

WASL Scores

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“If a school has a large number of English-as-a-Second-Language students ..., they will never get off the school improvement list, no matter how hard we work,” Bergeson said. “It’s a good idea to be held accountable but this is not the way to do it.”

Bergeson said she’s determined to close the gap between poor and rich students, though she knows that’s a big challenge.

“As poverty increases, achievement goes down,” she said. “We don’t want the accident of a child’s birth or the income of their parents to determine their achievement level.”

Bergeson is lobbying for changes in the federal law to give schools more flexibility in testing special education and non-English-speaking students.

The WASL is designed to measure critical thinking skills and how well students can apply what they have learned. Unlike old standardized tests, the WASL requires students to write essays and explain math solutions in writing. The test costs about \$24 per student to administer.

Officials last year said they could tell by the test results that high school sophomores were blowing off the test. Tenth graders left more than 22 percent of the open-ended math questions blank and were three times as likely to leave questions unanswered in the writing and reading portions as younger students.

Bergeson didn’t have comparable figures on how many questions were left blank this year, but said the response rate has improved slightly.

She said schools have done a better job of explaining the importance of the test to kids. She wants to create partnerships with state colleges and universities, so that kids who perform well on the WASL in the 7th grade could get letters encouraging them to think about college and the SATs in high school.

Details Of The 2003 WASL Scores

By The Associated Press

A look at Washington’s 2003 school test results:

TESTED: About 230,000 children in grades four, seven and 10.

HIGHLIGHTS: Students in every grade improved in reading, math and writing.

LOWLIGHTS: Listening scores dropped in grades 10 and four (though they improved in grade seven). Only about one in three students met state standards in all four areas. Special education and non-English-speaking student performance lags far behind state standards.

MEETING STANDARDS: 34.4 percent of fourth graders met state standards in all four areas; 27.2 percent of seventh graders met standards in all areas; 33.5 percent of 10th graders met standards in all

areas.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT: Fifty schools have failed to adequately improve WASL scores for two consecutive years or longer. They are:

Schools that haven’t made adequate WASL improvement for two years:

Brewster Elementary, Brewster Oakwood Elementary, Clover Park Southgate Elementary, Clover Park Grandview Middle School, Grandview Harrah Elementary, Mount Adams Robert Frost Elementary, Pasco A.W. Dimmit Middle, Renton Cleveland High School, Seattle Meany Middle School, Seattle Minor Elementary, Seattle Rainier Beach High School, Seattle

McCarver Elementary, Tacoma Stewart Middle School, Tacoma Wellpinit School, Wellpinit

Westside High School, Wenatchee

Schools that haven’t made adequate WASL improvement for three years:

Brewster Jr./Sr. High, Brewster Neah Bay Elementary/High, Cape Flattery Granger High School, Granger Cascade Middle School, Highline Chinook Middle School, Highline Artz Fox Elementary, Mabton Mabton Jr./ Sr. High, Mabton Midway Middle School, Moses Lake Mount Adams Middle School, Mount Adams Nespelem Elementary, Nespelem R.B. McFarland Jr. High, Othello Stevens Middle School, Pasco African American Academy, Seattle

Aki Kurose Middle, Seattle Concord Elementary, Seattle Madrona Elementary, Seattle Harrison Middle School, Sunnyside

Gault Middle School, Tacoma Jason Lee Middle School, Tacoma McIlvaigh Middle School, Tacoma Roosevelt Elementary, Tacoma Toppenish High School, Toppenish Morris Schott Middle School, Wahluke Saddle Mountain Intermediate, Wahluke Satus Elementary, Wapato Wapato Middle School, Wapato Adams Elementary, Yakima Barge-Lincoln Elementary, Yakima Lewis & Clark Middle School, Yakima M.L. King Jr. Elementary, Yakima Washington Middle School, Yakima

Schools that haven’t made adequate improvement in WASL scores for four years in a row:

Quincy Jr. High, Quincy Garfield Elementary, Toppenish Kirkwood Elementary, Toppenish

Religious Leaders Struggle To Support Black Gays

Continued From Front Page

says. “I used to be one of the strongest gay bashers there was until I encountered loving, compassionate gentle people who said, ‘I did not choose this. There’s no way that I’d be in my right mind and choose this lifestyle. This is who I am.’”

McDonald continues, “The fundamental theological question of homosexuality is: Is it by birth or is it by choice? That is the fundamental theological question. And then there are several thousands hermaphrodites born every year, babies with both sex organs. It is not as clear-cut as some ministers want it to be.”

And if people are born that way, as many contend, McDonald says he needs another answer. “I don’t

know why God did that. I haven’t figured that out yet.”

Rev. Joseph Lowery, former president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, has heard gay rights activists equate their struggle with the Civil Rights Movement.

