

STAAR 3-8, EOC results released for Spring 2025

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The Texas Education Agency (TEA) released its spring 2025 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness results for both End-of-Course assessments and grades 3-8 over the last two weeks.

The EOC results, which include district and campus level performance, were released Tuesday, June 10

See STAAR, Page 3



The Texas Education Agency recently released the spring 2025 results for the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness results for both End-of-Course assessments and grades 3-8 over the last two weeks. Results were distributed for campuses and the district as a whole. The results are available online for public viewing at tea.texas.gov.

Contributed photo



Stephens County 4H member Sylee Mitchell was recently elected as District 3 4-H parliamentarian, elected out of 11 other candidates to the position which covers 11 other counties along with Stephens County.

Photo/Alex Kielar

Sylee Mitchell elected District 3 4-H parliamentarian

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Stephens County 4-H announced last week that one of their own, Sylee Mitchell, has been newly elected as the District 3 4-H parliamentarian.

An incoming junior, Mitchell was elected out of 11 other candidates across the district to represent its 4-H program. There are 12 total 4-H districts across the state,

each with its own parliamentarians. District 3, along with Stephens County, also includes Hall, Motley, Dickens, Kent, Childress, Cottle, King, Stonewall, Harde-man, Foard, Knox, Has-kell, Wilbarger, Baylor, Throckmorton, Wichita, Archer, Young, Clay, Jack, Palo Pinto, Montague, Wise and Parker counties. Duties of a 4-H District

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2025 Boomfest canceled, chamber cites limited funding

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The Breckenridge Chamber of Commerce has decided to cancel this year's Boomfest, citing that they fell short of their fundraising goal for the patriotic event, which is typically held at Hubbard Creek Lake every July.

The announcement that the event was canceled came via a Facebook post Wednesday, July 18. Although they are not holding Boomfest this year, preparations are beginning for the 2026 version, which will notably be the 250th anniversary of the United States of America.

The chamber held a 10k fun run and walk to help raise funds for the event,

which took place Saturday, June 21, at Breckenridge Park. The funds raised from the 10k will now instead be used for next year. There were nine participants in the 10k Saturday morning, which went off at the Breckenridge City Park and was not officially timed.

Winning the 10k with an unofficial time of about 45 minutes was Bodie Skiles, an incoming Breckenridge ISD junior who runs cross country and track. As the winner, Skiles had a choice between three prizes being offered to the top three finishers. The prize that he chose was a one-hour hot massage at Halo Cosmetics.

Coming in second place, a few minutes after Skiles, was Scott Kirkowski, who chose the one-hour IV hy-

dration session at Rhaine Med Spa as his prize. The third-place finisher was Stephens County Precinct 4 Commissioner Tanner Wade, who earned the final prize of a one-hour hot stone massage at Spa Meraki.

The first girl runner to cross the finish line and fourth overall was Abbi-

See Boomfest, Page 3

Lady Bucks player helps build volleyball skills



Former Lady Bucks volleyball player Jesi Warren, who played on the varsity team for three years, hosted a two-day volleyball camp at the Breckenridge Auxiliary Gym of the Athletic and Fine Arts Center last week. Warren presented awards to those she viewed as the best players for the camp on the final day Tuesday, June 17. Warren played her first two years at Clarendon College and will be attending McMurry University in Abilene next school year.

Photo/Alex Kielar



Scott Kirkowski was the second runner to cross the finish line for the Breckenridge Chamber of Commerce 10k run and walk Saturday morning, June 21 at the Breckenridge City Park.

Photo/Alex Kielar

Weekly Local Forecast

Wednesday, June 25 High 93 Low 73 Precipitation 7%	Thursday, June 26 High 94 Low 74 Precipitation 9%	Friday, June 27 High 96 Low 76 Precipitation 14%	Saturday, June 28 High 98 Low 76 Precipitation 2%
Sunday, June 29 High 98 Low 76 Precipitation 2%	Monday, June 30 High 95 Low 74 Precipitation 23%	Tuesday, July 1 High 92 Low 74 Precipitation 24%	Hubbard Creek At capacity: 1,183.00 Current: 1,171.76

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Obituaries



Patricia Ann Bailey Atkins

June 25, 1940 – June 15, 2025

Patricia Ann Bailey Atkins of Breckenridge, Texas passed away peacefully on June 15, 2025 in Odessa, Texas at the age of 84. She was born to William Roy and Helen Mattie Lucas Bailey on June 25, 1940 in San Saba, Texas. She attended Cherokee ISD. She was a devoted daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and great-great grandmother.

Patricia worked in retail and was an amazing sewist, artist, and crafter, sharing her gifts with family and friends. She was a member of Church of Christ.

She was a partner in B&AA Drilling, specializing in seismograph exploration, working all around West Texas, Arizona, Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming, & Utah. She raised 5 sons and later in life, 3 stepchildren.

Patricia was an adventurous soul who loved the outdoors, camping, and traveling. She went river rafting for the first time at age 72 in Colorado, after being flipped from the raft, she sprang up from the river exclaiming, "I am Okay!", to conclude that multi-state trip she also rode a Texas Longhorn. She enjoyed cruises with family and friends and was always up for any adventurous activity thrown her way.

Patricia was preceded in death by her late husband William Travis Atkins, Sr. on August 8, 1979 and infant granddaughter, Jessica Ann Atkins preceded her death on March 26, 1998. She was also preceded in death by her second late husband Joseph Ezekiel on July 17, 1997.

She is survived by her sons: Timmy Wayne Atkins and wife: Julia of Big Spring, TX, Barry Len Atkins and wife Julie of White Rocks, UT, William "Bo" Benroy Atkins and wife Carol of Breckenridge, TX, William Travis Atkins of Colorado City, TX, Patrick Wade Atkins and wife Monica McGreggor, TX. She is survived by 2 Betty Faye Moore of Burlington, TX and Linda Pauline Bailey of Round Rock, TX.

She is also survived by her 18 grandchildren, 43 great grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren, and numerous nieces & nephews. She will be greatly missed.

A celebration of her life will be at a later date.

Arrangements are by Myers & Smith Funeral Home. Pay your respects online at www.myersandsmith.com

4-H

Continued from Page 1

Council parliamentarian include keeping order at club meetings and all events while following 4-H parliamentary procedure guide-

lines and working as a team with the other officers, as well as advising the president on parliamentary procedure and helping train all club officers in par-

liamentary procedure.

Stephens County 4-H Extension Agent Jessie Shortes raved about the work that Mitchell has done with 4-H and described her level of appreciation for that hard work.

"Sylee is a leader in the community and she advocates for 4-H in everything she does. She has done many projects that implement those skills," Shortes said.

Mitchell was one of 12 Breckenridge High School students to go to state for Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) in April, where she and Emery Smith earned a third-place medal for their presentation on sports nutrition.

