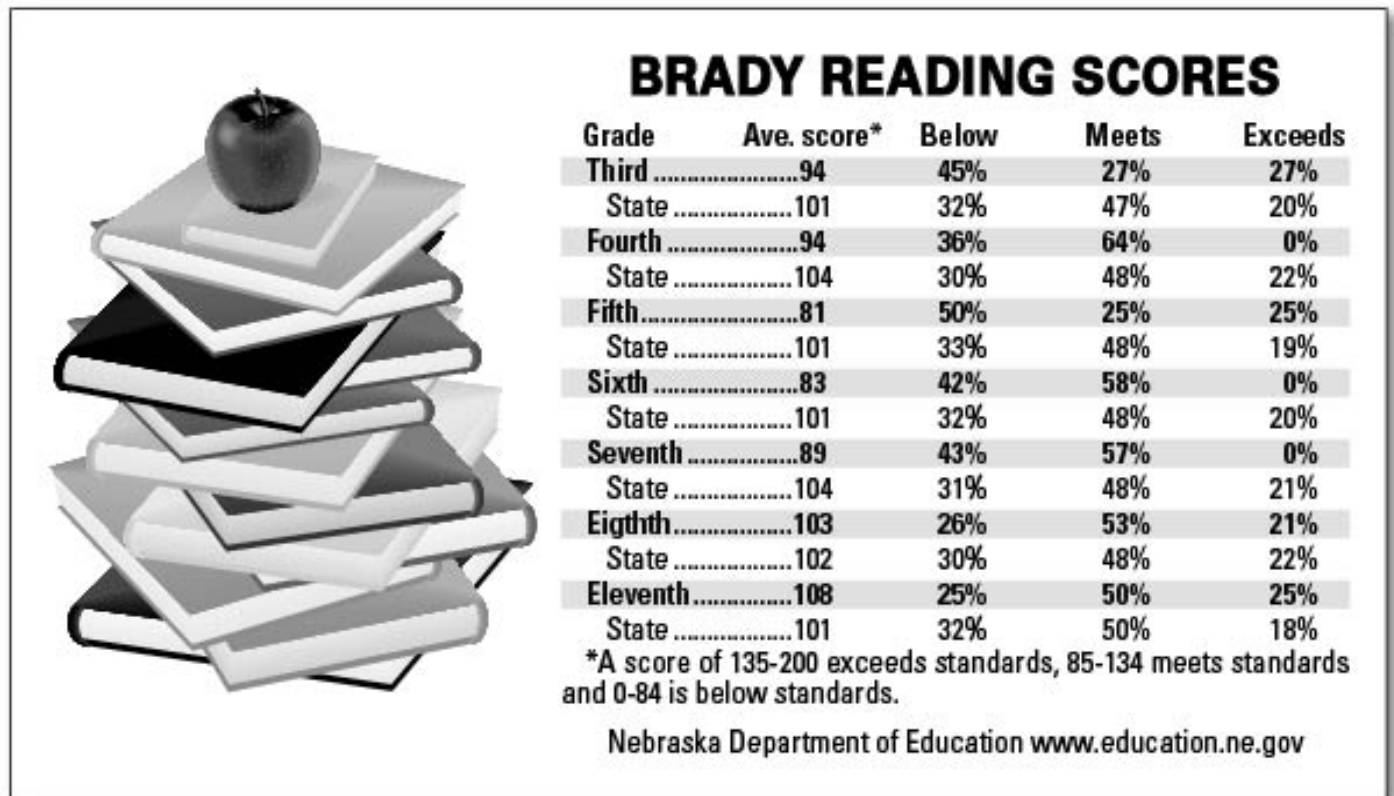


Brady already addressing disappointing test scores

Written by Deb Egenberger
Wednesday, 01 September 2010 21:53 -



District taking steps to help students improve.

It's difficult to look at brand new numbers from the first year of a statewide reading test and fully understand how a district has performed.

But when Brady superintendent Bill Porter reviewed raw scores from the Nebraska State Accountability tests taken last spring by students in grades 3 through 8 and 11, he knew something more had to be done.

"We didn't do well overall," Porter said.

He gave a prepared written statement: "The Brady school board, administration and staff have and will continue to make the necessary changes, doing what is necessary to ensure that the students receive a proper education.

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“We began by taking Response to Intervention (RTI) training last year and implementing Measuring Assessment Progress (MAP) tests this year.

“We will continue working with other education communities to make improvements where they are necessary.”

Essentially what that means, Porter said, is that the district began working to improve reading and other subject assessment scores long before the Nebraska Department of Education released the latest round of results last week.

Considering all seven grade levels tested for reading ability, 48% of Brady’s students met the state’s assessment standards.

Only 14% exceeded the standard and 38% fell below the desired score.

Across the state, 48% of the 147,000 students tested met the state standard. Roughly 20% exceeded the standard and 31% fell below.

In previous years, school districts developed their own reading tests to measure whether students met state standards.

Porter said the comparisons raise concerns but shouldn’t cause alarm because teachers are already working toward improvement.

1 Elementary teachers have taken the RTI training so they can be better equipped in targeting individual student needs in a variety of subject areas.

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The MAP tests will be implemented at all grade levels this school year. Porter said MAP is a standardized test similar to Tera Nova or Iowa Basic but it is designed to provide more specific feedback and progress reports.

“We’re working on some other things too,” Porter said, including a Drop Everything And Read program that will be implemented throughout the building.

DEAR allows for classroom time to be set aside daily or weekly for reading. It encourages silent, independent reading on individual levels with books chosen by the students.

“Every little bit of encouragement will help students become better readers,” Porter said.