

School board reviews tests

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was also noted to be lower than the state average, but they did see overall growth of 21% over last year’s scores. Math proficiency was nearly equal to the state average.

Fifth and sixth grade ELA, math, and science proficiency was above state averages and demonstrated strong average student growth overall.

Secondary principal Josh Vanderflucht presented the middle school and high school 2024 ISASP results, noting 96 kids met both their expected growth goals in both math and ELA this spring.

Vanderflucht noted high school science scores are low, and he recognizes they have some work to do to strengthen their standards, including earth science. He is looking forward to having two new science teachers for the 24-25 school year, and is confident they have a good plan going forward.

Most impressive, ELA proficiency remains strong.

“ELA is probably our bright spot,” stated Vanderflucht, “we’re at 85% percent proficient overall in this building [MS/HS].”

He went on to say that any growth percentage at all was measured by grade level. This showed 90% of juniors grew from last year’s score, 100% of the tenth grade class had growth over last year, 75% of freshmen showed growth, while 90% of 8th grade and 97% of 7th graders showed growth over the prior year.

“Our growth was pretty good,” said Vanderflucht.

While a little dip in math scores was noted this school year, overall, 80% percent of 7-11th grade students were proficient in 2024.

“With math, it builds so much, we’ve got to do a good job of assessing periodically,” stated Vanderflucht, “and if they don’t get it, we’ve got to intervene and make sure they get it.”

Personnel

The board reluctantly approved resignations from current band instructor Aaron Comer, who has accepted a position at Pleasantville Community School District, and librarian Julie Rivera, who has accepted a position at the AEA.

Five coaches were also approved by the board:

- Debra Reed as head bowling coach for both the boys and girls,
- Alissa Weinkoetz as head volleyball coach,
- Thad Streit as a middle school baseball coach,
- Isaac Vos as an e-sports coach,
- Daniel Showalter as head middle school track coach

Other Regular Business

The board of directors also unanimously approved the following items during their regular session:

- Resolution ordering election on the question of continuing to levy a voter approved physical plant and equipment property tax, which would extend the current tax levy, without raising taxes;

• Renewing the current driver’s education contract;

• Class of 2024 graduates pending completion of requirements;

• Set the graduation date for the next school year on May 18, 2025;

• Sharing agreements with Diagonal for human resources, transportation, special education, and curriculum director;

• Green Hills AEA sharing contracts for a shared social worker two days a week in the amount of \$20,000;

• Reviewed three fence bids and selected the low bid from American Fence Co. in the amount of \$33,601 for 850 feet of black vinyl fence and two gates along the east side of the high school parking lot;

• A late early retirement request from Betsy Budach, as circumstances changed with the ending of the TLC program;

• Albricio agreement to maintain the HVAC system at a cost of \$41,832;

• Proceeding with roof repairs per the AEA emergency waiver;

• Three fundraiser requests.

Closed Sessions

The regular meeting ended with the board moving into closed session to evaluate the professional competency for two separate individuals whose performance is being considered to prevent needless and irreparable injury to the individuals’s reputation, in accordance with Iowa Code Section 21.5(l)(i)

Snapshots of History

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104-110 N. Taylor Street in Mount Ayr.

By MIKE AVITT

I took this week’s picture in April 2011 and in 1949, the storefront nearest the camera was the home of Mount Ayr’s first television set.

Ted Marrs had a radio shop in that location and he put a new TV on display there in July 1949.

But, who had the first radio?

Radio was a phenomenon. For the first time sporting events could be heard in “real time.” Politicians, newscasters, and advertisers could reach their listeners instantly. Music, weather reports, breaking news, livestock and grain prices could be had with the push of a button. Sounds easy, but not so fast.....

First, you had to own a radio. I know Glenn Baird was selling radios out of J. B. Currie’s store in the early 1920s. Johnston Auto Co. was selling radios in 1924. So, a radio set could be purchased locally if you had enough money.

Second, you had to have electricity. Mount Ayr got electricity in 1909 and most of the other towns were electrified around

1920. However, rural Ringgold County did not get electricity until 1945, so those folks were on the waiting list.

Third, there had to be a station to dial in. And here’s where things get interesting.

