

Office of the Governor

Special Investigations



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HAND DELIVERED

Honorable Nathan Deal
Governor of Georgia
State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30335

Dear Governor Deal:

You continued our appointment from Governor Perdue as special investigators to probe allegations of test tampering and related matters in the Dougherty County School System.

Our investigation found criminal conduct and other wrongdoing by over 40 school teachers and administrators in that system with regard to the 2009 Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT).

Our investigative findings follow. At your direction, the entire file is available to the appropriate authorities. Please let us know if we may be of further service.

Very truly yours,


MICHAEL J. BOWERS


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Report Limitations

This report is only an overview of our findings. It does not include every detail or fact developed during this investigation. Nor does it include every relevant document. All notes, documents, transcripts and interview summaries related to this investigation will be available to you, and the appropriate authorities for whatever action, if any, is appropriate.

Special Thanks

We wish to express our gratitude to you and Governor Perdue for your support of our work. We also wish to extend our appreciation to Ms. Kathleen Mathers, former Director of the Governor's Office of Student Achievement, for her indispensable assistance throughout this investigation.

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OVERVIEW

The disgraceful situation we found in the Dougherty County School System (DCSS) is a tragedy, sadly illustrated by a comment made by a teacher who said that her fifth grade students could not read, yet did well on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT).

This incredible statement from a teacher in a school where the principal flatly refused to cooperate with our investigation is indicative of what we found in many of the schools we visited.

To our amazement, this top-level administrator would not even answer questions about how she mishandled her duties as the person who is most responsible, at that school, for overseeing all testing activity.

Another school principal, whose salary was over \$90,000 per year, allowed her family to falsely claim that they were eligible for a federally-funded free lunch each school day, even though official guidelines required the annual income to be no more than \$24,089.

Yet another principal, with regard to our interviews, told a teacher: “Don’t you tell them anything, you hear?”

Notwithstanding these examples of misconduct, there are skilled, dedicated and well-meaning educators in this school system. But their work is often overshadowed by an acceptance of wrongdoing and a pattern of incompetence that

is a blight on the community that will feel its effects for generations to come. This is the Dougherty County School System.

Hundreds of school children were harmed by extensive cheating in the Dougherty County School System. In 11 schools, 18 educators admitted to cheating. We found cheating on the 2009 CRCT in all of the schools we examined. A total of 49 educators were involved in some form of misconduct or failure to perform their duty with regard to this test.

While we did not find that Superintendent Sally Whatley or her senior staff knew that crimes or other misconduct were occurring, they should have known and were ultimately responsible for accurately testing and assessing students in this system. In that duty, they failed.

The 2009 erasure analysis, and other evidence, suggests that there were far more educators involved in cheating, but a fair analysis of the facts did not allow us to sufficiently establish the identity of every participant.

The statistics, and the individual student data, leave little room for any other reasonable explanation, save for cheating. For example, the percentage of flagged classrooms for DCSS is ten times higher than the state average.

Unlike our investigation of criminal misconduct in the Atlanta Public Schools, officials with Dougherty County Schools (and their agents) provided, in a timely and professional manner, access to all personnel and needed documents.

THE CRCT

The CRCT is a multiple choice examination given annually to all public school students in Georgia. There are five tested subjects: reading; English/language arts; math; social studies and science. Students are scored as “meets standards,” “exceeds standards” or “does not meet standards.” The CRCT is an important test. Its results help determine whether a school makes “Annual Yearly Progress” (AYP) as required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). All elementary and middle schools within a district must administer the CRCT at the same time and in the same manner, during a nine-day window. During the first five days, a different subject area is tested each day. The last four days of the window are used for make-up testing.

Georgia law requires that the test be administered under tightly-controlled conditions: the test materials are delivered to the individual schools several days before testing begins. Each school designates a certified educator to be responsible for test administration. This person is known as the testing coordinator, who must ensure that the test is administered according to the test protocols. But the principal bears ultimate responsibility for ensuring how the test is administered.

