has been stocked with air tanks, a multi-band emergency radio and first-aid equipment. It has "Supply Volunteer Fire Department 1379" painted on its sides while a band of stainless steel covers a once rusted out portion of its side paneling.

On closer inspection, one may recognize the renovated van. It once housed the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department's crime prevention and drug awareness community project.

"It didn't look that bad," said Lt. Roger Suggs of the Supply Volunteer

Fire Department. "I understand why they had to park it though."

Brunswick County commissioners agreed last month to donate the van to the Supply Volunteer Fire Department. The van stayed parked in the lot next to the sheriff's department until firemen began thinking that it could be used for better purposes.

After receiving the van, the first task was to check the engine and transmission, Suggs said. The transmission was completely overhauled after parts literally fell out during an inspection.

Next, the van was given a fresh coat of paint, compliments of Ward's Paint and Body Shop in Shallotte, Suggs said. Brunswick Professional Pharmacy of Supply donated first-

aid equipment.

Red, flashing lights and a siren are on order and "should come in shortly," Suggs said. When completely stocked, the van will be used to follow the department's pumper out on routine calls, both house fires and brush fires.

It will carry the department's air packs, portable lights, ventilation fans and other equipment.

A mounted radio will receive U.S. Coast Guard, weather and other bands in addition to both fire and rescue transmissions. The van will be ready to "handle any type of emergency situation," Suggs added.

"It's going to be a benefit to the community and to the county," he added.

SUPPLY Volunteer Fire Department Capt. Mack Long sits in the driver's seat of the department's newest vehicle, the renovated Brunswick County Sheriff's Depart-

ment's crime prevention and drug awareness van. The van will be used to carry fire department equipment in response to most calls.

Supply Volunteers Plan Fund-Raiser

The Supply Volunteer Fire Department will serve chicken and barbecue plates and hold a yard sale Saturday, June 22 from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. at the department building on Hwy. 211 in Supply.

Plates, which include vegetables and hushpuppies, will be \$3.50 each. Crafts, clothing, household furnishings and many other items will be offered at the yard sale. Proceeds will go to buy much needed equip-

ment, a spokesperson said.

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