Test shows gap in results of minority and white students

By Robin J. Burleson

Reports of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills showed that, as a group, black students scored worse in all testing areas than any other ethnicity in the Rock Island-Milan School District.

The gap between the scores of white students and black students increase as they progress through the grades, according to the results.

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum Joe Marino gave the results in the school board.

“Sometimes district averages can be misleading,” Mr. Markward said, adding “it is clear, however, that there’s an unacceptable disparity between the achievement of minority students and other students. We are curious to look at individual building results by ethnicity.”

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Score

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in all tested areas, Hispanic students are also performing between the fifth and sixth-grade level in language, reading and social studies, but scored at or above their grade level in math and science. On average, white sixth-graders in the district scored at the seventh-grade level in all tested subjects.

Mr. Marino said third-grade students in nine schools showed improvement in their ITBS reading scores, while 10 schools improved math scores. “Those trends are very positive,” he told the board.

However, third-graders at those schools on the warning list scored, on average, below their grade level. Frances Willard third-graders also performed at a lower grade level — except in math, where they scored at grade level.

Sixth-graders at Grant, Hawthorne-Irving, Lincoln and Frances Willard also scored, on average, below grade level in all areas, the report shows.

Earl Hanson and Horace Mann sixth-graders scored at a grade equivalency of seventh-grade students in all areas, except in social studies, where Horace Mann students scored at grade level.

Edison eighth-graders scored slightly below grade level in reading, but above grade level in all other areas.

“We still have a long way to go, but I think we’re getting better at understanding the problem and starting to focus on resources,” Mr. Markward said, adding that he would like to see that improvement “accelerated.”

He also said a new monitoring program at Hawthorne-Irving is expected to see students there in language arts.