"We are very proud that Sylee is representing us at the district level," Shortes said.

Abbott vetoes THC ban, calls special session

Gov. Greg Abbott just before the midnight deadline Sunday vetoed a bill on THC products and said he would call a special legislative session to regulate products containing the substance, the Austin American-Statesman reported. The veto angered the bill's chief champion, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick.

The governor's decision was being closely watched by both supporters of the bill, including law enforcement, and opponents, the latter of which included those in the hemp industry, libertarian conservatives, and veterans' groups. The veto came about 30 minutes before the midnight deadline.

"At worst, Senate Bill 3 would be permanently invalidated by the courts," Abbott wrote. "At best, its implementation would be delayed for years as the case winds its way through the legal system. We can do better."

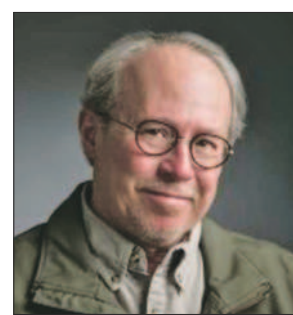
The 30-day special session on how or whether to regulate products containing THC will begin July 21.

Patrick quickly denounced the veto.

"His late-night veto, on an issue supported by 105 of 108 Republicans in the legislature, strongly backed by law enforcement, many in the medical and education communities, and the families who have seen their loved ones' lives destroyed by these very dangerous drugs, leaves them feeling abandoned," he wrote on X.

If SB3 had gone into effect, tens of thousands of businesses selling hemp-infused products would have faced closure.

Abbott late Sunday also signed bills approving the state bud-



Gary Borders

Capital Highlights

get and an overhaul of the Texas lottery.

Governor signs \$10B water plan; now voters to decide

Gov. Greg Abbott signed two bills into law last week that will launch a \$20 billion investment in the state's water infrastructure if voters approve the proposed constitutional amendment in November.

If voters pass the measure, \$1 billion in state tax revenues will be set aside for water projects each year, the Houston Chronicle reported.

"This session, Texas confronted a crisis," Abbott said when signing the bill in Lubbock. "Compounding a problem of inadequate sources of water, we lose about 88 billion gallons of water a year because of broken, busted and aged pipes."

The new funds would be spent on repairing those leaks in aging water systems and on finding new sources of water.

State Sen. Charles Perry, R-Lubbock, considered the Legislature's chief water expert, shepherded the legislation through the Senate. He said passage of the proposed amendment would change how the state approaches its water needs, which are expanding rapidly because of growth, aging infrastructure, and in-

creased industrial demand.

"It's going to be a little bit of a cultural shift from the way we do water in Texas," Perry said. "We're moving from a siloed, city-by-city conversation to where we're going to have more oversight and more of a coordinated effort."

State audit finds major lapses in jail systems

A recent audit of the agency in charge of overseeing the state's county jails faulted the Texas Commission on Jail Standards for failing to consistently investigate prisoner complaints, maintain accurate records or complete legally required inspections, the Texas Standard reported.

The audit, which covered the period from October 2022 to December 2024, identified some of the failures as "high risk."

"These weaknesses increase the risk that the Commission will not identify a jail in violation of minimum standards, which could affect the safety and well-being of inmates," auditors wrote.

In a written response to the audit, the TCJS said it agreed with the findings and plans to implement fixes by Aug. 1.

"TCJS will improve its processes and uphold its commitment to effective oversight and accountability," the agency wrote.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Lufkin.

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STAAR

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and the grade three through eight results were released Tuesday, June 17.

EOC results are results from assessments in Algebra I, Biology, English I, English II and U.S. History, while the grades three through eight results are from assessments in Mathematics, Reading, fifth and eighth grade Science and eighth grade Social Studies.

STAAR test scores are organized into four performance categories: Masters Grade Level, Meets and Above Grade Level, Approaches and Above Grade Level and Did Not Meet Grade Level.

STAAR EOC Results

Algebra I

BISD

Of 80 students from both Breckenridge High School and Breckenridge Junior High School to take the Algebra I assessment, 55% (44 tests) of them scored Masters grade level, 68% (54 tests) scored Meets and Above, 94% (75 tests) earned Approaches and Above and six% (five tests) were at the Did Not Meet level. The district as a whole had an average scale score of 4318, higher than the statewide average of 4051.

The scores are broken down for BHS and BJHS below.

BHS

53 students from BHS took the Algebra I assessment, of which 43% (23 students) were at Masters grade level, 58% (31 students) earned Meets and Above level, 91% (48 students) earned Approaches and Above and 9% (five tests) were at the Did Not Meet level. The average scale score for BHS, 4167, was also above the statewide average.

Biology

BHS

There were 100 students to take the Biology assessment at BHS and of them, 14 were at the Masters level, 67 of them earned Meets and Above and all 100 were at least at Approaches and Above, as no test takers were at Did Not Meet. The school's average scale score of 4160 was nine points higher than the statewide average.

English I

BHS

There were 98 students to take the English I portion of the STAAR exam at BHS and 7% (seven tests) of them were at Masters, 54% (53 tests) earned Meets and Above, 73% (72 tests) achieved at least Approaches and Above and 27% (26 tests) were at the Did Not Meet level. BHS was just below the statewide average, 4027 compared to 4038.

English II

BHS

For English II, BHS had 101 test takers, of which 4% (four tests) hit the Masters level, 56% (57 tests) were at Meets and Above, 74%

(75 tests) achieved Approaches and Above and 26% (26 tests) were at Did Not Meet level. The school's 4051 average scale score was just below the statewide average of 4061.

U.S. History

BHS

97 BHS students took the U.S. History portion of the STAAR exams and of those, 39% (38 tests) were at the masters level, 80% (78 tests) were at Meets and Above, 96% (93 tests) were at Approaches and Above and 4% (four tests) were at Did Not Meet. BHS had an average scale score of 4313, which was above the statewide average of 4282.

BISD 3-8 Results

3rd Grade Math

Of the 125 students tested for third grade math, 10% (13 students) were at Masters level, 28% (35 students) were at Meets and Above, 62% (78 students) were at Approaches and Above and 38% (47 students) were at Did Not Meet. The average scale score for BISD in third grade mathematics was 1407, slightly lower than the statewide average of 1460.

3rd Grade Reading

Of 124 third grade students to take the reading test, 12% (15 tests) were at Masters level, 38% (47 tests) were at Meets and Above, 70% (87 tests) were at Approaches and Above and 30% (37 tests) were at Did Not Meet. The BISD average scale score was lower than the statewide average, 1421 compared to 1476.