There were probably some radio stations that came and went and my research missed them. What I did find was two stations that went on the air in 1923 which Ringgold County might have been able to pull in on a cloudy night.

What eventually became KFEQ out of St. Joseph, Missouri started in 1923 from Oak, Nebraska. The operations moved to St. Joe in 1925. This was an agriculture-based radio station with farm reports, weather, livestock and grain quotes, and broadcasts from the St. Joseph Livestock Exchange. Initially, KFEQ wasn’t on at night.

Also in 1923, WOW, 590 on the AM dial, aired from Omaha, Nebraska. WOWT, a television station, began broadcasts in August 1949. All radio stations were on the AM

dial as FM was invented until 1933.

Things picked up in 1924 when WHO,1040 on the dial, began airing from Des Moines. And the floodgates opened in 1925.

Shenandoah, Iowa had two major nurseries: Earl May and Henry Field. Both of these enterprises established radio stations in 1925 with Earl May’s KMA 960 AM still on the air.

KMA is said to stand for “Keep Millions Advised.” The Everly Brothers began performing on KMA and KFNF (Field’s radio station) as part of the “Everly Family” with their mother and father in the late 1940s.

Radio was fast. Newspapers give you the news later, but keep in mind, newsprint can be saved and re-read or shared. On the radio, if you miss it, it’s gone. I still consider radio to be a better invention than television. Radio is a necessity and television is a luxury.

That’s my humble opinion and I could be wrong.

Table 1: Mount Ayr Elementary ISASP Proficiency

Grade	ELA	2023 State Average	Math	2023 State Average	Science	2023 State Average
3rd	57%	66%	65%	76%	N/A	
4th	58%	73%	72%	73%	N/A	
5th	76%	69%	88%	71%	76%	63%
6th	86%	73%	86%	70%	N/A	
Percent of students proficient based on results of spring 2024 ISASP testing						

