

'The Test'--Are Students Actually Learning?

LANSING
For the first time in history, Michigan school children throughout the state will be tested this year to see what they are getting from their studies.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Dr. Ira Polley said plans are nearing completion for the state's first statewide assessment of educational progress.

"To begin with, all public school students in the fourth grade, and all public school students in the seventh grade, will be given a basic skills examination sometime in January," Polley said. "It will require no more than two hours."

"What will, I am sure, come to be called 'the test' is actually a basic skills battery -- it measures the achievements of the students in reading, writing,

mathematics and vocabulary.

"The testing program has been devised and will be carried out by the Department of Education with assistance from Educational Testing Service, of Princeton, N.J. Local school officials will administer the test. We expect that four or five months will be required after the test is given to gather, compile and analyze all of the data."

BUT, HE NOTED, the basic skills assessment battery is merely the first step in a planned program to find out how well the Michigan educational program is doing, and to provide state help in making improvements where needed.

"The data which will be gathered this school year will be impressive in amount and scope," Polley said. "But we must emphasize again that full opera-

tion of a proper and meaningful assessment program will not be achieved in the period of one year."

"What we are after with the basic skills assessment battery of tests is an immediate measure in one area -- achievement in basic academics," he said.

He noted that development of suitable assessment procedures has been underway

for some time. On April 23, 1969, the State Board of Education called for a two-fold approach to assessment.

THE MAJOR long range thrust is to be a comprehensive program of data gathering and analysis involving the broad goals and purposes of the schools in addition to in-depth academic measurements. The other thrust is the basic skills

testing being started this year.

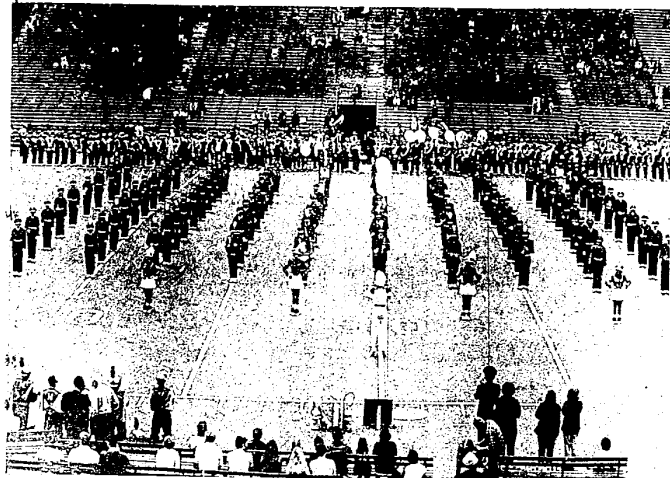
Both programs will enable meaningful comparisons between schools and school districts, and between geographic areas or socio-economic groups in the state.

In an initial report to schools on the assessment purpose and procedure, the Department recognizes the fact that some school people familiar with assessment may have mis-

givings.

Principal concern is problems that could arise from public misinterpretation of test results. Therefore, the Department publication says, no individual comparison or "ranking" of school district will be prepared.

Geographic area, pupil background and financial resources of the schools will be included, with reporting of results.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT are members of the Plymouth High marching band as they take over the gridiron at Saturday's Michigan-Vanderbilt game. Plymouth's musicians had the featured

role in a post-game program. That's Director James Griffith at lower right supervising the performance. (Observer photo by Harry Mauthe)

Parochial Panelists Split On Schools' Role

Usually a debate on parochial aid revolves in endless detail around the legalities of state aid to non-public schools and those schools' alleged need for public money.

And so the panel at Aldersgate Methodist Church in Redford Township Sunday night was unusual because some of the speakers addressed a higher question than the Taxider Bill--they got into the future of public funding and the role of the Catholic Church in American society.

The panel was unusual in another way: A Protestant debated in favor of parochial aid, and a Catholic spoke against it.

The panelist was attorney John Feikens, son of the former

federal judge and Civil Rights Commission Chairman. The Catholic was Carl Dumas, a member of the South Redford school board.

