

MEAP scores stir shock waves

Continued from Page 1

ACT (American College Test) required for admission in most colleges.

But MEAP did more than provide a statistical handle on a serious problem. MEAP tests — especially the relatively low science scores — sent shock waves throughout much of the educational community.

IF THE 1988 MEAP science test had been an earthquake, it would have measured about 6.0 on the Richter scale — not potent enough to cause serious damage generally, but strong enough to shake things up.

"The MEAP tests got people up in arms," said M. Cherie Cornick, consultant to the Michigan Department of Education. "Before the tests came out, people seemed more concerned about the football team or the marching band. But when the test results came out, they started thinking about science and math."

Not everybody had that reaction, of course. Some educators complained the test was inappropriate and didn't accurately measure what students knew in science.

The director of science curriculum

for the Troy School District, for example, noted that many schools have switched to a "hands-on" emphasis on science, while MEAP tests still measure information learned by rote, or from lectures or books.

"MEAP doesn't really measure what youngsters learn with the 'hands-on' approach to science," said Barbara A. Berthelsen, who also teaches biology in the Troy district. "I do not consider the MEAP tests to be a valid measure of what students know."

Criticism similar to Berthelsen's has been expressed in many parts of the state at different levels of the educational community. Students, teachers and administrators question the validity of MEAP tests.

One administrator said MEAP may have inadvertently contributed to low science scores by not emphasizing that discipline years ago, rather than within the last five years or so.

NOTING THAT EARLY MEAP examinations omitted science, Don Griffin, consultant to the Wayne County Intermediate District, said perhaps state officials sent the



wrong message by initially testing for math and reading, but not science.

Griffin was referring to the fact that MEAP tested for math and reading skills for more than 15 years before 1988, when officials first tried to measure science proficiency on an all-pupil basis.

Last fall was only the second time that MEAP tests tried to assess science proficiency on an all-pupil basis.

By neglecting to test for science, MEAP was saying science was not as important as math and reading, said Griffin. "They relegated science and the teaching of science to the back burner," he said.

Not everybody agrees with Griffin's assessment. But they generally agree MEAP tests are a flawed ruler by which to measure science knowl-

edge or proficiency.

"Most educators recognize that MEAP tests are not perfect," said David C. Houzel, one of two science consultants to Oakland schools. "Many educators regard MEAP tests as a thorn in the side. But they're a thorn people must live with. They're a thorn that raises public awareness."

MEAP officials are aware of the criticism, but defend the tests while acknowledging they must be refined and updated from time to time.

"We know the tests are not perfect," said Geraldine J. Coleman, state MEAP coordinator. "But we are making them better. We review them and make adjustments, but it takes time to make changes, usually three to five years."

Faults or no faults, MEAP tests are still a vital part of evaluating school programs, Coleman said.

Flawed or not, MEAP tests shake teachers and parents out of any apathy, she said. They prompt parents to clamor for more and better science.

"And we all know the squeaky wheel gets the grease," she said. "And what gets tested gets taught."



Flanders principal Frank Delowsky (right) and Phyllis Burns, PTA member, congratulate Courtney Blachford, one of the "lucky lotto" winners.

Flanders benefit adds Lotto touch

This year, Flanders Elementary PTA hosted the school's annual pot luck dinner with a new twist: a "Lucky Lotto Drawing."

More than 70 families enjoyed an extravaganza of homemade foods Jan. 10, followed by the drawing, which packed the room as more than 300 awaited the luck of the draw.

Principal Frank Delowsky emceed the event in gala attire; area merchants donated gifts or gift certificates for the drawing. Forty-three gift packages in all, including an autographed Red Wings hockey stick, a getaway weekend at an area hotel and roundtrip airfare to Chicago, were handed out.

Appealing to the children in the crowd were packages of books, videos, dinosaurs, science items, games and toys.

More females studying science

Two years ago, Farmington Public Schools and a local civic group started a program to interest female students in the sciences.

Women engineers, technicians and even a representative from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration gathered to show the sixth and eighth graders the exciting side of science — and what it could do for their future.

"There's a real issue here, and that's modeling. It's very important that we give out good messages," said Judith White, an assistant superintendent for Farmington schools. "The more we do, the more we encourage that."

The workshop, sponsored by the district's DELTA Department and the local chapter of the American Association of University Women each spring, is designed to interest these students before they make choices in their high school schedule.

As the person in charge of the district's curriculum, White is encouraging other new ideas in sci-

ence as well.

The district is carefully watching a science room started this year at the Highmeadow Common Campus, a pilot elementary program. The school board has gone on record favoring science rooms for all elementary, but so far there hasn't been room. Science curriculum in the district is under revision now.

STATISTICS SHOW that, traditionally, not as many girls take the high school sciences as boys. But teachers in the Farmington-area high schools see a changing trend.

Rich Jahn, who teaches freshman science at Harrison High School using computers, believes his methods help break the science gap. Many students come in a bit computer-shy, especially the girls, he said. But after working with fellow classmates in teams, everyone relates to learning.

