

8th-graders show CAP strength

Most Huntington pupils do well on state tests

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HUNTINGTON BEACH — Most grade-school students in the city performed well on their California Assessment Program tests, scores released this month by the state show.

However, marks for Huntington Beach City School District third-graders dropped.

The CAP test is given each year to measure performance in reading, written language skills and mathematics in the third and sixth grades. Eighth-graders are tested on the same subjects as well as history/social studies and science.

In the city's two elementary school districts — Ocean View and Huntington Beach City — scores varied on a school-by-school basis, but there were some overall trends.

Superintendent of Public Education Bill Honig cited the Ocean View district as one of eight in the county that improved most from last year. But although Huntington Beach eighth-graders turned in a strong showing, their counterparts in the third and sixth grades did not fare as well.

Huntington Beach sixth-graders' reading scores improved slightly over last year. But their writing and math grades dropped by four and seven points respectively.

Nevertheless, in all three categories, the district's sixth-graders scored higher than average compared to similar schools statewide.

Since 1984, the district's overall sixth-grade scores have been improving.

But this year's third-grade scores fell by 29 points in reading, 31 in written language skills and 33 in mathematics.

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TESTS: CAP score results higher this year for

Los Alamitos and Fountain Valley 8th-graders

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ing and mathematics skills. In a eighth-grade students' knowledge of science and history is examined.

Although the tests had been administered to students prior to passage of the state omnibus education law, state Superintendent of Public Instruction Bill Honig has said he uses the test scores to measure the success of the 5-year-old reform effort.

Among more than 70 mandates, the measure called for lengthening school days and years and offered financial incentive for districts to create a mentor-teacher position. Mentor teachers work throughout the district with other instructors to improve techniques.

Improvements in local eighth-grade results reflect an increase in the average scores of eighth-grade

ers throughout the state.

Students in all three tested grade levels in the Los Alamitos and Fountain Valley school districts scored higher than the state average. However, state education officials have noted that students of relatively affluent families, such as those who populate communities served by the two districts, tend to score higher.

A superintendent in a less affluent community, such as Santa Ana, "is up against circumstances that complicate matters," Ingram

said. Santa Ana Unified School District students scored at the bottom at each grade level in every subject category.

Decline in third-grade scores was experienced in most districts throughout the county, state figures show.