Proficiency tests

Southwestern says it didn't cheat

By Perla E. Badham
AFRO Staff Writer

"We are not cheats.

"This whole thing is really upsetting the teachers and the students because they are being accused of cheating. We have good students here and this has done them a great disservice."

This was Southwestern High School's response to recent reports that students were given parts of the math and reading proficiency tests ahead of time.

For the second time in four months, school officials are faced with the task of deciding how to handle the problem of students being given parts of exams before they are actually taken.

Last November, Edmondson High School was questioned about its preparation for the mandatory tests which are required for promotion.

Deputy Superintendent John G. Gist stated that Edward A. Forrest, Southwestern principal, will be reprimanded for the action since it is the principal's responsibility to keep the tests under lock and key until they are administered.

However, Forrest reported that the actual tests were not used nor were students taught the test.

"We have been accused of reproducing test materials in order to teach. This is an untruth," he said. "What we have done is to utilize portions of the test over a period of time for constructional purposes."

Richard L. Shoemaker, English department head, explained that throughout the year in the reading area, students are normally given lists of vocabulary words and some of the words are the same as on the test. But students are not informed which words will appear on those proficiency tests.

The mathematics portion of the test was supposed to have been copied verbatim. Yet, sample tests which were similar to the proficiency exams were sent to the school by the Division of Instructional Curriculum Management.

Bernard Friend, who heads the math department at Southwestern said, "I only implemented what I received from the DIC area. There was no way students could cheat on the tests. We had adequate supervision during testing and teachers would have reported any wrongdoings."

Forrest noted that Southwestern has placed greater emphasis on remedial areas over the past four years. Teachers were asked to prepare remedial lesson plans to be used in special classes one - half hour before the normal day begins. There was resistance among some teachers in the beginning, but the plan has been working.

A typical student at the eight - year - old school ranges from 15 to 19 years of age, and is three years behind in math and reading skills.

Assistant Principal Edgar Covert said, "Our efforts were not designed to ensure or guarantee students passing. Instead they were to improve and increase their ability levels."

Most of the current 10th - grade class read below fifth grade level. Most of the student body comes to the school unable to read at a secondary level.

Black students at Southern must walk through hostile neighborhood

Despite the fact that there have been clashes between black and white students at Southern High School, teachers and school officials still contend that the incidents are not racially motivated within the school.

They will admit, however, that there is some resistance among the predominantly white, blue collar residents to the increasing number of students travelling five blocks through their neighborhood. Most of these students are black and have faced not only name calling but obscenities as well.

In order to alleviate the problem, the Mass Transit Administration was called upon to relocate the bus stop from Key Highway and Light Street to Key Highway and Cross Street. This way students only have one block to walk.

The school is in an industrial area which is situated just behind the Inner Harbor. This area which has been heavily factory working families is now getting a mixture of residents due to the homesteading project being done in the area.

Some teachers at the school, located just off Key Highway, expressed feelings that the school's lack of outside campus space may be a contributing factor to the student confrontations that have been reoccurring since September.

When the facility was built at its new location just over one year ago, it was not equipped with an athletic field where students could retreat during free periods.

One teacher reported that the school administration was advised by members of Southern's faculty that it was a mistake not to include a field in the plans for a new site.

She said, "It's hard to keep almost 2,100 contained in the cafeteria without something happening.

During the school's Student Day which was held Thursday, both black and white students together assumed the responsibility of running the school. They were also allowed to conduct classes which went on smoothly and without incident.

Dr. Joel Carrington, regional superintendent, stated that whenever black and white students are involved in a confrontation there is a tendency to call it racial.

"Our staff development team at Southern has plans for workshops that will give students and teachers a forum where they can discuss their problems whether they are racial or not," he explained.

Earlier this week, the additional security officers who had been assigned to the school since snowball throwing incident occurred last week, have been dismissed. There are now two regularly assigned officers at the facility.

County losing CETA jobs

TOWSON, Md. — Baltimore County officials said Thursday the county is losing Federal money for a jobs-training program because of plans developed by Baltimore City.

County Administrative Officer Randolph Rosencrantz said the county lost $39 Comprehensive Employment and Training Act jobs, worth $1.1 million in federal funds, last year because of a distribution program developed by Marion W. Pines, a city official and director of the metropolitan Manpower consortium.

The consortium consists of Baltimore City and Howard, Baltimore, Harford, Carroll and Anne Arundel counties. Mrs. Pines, who works in the city's Office of Manpower Resources, has the legal power under an agreement to devise ways of dividing the federal funds.

County officials met with Mrs. Pine Tuesday. She said she had no comment.

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Inspection of pollution devices could lead to clean air

A federal environmental official says mandatory inspection of automobile pollution control devices is the most effective way of cleaning up the air of large cities.