4th Grade Mathematics

There were 103 BISD students to take the fourth grade mathematics test, which saw 16% (16 students) reach Masters level, 48% (49 students) at Meets and Above, 70% (72 students) at Approaches and Above and 30% (31 tests) were at Did Not Meet. BISD had an average scale score of 1547 for that test, just below the statewide average of 1565.

4th Grade Reading

Of 103 students to take the fourth grade reading test, 14% (14 tests) reached Masters level, 46% (47 tests) were at Meets and Above, 77% (79 tests) were at Approaches and Above and 23% (24 tests) were at Did Not Meet. The average scale score for BISD was 1523, lower than the statewide average of 1555.

5th Grade Math

Out of 94 students that took the fifth grade mathematics test at BISD, 21% (20 students) reached Masters level, 51% (48 students) were at Meets and Above, 81% (76 students) made it to Approaches and Above and 19% (18 students) were at Did Not Meet. BISD had an average scale score of 1666 for this test, above the state average of 1641.

5th Grade Reading

There were 90 stu-

dents at BISD to take the fifth grade reading test, of which 21% (19 tests) reached Masters level, while 53% (48 tests) were at Meets and Above, 87% (78 tests) were at Approaches and Above and 13% (12 tests) were at the Did Not Meet level. BISD had an average scale score higher than the statewide average for this test as well, 1652 compared to 1610.

5th Grade Science

Out of 95 BISD students to take the fifth grade science test, 11% (10 students) reached Masters level, 25% (24 tests) were at Meets and Above, 71% (67 tests) were at Approaches and Above and 29% (28 tests) were Did Not Meet. Compared to the statewide average of 3768, BISD was slightly above that, with a 3805 average.

6th Grade Math

Ninety BISD students took the sixth grade mathematics test, of which 23% (21 students) reached Masters level, 56% (50 students) were at Meets and Above, 86% (77 students) were at Approaches and Above and 14% (13 tests) were at Did Not Meet. The average scale score for BISD for this test was 1771, better than the statewide average of 1721.

6th Grade Reading

There were 90 sixth grade BISD students to take the reading test, with 21% (19 tests) reaching the Masters level, 53% (48 tests) being at Meets and Above, 87% (78 tests) at Approaches and Above and 13% (12 tests) being in the Did Not Meet category. The 1652 average scale score for those test takers was just barely higher than the statewide average of 1650.

7th Grade Math

Of the 62 students at BISD to take the seventh grade mathematics test, 11% (seven students) were at the Masters level, 44% (27 students) were at Meets and Above, 69% (48 students) were at Approaches and Above and 31% (19 students) were at the Did Not Meet level. BISD had an average scale score of 1784, higher than the state average of 1752.

7th Grade Reading

There were 83 BISD students to take the seventh grade reading test and 31% (26 tests) of them were at the Masters level, 54% (45 tests) were at Meets and Above, 83% (49 tests) were at Approaches and Above and 17% (14 tests) were Did Not Meet. With an average scale score of 1682, BISD was above the state average of 1667.

8th Grade Math

Among 91 eighth grade mathematics tests taken at BISD in the spring, 24% (22 students) reached Masters level, 46% (42 students) were at Meets and Above, 70% (64 students) were at Approaches and Above and 30% (27 students) were at Did Not Meet.

With an 1892 average scale score, BISD was above the statewide average of 1859.

8th Grade Reading

Of 97 reading tests taken by eighth grade BISD students in the spring, 34% (33 tests) reached Masters level, 57% (55 tests) made Meets and Above, 86% (83 tests) were at Approaches and Above and 14% (14 test) were the Did Not Meet level. A 1735 average scale score for BISD was higher than the statewide average of 1721.

8th Grade Science

There were 96 students to take the eighth grade science test at BISD, of which 19% (18 students) made the Masters level, 50% (48 students) were at Meets and Above, 78% (75 tests) were Approaches and Above, 22% (21 tests) were Did Not Meet. With a 4095 average scale score, BISD was above the statewide average of 3973.

8th Grade Social Studies

BISD had 97 students to take the eighth grade social studies test. 5% (five tests) reached the Masters level, 13% (13 tests) were at Meets and Above, 48% (47 tests) were at Approaches and Above and 52% (50 tests) were in Did Not Meet. An average scale score of 3571 was well below the state average of 3719.

Boomfest

Continued from Page 2

gail Duran, who is also a Breckenridge track runner. Mother-daughter duo, Allison Jakus of Norman, Oklahoma and her daughter Emma Cyrus of Breckenridge finished the 10k together after walking it. They were escorted to the finish line by a Sacred Cross EMS truck and were all smiles as they crossed the finish line.

It was a feel-good story to end the run, as Emma is set to get married - she and her fiancé, Eric, are having an elopement wedding in Wyoming next month.

Chamber Executive Director May-

lun VanWinkle stated that after all was said and done, they have so far raised just under \$500 to be set aside for next year's Boomfest.

"This was a tough decision, and we want to thank everyone who supported and believed in the event," said the chamber. "We know how much our community looks forward to Boomfest, and we're already looking ahead with hopes to bring it back bigger and better in 2026."

The chamber was planning a drone show rather than a fireworks show for the event this year, which had an estimated cost of \$25,000.

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When rocking chairs don't fit...

Many retirees—even if admitting only to slowing down to a lower gear—have a difficult time finding rocking chairs that fit.

Some don't even try; count me in that group, with entry into my 89th year now but weeks away.

A credo for many is choosing to “wear out” instead of “rust out,” and a sliver of potential retirees insists on the continuance of productivity and a commitment as fulfillment of their biblical obedience to feed the hungry....

One such man is Joshua Potter, an educator who spent 30 years in a teaching/coaching career in Texas high schools.

He's now involved in the mortgage loan field, but a growing passion is sharing a simple concept about feeding the hungry.

Josh and Karla, his



Don Newbury

The Idle American

wife of 36 years and also a retired teacher, have developed a food giveaway method that they hope will be duplicated throughout Texas, and perhaps beyond. They're distributing “hungry bags” kept in their vehicles at all times. Recipients are typically homeless people, hoisting “we'll-work-for-food signs” at intersections....

“Our ‘Hungry Bag’ initiative is not for everyone,” Josh explains. “An easy ‘out’ is to think these folks to be beg-

gars seeking money for alcohol and/or drugs, and a few likely are. But a high percentage are indeed hungry.”

He went on to say that he and Karla have seen hundreds of hungry students wherever they've taught across the years—Kemp, Brenham, Angleton, Jacksboro, New Caney and Van—somber evidence that the poor are with us always.

Since late last year, the Potters, children Seth and Sarah and their mates—as well as four grandchildren—fill “hungry bags,” a family ministry of food for both body and soul....

Their intent is to raise awareness of drastically-increasing food deprivation. “How could it be any simpler than handing these folks a brown paper bag that includes scriptures stapled to the top?”

