

Pushing Peanuts

It seems to be human nature, doesn't it, that we get so involved with the daily grind of life--pushing that proverbial peanut across the floor, completely engrossed in the task at hand--that we fail to sit up and take a look at the "big picture."

Recently we held the first of our feeder school parent information meetings. As I gathered some data for my presentation, I was struck by how impressive that information is, even though I see pieces of that information frequently. So I want to share that information with you as well.

We know through research and talking with prospective parents that when selecting a school, academics is often the most important factor. Academic success or progress is frequently measured by nationally standardized test scores. The Terra Nova is the standardized test administered to our junior high students each spring. Consistently, our junior high average on the Terra Nova is approximately the 70th percentile. That's achievement better than 70 percent of the students in the nation.

Our students also are administered, over the course of their junior high and school career, the Explore, PLAN, and ACT. These tests work in tandem to measure students' strengths and weaknesses in preparation for the ACT, the college entrance examination more widely used in Louisiana and in the South. Our students' achievement on this test is consistently and significantly higher than the national average. For example, in 2007:

TEST	National avg.	SFHS avg.
Explore (8th grade)	14.0	16.4
PLAN (10th grade)	17.5	19.5

Over time, linkage reports from the Explore to the PLAN and to the ACT show scores both increasing overall and consistently above the national average, as much as 24 percent and 21 percent above, even with fluctuations from one class to another.

Our ACT average is also consistently and significantly above both the state and national average. Our nine-year average on the **ACT is 22.9; the five-year average is 23.02.**

Here are some recent averages:

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
SFHS	23.0	23.2	23.4	22.9	22.6
State	19.8	19.8	20.1	20.1	20.3
National	20.9	20.9	21.1	21.2	21.1

Keeping in mind that these ACT averages include virtually *every* student in *every* graduating class, since all of our students take the ACT, our average is very strong.

Even more impressive are these ACT numbers, which show that no student is left behind:

	Bottom 10%
Class of 2006	17.57
Class of 2007	19.33
Class of 2008	18.67

I could go on for pages more, but I think these numbers tell the story. Our students do well academically when compared to the nation, and we should be very proud of their performance. We are grateful to you, their parents, for instilling in them the drive to succeed academically, and to their teachers for their dedication to academic success. I have no doubt that we will continue to see the same remarkable achievement that has been the hallmark of our school as we progress forward. We'll keep you posted.

God's Blessings,

Jennifer Malone, Principal