Table 2: Mount Ayr High School ISASP Proficiency

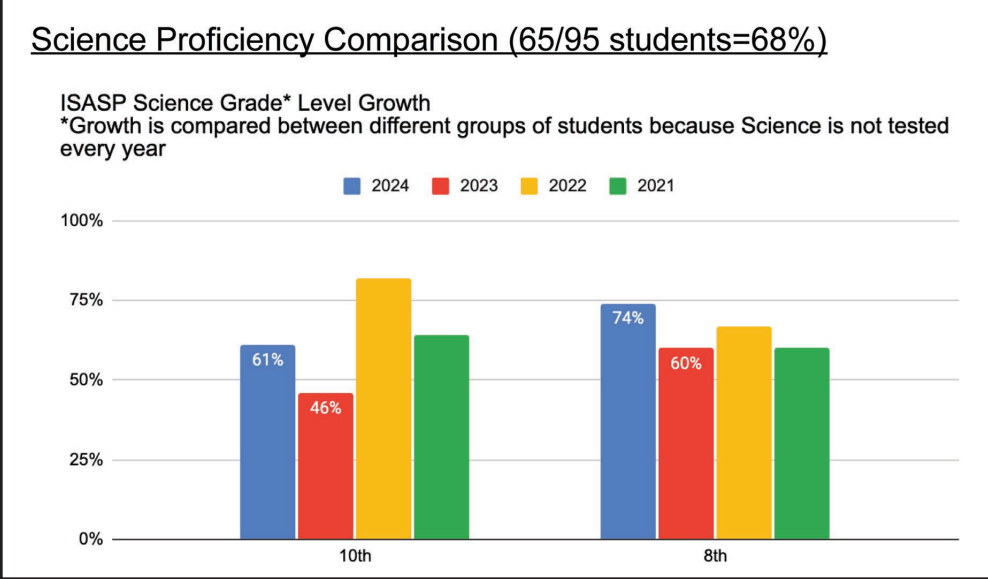


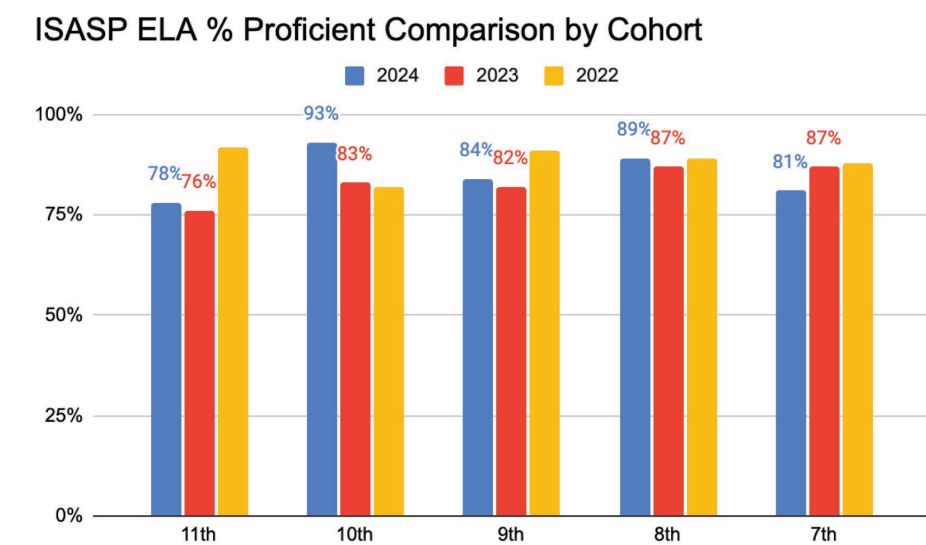
Table 3: Mount Ayr High School ISASP Proficiency

Student Growth Percentile (SGP): how growth compares to their academic

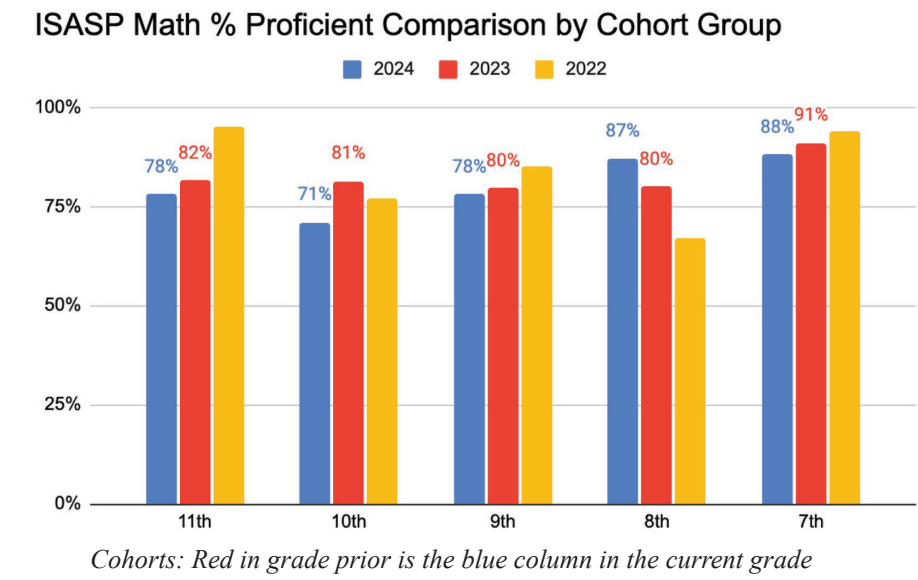
Math	SGP Met	Total Students	Percentage Growth	ELA	SGP Met	Total Students	Percentage Growth
11th	27	40	68%	11th	27	40	68%
10th	20	40	50%	10th	38	40	95%
9th	23	48	48%	9th	29	48	60%
8th	26	54	48%	8th	41	54	76%
7th	17	32	53%	7th	26	32	81%
Total School	113	214	53%		161	214	75%
		Avg Math Growth on 2023 School report card:	50%			Avg ELA Growth 2023 School Report Card:	46%

SGP Met is the number of students who reached state expected growth in the spring of 2024

ELA Proficiency Comparison (191/225 students=85%)



Math Proficiency Comparison (180/225 students=80%)



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