One reads, “This poor man called, and the Lord

heard him; He saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him, and he delivers them. Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him. (Psalm 34:6-8).

Inside the bag are small Bibles, a 60-second meal called “Hormel Compleats” and bottled water. The project has been endorsed by fellow worshipers at Van First Baptist Church....

I'm hoping and praying that retired educators will share this idea with their churches and begin in earnest,” Potter said.

He emphasizes that common sense must prevail, and that some people may not feel comfortable rolling down their windows to hand out the bags. He

See Newbury, Page 5

Ask Rusty: What about non-career Veterans and their VA healthcare?

Dear Rusty: In your answer to the retired U.S. Navy veteran about why he is forced to enroll in Medicare, you focused on military TriCare's requirement for the member to enroll in Medicare. But you said nothing about regular VA health care. If a non-career veteran is eligible for VA health care, couldn't that be used in place of Medicare? **Signed: Veteran Advocate**

Dear Veteran Advocate: Thank you for your feedback. FYI, I have previously explained numerous times that veterans who rely on the VA for 100% of their healthcare can, indeed, disenroll from Medicare Part B (thus saving the monthly Part B premium). I don't personally recommend it because of my personal experience, but it certainly is possible to do so.

Personally, I use the VA for some of my healthcare needs - usually an annual checkup and optometry services - at my local VA clinic which is only a mile away from where I live. But for any extensive treatment needs (medical tests, etc.) I must travel about 40 miles to the nearest VA hospital facility. For contrast, I have numerous private healthcare services, specialists, and hospitals very near where I live, but to use them under the VA I must get VA preapproval and use only certain VA-approved providers, which is inconvenient for me. Personally, I prefer the freedom to go to any healthcare service provider I choose, without restriction, at any time I need to. So, I use my VA coverage when it is convenient for me but rely also on non-VA, Medicare-approved specialists who I



Russell Gloor

Social Security Matters

can choose to use (or not) at will. For me, it's a matter of convenience and the freedom to use whichever healthcare provider I want. That said, I fully understand that some veterans rely exclusively on the VA for their healthcare needs, and I have explained to many who have written to me that they have that option. I have also published several public articles about this as well.

So, please rest assured that we regularly advise our veterans about their healthcare options under Medicare, including the ability to decline Medicare Part B coverage if they have full VA healthcare coverage. FYI, free Medicare Part A (inpatient hospitalization coverage) is mandatory to collect Social Security after age 65, but Medicare Part B coverage is always optional because there is a premium associated with Part B. A veteran can decline Medicare Part B coverage and save that monthly premium, but they would need to contact Social Security to do so. Social Security will want to interview the veteran to ensure they are aware of the potential financial consequences of not having Medicare Part B. And they may need to file form CMS-1763 (Request for Termination) But a non-career veteran can opt out of Medicare Part B if they get all of their healthcare services through the Veterans Administration.

See Results, Page 5

STAAR Grades 3-8 results reveal record high reading scores; Math scores increase but recovery is still slow

The Texas Education Agency released today the 2025 results from the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Grades 3-8 exams. The annual assessments provide a comprehensive look at how students are performing in key subjects at each grade level. These results reveal growth in academic outcomes across most grades in math, reading language arts, and science but for math and science, scores are still down from pre-pandemic levels.

Key takeaways include:

Reading language arts

reached record highs with 53% of students on grade level across grades 3-8. Scores increased for 3rd, 4th, 5th and 8th grade, with 5th grade reaching a record high of 57% of students on grade level. For 6th and 7th grades, scores did not increase.

Math performance saw a slight increase of 2 percentage points (from 40% meeting grade level to now 42%) across grades 3-8, but growth and declines varied greatly by grade. Scores improved for 3rd, 4th, 6th and 8th graders, while 5th and 7th grades declined. In all grades, the percentage of students meeting grade

level expectations is below 2019 levels, with some grades 10 percentage points lower.

Science performance increased in both 5th and 8th grades by 3 and 4 percentage points respectively. Only 29% of 5th graders met grade level expectations, 18 percentage points lower than 2019 levels (47% on grade level).

Social studies performance saw a slight decline, dropping one percentage point, to just 30% of students meeting grade level expectations.

Across all tested grades, including EOC results, both math and reading language arts

saw an improvement, with 43% of students on grade level in math (up 2 points from 2024) and 54% of students on grade level in reading language arts (up 1 point from 2024).

Students take math and reading language arts exams yearly in 3rd through 8th grades, science exams in 5th and 8th grades, and a social studies exam in 8th grade.

At the signing ceremony early this month for House Bill 2, the legislative session's main school finance bill, Gov. Greg Abbott laid out a bold goal: to make Texas No. 1 in education. Today's STAAR results for grades 3 through 8 show encouraging progress toward that vision, particularly in reading, where students are gaining ground.

But the data also makes clear how much work remains. While there are signs of growth in math, student performance is still below pre-pandemic levels. These results should guide our next steps, particularly in strengthening the core subjects that are key to long-term student success.

See Results, Page 5

The Breckenridge American offers local readers an opportunity to share their opinions on community topics and issues of public importance. Mail or deliver letters to the office at 114 E. Elm Street in Breckenridge, or e-mail letters to editor@breckenridgeamerican.com. The deadline is 5 p.m. Friday for the midweek edition. Letters that do not meet the deadline will not be printed in the paper. Letters must be submitted by the author/signee, and not by a third-party on behalf of the author/signee. Letters must contain the author's first name, last name, complete address, and telephone number. Only the writer's name and title of the letter, as appropriate, will be published with the letter. Names cannot be withheld. Letters from any candidate who is actively running for any political office will not be published. Writers may submit letters of up to 500 words. Letters are not guaranteed to be published in the next edition, but every effort to do so will be made. Unverified letters and letters containing personal attacks the newspaper deems to be of a libelous nature will not be published. In any event, the newspaper reserves the sole discretion to decide whether or not a reader submission will be published. All letters and columns featured on the Opinion Page are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Breckenridge American.