Michael T. Walsh of the Environmental Protection Agency said the concept of "inspection and maintenance" is based on findings that emission - control equipment does not work properly if it is not serviced. State laws are necessary to keep the devices maintained, he added.

Maryland is under pressure from the federal government to pass such a law because of smog produced by the high concentration of vehicles around Washington and Baltimore.

The state's air quality officials have said that Baltimore will not meet federal clean - air standards by 1982.

Walsh said the EPA inspected about 3,000 late - model cars last year and found that after being on the road a short time most emit two to three times the amount of pollution they are designed to emit.

States with inspection laws have shown "dramatic results," he said.

The amount of hydrocarbon emissions was reduced 35 to 40 percent and carbon - monoxide pollution was cut in half in Portland, Ore., after an inspection law was passed there, Walsh said.

Teen Talk

Are exams necessary?

By Marsha Young
(Editor's Note: Ms. Young is a junior at Western Senior High School.)

It's a new year with different things in store for teenagers. There are finals to study for, resolutions to stick to, new places to disco and a new teen of the week.

As soon as the year starts, students are faced with: Midterm Semester exams.

Midterm semester exams are one hour tests taken in math, English, science and social studies. Finals are taken at the end of the semester and are one - half of the semester grade in some schools.

Finals are an extra strain on the students because during the new year they have to worry about Proficiency Exams, California Achievement Tests, PSAT and SAT tests.

For some students and teachers exam time is similar to a vacation because there are no lesson plans to prepare and one - half day of school.

But are finals necessary?

Sam Powell, a senior at Edmondson said, "If you have paid attention during the year and have been tested on the material why is it necessary to go back and test on it?"

Robin Wilkerson, a sophomore at Walbrook said, "Exams drive me up a wall."

Terry Wright, a senior at Edmondson said, "Exams are necessary because they let the student know what they have learned and what they need to learn."

Dorene Mack, a junior at Northwestern said, "I hate exams because they give stuff I've never seen before."

Annette Tucker, a senior at Edmondson said, "Exams are necessary because if a student has done poorly that means they need to work harder. I like exams because they show my great progress after studying so hard for them."

After reviewing in class Annette Tucker studies a little each night about a week before the exam so the information can sink in.

Vanessa Robertson just looks at her notes the night before the exam then goes to sleep and doesn't think about it anymore. She doesn't like to study too much because she is afraid she is going to fail.

Robert Wilke, a senior at Forest Park said, "I study a day or two before the exam but I don't make a big deal about it."

TEEN of the WEEK

A Broadway star living in Baltimore and only few people know about him. His name is Raymond Wise a 17-year-old senior at Dunbar.

He has been in Hello Dolly, Guys and Dolls, Music Man, Nutcracker and other performances for his school and the city. His goal is Hollywood.

Anything involved in liberal arts he is in. He plays the piano for Central Baptist Church, directs choirs, writes music for shows, sings with St. Katherine's choir, the chamber choir, All State Chorus and he was chosen to represent the city in the All City Chorus. He has attended the Maryland Center for the Arts for three years.

Despite his busy schedule he still has time to maintain a ninety point grade average the entire time he has attended Dunbar. He studies hard for courses such as trigonometry and English IV honors.

He has applied to Denison U. in Ohio and his small goal is to become a music teacher or any kind of a performer.

So here he is the perfect bachelor, 17, talented, smart and single.

School was being explored this week and if you have any suggestions, comments or news happening in your school, club or neighborhood, mail to: Teen Talk, 628 N. Eutaw Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has urged the major oil companies to continue the practice of providing free pressurized air for tires at service stations throughout the nation.

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New Federal regulations have extended the deadline for opening or contributing to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to April 15. This means that if you open or add to your IRA at Baltimore Federal by April 15, you may still deduct your contribution from your 1978 taxable income. At the same time, you may start making your 1979 contributions and receive greater tax-sheltered interest this year on these funds.
If you are a wage earner with no other retirement plan, you are eligible to contribute up to $1500 per year, or 15% of gross earnings (whichever is less). Spousal IRA accounts, allowing a combined contribution of up to $1750, are also available. For tax years beginning in 1979, it is possible for your employer to contribute 15% of your gross earnings up to $7500 under certain conditions.
With an IRA, you insure a healthy retirement income. For example, if you are 35, a $1500 annual contribution will grow to $195,515.68 at age 65!* You'll also earn high tax-deferred interest (8% per annum current rate), and save on taxes. And... IRA accounts at Baltimore Federal are now insured up to $100,000 by the Federal Savings & Loan Insurance Corporation.
Already filed your income tax return? Open your IRA and then file an amended return. A Retirement Specialist at any Baltimore Federal office will be happy to tell you everything you need to know, and then help you set up your retirement plan. If you are self-employed, we'll also give you complete information on Keogh Retirement Plans. With Keogh you may contribute up to $7500 this year, or 15% of earned income (whichever is less) and deduct the full amount from your 1979 taxable income.
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Minister declares war

(Continued from page 1)

"We are trying to alert the citizens across the city to this drug because few of them know our youth are buying this. They use it to get high by sniffing it. They use it to get a longer high by putting it on their cigarettes. And they use it to get a triple high by putting it on marijuana.