At North Farmington, the only class with more boys than girls is electronics, according to teacher Bob Winters. "The girls have picked up — I see

it's about equal now," he added.

At Farmington High School, teacher Bob Neuhauser said the school is developing a "more diverse student population," which is spilling over into all classes, including science. That also goes for the male/female split.

"We've always had quite a few of the women going through the science program," he said. "A lot of students get the feeling that math isn't for them. That's not a male and female thing."

Roy Lewis, a teacher at Harrison, said although science classes have "gotten more sophisticated in what we present," it hasn't deterred students — male or female — from enrolling. He sees a lower female enrollment in some classes, like physics, but "in some classes, I have more girls," he added.

The bottom line is how the courses are marketed for everyone. "There's all kinds of things — like seminars being offered. All of that is being promoted regardless of sex," Lewis added.

State tests accepted as yardstick

Continued from Page 1

scores are available for comparison from 1986 to 1987 and 1988 to 1989. In comparison to mathematics and reading, which have been tested for years, science is down on the list for Farmington and most other districts.

THIS YEAR, for example, only 23

percent of Farmington Public Schools 10th graders achieved 75 percent or better on the tests. In comparison, the sophomores scored 82.5 and 89 percent in mathematics and reading, respectively. Fourth and seventh graders fared better in science, but no better than 57 percent, school teachers explain that

while the tests are given at the beginning of the 10th grade, many of the skill objectives on the MEAP test aren't taught to students until later high school years.

"They're at a disadvantage testing them on something they haven't had yet," said Roy Lewis, science teacher and department head at Harrison

High School.

Farmington High science teacher and department head Bob Neuhauser said using the 1988-87 test figures as a comparison is not fair, or realistic.

"The first one was a flasco," he explained. "It was totally useless. The only part which can be evaluated would be ninth grade science."

ms. THREADS
Contemporary Women's Fashions
Always 20% - 60% Below Retail

Giant Spring Progressive Sale

Days Only!	Wednesday, Jan. 25	10:30
	Thursday, Jan. 26	08:00
	Friday, Jan. 27	10:30
	Saturday, Jan. 28	10:50

Shop our Special Bargain Racks

HUNTERS SQUARE
14 Mile and Orchard Lake Road
Farmington Hills, MI
855-4464

Buy 1 item at our regular low discount price. Get the following DISCOUNT on merchandise of equal or lower value.

- 2nd item at 10% OFF
- 3rd item at 15% OFF
- 4th item at 20% OFF
- 5th item at 25% OFF
- 6th item & more 30% OFF

All Sales Final
Prior Sales Excluded



When is the Best Time to look for a Physician?

(see answer below)

No matter how healthy you are, anyone can fall victim to an unexpected accident or sudden illness. When that happens, it's nice to have a personal physician you can turn to. Someone who knows your medical history and can promptly respond to your medical needs.

Finding the right physician isn't easy. That's why St. Mary Hospital established a no cost, no obligation, physician referral service. Our representatives can help you find the right physician specialist near your home or work, who has convenient office hours and accepts your insurance plan. If you desire, you can even be connected to the physician's office for an appointment. Best of all, the physician is affiliated with St. Mary Hospital of Livonia. St. Mary has been providing quality care to area residents for over a quarter-of-a-century.

So, before you look for a physician in the yellow pages, or compile a confusing list of names and telephone numbers from friends, call

**ST. MARY HOSPITAL
PHYSICIAN REFERRAL SERVICE
464-WELL**

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. At other times you may leave a message and the representative will call you back the next business day. Remember, the best time to look for a physician is before you need one!

**St. Mary Hospital**
36475 W. FIVE MILE RD.
LIVONIA, MICHIGAN 48154
464-4800

(ANSWER: BEFORE YOU NEED ONE!)

**ST. MARY HOSPITAL
FAMILY MEDICAL
CENTER**
28000 W. 13 Mile Rd.
Livonia, Michigan 48150
474-5910

**ST. MARY HEALTH
CARE CENTER -
REDFORD**
6001 Woodhurst Rd.
Redford, MI 48239
837-3330

**ST. MARY HEALTH
CARE CENTER -
LIVONIA**
5001 Woodhurst Rd.
Livonia, Michigan 48150
471-1122

**ST. MARY HEALTH
CARE CENTER -
NORTHVILLE**
4200 W. Six Mile Rd.
Northville, MI 48167
247-1070

If you're not ready for a nursing home,

SAY YES TO OUR UNIQUE SUPERVISED RESIDENTIAL CARE COMMUNITY

Here you can live as independently as you like, yet know that a 24-hour professional staff is ready to lend assistance and administer your medication.

Don't worry about housekeeping and laundry; we'll take care of all that. Enjoy a comfortable room and deliciously prepared food. Go on shopping trips and excursions. Take part in daily activities. But always live a life of your choosing. For a tour and brochure, call...



The Farmington Hills Inn,
30350 W. Twelve Mile Road,
Farmington Hills, MI 48018 - (313) 851-9640