

MEAP scores exceed state and county averages

By TRACY BRENKHAUER
STAFF WRITER

Farmington fourth and seventh graders continue to exceed state and county averages in math and reading Michigan Educational Assessment Program scores.

The Michigan Department of Treasury released the scores on May 30. Scores for fifth- and eighth-grade science, social studies and writing tests aren't yet available.

Test results are categorized into satisfactory, moderate and low. The goal for public schools is to not only move scores into the satisfactory category, but also to move scores out of the low

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Barb Cherem

—Director of assessment, evaluation, special projects

classification.

Comparing this year's scores to last year's in Farmington, the news is mostly good.

For fourth-grade students, the district improved by 1.9 percent in math. Four schools had no students in the low category. In reading, the district declined by 1 percent in the satisfactory cat-

egory. Six schools improved and six schools declined. Two stayed relatively the same.

"In math, we are up in satisfactory and we cut the low group in half," said Barb Cherem, director of assessment, evaluation and special projects. "Keep in mind it takes about three years to see a substantial change, so you have to keep a focus. We are above the state in the high category and below the state average in the low."

For seventh-grade students, the district improved by 3.1 per-

cent in the satisfactory category in math, with three of four middle schools moving students out of the low category. For reading, there was a 5 percent increase in the satisfactory category.

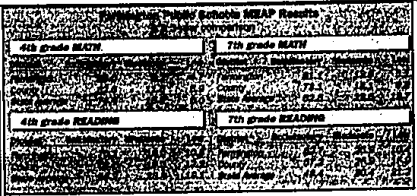
Administrators say these numbers demonstrate that Farmington's curriculum is working.

"This is a long-term gain," Cherem said. "We've been working for the last three years with training and integrated instruction."

Most of the MEAP is skill-based. School districts use the data to tweak curriculums. Farmington won't make any immediate changes in response to its MEAP scores.

"We need time to digest and reflect on the numbers," Cherem said. "There's always a context with any statistic."

For fourth-grade math, 74.8 percent of the state and 82.6 of the county had satisfactory



scores, while in Farmington 66 percent scored in that category. The same trend exists in fourth-grade reading. The state showed 58.2 percent satisfactory, the county 68.5 percent and Farmington was at 70.2 percent.

In math, 62.8 percent of seventh-grade students across the state and 73.1 percent in the county tested satisfactory, while

61.1 percent of Farmington students did. For seventh-grade reading, 48.4 percent of the state, 57.2 of the county and 62.7 of Farmington students earned satisfactory scores.

School administrators stress that the MEAP is not a competitive test within schools or across the state.

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Thefts

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the calls from the alarm company, and they're gone," he said.

Investigators have examined any connections among the businesses and thought they had some suspects identified, but the leads didn't pan out. The cases are being "aggressively investigated," Nebus said.

Because there appears to be no pattern to the day or time —

some buildings have even been broken into while people were inside — police are urging business owners and employees to call if they hear or see anything suspicious. More importantly, Nebus said, exercising some basic common sense might help prevent these crimes.

"Keep portable computers out of sight, locked up in desks or

■ 'Keep portable computers out of sight, locked up in desks or cabinets if possible.'

Chuck Nebus
—Assistant police chief

cabinets if possible," he commented.

Alarm systems can be a deterrent; however, in one case, a motion detector didn't work.

"Make sure you're alert to the fact that you're not always protected by a lock," Nebus said. "They're bold, and they're very quick."

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