Teachers receive training on test administration using procedures that specifically set forth how the test must be given. Any deviation from the test protocols is prohibited.

In first and second grade, teachers read the test questions aloud and students answer questions in the test booklet by marking the correct answer. (Exhibit 1). Teachers must read each question only twice, with no voice inflection that could suggest the answer. Third through eighth graders read the test questions for themselves and answer questions on a separate Scantron® sheet by filling in the appropriate bubble by pencil. (Exhibit 2). Each test section is timed and contains between 40 and 60 questions. Only students with special accommodations may have variances in the test administration.

First and second grade students no longer take the CRCT.

INTERVIEWS AND DOCUMENT REVIEW

On August 26, 2010, Governor Sonny Perdue appointed us as his Special Investigators to investigate alleged test tampering, and related matters, in the DCSS. (Exhibit 3). This order augmented his directives that we were to:

- Find the truth with regard to cheating, if any, on the 2009 CRCT within DCSS;
- Assist state regulators in sanctioning educators who participated in cheating;
- Submit information to prosecuting authorities regarding criminal conduct, if discovered.

Governor Perdue emphasized that our mandate was to find the truth. He also stressed that teachers who were honest in their testimony should not be criminally prosecuted. You restated these directives to us upon assuming office.

In order to gain an understanding of the overall structure of DCSS, how the testing process works and the relevant players, we first conducted benchmark interviews of top officials in the District, including Dr. Sally Whatley, Renee Bridges, Dianne Daniels, Carlos Keith, and Robert Lloyd. All of these officials were interviewed again toward the end of this work. David Maschke, Rev. James Bush, and Dr. Joshua W. Murfree, Jr. were also interviewed during this investigation. We also interviewed the teachers, administrators and others at each of the flagged schools.

In addition to interviews of district personnel, we met with James Wilson, who conducted the initial “investigation” on behalf of the district and he was wholly unqualified for that job. We conducted more than 650 interviews.

2009 ERASURE ANALYSIS

As we did in the investigation of the Atlanta Public School System, one of the first tasks we undertook was to test the validity of the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) erasure analysis. This was done with the assistance of our expert during a visit to CTB McGraw-Hill’s test facility. The erasure analysis is, without question, accurate and reliable.

In February 2010, GOSA produced an erasure analysis performed by CTB McGraw-Hill on the spring 2009 CRCT. The results of this analysis showed testing irregularities. The GOSA erasure analysis, which was performed on the

test answer documents for every elementary and middle school student in the State of Georgia, compared the number of wrong to right (WTR) erasures by grade, test subject and class, to the average number of WTR erasures state-wide for the corresponding grade and test subject. The results of the erasure analysis showed that in 35 Georgia school districts, including DCSS, a significant number of classes had WTR erasures that were dramatically and disconcertingly higher than the state average.

Specifically, CTB McGraw-Hill determined that if a class had WTR erasures more than three standard deviations above the expected norm (i.e., the state average), it was almost statistically impossible for such a high number of WTR erasures to have occurred without some external force operating to cause it. For example, at three standard deviations there is only one in 370 chance that the high erasures occurred by coincidence and at five standard deviations there is only one in 1.7 million. By seven standard deviations, there is only one in 390 billion chance that such a high number of WTR erasures occurred randomly.

STANDARD DEVIATIONS CHART

Standard Deviations	Chance of Occurring Randomly
3	1 / 370
4	1 / 15,788
5	1 / 1,774,278

6	1 / 560,800,000
7	1 / 390,600,000,000

In other words, some external force operated to cause the high number of WTR erasures. Although a WTR erasure analysis does not indicate that the external force was cheating, it does suggest that something other than normal student erasing occurred.

Thirty-five Georgia districts had schools with more than five percent of the classes flagged for standard deviations higher than three. (Exhibit 4). The GOSA study grouped schools into four categories based on the percentage of flagged classrooms: “clear of concern”; “minimal concern”; “moderate concern”; and “severe concern.” Eighty-percent of Georgia’s elementary and middle schools fell into the “clear of concern” category, 10% fell into “minimal concern,” 6% fell into “moderate concern,” and 4% fell into the “severe concern” category.

