Local ACT scores below U.S. average

Juniors and seniors in parish high schools achieved higher composite scores than the state average on the American College Test for 1983-84 but fell below scores set nationally. Associate Superintendent Donald Hoover said Monday the scores reflect changes in the type of students taking the test.

“Students who are not really serious about going to school, fewer of those students are taking the test,” Hoover said. “Only those who are more serious about going to school are being pushed by their parents and are taking the test.

“Many families without the resources are considering other options,” he said.

East Baton Rouge students achieved a composite score of 17.3, compared to state averages of 16.6 and the national averages of 18.5, the report said. The maximum composite score is 36.

The parish’s overall composite score is an improvement over the 1982-83 test results, which showed local students with a 16.2 composite score.

The ACT, used by Louisiana colleges and universities to assess incoming freshmen, is broken down into the subjects of English, mathematics, social studies and natural sciences.

A composite score is reached by combining the results from those four areas and computing an average score.

Hoover said the local scores are in the same proportion to state and national scores as they have been (See ACT, 6B)
for the last few years.

“We normally fit someplace between the national norm and state norm,” he said. “The thing we need to consider in comparison to state and national scores is who is taking the test.

“We look at SAT and ACT and think about how we did this year as compared to last year without considering the population can drastically change,” he said.

The report says the 2,366 EBR high school students, mostly 11th graders, took the ACT during the last school year. Sixty-nine percent of that group were white, 24 percent black, 2 percent Oriental, 1 percent Hispanic and 3 percent other.

The report showed 37 percent of the local 1,039 male students and 28 percent of the 1,327 female students to take the examination scored above the national average of 18.5, the report said.

Scores in the 20s are considered extremely good, said Lee Faucette, public relations director for the School Board.