

REPORT CARDS ARE NOT JUST FOR STUDENTS

By Marta McCloskey
Staff Writer

■(GIT) To ensure "open" communication between communities and school districts, the Secretary of Education, Dr. Floyd Coppedge, along with Governor Frank Keating, announced that schools will now have their own report cards, publicly proving their performance based on demographics and test scores.

Coppedge said the report cards have been sent to each school district for copying and distribution to parents and patrons before the end of the year. "This is an attempt to move Oklahoma back to parental and local involvement," he said. "This will also be used as a tool to show parents exactly how their school is doing."

Currently, elementary schools are above the national average in test scores. However, Oklahoma secondary students are below the national average based on ACT scores. "We have been making gains, but they are not adequate enough. Oklahoma students could be doing much, much better," Coppedge added. "I do not want to paint a dismal picture, but we ought to be concerned."

Coppedge offered suggestions for schools to improve themselves. He said that teachers needed to become personally accountable. For example, "just because a school district is located in a low-income area is no excuse for low test scores," Coppedge said.

In addition, Coppedge suggested that curriculum and programs be strengthened.

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Dr. Floyd Coppedge

"If we teach more, students know more."

The report card did not include data for national or regional comparisons. Coppedge and Keating, said that the school report card program was new and could be amended to include such items.

"The new school report card will allow parents and school patrons to measure how well their neighborhood school is doing, just

as they examine a child's report card as a measure of his or her progress," Keating said.

"I would encourage everyone to take a close

look at their school's report card. If a school is doing well, let's praise it. If a school is performing poorly, parents and patrons should ask why and offer to help make improvements."

The school report cards will be available to parents and communities through their local schools.

KEATING COMMENTS ON SCHOOL-TO-WORK

By Marta McCloskey
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Governor Frank Keating said Thursday in a press conference, that he would still not sign a bill for school-to-work, as long as the state vocational-technical system was leading the program. Last week, Attorney General Drew Edmondson issued an opinion stating that the Executive School-To-Work Council created by the Governor would not continue to function beyond the last day of adjournment by the Legislature, unless during that session the Legislature statutorily creates the agency.

However, Keating said that any board that performs executive functions should always be appointed by the governor. Keating contended that it should be the responsibility of the Legislature and the governor to represent Oklahomans on the issue of school-to-work. "It is not the responsibility of career educators ... elected officials should be the voice for the people," he said.

"If this is a fundamental remake of the education system, then who's authorizing it ... vo-tech," Keating questioned. He added that children in grades K-6 did not need to think about careers, instead, they needed to learn the basics in core subjects. "At very young ages, children should learn a column of figures, not visit a fire station."

COMMISSION COMMITTEE ELIMINATES 70 POSITIONS

From Okla. Dept. of Human Services

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) An Oklahoma Commission for Human Services committee met all day May 8 in Oklahoma City reviewing questionable positions identified in the recently released Peak Marwick study of the Department of Human Services Central administration.

Human Services committee chairman Joe Sam Vassar of Bristow said, "We were able to identify 70 of the 170 questionable positions as positions which could be eliminated. There are another 54 positions which may be eliminated; however, it would require help from the Oklahoma Legislature on providing retirement incentives."

Vassar, speaking for the committee said it would be important for the Legislature to also take action, giving DHS the right to identify positions whose incumbents could be offered separation plans. The positions targeted would not need to be replaced.

After the nine-hour meeting, the committee directed DHS Director George A. Miller to have additional meetings with DHS division heads to identify other questionable positions that may be eliminated in the near or not-too-distant future.

The 170 positions reviewed is an adjusted and more accurate questionable positions figure, reflecting the agency's organizational structure and is different from the previous number of 220 positions reported originally in the Peak Marwick report.

The committee membership included, Vassar, Steve Bailey of Bethany, Marvin K. Hambrick of Oklahoma City, and Commission Chairman Donald L. Benson of Alva.

The next meeting of the full Human Services Commission is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. May 21 in Oklahoma City.



"Of course, I'll consider your side. Let's flip. Heads I'm right, tails you're fired."

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