DCSS ERASURE ANALYSIS

The percentage of flagged classes in DCSS exceeded any other district in Georgia except the Atlanta Public School System. Of the middle and elementary schools in DCSS, 36% fell into the “severe concern” category, 27% were of “moderate concern” and 23% were of “minimal concern.” DCSS accounts for 10.8% of the “severe” category schools in the state. West Town Elementary, with

77.2% of its classes flagged, was 6th in the state in percentage of classes flagged for WTR erasures.

The erasure analysis only flagged classes that departed from the norm by three or more standard deviations. But some classes in DCSS had standard deviations ranging from 10 to 36. (Exhibit 5). So many WTR erasures could not occur without human intervention.

Amazingly, many DCSS teachers had high WTR erasures in all three subject areas: English/language arts; reading; and math. Not only did numerous teachers do something that was virtually impossible one time, they did it three times in a row. Even more amazing, several teachers in the same school did this multiple times.

Dr. Gregory Cizek, our expert, analogized the chances of this occurring to the Georgia Dome being filled to capacity, with every person in the Dome being seven feet tall.

VERIFICATION OF THE ERASURE ANALYSIS

We verified that the results of the erasure analysis were accurate and consistent. This study served as a guide to identify where cheating may have occurred, and it established the foundation for this investigation. We took the following steps to ensure its validity:

- Retained an expert to review the GOSA erasure analysis;

- Inspected the CTB McGraw-Hill facility and interviewed several members of the staff who were involved in grading the CRCT and conducting the erasure analysis;
- Observed the answer document scanning process;
- Compared the results of the erasure analysis to the results of a reanalysis of selected and random test documents;
- Manually reviewed thousands of answer sheets and compared them to the results of the original erasure analysis; and,
- Interviewed experts in the educational testing and statistics field.

Based on these efforts, we concluded that the GOSA erasure analysis is accurate, reproducible, and reliable.

We retained Gregory J. Cizek, Ph.D., of the University of North Carolina, who is one of the foremost experts on educational testing and statistics in the nation. Dr. Cizek is a Professor of Educational Measurement and Evaluation in the School of Education at UNC. He currently serves as the President of the National Council on Measurement in Education. (Exhibit 6). After Dr. Cizek reviewed the erasure analysis, he accompanied us to the CTB McGraw-Hill facility. When we toured the CTB McGraw-Hill plant, we observed the answer documents being re-scanned and interviewed CTB McGraw-Hill's statistician and other personnel familiar with the scanning process.

CTB McGraw-Hill's high-optical scanner read the students' test documents and recorded answers and erasures for each section. A computer used special

software to determine when an answer was changed from WTR. This data reflected the total number of erasures and the total number of WTR changes for each student in each subject area measured in Georgia.

Next, CTB McGraw-Hill employed a statistical test to flag excessive numbers of WTR erasures in a class. (Exhibit 7). The average number of WTR erasures statewide, in a given grade and subject, were compared to the number of WTR erasures in a specific class within the DCSS. The proximity of erasures to the expected norm is expressed in terms of standard deviations. CTB McGraw-Hill flagged classes that were three or more standard deviations above the state average.

GOSA used a conservative criterion of three standard deviations. This was done to insure that only the most severe and questionable erasures were identified.

We interviewed company officials and manually reviewed answer documents, counted erasures, and compared our count with the computer's analysis. This manual count of erasures revealed more changes than the computer scanning process. The computer is not as stringent as the human eye. The difference is not because the scanner missed erasures, but because it is calibrated to give the benefit of the doubt to a certain level before it considers a lighter mark.

To confirm the study results, we asked that CTB McGraw-Hill re-scan both random and selected tests. The results of the re-scanned answer documents were consistent with the results of the original erasure analysis.

USE OF THE ERASURE ANALYSIS IN THIS INVESTIGATION

The erasure data helped us prioritize interviews of educators at the schools to allow us to efficiently focus our effort. We also used this information when we questioned teachers and administrators.

