

The Farmington Observer

HomeTown News... It's all about you!

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Revising C'ville curriculums eyed as way of improving scores

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
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Clarencville school officials believe revised science and social studies curriculums will help stem the tide of poor test results in those subject areas.

Less than half of the district's fifth and eighth graders scored proficient or satisfactory on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program exams in those subjects, according to results released June 19. Students performed much better in writing.

Youngsters took the tests in January. Only 35 percent of fifth graders scored proficient on the MEAP science test. In eighth grade, only 24 percent hit the mark.

Students in both grades fared poorly in social studies. Only 10 percent of fifth graders either met or exceeded state expectations (considered satisfactory) while a mere 18 percent did so at the eighth-grade level.

The district is aligning new social studies and science curriculums to better reflect state standards.

Statewide, 21 percent of fifth graders and 31 percent of eighth graders achieved satisfactory scores on the MEAP social studies test.

The MEAP social studies exam has been criticized for being too sophisticated, especially for fifth graders. That said, district officials are "concerned" about the latest MEAP results, said Barb Church, curriculum director.

"We're working on multiple fronts to improve student achievement," Church said.

The district is aligning new social studies and science curriculums to better reflect state standards.

At Thursday's meeting,

MEAP

Clarencville school board trustees approved \$15,600 in new social studies curriculum materials. Trustees passed a revised science curriculum June 8.

By contrast, student writing scores show promise. In the fifth grade, 81 percent of the youngsters scored proficient. That was above the state average of 68 percent.

Of eighth graders, 47 percent passed. The state average was 67 percent.

The 4.6-square mile Clarencville district includes parts of Livonia, Farmington Hills and Redford. The district has 1,850 students.

While concerned, one school board member urged people not to get too caught up in the controversial state standardized test.

"MEAP is one measure... It doesn't test the quality of education your child is receiving," said Trustee Matthew Boettcher. "It's

a mistake to judge a school district solely on MEAP."
School board President John Kanyo also noted percentages are deceiving.

"We have to look at the number of students and the number of questions they got right or wrong," Kanyo said, "especially since we are a small district."

Board members approve of the way district officials are addressing areas where MEAP scores are lacking, Boettcher said.

Church will meet with building principals and other administrators to go over strategy. Teacher workshops are also being planned, Church said.

"We should see improvements, but it won't be as dramatic because we need to build the foundation."

Groundwork will likely be done with a heavy concentration in reading.

MEAP exams in social studies, science and math require students to read extensive written questions.

"Reading is the foundation of everything," Church said.

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Burglary council goal is to educate public and lower residential crime

Educating the public and lowering the rate of residential burglaries is the mission of the non-profit Burglary Prevention Council, the only association of its type in the United States.

Since its formation in 1995, the Burglary Prevention Council recognizes the month of June as Burglary Prevention Month.

During the month, the BPC works with police chiefs and crime enforcement officers throughout the country, providing burglary prevention data and information to aid them in their crime prevention programs.

Police departments, national on-line information services and home security product manufac-

turers have cited data statistics distributed by the BPC as sources in crime prevention programs and materials. Information from the council has been used in hundreds of newspapers, magazines, radio and television stories.

The Burglary Prevention Council's booklet called "Safe & Secure" has been distributed to more than a million homeowners throughout the country.

For additional information, contact the Burglary Prevention Council at 221 North LaSalle Street, Suite 3500, Chicago, IL 60601-1520, phone (312) 372-7090 or check out its web site at www.burglaryprevention.org.

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