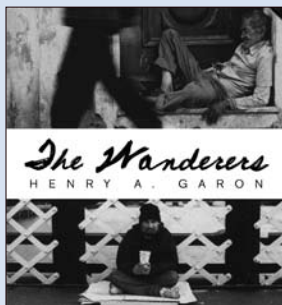




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## Strong school test scores establish baseline for future

By Peter Finney Jr.  
Clarion Herald

Students attending elementary schools in the Archdiocese of New Orleans exceeded the national averages in math, reading and language on the TerraNova Achievement Test administered for the first time by the Office of Catholic Schools.

Carole Elliot, associate superintendent for elementary schools, said the test, given last spring, was mandatory for students in grades 3-7 and optional for other grades. The test measures a student's knowledge and skills in the three core subject areas as well as in science, social studies and spelling.

Students also took an aptitude test called InView, which predicts a student's anticipated performance.

In Grade 3, the composite score for all students was in the 66th percentile, meaning students scored at or above the score of 66 percent of students nationwide. Fourth-



Shannon Puente, senior product manager for CTB McGraw-Hill, goes over student test results with principals and teachers at an instructional workshop.

Photo by Peter Finney Jr. | CLARION HERALD

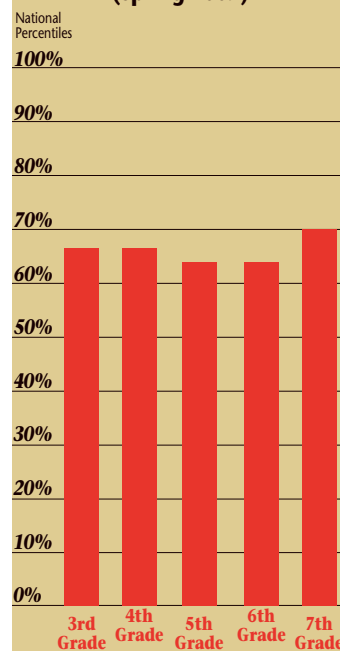
graders scored in the 66th percentile; fifth- and sixth-graders in the 63rd percentile; and seventh-graders in the 70th percentile.

"These scores provide a snapshot of student achievement that teachers and principals can use to identify strengths and weakness of a student, class, school or even an entire district such as the archdiocese," Elliot said.

The information gleaned from the TerraNova testing was so comprehensive that the Office of Catholic Schools held workshops in November for teachers and principals on how to best use the results to help improve student performance in all areas. Elliot said the workshops showed how the data can drive professional development needs,

See **TEST SCORES** page 6 >

### Archdiocese of New Orleans TerraNova Achievement Test Scores (Spring 2009)



#### Total of Reading, Language, Mathematics

- 3rd-grade students scored at the 66th percentile. This indicates that 3rd-grade students scored at or above the score of 66% of the students nationwide in Reading, Language and Mathematics.
- 4th-grade students scored at the 66th percentile.
- 5th-grade students scored at the 63rd percentile.
- 6th-grade students scored at the 63rd percentile.
- 7th-grade students scored at the 70th percentile.



Photo by John Caulfield | CNS

Marian Sister Serena Defers of Waverly, Neb., plays basketball with a young woman at the 2009 National Catholic Youth Conference in Kansas City, Mo., Nov. 19.

## Thousands of teens celebrate faith

By Kevin Kelly  
Catholic News Service

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (CNS) – They clogged downtown streets, jammed restaurants, took up hotel rooms, ate up parking spaces and generally inconvenienced downtown Kansas City.

But the nearly 21,000 teens and their 3,000 adult chaperones and local volunteers also gave the city a three-day gift of faith.

They came to bring themselves closer to Christ. By the time they left the 2009

National Catholic Youth Conference Nov. 19-21, they showed Kansas City – and the world watching live on the Internet – what happens when Jesus Christ pours out of the hearts of thousands of believers.

The theme of the conference was "Christ Reigns." It was co-hosted by the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph and the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kan.

Participants heard from keynote speakers, were entertained by various musical

artists and attended dozens of workshops on such issues as social justice, the Bible, prayer, spirituality and social networking.

They spent time at a special conference theme park called the Reign Forest, a 200,000-square-foot interactive venue with more than 150 exhibits.

Mass was offered daily, and there were opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation, eucharistic adoration, meditation, recitation of the

See **YOUTH** page 6 >