We compared the student scores with other evidence to better understand what occurred in classrooms. The student data listed every student in DCSS and set forth how many total erasures, versus how many WTR erasures, appeared on that student's answer document. This information provided an additional perspective for analyzing erasures.

When student-level data revealed a large number of students within a single class with high erasures that changed from wrong to right 70%-100% of the time, such information raised an additional suspicion that someone other than the students could be changing answers.

SCHOOL SUMMARIES

We found cheating in all of the schools we investigated. There were a total of 49 educators involved in some manner of misconduct with regard to the 2009 CRCT. The principals of all 11 schools we investigated were found to be ether

responsible for having failed in their duty to supervise testing, or to be directly involved in criminal conduct. Surprisingly, three principals refused to answer our questions by invoking the Fifth Amendment, which, under civil law, is an implied admission of wrongdoing. In eight of the 11 schools, we obtained confessions of cheating.

WEST TOWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1113 University St.
Albany, Georgia 31707

Principal: Alene Pringle
Testing Coordinator: David Walker

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Cheating occurred at West Town Elementary School during the 2009 CRCT. Forty-two people were interviewed, some more than once. One person admitted cheating on the 2009 CRCT. This misconduct is indicated by the high standard deviations in flagged classrooms, a confession, witness testimony and the dramatic drop in WTR erasures from 2009 to 2010. Principal Alene Pringle was interviewed twice, and then refused to answer our questions by asserting her Fifth Amendment rights. She failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT. Pringle coordinated, directed and facilitated the cheating.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	77.2	3.7
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	43	3
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	16(15)	2(1)
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	12.7	4.68
High Flagged Standard Deviation	36.9	6.7
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.7	3.6

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
BANKS	1 RD	10.23397
BANKS	1 LA	12.97021
BANKS	1 MA	9.646991
BRACKEEN	1 RD	17.46921
BRACKEEN	1 LA	16.51044
BRACKEEN	1 MA	12.70482
CHEVERS	1 RD	10.55532
CHEVERS	1 LA	12.84356
WAITE	1 RD	11.02666
WAITE	1 LA	9.898922
WAITE	1 MA	10.89428
MALLORY	2 RD	15.81229
MALLORY	2 LA	11.69482
MALLORY	2 MA	5.507629
MITCHELL	2 RD	13.70757
MITCHELL	2 LA	17.92212
MITCHELL	2 MA	17.44879
ALDRIDGE	3 LA	4.805527
ALDRIDGE	3 MA	7.001085
DOUGLAS	3 LA	12.15267
WASLEY	3 RD	6.427334
WASLEY	3 LA	4.116731
WASLEY	3 MA	3.707342
WOODHAM	3 RD	9.963333
WOODHAM	3 LA	8.134703
WOODHAM	3 MA	8.647957
CLAY	4 RD	11.43546
CLAY	4 LA	7.682805
CLAY	4 MA	16.66032
NEFF	4 RD	13.05013
NEFF	4 LA	5.266158
NEFF	4 MA	9.161786

ROBINSON	4 RD	11.98553
ROBINSON	4 LA	6.98995
ROBINSON	4 MA	11.09194
MOSELY	5 RD	36.94545
MOSELY	5 LA	14.00242
MOSELY	5 MA	2107647
SAVAGE	5 RD	27.95694
SAVAGE	5 LA	23.82917
SAVAGE	5 MA	13.90937
WRIGHT	5 RD	24.78494
WRIGHT	5 LA	15.89046
WRIGHT	5 MA	6.969581

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

A. Narrative

While the administration of the 2009 CRCT was underway, Principal Pringle approached fifth grade teacher Gloria Mosely and asked if she would cheat. Soon after that, Mosely says she received the students' tests in her classroom after school hours where she changed students' answers. Once the tests had been changed, Mosely returned the tests to the principal's office where Pringle was waiting for her.

Mosely said another fifth grade teacher, Adrienne Savage, also cheated on the 2009 CRCT. Savage gave students the answers and reviewed sections of the test before it was administered. Principal Pringle knew of Savage's actions at the time they occurred, but failed to report Savage to school officials and took no disciplinary action against her.

