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School Fitness Testing Shows Room For Improvement

AUSTIN — About two-thirds of the 10 million schoolchildren in Texas are not up to physical fitness standards, according to a study by a private company and funded by \$2.5 million in private donations.

The Texas Education Agency on July 1 publicized preliminary results after 2.6 million of the state's 3.4 million children in grades 3-12 were tested.

Test results show elementary school kids tend to be more fit than older kids. Roughly one-third of third-grade boys and girls tested in the "Healthy Fitness Zone." Testing revealed that an even lower rate of middle school students scored in the zone and that high school students were less fit than middle-schoolers.

The testing measures body composition, aerobic capacity, strength, endurance and flexibility.

Each student must have a skin fold test and attempt a one-mile run, curl-ups, pushups, trunk lift and shoulder stretches.

Parents or guardians may obtain a copy of their child's "Fitnessgram" report from the child's school.

The legislation that instituted the testing and daily physical exercise requirements was written by Sen. Jane Nelson, R-Flower Mound, and sponsored by Rep. Rob Eissler, R-The Woodlands.

This issue has a cash side to it. According to the TEA, the Texas comptroller found that Texas businesses spent an estimated

\$3.3 billion in 2005 on costs related to obesity. Costs included disability coverage, lower productivity, absenteeism and health care.

Steroid testing results released

These are preliminary results, but in the spring term only two out of more than 10,000 Texas high school athletes tested positive for anabolic steroids in their systems in a random screening program mandated by SB 8 passed by the 80th Texas Legislature in 2007.

Student-athletes in grades 9-12, regardless of sport, gender or participation level are subject to screening.

The University Interscholastic League said 40,000 to 50,000 student-athletes will have been screened by the end of the 2008-2009 school year.

The program costs the state \$3 million to administer.

Branch named to powerful board
 Texas House Speaker Tom

Craddick on July 1 appointed state Rep. Dan Branch, R-Dallas, to the Legislative Budget Board.

Branch replaces state Rep. Fred Hill, R-Richardson, who resigned from the post. Hill, 68, is not seeking reelection in the fall. Hill was elected to the House in 1988 and is the 13th most senior member of the 150-member chamber. Branch, 50, elected to the Dist. 108 House seat in 2002, plans to seek a third two-year term.

The 10-member Legislative Budget Board was created by statute in 1949. The board analyzes, develops and recommends appropriations for all state governmental agencies and provides the Texas Legislature with a state budget at the beginning of each regular legislative session.

Craddick and Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst serve as joint chairs of the board. Besides Branch, other members include Senate Finance Committee Chair Steve Ogden, R-College Station; House Com-

mittee on Appropriations Chair Warren Chism, R-Pampa; Sen. Robert Duncan, R-Lubbock; Rep. Jim Keffer, R-Eastland; Sen. John Whitmire, D-Houston; Sen. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo; and Rep. Sylvester Turner, D-Houston.

Meanwhile, on the subject of budgets and budgeteers, Gov. Rick Perry on July 2 named Mary Katherine Stout as his director of budget, planning and policy.

The Texas A&M graduate has been serving as vice president of policy and director for Texas Public Policy Foundation's Center for Health Care Policy.


The foundation is a non-profit, non-partisan, research institute based in Austin.

Craddick vs. Dingus in November

Speaker Craddick will face an opponent in the November general election: Democrat Bill Dingus of Midland, a recent former member of the Midland city council.

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

State Capital



HIGHLIGHTS
 By Ed Sterling

Dingus resigned from the city council on April 21 and announced his candidacy for the seat occupied by Craddick for the last 38 years.

The Republican Party of Texas contested that Dingus was ineligible to run because he was still serving on the city council when he filed for candidacy.

A Travis County state district court ruled Dingus not in conflict with the state's prohibition on dual officeholding and eligible to run.

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Let's Look Back... 24 YEARS AGO

July 26, 1984

Miss Judy Bunge a student at the College of Pharmacy at the University of Texas at Austin has been placed on the Dean's List with highest honors due to her superior academic performance during the 1984 spring semester...

Renee Lynn Hunt, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dale V. Hunt of Garwood is one of 626 students listed on the 1984 Spring Dean's Honor Roll at Abilene Christian University...

Mr. and Mrs. Gale Thompson, announced the birth of their

first child, a daughter, born on July 12 at 1 p.m. at the Eagle Lake Community Hospital in Eagle Lake. The baby was named Kristin Nicole. She weighed eight pounds, 14 ounces...

Mr. and Mrs. Craig Alan Welch of Louise announced the birth of their first child, a son, born on July 11 at 1:37 p.m. at the Eagle Lake Community Hospital. The baby was named Randall Vincent Welch and weighed seven pounds, two ounces...

Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Struss are celebrating the birth of another granddaughter. Little Heather

Lindsay was born Monday, July 23 in Austin, a daughter of Warren and Colleen Struss...

Elizabeth Ann Koliba of Bloomington and Joe Rhodes of Victoria, who were wed July 21, were entertained with a backyard cookout in Columbus at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Otto H. Loessin...

Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Bowen of Houston are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Stephanie, to Wesley Wick, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Wick of Eagle Lake...

Miss Beverly Sue Rucka,

daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ervin Rucka of Eagle Lake, has been selected to compete in the Texas Miss T.E.E.N. Pageant to be held at the Loews Anatole Hotel, Dallas, August 31-September 1-2...

Emily Matcek, 84, a resident of the Garwood area for the past 68 years passed away July 16 in a Houston hospital after an extended illness. A rosary was held on Wednesday, July 18, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Nada. Funeral services followed at 4 p.m. with Rev. John Bily officiating. Interment was in St. Mary's Cemetery.



VFW Post 8783 recently made a donation to the Eagle Lake Ministerial Alliance Food Pantry. Pictured in back from left to right are Sandy Thomson, Sandra Benge, Ruby Darnell, Virginia Bauer, Angie Holland, Mary Rodriguez, Helen Supak, Kate Spalinger, Marie Glover, Ruthie Ziehmer, Kathryn Mehner, Ray Ziehmer, Jean Cranford and Monica Pagel. In front are from left to right, Jr. Vice Commander, Isidoro Ramirez; Dolores Grammer, Chaplain, Harry Supak; and Sr. Vice Commander, August Servantes.

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