

Farmington Schools MEAP results

Here's a school-by-school breakdown of the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) score for the Farmington Public Schools. These results are for the 1992-1993 school year.

Elementary	Reading (1 st grade)	Math (1 st grade)	Science (1 st grade)	Middle Schools	Reading (7 th grade)	Math (7 th grade)	Science (7 th grade)	STATE AVERAGES
Beechview	54.3 (S) 28.4 (M) 17.3 (L)	65.5 (S) 29.4 (M) 11.1 (L)	11.5 (cat. 3) 0.0 (cat. 2) 1.3 (cat. 1)	East	39.4 36.2 24.4	47.9 39.0 13.1	70.8 23.2 5.7 0.5	Elementary School* 4 th grade reading Satisfactory.....36.7 Moderate.....31.2 Low.....32.0
Eagle	50.0 37.5 12.5	67.2 21.9 10.9	81.0 19.0 0.0	O.E. Dunckel	54.0 30.2 15.8	61.4 29.8 9.8	75.9 23.5 0.5 0.0	4 th grade math Satisfactory.....42.3 Moderate.....27.8 Low.....29.9
Flanders	51.4 25.7 22.9	65.7 22.9 11.4	97.0 3.0 0.0	Power	57.4 34.0 12.6	54.7 34.7 10.5	78.1 15.8 6.0 0.0	5 th grade science Category 4.....71.0 Category 3.....23.8 Category 2.....4.8 Category 1.....0.4
Forest	47.7 36.4 15.9	61.4 25.0 13.9	72.5 22.5 5.0	Warner	45.4 22.4 22.2	62.3 30.4 7.2	67.7 23.2 6.1 0.0	Middle School 7 th grade reading Satisfactory.....32.8 Moderate.....33.2 Low.....34.0
Gil	37.7 39.6 22.6	39.6 37.7 22.6	81.3 8.8 0.0	High Schools	Reading (10 th grade)	Math (10 th grade)	Science (11 th grade)	7 th grade math Satisfactory.....35.4 Moderate.....36.0 Low.....28.5
Gil Year-Round	40.0 13.3 46.7	33.3 40.0 28.7	N/A N/A N/A	Farmington	49.2 32.1 18.7	36.8 36.0 27.1	67.0 25.9 5.2 1.9	8 th grade science Category 4.....57.1 Category 3.....30.3 Category 2.....11.1 Category 1.....1.5
Highmeadow Common Campus	80.8 11.5 7.7	86.5 11.5 1.9	98.7 1.3 0.0	Harrison	58.6 27.7 15.8	45.3 31.8 22.9	62.7 39.7 7.6 0.0	High School 10 th grade reading Satisfactory.....38.3 Moderate.....32.5 Low.....29.2
Hillside	61.3 32.0 6.7	73.3 25.3 1.3	83.3 16.7 0.0	North Farmington	66.0 22.5 10.5	45.6 34.7 19.8	61.0 24.0 4.6 0.4	10 th grade math Satisfactory.....23.1 Moderate.....29.2 Low.....47.7
Kenbrook	62.5 32.4 7.1	80.4 17.8 1.8	85.7 14.3 0.0	Key	S-Satisfactory M-Moderate L-Low	cat.1-Category 1 cat.2-Category 2 cat.3-Category 3 cat.4-Category 4, satisfactory performance. A student must show mastery on more than 75% of the objectives.	11 th grade science Category 4.....46.5 Category 3.....36.1 Category 2.....14.6 Category 1.....2.8	
Larkshire	59.0 23.5 11.5	59.0 27.9 13.1	91.7 8.3 0.0					
Longacre	51.9 33.3 14.8	61.1 25.9 13.0	81.2 8.8 0.0					
William Grace	38.5 23.1 38.5	51.3 25.6 23.1	92.9 3.8 0.0					
Wood Creek	55.1 30.4 14.5	60.9 29.0 19.1	90.5 9.5 0.0					
Wooddale	55.6 26.7 17.8	66.7 20.0 13.3	88.9 11.1 0.0					

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They question such things as the "whole language" approach to reading. They wonder if teaching the basic skills in math, reading and writing are compromised in the district's quest for an innovative curricula.