The statistical evidence at West Town indicates many more students' answers were changed. Teachers also cheated on benchmark and unit tests by identifying those questions students correctly answered, then allowing students to change their incorrect answers.

B. Testimony of Witnesses

1. Gloria Mosely (Teacher)

She cheated on the 2009 CRCT at Principal Pringle's direction. The Friday after testing was completed, Pringle asked Mosely to "look at the children's answer sheets and make sure that most of them pass." Mosely left the school for awhile, and when she returned, her students' answer sheets and tests were in her classroom, and the exams were covered. She does not know who put the tests there but believes it was either Pringle or Assistant Principal David Walker.

As directed, she changed the students' answers and then returned the test material to Pringle, who was in her office. Mosely claimed she only changed the math answers of her own homeroom students. It was Mosely's understanding that other teachers were helping Pringle change answers, but claimed that she does not know which teachers were involved.

The upper grades at West Town were departmentalized -- one teacher taught math to all students in the grade, while another taught a different subject. Principal Pringle told teachers to enter other teacher's classrooms while the subject they regularly taught was being tested. Savage, a science teacher, came into Mosely's classroom during the science CRCT. Mosely saw Savage giving an answer to a student in Mosely's class. Mosely told Savage "we don't give students answers here." Mosely believed that Savage cheated because she wanted to look good and reported Savage's actions to principal Pringle. Pringle told Mosely that Savage was trying to make Pringle look bad. Principal Pringle instructed Mosely to cheat because Pringle did not want to look bad by having lower test scores in the subjects not taught by Savage.

After her interview with us, Mosely says that Pringle told her, "don't you tell them [Governor's investigators] anything, you hear!" Pringle also instructed Mosely not to tell us that Pringle instructed teachers to improperly go into other teachers' classrooms during the administration of the 2009 CRCT. Mosely told teacher Teresa Hall, that she admitted that she cheated to the Governor's investigators. Hall wanted to know if the investigators asked about "who changed the reading answers."

2. Teresa Neff (Teacher)

In 2009 Neff was a fourth grade teacher. One morning during the administration of the 2009 CRCT, Neff noticed one of her student's answer sheets was missing. She was sure this pupil's answer sheet had been turned in the day

before with her other students' tests. A student from Patricia Clay's fourth grade class showed up at Neff's door with the student's missing answer sheet, which had been put in with Clay's test documents.

Neff was surprised by the high scores of Alice Wright's fifth grade students, many of whom she taught the year before. These students scored higher than Neff thought they could. She heard that Pringle had asked others to change students' answers, but did not know who these people were.

On unit tests, Neff would tell students which questions they got correct, and would then return the tests to the students so they could re-answer the questions they missed.

3. Alice Wright (Teacher)

While administering either the science or social studies section of the 2009 CRCT, Wright noticed one of her students marking answers without reading the questions. It appeared that the students had prior knowledge of the questions on the test. Wright stated, "I better not have seen what I thought I saw." After Wright said this to her class, it appeared the students started to read the questions more closely. Wright thinks that Savage reviewed the test with the students before it was given. She believes it was impossible for the students in her class to make the number of wrong to right erasures identified in the erasure analysis.

4. Patricia Alexander (Proctor)

Alexander was a proctor for Teresa Neff's class. She heard that several teachers at West Town were in a room changing answers on the 2009 CRCT. This group was close to Principal Pringle, and included Felecia Hawkins, Jacqueline Cuffie, Carol Boges and Teresa Hall. Alexander heard this shortly after the school received its test results. She was surprised by West Town's scores on the 2009 CRCT. The scores were higher than she expected.

5. Alene Pringle (Principal)

We interviewed Pringle three times. The first two times, she denied that there were any testing irregularities during the administration of the 2009 CRCT. She also said she had not heard any complaints of teachers cheating on the CRCT.

However, during her final interview, she refused to answer any questions by asserting her Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate herself.

