

Student Performance

N.C. Annual Testing Program

Editor's Note: This is the second of a three-part series on the Competency Testing program.

In March and April 1979, a battery of achievement tests was administered to students in the first, second, third, sixth and ninth grades throughout North Carolina. Results from the tests will be used to identify students' learning strengths and weaknesses, to improve students' academic performances, to inform parents and the general public of the progress of their children, to inform the public of the current educational programs and to plan and improve educational efforts.

A reading test and a mathematics test, designed to give teachers and parents explicit information about student performance on skills and knowledge emphasized at the student's grade level, were administered to students in grades one and two. Achievement tests in reading, mathematics and language arts were administered to students at grades three, six and nine. These tests are designed to obtain general measures of performance and to compare the performance of various groups of students.

From March 20 to April 9, 455,912 public school youngsters took the annual tests. Additionally, 17,009 non-public school youngsters were administered the tests along with approximately 1,000 students in two federal schools at Fort Bragg and Camp Lejeune. The following is a summary of the results.

Generally, the average scores for students in grades one, two, three and six surpassed the average scores nationally on tests administered as part of the Annual Testing Program. There were two exceptions. The state scores were identical with national scores in reading at grade three but the national average was two months higher in reading than state students in the sixth grade.

With the exception of spelling, the average ninth grade student nationally scored higher than the average North Carolina student on the tests administered as part of the Annual Testing Program. When North Carolina students were compared with national averages, they generally achieved the highest scores in mathematics, second highest in spelling, third highest in language, and the lowest in reading. Generally, the average student at all grade levels in each subject area in all eight regions of the state gained in performance from 1977-78 to 1978-79, with the exception of reading at the first grade level in Region III and reading at the ninth grade level in Region VIII. No changes were noted there.

At the ninth grade level, the average student in Regions one, two, three, four and six generally scored below the national average. However, the average ninth grade student in regions five, seven, and eight generally surpass the average ninth grade student nationally. The average ninth grade student in Region V surpassed the national average in all subject areas.

The greatest improvement in achievement between 1977-78 scores and this year's administration of the Annual Testing Program was noted in language. Substantial improvement was also observed in mathematics, spelling, and reading. Sixth grade students showed the largest gain of the five grades in which the tests were administered. Third and ninth grade students were approximately the same and the least progress was noted between the two test administrations at the first and second grade levels.

This report includes a summary of student performance for the entire student population in the state, as well as for the total student population in each of the eight educational regions.



MRS. DAVIS CELEBRATES 88th BIRTHDAY

Mrs. Annie Strong Davis of 2851 LaSalle Street recently celebrated her 88th birthday at her home with her family and relatives. Mrs. Davis is the mother of five daughters and one deceased son. Her daughters are: Willene Huff, Louise Vanderburg, Thelma Wallace, Lolla Twitty and Blanche Goodman. Mrs. Davis, who has lived in Charlotte all her life, has been a faithful member of Salem Baptist Church for 50 years. She is also the oldest living member of the church. Retiring five years ago at the age of 83, Mrs. Davis worked for Francis Martin, a surgeon,

for 40 years. Mrs. Davis' birthday gifts consisted mostly of monetary surprises. Among family members present at this memorable event were her 12 grandchildren: Thomas Wallace, Martin Davis, Nathaniel Smith, Cecil Wallace, Ralph Jordan, Carleen Clybourne, Tresdant Goodman, Aretta Goodman, Roselyn Jordan, Thomasina Massey, Andrea Moore and Cynthia Smith; 37 great grandchildren, four great-great grandchildren, an aunt, a brother and nephews and cousins.

"Illegitimate" Children Eligible For Annuity Benefits

"Illegitimate" children of deceased Civil Service employees or Members of Congress from throughout the country are now eligible for survivor annuity benefits on the same basis as other surviving children, as the result of a recent federal court decision in the District of Columbia. Between 10,000 and 22,000 children are affected by the Court's ruling. Many of them are now eligible for benefits of at least \$135 per month.

A provision of the Civil Service survivor annuity law, which restricted survivor benefits to those "illegitimate" children whose Civil Service parent died on or after February 24, 1972, are entitled to back ("retroactive") bene-

fits which the Office of Personnel Management (formerly, the Civil Service Commission), improperly denied them. While the Government has appealed the Court's decision and has gone to the Supreme Court on a similar case, Judge Richey ordered that some of the children in the nationwide class action must receive benefits immediately. Under the Court's recent Order, Management.