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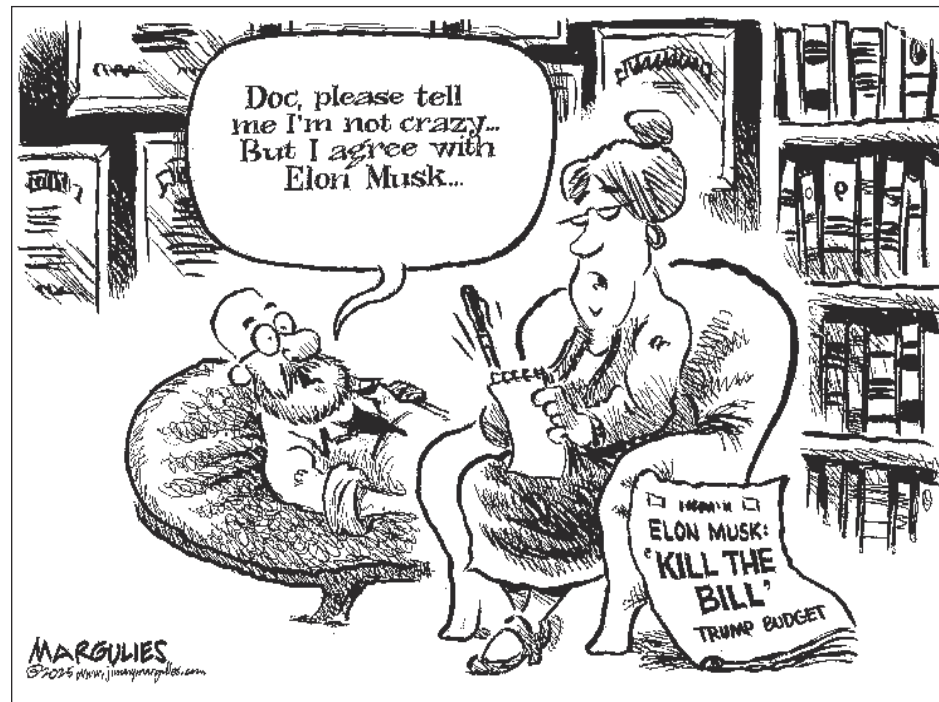
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Newbury

Continued from Page 4

mentioned one alternative is to leave bags at vacant intersections. "They will be picked up," he assured.

Who knows? Maybe entire congregations will see fit to help feed the hungry in this man-

ner. One thing for sure: They'll always be with us....

•••

That Josh has focused on this project is no surprise. I knew him and his brother, Jason—also an alumnus of Howard Payne Uni-

versity—during my tenure there as president. Both "bootstrap pullers," they were reared during most of their public school years in Cisco, TX, by an aunt and uncle. Both were outstanding student athletes, as they were

later at HPU. Josh is the kind of Christian leader whose influence meant much to parents whose children were entrusted to his tutelage.

(Clearly, he taught life first, ahead of subject content and football. I could not admire him

more.

It was big of me to confess to him that his 3.5 college grade point average was almost one point better than mine had been at HPU three decades earlier.)

"Hungry Bags" could be filled and distrib-

ed by the tens of thousands not only by retired educators, but others still in the work force.

Maybe you should participate, and/or pass the idea along. The field is white already unto harvest....

Results

Continued from Page 4

The growth seen in today's scores is an exciting step toward being No. 1 in the nation for education, and we anticipate that the key reforms in HB 2 around teacher quality and investments in early numeracy and literacy will continue to add to this momentum.

While we celebrate this growth, there is still much work to do, especially in math, where just 43% of students are on grade level. These results also tell us to think critically about how we are supporting students in the middle grades to ensure that they are prepared to enter high school with the skills needed to succeed. This session, the state invested in reforms for the early grades and high school, but was relatively silent on targeted middle school reforms and investments.

"Assessments like STAAR are how we understand what's working for Texas students, and where we must do better," said Mary Lynn Pruneda, Director of Education and Workforce Policy at Texas 2036. "This data helps ensure that every student, regardless of ZIP code, receives the support they need to thrive in the classroom and beyond. The path to becoming the top education state in the country starts with strong data, targeted instruction and an unwavering commitment to student success."

"It's encouraging to see signs of progress in math and reading language arts, and that's a credit to the hard work of Texas educators and the steps our state has taken to support students," said Gabe Grantham, Policy Advisor at Texas 2036. "But

we're still not where we need to be, particularly in math, where too many students remain off track by the time they reach high school and remain far behind pre-pandemic levels. Continued focus and thoughtful investment in the middle grades will be key to sustaining and accelerating this progress."

The STAAR assessment plays a critical role in Texas' education system by providing clear, comparable data on student learning across the state. It

enables educators, families and policymakers to understand where students are making gains and where additional support is needed.

With a strong statewide assessment program, Texas can make informed decisions that drive continuous improvement, promote equity, and ensure that all students are on a path to long-term success. These results are an essential tool for measuring progress and advancing our shared goal of academic excellence.



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Breckenridge Devotional Page

1. Is the Book of Jonah (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
 2. In Genesis 15, who was told to "look now toward Heaven and tell the stars"? Noah, Adam, Abram, Moses
 3. Who succeeded Belshazzar as King of the Chaldeans? David, Darius, Daniel, Saul
 4. Who sold his brother, Joseph, to a camel caravan? Cain, Judah, Silas, Joshua
 5. Where did Jacob and his family settle in Egypt? Goshen, Damascus, Bethlehem, Beersheba
 6. What was the name of Naomi's husband? Ephriam, Elijah, Elimelech, Elisha
- ANSWERS: 1) Old, 2) Abram, 3) Darius, 4) Judah (with his brothers), 5) Goshen, 6) Elimelech