DUMAS SAID, "Originally there was a compelling reason" for parochial schools, immigrants, especially Catholics, needed their own schools to nourish their faith and upgrade themselves.

Today, however, "A dual school system, at least as we know it, can't be borne any more," said Dumas, and the Catholic Church -- "my church"--must ask itself some questions.

What should be the role of the church today? Should it be in the field of total (K-12 plus college)

education? Are the descendants of those 19th century immigrants still socially, educationally, economically deprived?

Dumas' conclusion: "The church should consider a planned phasing out of its educational activities... I'm not saying to close all your doors tomorrow and dump all your kids on the public schools... but a planned analyzing of the church's role."

FEIKENS likened the parochial issue to the legislative reapportionment issue -- a matter of "equal protection of the laws."

If the Legislature attempted to halt some present programs

--such as auxiliary services that parochial students get -- if it fails to respond to the parochial schools' trouble, Feikens reasoned, couldn't the courts step in and require the state to provide free education in a building of the student's choice?

His fellow parochial backer, Mrs. Kay Beard of Inkster, representing Citizens for Educational Freedom, picked up that point later.

Education, she said, is a constitutional right. "If you say that parents can send their children to parochial schools only as long as they can afford it, then you're saying that freedom has a price tag. But freedom should not have a price tag."

Observer's Virginia Kissell Dies

REDFORD
An active civic worker and Supervisor of Redford Township Schools and civic affairs, Virginia Kissell, 25351 Caberail, died Monday in Grace Hospital. She had been in declining health the past year.

Most recently an Observer staff member in the credit and purchasing departments (1956-65), Mrs. Kissell had devoted 15 years of concentrated efforts to school affairs in the township.

She was also a recent appointee of Aldrick Bellaire, township supervisor, to the Redford Township library board.

She served for several years on the township election commission.

A life member of the national Parent Teacher Association as a result of honors accorded by the Redford Township Council, she had served as president of PTA units in Vandenberg School and Pierce Junior High at the time of each school's opening.

SHE WAS PRESIDENT of the township council of Parent Teacher Associations during the years when PTA units were founded in Pierce and in Pearson Junior High Schools.

The South Redford Board of Education received the news of Mrs. Kissell's death during its Monday evening meeting and immediately passed a resolution commending her outstanding contributions to child welfare in the community.

"Virginia Kissell immeasurably enriched the lives of people in our community and we deeply regret her loss. She truly will be missed," stated the resolution.

"It was always a joy to see her," added Supt. Merlyn D. Roe. "Her concern was always for all the children and she came forward when the going was very rugged in the infancy of several of our schools."

ANOTHER VOLUNTEER service to which she devoted many years was the Michigan Cancer Foundation. The family expressed her wish that contributions go to the foundation in lieu of flowers.

Born in DeSoto, Mo., June 16, 1914, she came to Redford in November 1954 with her husband Harold, and daughter Linda, 20, who is now a senior at Eastern Michigan University. Mrs. Kissell is with the Centerline branch of the Crucyler training center.

Burial will be in St. Louis, Mo., where the body will be taken after viewing by friends at the Harry J. Will Funeral Home, 25450 Plymouth Rd. Friends may call Wednesday until 10 p.m.



LINING UP BEHIND the United Foundation Torch Drive poster are five entrants in the "Miss Torch" contest. They are (left to right): Beverly Donohost, 9979 Beaverland; Joan Smith, 1026 W. Grand Blvd.; Daune Bergen, 12089 Stout; Charlotte Livernois, 6113 Grandville, and Carolyn Opanowski, 12621 Grayfield. Sixty-four girls -- the largest field ever -- entered the competition. "Miss Torch," who will be announced Sept. 29, will represent UF at meetings, rallies and broadcasts throughout the Oct. 14 to Nov. 6 campaign.

Pursell Asks Unified Action On Welfare

Carl Pursell (R) who represents the 26th District on the Wayne County Board of Supervisors, is making a strong plea for solutions to the welfare program, currently one of the main problems in government.

Speaking before the Plymouth Rotary Club Friday he cited the lack of communication among the various governmental units and pleaded for leadership that could unite the program.

