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PATRICIA BECK/Detroit Free Press

Angel Lewis, 7, of Detroit, center, responds Monday at Crary Elementary in Detroit. Crary didn't make adequate yearly progress in the 1999-2000 school year. But thanks to staff changes and parents becoming more active, the school has improved markedly.

Major battles done, U.S. says

More than 200 Mich. schools get poor marks

Sanctions may include replacing staff and letting students move

By LORI HIGGINS,
KATHLEEN GRAY
AND KIM NORTH SHINE
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITERS

► Full list of the 216 sanctioned schools in Michigan. 3A

More than 200 Michigan elementary and middle schools — nearly half of them in Detroit and overwhelmingly in poorer communities — must improve or face potentially serious consequences.

For parents, it can mean an opportunity to send children to better schools. For the schools themselves — including 96 in Detroit Public Schools — it could mean that tutoring services must be offered, teachers could be replaced and curriculum could be changed.

For Gov. Jennifer Granholm, it means a far-reaching community and business coalition must embrace the schools to help them succeed.

"There will be a sense of urgency because we cannot afford to wait," Granholm said. "This will require an unprecedented effort."

The state revealed Monday the list of 216 schools — out of 2,260 that were evaluated — that failed to meet adequate yearly progress.

Some districts have already appealed — including Detroit, which says eight of its 96 schools should not be included because the state used incorrect data.

Most of the schools serve large percentages of low-income students, and most are in urban areas. But educators say everyone should care.

"We used to be a society where you could lift for a living, but now are a society where you have to think for a living," State Superintendent Tom Watkins said. "We ought to care about this list for our own selfish economic reasons, because how can we have a strong state and nation without an educated citizenry?"

"We're all in this together," said Alex Bailey, superintendent in the Oak Park School District, where Pepper Elementary was listed because its reading scores didn't meet the goals.

Bennie Buckley, an Oak Park

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DAVID GUTTENFELDER/Associated Press

U.S. soldiers arrest a group of men in a Baghdad street, accusing them of carrying weapons and attempting to ambush U.S. troops Monday. U.S. soldiers and residents claimed the men were non-Iraqi Arab fighters. Meanwhile, efforts began to restore water and power to the city.



KEVIN FRAYER/Associated Press

U.S. Marines break through a gate while looking for resistance as they secure an area in Tikrit, in northern Iraq, early Monday. A Marine commander said the action ended the war's major battles.

NEW FOCUS

Tough talk about Syria raises concerns of war

By RON HUTCHESON
FREE PRESS WASHINGTON STAFF

WASHINGTON — President George W. Bush didn't include Syria in his axis of evil, but that country is fast becoming the top target in his campaign to rid the world of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

Although U.S. officials downplay prospects of military action, the steady stream of accusations against Syria from the White House, the Pentagon and the State Department is strikingly similar to the invective aimed at Iraq in the buildup to war.

On Monday — a day after Bush accused Syria of producing chemical weapons — administration officials branded Syria a

rogue nation" and threatened diplomatic, economic and unspecified sanctions.

U.S. officials have also accused Syria of offering sanctuary to Iraqi leaders and harboring terrorist organizations. Syria has been on the government's official list of nations that sponsor terrorism since the list's inception in 1979.

A newly released CIA report says that Syria has a stockpile of sarin, a deadly nerve agent. It also says that Syria "apparently is trying to develop more toxic and persistent" chemical weapons and is probably seeking biological weapons.

"They should review their ac-

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FINAL STRONGHOLD Marines easily capture hometown of dictator

DANGER REMAINS Small-scale encounters likely, officials predict

By JONATHAN S. LANDAY,
SARA OLKON
AND MARTIN MERZER
FREE PRESS WASHINGTON STAFF

TIKRIT, Iraq — The Pentagon declared the end of large-scale fighting in Iraq on Monday as Marines stormed the heart of Tikrit, suppressed hard-core resistance there and captured the last stronghold of deposed Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"The major combat operations are over," Maj. Gen. Stanley McChrystal said after more than 3,000 Marines fought their way to the center of Hussein's ancestral hometown.

They seized an opulent presidential palace and rolled their armored vehicles along the city's broad boulevards. Though no jubili-

lant welcome greeted the U.S. troops, they saw white flags flutter from taxicabs, cement homes and mud huts. They accepted roses from a few grateful residents — and stayed alert for suicide attacks by the remnants of pro-Hussein militias.

"There is nothing beyond Tikrit," said Marine Lt. Col. Doug Hardison. "That is it. It's now just a function of when to call the win."

The city fell with no sign of the ferocious last stand by Hussein loyalists that some planners had feared. Following a pattern that began weeks ago in other Iraqi cities, the Marines fought a few sharp engagements and then watched their enemies vanish.

Large concentrations of Iraqi

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Local governments swallow road costs

Millions invested preparing now-delayed projects

By MATT HELMS
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

When the Michigan Department of Transportation slammed the brakes on dozens of road expansion projects, it was local governments that got thrown into the windshield.

Several Oakland County leaders are angry and financially bruised after spending loads of money and time preparing for projects that are going nowhere for at least four years because of the state budget crunch.

In Novi and Wixom, MDOT called an abrupt halt to years of planning for new I-96 interchanges at Beck and Wixom roads. Both Novi and the Road Commission for Oakland County have spent millions on local roads in anticipation of the work — including this summer's replacement of a crumbling Grand River

Avenue bridge over railroad tracks west of Novi Road.

And in Rochester Hills, a new interchange at Adams Road will have to wait — despite local officials' promises and projections that the work would more than pay for itself with new jobs and tax revenues.

These projects are in Oakland County, but "this is a regional issue," said Craig Bryson, spokesman for the Road Commission for Oakland County. "There are 300,000 people who live outside of Oakland County and commute into the county to work."

The projects were among 34 road expansions statewide that Michigan recently announced will be put off until at least 2007. Because the economy is weak, Gov. Jennifer Granholm says the state shouldn't build new roads until 90

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>KNIGHT RIDDER<



SUNNY
Windy and very warm.
Jerry Hodak's forecast, 7E

80 | 53
HIGH | LOW



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