<p>ANGLICAN St. Andrews Anglican Church 200 North Easton, 254-559-3172 Donald Sackett, Priest</p> <p>ASSEMBLY OF GOD Christian Fellowship Church 810 E. Elm, 254-559-8436 Tom Moore, Min.</p> <p>La Hermosa Assembly of God 909 Jeanette St., 254-559-7329 Raul Duran, Min.</p> <p>BAPTIST Bethany Baptist 1911 W. Walker, 254-559-5083 Don Bearden, Min.</p> <p>Bethel Baptist 804 S. James, 254-559-2072 Clarence Holliman, Min.</p> <p>Calvary Baptist 401 S. Camden, 254-559-7364 Dan Nelson, Min.</p> <p>Crystal Falls Baptist FM 578, Crystal Falls Danny Lee, Min.</p> <p>Eliasville Baptist Eliasville Wayne Peters, Min.</p> <p>First Baptist Church 301 S. Rose, 254-559-2295 Andy Rodgers, Min.</p> <p>First Baptist Church of Woodson Woodson, Jeremy Smith, Min.</p> <p>Gunsight Baptist Hwy. 183 S., 254-559-1620 Rex Boggs, Min.</p> <p>Mount Olive Baptist 518 S. Dunnigan, 254-559-2500 Gregory Morris, Sr., Min.</p> <p>Necessity Baptist 7150 C.R. 144, Caddo, 254-559-6775, John Kinman, Pastor</p> <p>New Hope Baptist #3 FM 717, Ranger, 254-647-1515 Ronny Guess, Min.</p>	<p>Rose Avenue Baptist 702 N. Rose Ave., 817-724-4047 Russell Brock, Pastor</p> <p>Trinity Baptist 36 CR 327, 254-559-7405 Pastor Herman (Butch) Hinkle, Jr.</p> <p>BIBLE Lord's Old-Time Gospel West Elliott, 254-559-8051</p> <p>The Church of Breckenridge 405 Sunset, 254-559-9790</p> <p>CATHOLIC Sacred Heart Catholic 208 S. Miller, 254-559-2860</p> <p>CHRISTIAN CHURCH First Christian 101 E. Williams, 254-559-2744</p> <p>First Christian of Woodson Michael Patrick, Min.</p> <p>Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints 530 CR 179, Eastland, 435-640-6103 Doug Smith, Branch President</p> <p>CHRISTIAN SCIENCE Christian Science 401 S. McAmis</p> <p>CHURCH OF CHRIST Central Church of Christ Woodson Royce Priddy, Min.</p> <p>Church of Christ 1701 W. Elliott, 254-559-2558 Don Nelson, Min.</p> <p>Church of Christ 1314 W. Jeanette, 254-559-5001</p> <p>Albany Church of Christ 417 N. Main Street, 325-762-2078 Russell Scott, Minister</p> <p>Eliasville Church of Christ Eliasville - Norman Carpenter, Min.</p> <p>CONTEMPORARY Real Church 515 N. Graham Ave., W.S. 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p>INTERDENOMINATIONAL Victory Life Church 1612 Hwy. 180 E, 254-559-3600 Dr. Craig Smeed, Lead Pastor</p> <p>JEHOVAH'S WITNESS Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses 202 FM 3099, 254-559-6830</p> <p>LUTHERAN Trinity Lutheran Church Hwy. 180, Albany, 915-762-3227 Thomas Chandler, Min.</p> <p>METHODIST First Methodist Church 419 W. Walker, 254-559-8208 Samantha Chambers, Pastor</p> <p>St. Paul United Methodist 1504 E. Elm, 254-559-3685 Samantha Chambers, Pastor</p> <p>NONDENOMINATIONAL Eolian Community Church 7162 CR 292, 254-559-3829 Genoa Goad, Min.</p> <p>River of Life Fellowship 122 E. Lindsey, 254-522-8981 James Stewart, Min.</p> <p>The Light of the World 600 N. Breckenridge Ave. Inocencio Briones, Min.</p> <p>The Ridge Cowboy Church @ Lakeside 108 CR 221, 325-370-7673</p> <p>PENTECOSTAL The Lighthouse 1509 E. Walker, 254-559-6077 Rev. Will Anderson</p> <p>PRESBYTERIAN First Presbyterian Church 1601 W. Elliott, 254-559-2484 Pastor Linda Buchanan Leveridge</p> <p>Have changes? Need something added? Email design@grahamleader.com.</p>
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FEATURES FROM THE BIBLE

TRUTH IN SCRIPTURE

A Wife for Isaac
Genesis 24

Abraham sent his chief servant to the land from which Abraham and Sarah had come to find a wife for Isaac.


He journeyed to Nahor and was at the town well watering his camels at the time the women of the town came out to get water for home. He prayed that he would have success in finding a wife for Isaac.

He determined that he would know which girl was right for Isaac if, when he asked for a drink from a girl, she would give a drink to him and also give a drink to his camels.

While this servant was still praying the beautiful Rebekah came and filled her jar with water. The servant asked her for a drink for himself.

She gave him a drink and offered to draw water for his camels. Bingo. Success.

Isaac's servant had found Isaac a wife.



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Even Exchange answers

1. Search, Search	6. Notice, Notice
2. Pulse, Pulse	7. Fumble, Fumble
3. Ditch, Ditch	8. Glance, Glance
4. Wear, Wonder	9. Devour, Devour
5. Line, Line	10. Pickle, Pickle

SCRAMBLERS solution

1. Abyss 2. Laugh;
3. Averse; 4. Dearth

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Answers

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D	I	O	R	S	T	E	T	S	O	N
S	T	E	P	P	E	S	E	S	S	A
L	A	X	A	L	I					
D	A	Z	E	S	T	E	A	L	T	H
E	N	E	L	I	V	O	O			
S	T	E	R	E	O	S	T	A	U	N
U	L	T	S	A	S					
S	A	M	B	A	S	T	E	L	L	A
S	T	E	I	N	W	A	Y	E	E	R
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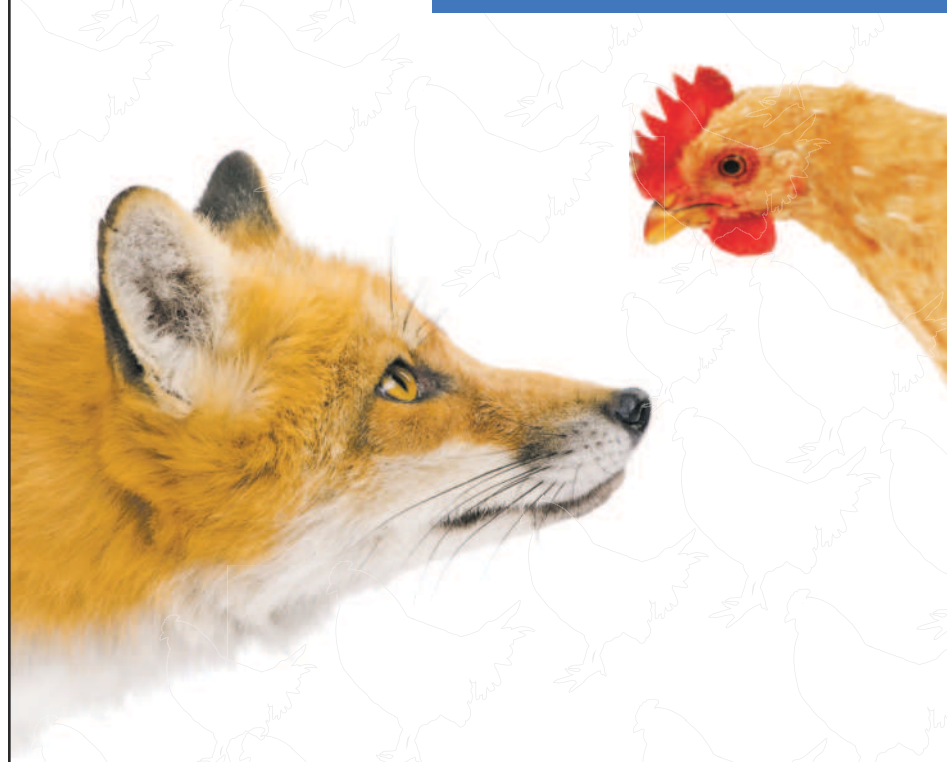
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2

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3

You'll boost the local economy

By advertising in your community newspaper, you'll be supporting the local economy. You'll help the papers' reporters, advertising representatives, carriers, graphic designers, copywriters and other employees keep their jobs. Moreover, you'll work with people who understand the local market.