6. Dr. Adrienne Savage (Teacher)

Savage denied cheating. She admitted leaving her classroom and walking through the other fifth grade classes during the administration of the CRCT. Savage agreed to take a GBI-administered polygraph examination.

During the polygraph test, Savage denied involvement in cheating on the 2009 CRCT and denied knowing of any specific teacher cheating. She further denied that she was instructed to cheat on the tests. It was the polygraphist's opinion that her physiological responses were "indicative of deception." Savage reiterated her denials after being informed of failing the polygraph test.

7. David Walker (Assistant Principal and Testing Coordinator)

Walker denied cheating or having any knowledge of cheating.

8. Teresa Hall (Teacher)

Hall served as a proctor for Ravien Washington during the administration of the 2009 CRCT. She denied cheating or having any knowledge of cheating. Gloria Mosely told Hall that she confessed to cheating. Hall denied asking Mosely whether the investigators inquired about who changed the answers to the reading portion of the test.

9. Jacqueline Cuffie (Teacher)

Cuffie was an exceptional student program [ESP] teacher who tested ESP students during the administration of the 2009 CRCT. She denied cheating or having knowledge of cheating. She and Pringle were friends, but had not been as close the past two or three years. When erasing stray marks, Cuffie erased bubbles that were overfilled, and filled in bubbles that were under-filled. Assistant principal David Walker told her to do this.

10. Carol Boges (Teacher)

Boges denied cheating or having any knowledge of cheating.

11. Felecia Hawkins (Counselor)

Hawkins said that only she, assistant principal Walker and principal Pringle had a key to the conference room where the tests were stored. Teachers cleaned stray marks in that conference room, or in Hawkins' office if the conference room was full. Pringle stayed late at the school, often until nearly 7 p.m.

Pringle told Hawkins that Mosely confessed to cheating. Pringle further said that Savage told the Governor’s investigators that Mosely made an answer key for the CRCT and gave it to Pringle, Hawkins, and Juanita Reid. Pringle told Hawkins they needed to “get Savage.” Hawkins told Pringle that she was going to be honest with investigators and had nothing to hide.

Hawkins told us she did not receive an answer key. After consulting with her lawyer, Hawkins agreed to take a GBI-administered polygraph test. Hawkins became very nervous and the test was stopped at her request.

12. Jane Aldridge (Teacher)

Aldridge said that during the benchmark test and some unit tests, she would walk around the classroom to check on students’ answers. If a student answered a question correctly, Aldridge would put a check next to it. The student then knew to go back and change the answer to any questions not checked. Aldridge thinks this was discussed at a grade level meeting. Aldridge denied doing this on the 2009 CRCT.

13. Patricia Clay (Teacher)

Clay said that she could not recall having the answer sheet of one of Teresa Neff’s students, but added that “it may have happened.”

14. Jason Brackeen (Former Teacher)

Brackeen was a teacher at West Town in 2009. He said that Principal Pringle pressured teachers to make Adequate Yearly Progress.

15. Marilyn Banks (Teacher)

All three of Banks’ first grade classes were flagged. She denied cheating or having any knowledge of cheating. Banks agreed to take a polygraph examination. It was the polygraphist’s opinion that there was “no indication of deception” when Banks answered relevant questions.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

We conclude that Principal Alene Pringle directed and allowed cheating on the 2009 CRCT at West Town Elementary School. Gloria Mosely confessed to assisting Principal Pringle in her cheating scheme. We conclude that Dr. Adrienne Savage also cheated on the 2009 CRCT.

Based on the evidence we found at this and other schools with similar statistical data, we believe additional individuals cheated. We lack sufficient evidence to identify who else was involved.