As a result, some have enrolled their children in private schools.

Farmington Schools' Judy White said she understands their frustration.

However, the assistant superintendent for curriculum and staff development said a lot of the concerns are due to the two M's — misunderstanding and misinformation.

"There are people that have a belief system that if you don't teach kids in the way they were taught themselves . . . if we're not teaching in that belief system then in someone's estimation we're not teaching correctly. There's nothing I can do about that," White said.

"For every parent who is basic, traditional-oriented in Farmington, I have 50 parents that want us to do something in a different way," she added later. "They want us to be on the cutting edge, to use technology and push us to move forward."

White said high scores in Michigan Educational Assessment Program and national assessment tests indicate the basics are being taught, and learned. She points out a high percentage (88 percent in 1992) of Farmington school students go on to college.

Swistkowski remains unswayed.

"It's not much of a surprise that (88 percent) of students go to college and their MEAP scores are higher," said Swistkowski, who attributes those figures to

strong parental involvement in education in this area.

"What happens when they go to college? Why do colleges have remedial reading programs?"

What's "whole language?"

The whole-language approach involves using a variety of materials, incorporating storytelling, writing and speaking. The idea is for children to understand what they're reading.

Such methods have replaced traditional, sequential reading programs that relied primarily on teaching children to sound out words.

With the whole-language approach, one concern is that kids are not learning enough phonics (study of sounds of spoken language) early on. White said that's not true.

For example, she said the Alpha program for children in kindergarten and first grade deals solely with phonics.

"People are worried because they don't see as much phonics as they did before, but the phonics approach built a whole nation of non-readers," White said.

"So we have to teach our kids to read for a variety of different purposes and a variety of different ways because they are going to be much more challenged than they ever were."

Parent is unhappy

Sandy Grulke is not sold, though. The Farmington Hills resident is a former elementary school teacher with 17 years of experience.

Her son attended kindergarten at Hillside Elementary, but he won't be going to first grade there.

Instead, Grulke said he'll be enrolled at Our Lady of Sorrows

School this fall.

"And I'm not even Catholic," she said.

Grulke observed a first-grade class at Hillside Elementary, which is two and half blocks away from her home. She wasn't impressed.

She said they didn't emphasize letter writing enough and teachers didn't correct it. She also didn't care for inventive spelling, where children are allowed to spell things phonetically in kindergarten and first grade.

"I think it was very lax," she said. "Not enough is expected of these kids."

Grulke is also not a fan of the whole-language approach.

Education has always had fads, she said, recalling an experiment with open classrooms when various grade levels were congregated into one large center. The plan was scrapped when grades began to fall.

She wonders if whole language might incur a similar fate.

"I don't want to get five years down the road and have my son not get all he should have because it wasn't fashionable at the time," Grulke said.

Patty Alspach's children also attend Hillside. She said sending her children to a private school is not an option.

Alspach said she's not against new teaching techniques.

"The four things I send my kids to school for is to learn how to read and write legibly and be taught how to spell and how to do arithmetic," Alspach said. "If those outcomes are the same, it doesn't matter . . . I'm finding I'm doing the work at home instead of school, where it should be done."

Bill calls for drivers' license change

Michigan residents could list a contact person on back of their driver's license to help doctors make the right medical decision in case of an emergency under legislation passed by the House Transportation Committee, said State Rep. Jan Dolan.

House Bill 4539, sponsored by the Farmington Hills Republican, makes available to emergency personnel the name and telephone number of an individual authorized as a "patient advocate."

That person would be responsible for providing doctors with instructions on desired treatments if patients are incapable of doing it themselves. The legislation creates a uniform location and helps physicians make the best decisions regarding procedures.

"It is unfortunate — and ironic — that Michigan does not legally recognize living wills, but honors patient-advocate requests," Dolan said. "As such, I believe it is all the more important to have the option to list such information on an easily accessible and highly visible document, such as a driver's license."

"This is a practical and responsible way to ensure that a person's medical choices in the event of physical or mental incapacitation will be readily known and carried out."

The bill, which received strong bipartisan support by the panel, now goes to the full House for consideration.

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