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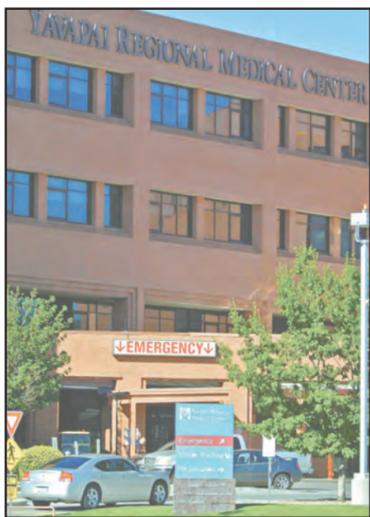
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Daily Courier file

FIRST IN STATE

Medical center takes stand against recreational pot

By **NANCI HUTSON**
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PRESCOTT — No pot smoking allowed - unless it's prescribed by a doctor.

That's the official stand of the Yavapai Regional Medical Center Board of Trustees, the first medical entity in the state to take a position against a November ballot proposal to legalize recreational marijuana.

Arizonans for Responsible Drug Policy announced the trustees' decision on Thursday.

"We, the Board of Trustees at Yavapai Regional Medical Center, appreciate and deeply value the importance of healthy communities," the trustees said after a July 17 vote. "We advocate for the health of everyone living in the communities we represent."

"Improving and maintaining health is challenging and complex. We support a multitude of ongoing health programs to help our communities be healthier. We commit our resources to provide services, information and education to help maximize good health for all, from tiny newborns to frail centenarians. In that spirit, we have voted consistently with the position taken by the Board of Directors for the Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association. The YRMC Board of Trustees opposes the initia-

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SCORES ARE UP

Officials happy with Prescott school district results, talk future of testing

By **NANCI HUTSON**
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PRESCOTT — As they ready for a new school year, district administrators' confidence in their schools academic rigor and readiness is bolstered by the Arizona Merit test results that indicate steady progress in math and language arts.

Once again, the district's performance was above state average at almost all levels.

"I'm very happy with our scores," said Assistant Schools Superintendent Mardi Read.

In fourth grade, the language arts proficiency rate was 68 percent versus 46 percent statewide. A year ago, Prescott's average was 54 percent; the state 42 percent. In 10th grade language arts, 47 percent of students passed versus the state average of 30 percent.

In math, 54 percent of fifth-graders reached proficiency versus 46 percent statewide; last year that number was 46 percent in Prescott and 40 percent statewide. In Algebra 2, 50 percent of students passed versus 29 percent statewide. A year ago, Prescott students scored just above state average at 31 percent to 30 percent statewide.

"We've worked hard in the district on instructional guides, and work-



SCORE SAMPLE

4th-grade language arts proficiency
68% Prescott vs. 46% state

5th-grade math proficiency
54% Prescott vs. 46% state

Algebra 2
50% Prescott vs. 29% state

See more information in bar charts at dcourier.com

ing on a collaborative basis on when to teach the educational standards," Read said.

The one anomaly was eighth grade math. Those scores dipped from 34 percent to 8 percent passing - state scores were 34 percent in 2015 and 26

percent this year - but administrators were clear that had more to do with student apathy than ability. This year, students will be better informed about the test's relevance, officials said.

"I'm really proud of the work our teachers did, and that our students did by their hard work," Read said of the overall results.

Yavapai County Schools Superintendent Tim Carter, a member of the state Board of Education, said he cautions district leaders and parents to be careful how they interpret results.

It is still early in the implementation process, and all involved in the transition, even students, are still weighing how best to interpret and utilize it to bolster instruction.

"And it's not easy," Carter said.

AZ Merit test scores have been delivered to individual districts, and student scores will be delivered to parents soon, but the statewide analysis will not be available until late August. The test scores at four levels: minimally proficient, partially proficient, proficient and highly proficient.

Carter pleaded for patience as the state board considers the best way to proceed with standardized assessments in the future.

In March, Gov. Doug Ducey approved legislation that will allow

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Volunteers sought for fire dept. auxiliary unit

The Daily Courier

PRESCOTT - A new volunteer program that aims to offer support to Prescott Firefighters and relieve them of some day-to-day tasks has been launched by the City of Prescott.

In a news release Thursday afternoon, the city announced that it is recruiting volunteers to serve as auxiliary fire personnel in a newly established Community Services Unit (CSU) of the Prescott Fire Department.

The city is inviting those interested in the program to attend a Prescott Fire Department-hosted open house at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 4, at Fire Station 71, 333 White Spar Road.

Prescott Fire Chief Dennis Light will be on hand at the open house to

discuss the program, along with other city officials.

The news release explains that the volunteers would perform "routine, non-emergency services," such as smoke alarm installation, fire inspections, pre-incident fire planning, and possibly, quality assurance/improvement reviews for emergency medical services.

"The Community Services Unit will support our firefighters by relieving them of certain day-to-day tasks unrelated to fire suppression or designated emergency response services," Light states in the news release.

He added: "This will allow us to align resources with points of need, dispatching personnel and equipment according to the level of need. Our first priority is always the pro-

tection of human life, followed by property and the environment. The CSU will help our firefighters focus on these calls."

The city anticipates that the unit will begin with seven members, and be operational by late 2016.

Those applying must be at least 21 years old and must undergo customary screening and interviews. The selected volunteers will be required to successfully complete an 80-hour customer-service and orientation training course, work a minimum of six hours per week, and attend monthly meetings, as required.

Discussion at the Aug. 4 open house is expected to center on Prescott Fire Department operations, the scope of

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Today's Weather

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