

Tests

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McLaughlin-Smith, curriculum director and principal of Lake-Noxen and Ross elementary schools. "If we are weak in an area, then the teachers and I sit down and try to find materials or instructional methodology that will address that need," Smith said, explaining the process he uses to align Lake-Lehman's curriculum with the standards.

How and when those standards are taught remains in the control of the local school district. These standards allow the state to assess, through the PSSA, how well a school is performing and how much they are improving. "The results of our efforts are clear," said Paul Reinert, assistant principal of Dallas Middle School. "We're above the state average in all areas."

Area educators strongly emphasized not teaching to the test, but teaching to the standards.

"Teaching to the standards is of extreme importance and that's a big part of our regional undertaking," said Robert Kunkle, principal of Lehman-Jackson Elementary School. "Whether that test were there or not, we'd be doing the same thing."

McCarthy agrees with the distinction.

"Some schools, in their efforts to get test scores up, substitute so called test preparation materials for authentic curriculum materials. I don't agree with that. We don't use test prep materials," said McCarthy. "The whole school is becoming successful because we are stressing, not the test, but the curriculum."

Beginning in the school year

"Teaching to the standards is of extreme importance and that's a big part of our regional undertaking."

Robert Kunkle
Principal,
Lehman-Jackson Elementary

2002-03, students must demonstrate performance at the proficient level or better in reading, writing and mathematics on either the State assessments administered in grade 11 or 12 or local assessments aligned with academic standards or both. Individual student scores, provided only to their respective schools, can be used to assist teachers in identifying students who may be in need of additional educational opportunities.

"This is the first year that each student gets a report back that identifies the student as below basic, basic, proficient or advanced," said Speziale. "The state has said that in 2002-2003 school districts need to look very closely at scores in terms of graduation. Kids that are basic or below basic have to be remediated."

The only requirement that the Commonwealth mandates is, at a minimum, that students perform at the proficient level or better in reading, writing and mathematics in order to graduate. The methods used to make this determination are the decision of the local school board.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education gives cash rewards to schools showing marked im-

Scaled scores for Back Mountain area schools for the past five years

DALLAS SCHOOL DISTRICT School

Gr.	Subject	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999	1997-1998	1996-1997
5	Math	1380	1350	1340	1330	1340
5	Reading	1410	1350	1410	1350	1420
5	Math	1380	1340	1340	1330	1370
5	Reading	1390	1350	1320	1350	1400
8	Math	1350	1350	1350	1370	1360
8	Reading	1370	1380	1360	1360	1350
11	Math	1390	1270	1350	1320	1340
11	Reading	1420	1260	1350	1300	1350
11	Writing	1420				
11	Writing	1280				

LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT School

Gr.	Subject	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999	1997-1998	1996-1997
5	Math	1400	1360	1290	1370	1330
5	Reading	1380	1340	1320	1380	1360
5	Math	1340	1270	1300	1360	1310
5	Reading	1380	1320	1350	1410	1380
8	Math	1340	1320	1340	1270	1290
8	Reading	1340	1330	1360	1320	1360
11	Math	1280	1330	1330	1270	1310
11	Reading	1320	1350	1350	1310	1360

State averages for 2000-2001

	Grade 5	Grade 8	Grade 11
Math	1310	1310	1310
Reading	1310	1310	1300
Writing			1320

All area schools scored above the state averages with the exception of a 1280 in math for Lake-Lehman High School.

Bold face indicates highest scores in Luzerne County

provement in the PSSA results. Wycallis, Dallas, Lehman-Jackson and Lake-Noxen elementary schools and Dallas High School had increases of no less than 80 points on the combined math and reading scores over last year's scores and may be eligible for school performance funding from the state.

In 2000, schools that attained an increase of at least 50 points on the combined math and reading tests as compared to a baseline set by the school's

"Our district made a conscious decision to align what is taught in the classroom to what children are expected to know."

Kathleen McCarthy
Principal, Wycallis Elementary

PSSA results of earlier years, were qualified for funding and received awards of between \$18 and \$93 per student depending on the level of increase. The exact minimum increase in points

is determined yearly after analysis of that year's data.

A school committee, headed by the principal, determines how the award will be spent following Pennsylvania Depart-

ment of Education guidelines. Area schools should be notified later this month if they qualify for these awards. Schools that start with a high achievement rate and maintain it are rewarded as well.

"Everybody has to jump on the bandwagon and give kids these opportunities. This is important to the children whether or not they are tested," summed up McCarthy. "Because, in life, who does a multiple choice test?"



POST PHOTOS/M.B. GILLIGAN

Joey Kupstas, FBLA president at Dallas High School, checked out the registration table at the start of the event. Seated from left: Stephanie Kutza, Liz Janoski and Kristie Kovalick.

Business

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also addressed the audience. Officers from the various schools participated in a ceremony that explained the meaning of the parts of the emblem of the FBLA: eagle, service, education, progress, future, business, leaders and America.

Students then attended three of the 10 workshops that included Real Estate as a Career; Accounting; Stress Reduction Through Reiki; Networking People Skills; Interviews and Resume Tips and Techniques; and Dressing for Success.



Members of the Dallas FBLA club are pictured at the pizza party that followed workshops. From left: Rebecca Pincofski, Kelly Lenahan, Jaime Bozentka, Alyse Taddei, Kristen Allardyce, Amanda Socash and Laura Vanderhook.

"They told us to wear navy blue or black and white and also how to act at work."

Rebecca Pincofski
Dallas junior

"Dressing for Success was interesting," said junior Rebecca Pincofski. "They told us to wear navy blue or black and white and also how to act at work."

Many students signed up for the Reiki session presented by Marlene Knappman and Donna

Panzak. "It was nice and relaxing," said Amanda Socash.

The students, advisors and presenters were treated to hoagies, pizza and ice cream after the workshops. A \$5 admission fee helped to cover the costs of the evening.

The second general session of the evening featured a drawing for t-shirts supported by Chuck Wilson of The Fieldhouse. The shirts had FBLA on the front and "We Mean Business" on the back, an idea of Dallas senior John Pambianco.

"The fall workshop is more of a fellowship meeting of the group," said Shrader. The clubs move into a competitive stage in February.

"The regional competition will be hosted by Crestwood this year," said Toni Madden, a Dallas resident who is one of three advisors for the Wyoming Valley West FBLA club. "The winners advance to the state competition held in Seven Springs and this year the national competition will be in Nashville."

Sand candles available

Christmas sand candles will again be available this year at the Shavertown Volunteer Fire Co. The cost will remain the same at \$5 per dozen. Contact any member of the company or call 696-3212 to place an order.

SV Church of Christ holiday celebration

Sweet Valley Church of Christ presents "O Holy Night, The Beginning of Hope" along with a reenactment of the time and place of Christ's birth on Dec. 15 and 16, at 7 p.m. The church is located at 5439 Main Rd., Sweet Valley, approximately 2.5 miles from the intersection with Route 118. Main Road intersects with Route 118 just an eighth of a mile from the stop light in Pikes Creek. Nursery is provided for families with small children. Call 477-2320 for more information.

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