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Gladstone schools make significant gains in reading, math, and writing

After using some new instructional approaches, Gladstone teachers saw gains in a number of areas during the last round of state OAKS testing.

At John Wetten Elementary, third grade reading scores jumped an astonishing 15.2 percent, climbing above the state average. Reading scores also rose 4.6 percent for 7th graders and 3.5 percent for 11th graders, who beat the state average.

“Our team taught Common Core standards deeply, including 90-minutes of daily reading instruction focused on fluency and comprehension. Teachers also tracked data on student achievement and adjusted their instruction to meet individual student needs.” said Wendy Wilson, principal at John Wetten. “Honestly, our third grade teachers are amazing, and their results demonstrate that.”

At Kraxberger Middle School, students made big gains in math as students adjusted to new Common Core math curriculum. Sixth graders were 7 percent above the state average. Seventh graders improved by 3.3 percent, with average scores 14 percent above the state average. Eighth grade student achievement climbed 5.5 percent, 4.5 percent above the state average.

“Decreasing class sizes in math made a significant difference,” explained Principal Nancy Bailey. “In addition, we created math intervention classes in all grades to give struggling students extra time each day to work on math mastery. Early release Wednesdays also helped by providing academic support to students in all subjects and allowing time for teachers to plan together.”

Gladstone High students exceeded the state average across the board, in math, reading, science, and writing. The biggest gains were made in writing, where scores jumped 6.2 percent.

“Writing was a focus area for us last year,” said Dr. Natalie Osburn, Gladstone High School principal. “Our teacher in-service on writing for learning benefited students across the curriculum, and resulted in more writing in all our classrooms.”

The Gladstone district continuously strategizes ways to improve achievement in areas where students struggle, such as fourth grade math, where teachers and students are adapting to significant changes to the curriculum.

This school year, elementary parents will see teachers focus more on math, learning strategies they learned from instructional consultants in August. Meanwhile middle school teachers will learn new ways to improve student reading and literacy across all content areas. At Gladstone High, teachers will continue to build familiarity with the Common Core curriculum.

High Rocks Hawaiian luau to raise funds for Outdoor School

Gladstone's High Rocks restaurant plans a Hawaiian feast as a fundraiser for the Outdoor School at Kraxberger Middle School. A full 100 percent of proceeds will go to benefit the program, which sends sixth graders to a week-long environmental learning camp in Rockaway.

The event will take place at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, September 23 at High Rocks Restaurant, 915 E. Arlington Street in Gladstone. Dinner costs \$10 per adult and \$5 for kids 12 and under.

The buffet dinner includes Hawaiian roast pig, salads, fruit, bread, and desserts. Beverages and bar drinks will be charged separately.