

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

Superintendent R. Todd Porter expressed pleasure via a letter to district patrons concerning Wallace School's ranking in the Nebraska Performance Accountability System (NePAS) which measures schools by their average scores in reading, math, writing and science.

"I am very happy to say that our students rank in the top 9 percent in the state in reading, top 23 percent in math, and the top 2 percent in science," said Porter. "Although our average writing score is in the proficient range, it is an area we need to improve in, ranking 200 out of 249 schools overall."

Porter said the Wallace School District is already starting to address this issue.

The statewide results were released Nov. 20 by the Nebraska Department of Education. The report compiles test scores and demographic information from each of the state's 249 public school districts which oversee the education of 152,000 students.

Porter's letter explained how the report shows current results, indicating whether grade levels have improved from year to year, and whether students have shown growth from one grade to another.

Schools are divided into elementary grade level configurations (grades 3-5), middle grade level configurations (grades 6-8) and secondary grade-level configuration (grades 9-12).

"An overall school district ranking is also shown, which is a good indicator for small schools such as ours, since schools with small class sizes can be affected by a very small number of students in terms of test scores or graduation rates," said Porter.

Parents and anyone else interested can view the website where the 2011-12 State of the Schools Report appears and schools in similarity are compared to each other. It includes all students, including English language learners and children in special education.

"Keep in mind that this is just a snapshot of a district on one test on one day," said Porter, who said he expects to see much improvement during this current school year.