St. Landry readers rank highest locally

Vermilion has most 2nd, 3rd graders reading below grade level in Acadiana.

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LAFAYETTE — Statewide 54 percent of second- and third-grade students read at or above grade level, while 46 percent read below grade level, according to results of a uniform reading assessment used for the first time this fall.

“These results show that we are on target in focusing on reading in kindergarten through third-grade,” said state Superintendent of Education Cecil Picard. “Thanks to the new assessment, teachers are identifying the children who most need help. These children can now receive the help they need before it’s too late.”

Among nine Acadiana public school districts, St. Landry Parish had the highest percentage of second- and third-grade students reading at or above grade level at the start of the school year. Vermilion Parish had the lowest percentage.

Results from the state’s new Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) released late Tuesday by the state Department of Education show 66 percent of St. Landry Parish second- and third-grade students read at or above grade level, while 34 percent are reading below grade level. In Vermilion Parish, 44 percent read at or above grade level, and 56 percent read below grade level.

Among Acadiana school districts with the highest percentage of second- and third-graders reading at or above grade level, St. Landry was followed in order by Lafayette (61 percent), Jefferson Davis (58 percent), Evangeline (56 percent), St. Martin (49 percent), Acadia (48 percent), Iberia (46 percent), St. Mary (46 percent) and Vermilion (44 percent) parishes.

Jefferson Davis Parish had the highest percentage of second- and third-graders reading above grade level. St. Landry Parish had the highest percentage of second- and third-graders reading at grade level. Lafayette Parish had the highest percentage of second-graders reading below grade level, while Vermilion Parish had the highest percentage of third-graders reading below grade level.

The DRA is individually administered and evaluates the accuracy of oral reading and comprehension through reading and re-telling of narrative stories. Since a variety of assessments was used last year, the 1997 data cannot be compared with 1998 scores.