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Ad space in a national newspaper is much more expensive than in a local one. Admittedly, your message circulates over a greater area, but you should analyze the cost-effectiveness: will readers really travel dozens of miles to visit your store? By advertising in your local paper, you'll reach your target audience directly — without breaking the bank!

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ENTERTAINMENT

Midweek Edition

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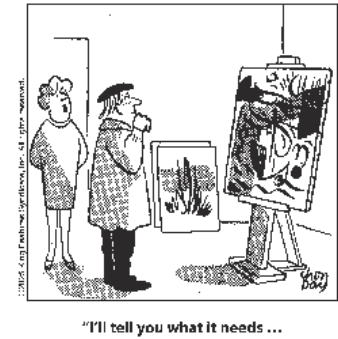


Even Exchange by Donna Pettman

Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from MASTER for an I, you get MISTLE. Do not change the order of the letters.

1. Laundry stiffener	_ T _ _ _ _	Look high and low	_ E _ _ _ _
2. Sign of life	_ _ L _ _ _	Boxing match prize	_ _ R _ _ _
3. Trench	_ I _ _ _ _	From Amsterdam	_ U _ _ _ _
4. Mosey along	_ A _ _ _ _	Awe	_ O _ _ _ _
5. Ocean vehicle	_ _ _ _ R _ _	Tablecloth material	_ _ _ _ N _
6. Take heed	_ _ _ T _ _	Apprentice	_ _ _ V _ _
7. Mishandle a football	F _ _ _ _ _	Speak unclearly	M _ _ _ _ _
8. Round map	_ _ _ B _ _	Pitcher's gear	_ _ _ _ V _
9. Wolf down	_ _ _ R _ _	Dedicated to	_ _ _ _ T _
10. Fence style	_ I _ _ _ _	Kangaroo's feature	_ O _ _ _ _

SCRAMBLERS
 Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!



"I'll tell you what it needs ..."

Void
BASSY _ _ _ _

Giggle
HAGUL _ _ _ _

Against
SAVEER _ _ _ _

Lack
HATRED _ _ _ _

TODAY'S WORD

_ _ _ _ _ _

Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13			14			
15				16			17			
18				19			20			
			21			22				
23	24	25			26		27	28	29	
30					31			32		
33			34	35			36	37		
			38			39				
40	41	42			43			44	45	46
47					48			49		
50					51			52		
53					54			55		

ACROSS

1 Wax-coated cheese

5 Jug handle

8 Thinker Descartes

12 The Big Easy acronym

13 "No seats" sign

14 Squad

15 French perfume brand

16 Western top-pers

18 Treeless plains

20 Thoreau piece

21 Remiss

22 Boxing leg-end

23 Stupefies

26 Spy's asset

30 Compass dir.

31 Actress Tyler

32 Tic-tac-toe win

33 Sound systems

36 Ridicule

38 Last (Abbr.)

39 Airline to Sweden

40 Ballroom dance

43 First-rate

47 Big name in pianos

49 Architect

50 Memo

51 100%

52 Work on proofs

53 Hot tubs

54 Hwy.

55 Cushions

DOWN

1 Goals

2 "Act now!"

3 Lotion additive

4 Christie sleuth Jane

5 English county

6 — and crafts

7 Shad product

8 Moscow's land

9 Son of Seth

10 Pinta's companion

11 Online crafts site

17 Far (Pref.)

19 — de deux

22 Off-roader (Abbr.)

23 — Moines

24 Busy insect

25 Wye follower

26 Bro's sib

27 Singer Rawls

28 Heavy weight

29 Sizzling

31 Parking place

34 July birth-stones

35 Panache

36 Menlo Park monogram

37 In dreamland

39 Fashion

40 Taxpayer IDs

41 Perched on

42 Self-referential

43 Popcorn seasoning

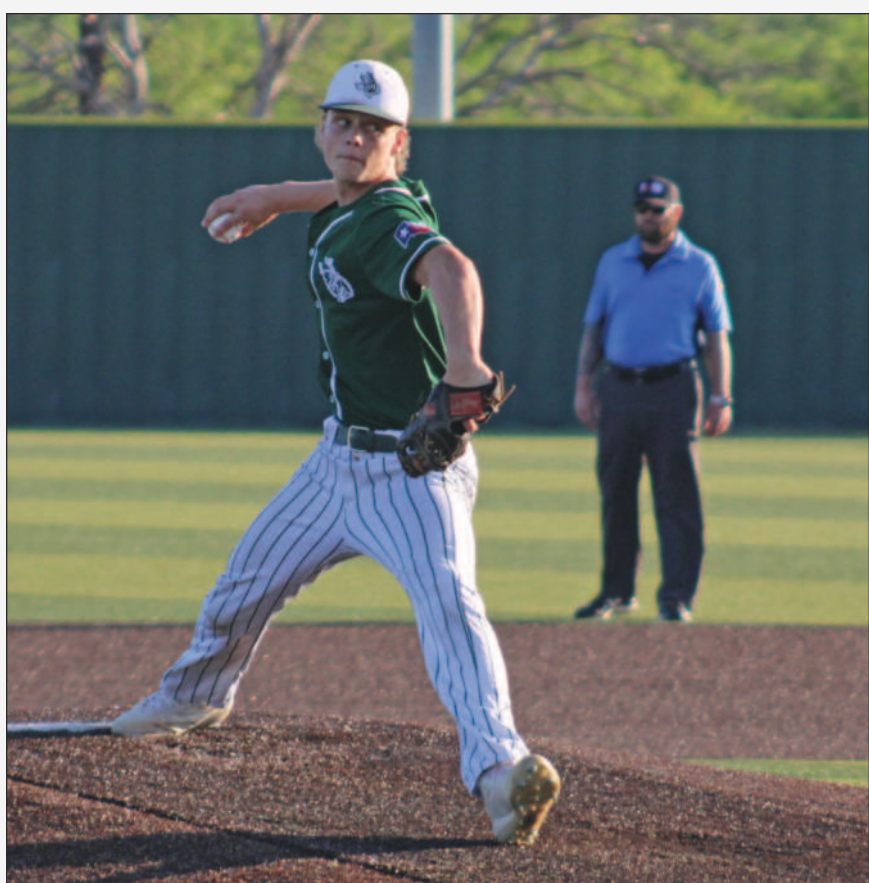
44 Castor's mother

45 Desertlike

46 Decays

48 Series of battles

Look for answers in the Classifieds.



Starting in the 2025-26 season, all postseason matchups leading up to the state tournament in 3A and 4A will be best-of-3 series, unless agreed upon by the coaches to be one game.

