

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

Nebraska's students in grades three through eight and the 11th grade were tested last spring in reading and mathematics.

Perkins County's students were among the more than 80 percent of those students, as well as most of the eighth and 11th graders tested in writing, who took their tests online. Science tests were administered to students in grades five, eight and 11.

The performance scores released Aug. 21 are considered the initial results since they could change slightly before the scores are final in November.

New test results show Nebraska public school students scored higher on their 2012 state reading and mathematics tests—higher than in previous years.

Nearly three of every four students or 74.2 percent are meeting or exceeding state reading standards, compared to 68.6 percent in 2010.

The new mathematics test results show 67.4 percent of the students tested proficient, compared to 62.8 percent in 2011.

“Nebraska teachers and administrators will be pleased to see a growing number of students meeting the new, more rigorous learning expectations and scoring proficient on tougher tests,” said Education Commissioner Roger Breed. “Students are making progress, and we attribute that to Nebraska teachers who have a long history of helping their students meet higher learning expectations.”

This year's baseline for first-year science test results showed 66.9 percent of the students were proficient.

Science standards, as well as the state's science test, have been revised, increasing the rigor of the standards and the tests with the goal of ensuring Nebraska students are career and college ready by the time they graduate from high school.

Parents will receive a report on their child's scores from their local school district soon. Materials to help parents help their child with reading, mathematics, science and writing are available through the Nebraska Department of Education's homepage at www.education.ne.gov

Reading, mathematics, science and writing test results for districts and school buildings by grade level are available at <http://www.education.ne.gov/>

Writing test results were released earlier in May for fourth, eighth and 11th graders.

PCS fourth graders who met the standard numbered 79 percent which was down from the previous year. Superintendent Tobin Buchanan said the district will continue to look at strategies to improve students' writing skills.

Statewide, 92 percent of the fourth graders met the state standard.

Eighth and 11th graders followed a new process. Sixty-nine percent of PCS students in eighth grade were proficient in writing compared to 63 percent statewide. Sixty-three percent of the district's 11th graders were proficient in the writing standards compared to 62 percent statewide.

Perkins County Students Performance Levels

Students tested and their performance comparisons include:

- Grade 3: Twenty-two students were tested.

Reading—59 percent met, 32 percent exceeded and 9 percent fell below standards.

Math: 50 percent met standards, 27 percent exceeded and 23 percent fell below standards.

- Grade 4: Thirty-two fourth graders were tested in reading and 33 tested in math in spring

2012.

Reading: 50 percent met standards, 13 percent exceeded standards and 38 percent fell below.
Math: 79 percent of students tested met the standards, 6 percent exceeded and 15 percent fell below the standards.

- Grade 5: Of 24 fifth graders tested, results are:

Reading: 50 percent met standards, 38 percent exceeded standards and 13 percent fell below standards.

Math: 56 percent met standards, 33 percent exceeded and 13 percent fell below standards.

Science: 88 percent met standards, 4 percent exceeded and 8 percent fell below standards.

- Grade 6: Thirty-four students were tested in reading and 23 were tested in math.

Reading: 59 percent met standards, 18 percent exceeded and 24 percent fell below standards.

Math: 52 percent met the standards. Twelve percent exceeded the math standards, and 36 percent fell below the standards.

- Grade 7: Twenty-nine seventh graders tested in reading and 30 in math had the following results:

Reading: 28 percent met the standards, 10 percent exceeded and 62 percent fell below the standards.

Math: 37 percent met the standards, 7 percent exceeded standards and 57 percent fell below.

- Grade 8: Twenty-two students tested in reading and math.

Reading: 41 percent met standards, 18 percent exceeded standards, and 41 percent fell below standards.

Math: 45 percent met the standards, 9 percent exceeded and 45 percent fell below the standards.

Science: Half of the district's students met the science standards with 9 percent exceeding and 41 percent below the standard.

- 11th Grade: Twenty-nine students were tested.

Reading: 59 percent met, 21 percent exceeded and 21 percent fell below the standards.

Math: 59 percent met standards, 34 percent exceeded the standards, and 17 percent fell below the state standards.

Science: 76 percent of 11th graders met the standards, 7 percent exceeded and 17 percent fell below the standards.

The performance scores released Aug. 29 could change slightly when the scores are finalized in October.

Complete score results are available online at www.education.ne.gov