“I don’t think it’s synonymous,” he says, referring to the two movements. “I think there are similarities. It always has been divisive but it’s time for the choir to sing. I don’t mean just an excluding choir. I mean an inclusive choir. And if I’m going to err in terms of critical issues like that, I’m going to err on the side of inclusiveness.”

David Almasi, director of Project 21, a Washington-based

Black conservative think tank, says, “Unfortunately, a lot of those people recognized as the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement are happy to have that [gay and lesbian] political backing behind them. And so they’re embracing it. The civil rights community is not doing this for a civil rights reason as much as a way to maintain power, maintain authority, to have large political backing that maybe someday they may be able to call on the homosexual lobby or the anti-war in Iran lobby or whatever for political favors.”

Black gay activists disagree. “Dr. King said none of us is free until all of us are free,” says Keith Boykin, former executive director of the now defunct National Black Lesbian and Gay Leadership Forum. “I don’t think that the movement

stops when Black people achieve equal rights. I think the movement continues until all of us are free.”

Boykin explains, “I’ve met thousands and thousands of gay men and lesbians over the years and none of them would voluntarily choose to be a part of another oppressed group, especially those who are Black or Latino.”

Recent polls show Black support for gay lifestyles on the decline, especially after a Supreme Court ruling on June 26 overturning Texas’ anti-sodomy law.

Support for homosexual relations between consenting adults has varied from a low of 32 percent in 1986 to a high of 60 percent last May. The Supreme Court ruling apparently touched off a dramatic reversal, with support for such unions dropping 10 to 12 points in

just two months.

The poll initially showed Blacks and Whites about even in their levels of support for legalized gay relations, with 59 percent of Whites favoring them and 58 percent of Blacks holding a similar view.

In July, after the Supreme Court’s Texas ruling, the percentage of Blacks supporting such relationships dropped by 23 points, from 58 percent to 35 percent. The

overall drop in support for all races was 10 percent. The margin of error was 3 percent.

McDonald concedes that Black ministers in particular are of two minds.

“The jury is still out,” he explains. “In the Black church, there is just now beginning to be debate and the semblance of open discussion on this issue. Not by a long shot are we there yet.”

Prison Escapee Shot During Capture Dies

(AP) - A convicted kidnapper and rapist who was shot after escaping from a prison near Aberdeen died on Saturday.

Thomas D. Guinn, 33, was pronounced dead around 1:30 p.m. at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, said Veltry Johnson, spokesman for the state Department of Corrections.

Guinn escaped from Stafford Creek prison on Friday after assaulting a prison gardener, commandeering a maintenance truck, crashing it through a fence, then climbing over the prison’s outer perimeter fence, Johnson said.

State corrections officers and Grays Harbor County sheriff’s deputies found Guinn in a wooded area about a mile away from the prison, Johnson said.

Guinn, serving a 175-year sentence for rape, kidnapping, robbery and burglary in Pierce County, was shot after refusing to surrender to authorities, Johnson said.

Prison Superintendent Doug Waddington said Guinn, who was unarmed, was given numerous warnings before he was shot. He

said Guinn was apprehended within 90 minutes of his escape.

Waddington said two officers found Guinn in a wooded area and ordered him to stop, but he yelled profanities at them and kept running. The two officers then used pepper spray on him, gave him three more verbal commands to stop, then fired a warning shot, then gave him another verbal command but he continued to run, Waddington said, and then they shot him.

Waddington said the two officers could not have surrounded the man in the area of dense brush and forest where they found him.

Agencies investigating include the sheriff’s office, Washington State Patrol, the U.S. Coast Guard and the state Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Stafford Creek, a 1,936-bed prison, on the outskirts of South Aberdeen, has been open since April 2000. Earlier this month it had 1,875 inmates, and 533 staff members, according to Waddington.

The facility has units for long-term minimum security offenders, medium security and maximum security offenders.

THE SEATTLE MEDIUM (ISSN 746-5394) is published weekly on Wednesday for \$34.00 per year by Tiloben Publishing Company, Inc., 2600 South Jackson Street, Seattle, WA 98144. Periodicals postage paid at Seattle, WA. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to: THE SEATTLE MEDIUM, 2600 South Jackson Street, Seattle, WA 98144.

Joan Owens & Chris B. Bennett, Co-Publishers

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BONkids

young achievers



Michala Watford
Arbor Heights Elementary

Age: 10
Favorite School Subject: Michala really enjoys reading, especially books by Sharon Creech.
Hobbies/Interests: She takes piano lessons and likes to draw pencil portraits of her friends.
Proudest achievement: Her improvement in reading skills.
Ambition: To design kids clothes.
How She'll Get There: By doing it and going on from there.

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