Persons who think they may be eligible for benefits or who know about children who may be eligible for benefits should visit or call the local office of the Office of Personnel Management.

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Retirement Means Only The

Beginning Of Old Age

"For many folks, retirement means only the official beginning of old age," says PRIME TIME host Don McNeill. "and that's too bad because things that were never possible before should be the very things we now look forward to with great anticipation."

McNeill, for 33 years the host of ABC Radio's "Breakfast Club," introduces viewers to some very special people who have "turned what they thought were going to be the down years into the time of their lives" on "Learning to Enjoy," episode two of PRIME TIME, airing nationally on PBS, Saturday, July 14, 6 p.m. ET (WTVI is airing Saturday, July 28 at 4 p.m.).

Retire and Relax

"A lot of older Americans prepare for retirement with the same precision as balancing a checkbook," remarks McNeill. Among those people are:

Joe and Elsie Collins, who have returned to live again amidst the rural pleasures of their childhood in Michigan's upper peninsula, where they are designing a year-round vacation residence.

Art and Bernice Lartz of Spring Hill, Florida, who recall "Our children told us to go and enjoy ourselves - and that's just what we did." The Lartzes are now part of Spring

Hill's social establishment, do as much swimming, fishing and golfing as they can, and work in helping others adjust to retirement ("If they only knew they could come here and just relax," says Art).

For some, though, their "self-identity through the years is completely linked to their occupation," as McNeill puts it. Yet, even they can discover that retirement is far less traumatic, far less a thing to be dreaded, than they feared. Among those who've made that discovery:

Margaret Richards, a Kansas City journalist who now teaches poetry, is making new friends and claims that it's "the happiest period of my life."

86-year-old Max Engel of Los Angeles - a life-long traveler who hasn't stopped exploring yet and now has as much time as he wants to devote to his life-long passion to see new places.

Naomi Gates Hodge, a civil servant in Chicago all her adult life, who now sings in a church choir and is heavily involved in church activities (says Naomi, "If we live like we should, we won't age").

Keep your out-of-town friends informed on what's happening in Charlotte by sending them a copy of the Charlotte Post each week.

Graduation Requirements

Change For New Students

by Susan Ellsworth Post Staff Writer

Students entering high school in September must meet new requirements for graduation.

The state board of education has raised the requisites to 18 units in grades 9 through 12 for all North Carolina's high school students graduating during 1982-83.

In Charlotte-Mecklenburg, the requirement had been 16 units through grades 9-12 or 13 units in grades 10-12.

"All but 13 of the state's 145 schools already require 18 units and in most of those units students generally have 18 or more units anyway," according to state superintendent Craig Phillips.

Under the old system ninth graders were limited in the number of high school offerings available to them.

Each student under the new system will be required to complete seat-time courses during the last four years of school. One additional unit in

mathematics and one more elective will be required.

The new math requisite raises the number needed to graduate to two and the additional elective increases that requirement to seven.

Students may also take courses at technical schools and community colleges and have them approved as a unit for graduation.

Passing the state competency test is also required to receive a diploma.

Those students who complete all required coursework but fail the competency test are allowed to retake the test as many times as they need to pass it up to age 21.

Students who have met requirements but owe the school money can participate in graduation exercises but will not receive a diploma until their financial obligations have been met.

John Caldwell

Joins U.S.

Air Force

John W. Caldwell, son of Mrs. Lizzie Caldwell, of 2828 Columbus Circle, has enlisted in the U.S. Air Force.

Airman Caldwell, a 1978 graduate of Harding High School, joined under the Air Force's Delayed Enlistment Program (DEP), which allows him to accumulate time in the Air Force Reserve until he enters active duty on September 10, 1979.

Sergeant Steve Dagenhart, Air Force recruiter in Charlotte, stated that Airman Caldwell successfully completed a series of tests which qualified him for the Aircraft Armament Systems Specialist field of training.

What Is A Biopsy?

Biopsy is the surest method for diagnosing cancer. It is generally a minor operation in which a small piece of suspect tissue is removed and examined under a microscope by a special doctor called a pathologist. If the tissue contains cancerous cells, treatment is begun. Contrary to what some people believe, a biopsy will not spread any cancer that is found.

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