"He pointed out that the city, state, county and the national government are concerned and yet there is little communication or an attempt to sit down as a unit and try to come up with answers.

"I think it's time," he said, "that our government leaders--city officials, county officials, representatives in the state legislature and representatives in Congress--get together and

iron out the problem or start paving the way for a solution.

"As it is now," he continued, "no single unit takes the responsibility and as a result there is no solution. It's time this condition changed."

HE POINTED OUT there are 76,000 children on the county welfare lists. He also explained that \$10 million has been set aside for the program in the county. This will be matched by state and national funds -- but it isn't enough.

Using Pursell's figures, 76,000 children and \$20 million it breaks down to \$263 per child.

Pursell also told of plans for a mass transit system and suggested that a look be taken at

the Toronto system where more than one million passengers are carried each day.

He informed Rotarians that a public hearing is being set before the supervisors to determine the status of the charter proposed for Plymouth Heights (Plymouth Township) and emphasized that he was opposed to the erection of government buildings on the 63 acre site now being purchased by the Township.

Originally, this land was designed for recreation and Pursell stated, "It would be a waste of taxpayer's money to duplicate municipal buildings on the site that was designed (and later turned down) for recreation.

Schoolcraft Announces Natural History Class

Nature lovers in the Schoolcraft College district will find another opportunity this fall to learn more about the natural history of Michigan through a special four-week course announced by the college's Biology Division.

Called "Saturday Mornings with Nature," the course consists of field trips on four successive Saturday mornings starting Sept. 27. It is open to the general public.

The schedule: Sept. 27, "Nature's Microscopic World," a field trip to aquatic habitats and microscopic examination of fresh-water life, conducted by Gordon Snyder, biology instructor.

Oct. 4, "The Flora of an Oak Opening," a field trip to the oak openings region of northwestern Ohio, conducted by Mrs. Mary Ellis, well-known naturalist, and Roger Sutherland, biology instructor.

Oct. 11, "Man's Role in the Dynamics of Ecology," field trip observations of a series of ecosystems, conducted by William Pinal, biology instructor.

Oct. 18, "A Look at the Geologic Past," a fossil-hunting trip to a limestone quarry in northwestern Ohio, conducted by William Ryan, geology instructor.

Russen Bertrian, director of financial aid, announced at Schoolcraft that up to 20 students of 60 are expected to attend. A representative of the Division will explain provisions of programs involving competitive scholarships, tuition grants, and guaranteed loans for high school graduates intending to seek a college education.

A Division of Student Financial Aid is a branch of the Dept. of Education's Bureau of Higher Education. Ronald Jursa is director of the division.

Counselors To Meet
Guidance counselors from high schools in the northwest Wayne County area will meet at Schoolcraft College on Thursday, Sept. 25. In one of a series of seminars conducted by the State Dept. of Education's Division of Financial Aid to familiarize counselors with state sponsored student financial aid programs for 1970-71.

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MSU Names Top Students
EAST LANSING
Michigan State University honored 85 students for outstanding academic achievement during the summer term. Each student must attain a grade of A or better in every course to be eligible for the honor roll.

Local students named to the list were:
John Popeacu, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene J. Popescu of 1705 S. Central, Redford Township. A 1967 graduate of Redford Union High School, he is studying police administration.

Linda J. Bonnell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Bonnell of 35560 Marler, Livonia. An elementary and special education student, she is a 1966 graduate of Bentley High School.

Donald J. Weir, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alastair Weir of 15390 Stamford, Livonia. Weir, a pre-med student, is a 1967 graduate of Bentley High School.

Lyle D. Meier, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred P. Meier of 15443 Lakewood, Plymouth.

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| The Redford Observer | 29,000 | 29,511 |
| The Farmington Enterprise | 15,400 | 14,150 |
| & Observer | 9,700 | 8,987 |
| The Plymouth Mail & Observer | 10,200 | 11,842 |
| The Westland Observer (West end) | 11,600 | 11,842 |
| The Garden City Observer (West end) | 11,600 | 11,842 |
| Total Weekdays | 105,200 | 92,100 |
| Total Sunday | 75,800 | 71,668 |
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