Photo/Alex Kielar

UIL approves change to baseball postseason format

Alex Kielar
news@breckenridgeamerican.com

This past baseball season, the Buckaroos made the playoffs as the third seed in Conference 3A Region 1 District 8 and went on to face Iowa Park, out of that region's District 7, in a bi-district matchup. The Hawks got the best of them in what was only a one-game playoff at Iowa Park, beating the Bucks, 6-1, and moving on to district playoffs. A recent approved change to the baseball postseason format for conferences 3A and 4A, by the University Interscholastic League (UIL) Standing Committee on Athletics, would have potentially opened the door for the Bucks to get a second crack at the Hawks had it been in place earlier – the fallacy of the predetermined outcome aside.

The change that was approved, which occurred when the UIL Legislative Council met Wednesday, June 11, at the Westin Austin in Austin, is to expand a current pilot program in place that requires a best-of-3 series for all postseason matchups up until the state tournament.

The pilot program has been in place for the past two years in conferences 5A and 6A, which has been successful, according to UIL Standing Committee on Athletics Chair Curtis Rhodes.

“The updated pilot expansion aims to allow the playoff formats across conferences and provide

greater consistency throughout conferences in the postseason,” the commentary read by Rhodes stated.

Previously, coaches would flip a coin to play one game or a series if they differed on the length.

Bucks Head Coach Jeremy West was for playing one game this year against Iowa Park, as anything can happen and they knew that the Hawks were one of the better teams. It turned out to be true, as Iowa Park went off to play in the state semifinals.

“Baseball’s a funny game; anything can happen in one game. So, we want to flip to play that one game, to try and put all our eggs in that basket and beat them once, as opposed to having to beat them twice,” West said. “I’ve been on both ends of that deal. Depending on the year and depending on your team and your opponent, there’s some strategy involved in that and they pretty much eliminated that. Sometimes you want that [one game] and some years you don’t.”

West said another reason that a team may want the one game is if they have a pitcher who is a top college prospect that they want to throw out there for the one game and move forward.

“There are some pros and cons both ways... even though the state tournament now is just the finals, they didn’t change the state tournament. We’re going to play a series for five weeks and then the state tournament is win-

or-go-home,” West said. “Why didn’t they make the finals that way? So there are still some quirks to it, but it’s not going to affect people for the most part. You’ve got a full week to play a series... I think most people prefer it that way. I guess you could at least ensure that the best teams get to the state tournament.”

West noted that he thinks the next realignment will bring some more changes to the format. The next realignment cycle will occur in February 2026 for the 2026-28 school years.

If approved by the Commissioner of Education, Mike Morath, the playoff format change will take effect Friday, Aug. 1, and be implemented in time for the 2025-26 school year and the 2026 baseball season.

Other changes made by the council for athletics included removing the pilot status from water polo to officially sanction it as a UIL sport and mandating UIL-registered officials for all varsity contests, including playoffs, except cross country, golf, tennis and track.

The Athletic Committee also announced that it will continue to study the addition of a shot clock for all UIL basketball contests and did not make a motion to implement the proposal. They also said that they will continue to study other proposals, including adding girls’ flag football, adding a mileage cap for playoff game travel and adding lacrosse.

Jackson named finalist for All-Big Country softball player of the year

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As she continues to rack up her achievements before going off to Weatherford College, Joni Jackson was recently named as a finalist for the Abilene Reporter’s 2025 Readers’ Choice All-Big Country Softball Player of the Year. The former Lady Bucks’ star catcher and soon-to-be Weatherford Coyote is one of 15 candidates from the Big Country that readers are voting on.

The Abilene Reporter selected the finalists based on individual statistics, team success, end-of-season accolades and coach recommendations.

Jackson was not only a force to be reckoned with at the plate, but also behind it and off the field this past season and throughout her high school career. Statistically speaking, Jackson led the Big Country with a .746 batting average (47-for-63) while also posting 50 RBI, 47 runs scored, 38 extra-base hits, 20 home runs, 25 walks, a 2.866 OPS, eight stolen bases and a .991 field-



Joni Jackson was recently named as a finalist for the Abilene Reporter’s 2025 Readers’ Choice All-Big Country Softball Player of the Year.

Photo/Alex Kielar

ing percentage in 26 games.

The poll that readers can vote on through Monday, June 30, to select their pick for the player of the year is available at the bottom of the story on the Abilene Reporter website. To get to the article, click the sports tab at the top of the website, and it is the first article at the top of the page.

“Joni being named a finalist for Big Country Softball Player of the Year just shows how all of her hard work has been noticed by

our community as well as the surrounding areas. She is a dominant force in all aspects of the game,” Breckenridge Head Softball Coach Jocelyn Gonzales said. “I have seen her bust her butt to be at this level, so even though she might not think much about her accomplishments, I will never stop bragging on her. I am so proud and happy for her. Softball can truly take you anywhere, so I hope Joni continues to put God first and trust his path that she will travel on.”

Lady Bucks participate in summer volleyball

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For their third week of participating in the Graham summer volleyball league, the Breckenridge Lady Bucks’ first and second teams played each other before the second team faced Perrin later in the evening Monday, June 16. The first team beat the second team in the first game on the night before losing their second game to Mineral Wells’ second team.

In the game against Perrin, the Lady Bucks’ second team stayed competitive early in the game before falling farther behind, as the Lady Pirates pulled away for a 40-24 win. The Lady Bucks started the contest with a 3-2 lead and a kill on the left side of the net later made it 4-3 before Perrin rallied for two points to go up 5-4.

A kill attempt by Perrin went off the pole and the game was tied 5-5. The Lady Bucks then added another point to retake the lead, 6-5. Some miscommunication led Perrin to tie it back up at six points apiece.

Lady Pirates took advantage of some shaky defense from the Lady Bucks, as Breckenridge fell behind 9-7. Head



Two sets of Lady Bucks teams have participated in the summer volleyball league for the first four Mondays of the month.

Photo/Alex Havardansky

Coach Latisha Clark noted that the team needs to work on its back row communication, which was a factor in the game’s outcome.

Within the final 15 minutes of the 25-minute game, Perrin held a 13-10 lead. A few minutes later, the deficit for the Lady Bucks was 19-16, and more miscommunication in the passing led to it slipping away as the deficit was 28-19 shortly after. Perrin kept their foot on the gas as they continued to add points, leading 36-24 before closing it out with a 40-24 win.

Overall, Coach Clark said that she is proud of all the girls who have come out for the summer league.

“Each week, girls have to play new positions, due to the busy summer time of camps and vacations. This is a

great way to get touches on a ball to get ready for our season,” Clark said. “I am seeing lots of good things and I am also able to see areas we need to focus on come practice time. I am excited to work with the girls and see what all we accomplish.”

Coach Clark also said that during week three of the Graham summer league, the athletes were complimented by a coach there who said they can tell the girls have been working hard and that they love their attitudes.

The Lady Bucks finished up the summer league this past Monday, June 23, with the first team facing off against Newcastle, Graham and finishing off against Perrin. The second team faced the Graham second team.