"This is only the beginning. We are trying to get the city and state legislatures to ban the sale of "Rush" over the counter. If it is really important we want it to be done by prescription."

Rev. McDaniel added that the owners of Heads Up had reneged on a promise that it would remove the remaining "Rush" from their shelves.

David Rosenberg, one of the owners of Heads Up, stopped McDaniel at this point telling him that he was lying. At that point a fight almost erupted between the two as each of their tempers rose.

Rosenberg maintains that all the picketing was of no value because he advises his customers to only use the drug as "incense" and a "room freshener."

"We sell it to people only over the age of 18 and tell them its used for incense," Rosenberg said. "I know young kids might abuse it and I'm afraid of that.

"Half of the people don't know what it is. But now with the increased publicity, we probably will sell out in no time."

Rosenberg said the drug sells for $6 per bottle and he sold eight of them during the Christmas holidays. He added that he had 30 bottles left and soon as he is sold out he would not reorder anymore.

Although Rosenberg and his partner, Bernard Kandel, maintain that the chemical is harmless and that they did not know anyone who smokes marijuana, they got defensive about illegal drugs as they continued to talk.

"Look at this," Kandel asked, pointing out numerous blow pipes and plates with "cocaine" on them displayed in the shop. "The U.S. promotes all of this and then they say you can't use certain drugs."

"Check this out," Rosenberg demanded, displaying a box of small brown bags. "You know what these bags are for? To collect coins, but do you think they use these to collect coins? I have an average of 40 customers who come in here and buy bags and there are 50 in a package."

The Park Heights Anti - Crime Project, a separate component of PHCC, was first alerted about "Rush" on Nov. 13, 1978 when Joyce Scott, a secretary at the Concentrated Juvenile Crime Reduction Program, wrote them a letter.

Ms. Scott said a client who came into the center asked her to sniff a bottle of "Rush." After she refused, she later learned that Heads Up Inc. was the seller of the drug in the area.

"I was told that it was a paraphernalia used by the young people in this area (and other areas I suspect) to 'get high,'" the letter says.

Actually, "Rush" (isobutyl nitrite), is quite a culprit, according to technical information published on the drug.

According to the Metric Index and Encyclopedia of Chemicals and Drugs, published by the Defenseter of the United States, the drug causes severe headaches, and damage to the liver, and lungs.

The drug also causes brain cell damage and brain cells cannot be reproduced, according to the Index. The technical source also says that in some persons the drug produces a reaction comparable to shock, nausea, vomiting, weakness, restlessness and sweating.

A kind of poor man's cocaine (because it is also sniffed), isobutyle nitrite is also known to users as a "popper" because its effects are similar to those of its restricted chemical cousin, amyl nitrite, only sold by prescription.

It has been reported that the "popper" fad began among homosexuals, who first used amyl nitrite to enhance sexual pleasure.

When the Federal Drug Administration in 1969 classified amyl nitrite as a prescription drug, many homosexuals switched to isobutyl nitrite (Rush), which is not covered by the regulation.

According to the July 17, 1978 issue of Time Magazine, in 1976 Pacific Western Distributing Corp. of San Francisco came out with a mass - produced isobutyl nitrite.

As a result of aggressive marketing, the drug quickly spread among gays and is now popular among heterosexuals. It is sold openly in some record stores, boutiques and pornographic bookstores.

According to Pacific Western Chairman W. Jay Freemer, retail sales totaled some $20 million last year; he forecasts a 15 percent to 20 percent increase this year.

Thus far, only Connecticut has banned the use of the chemical.

"We have no solid evidence of damage," Dr. David Ormstedt, Connecticut assistant attorney general told Time Magazine.

"But we successfully argued the reasonable probability of harm. Our state doesn't require a dead body to ban a product."

Whatever decision made by the owners of Heads Up Inc., the Park Heights Anti - Crime Project is continuing on with its study and will ask that legislation be introduced to ban the sale of the drug over the counter.

AFRO photo by Roman Hankewycz
PROTEST — Two representatives of the Park Heights Community Corporation picket in the rain outside a store to protest the sale of isobutyl nitrite in a store in their community. The drug is commonly called "Rush."

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Braille copier now available at PGC library

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System's Division for the Visually and Physically Handicapped at the Hyattsville Library, 6530 Adelphi Road in Hyattsville, has recently required a Thermoform Braillon Duplicator for public use.

A large print typewriter is also available for use by the public.

Both pieces of equipment were generously provided by the International Innovations for the Blind, a non profit organization for the blind and visually impaired.

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