It is also our conclusion from the statistical data and other evidence, that principal Alene Pringle failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT, and failed to adequately supervise testing and test security. This resulted in, and she is responsible for, falsifying, misrepresenting, or erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

NEW JACKSON HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1305 E. 2nd Ave.
Albany, Georgia 31705

Principal: Dr. Lazoría Walker Brown
Testing Coordinator: Barbara Collier

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Cheating occurred at New Jackson Heights Elementary School during the administration of the 2009 CRCT. Fifty-five people were interviewed, some more than once. Six people admitted that they cheated on the 2009 CRCT. Cheating at this school is indicated by statistical analysis of flagged classrooms, confessions, witness testimony, documentary evidence, and the dramatic drop in wrong to right erasures from 2009 to 2010. Dr. Lazoría Walker Brown, the principal, failed to properly monitor the 2009 CRCT and participated in this illegal conduct.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	57.9	0
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	33	0
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	16 (10)	0
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	10.4	0
High Flagged Standard Deviation	31.5	0
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.1	0

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
ASHLEYA	1 RD	11.61235

ASHLEYA	1 LA	10.34716
ASHLEYA	1 MA	8.764226
COAXUMA	1 LA	4.632121
COAXUMA	1 MA	3.971614
COLLINS	1 RD	6.999252
COLLINS	1 LA	5.718765
COLLINS	1 MA	4.790799
MASTERS	1 RD	13.31059
MASTERS	1 LA	7.132484
MASTERS	1 MA	9.381473
GREEN	2 RD	12.75955
GREEN	2 LA	5.694527
GREEN	2 MA	10.85515
MORROW	2 RD	4.873879
MORROW	2 LA	12.40064
MORROW	2 MA	8.711068
TAYLOR	2 RD	8.274935
TAYLOR	2 LA	7.184775
TAYLOR	2 MA	12.62086
BROOKS	3 RD	10.72105
HALL	3 RD	15.88019
JAMES	3 RD	4.154192
AKIYODE	4 MA	31.47999
BOWMAN	4 MA	26.17379
SUTTON	4 MA	23.98209
LOUD	5 RD	9.206194
LOUD	5 LA	6.937153
LOUD	5 MA	16.14864
SMITH	5 LA	3.075526
SMITH	5 MA	4.106846
WILLIAMS	5 LA	4.64269
WILLIAMS	5 MA	18.23

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

A. Narrative

There was coordinated cheating at New Jackson Heights on the 2009 CRCT. Fearing that students were not performing well on that test, Principal Brown directed teachers Tanza Sutton and Vernell Lowther to enter other teachers' classrooms and cheat. At Principal Brown's instruction, Sutton openly cheated with Rita Akiyode and Robert Bowman by giving students the correct answers on the test. Lowther also cheated with Tinisha Loud by providing answers to students.

Cheating was a way of life at this school. On unit tests, for example, teachers would mark the correct answers, and then return the marked-up tests to the students. The teachers would do this so that the students would see which answers were wrong and make corrections.

B. Testimony of Witnesses

1. Tanza Sutton (Teacher)

During the math portion of the 2009 CRCT, Sutton told Brown that her students were not performing well. Brown told Sutton to go to the other fourth grade classrooms and "keep going back and forth [between the classrooms] to check on [the other math students]." Principal Brown gave this instruction in an email attached to this summary as **Attachment A**. With this order, Brown indicated that Sutton should cheat. Sutton went to Robert Bowman's class and gave students the answers on the math section of the CRCT.

Akiyode and Sutton gave answers to the students for the math test so they could change their answers that were marked from the day before. Brown entered Sutton's classroom during testing and told a student that he answered a question incorrectly. Brown looked at Sutton, in a way that Sutton felt demonstrated that Brown expected her to cheat.

In an email to Sutton in reference to the benchmark testing, Brown told Sutton that she was stressed to have to depend on others for her success. Brown further stated that "[t]hese children don't really care because they don't have parents who set standards and high expectations for them. Sorry to say this but it is true." **Attachment A**.

Teachers also cheated on unit tests. After these tests were administered, teachers and Brown would give those tests back to the students so they could correct the questions they previously missed. Sutton believed it was a common practice in the system.

2. *Rita Akiyode (Former Teacher)*

Akiyode was a fourth grade teacher and said she cheated on the 2009 CRCT. The day after the math section was given, Sutton came into Akiyode's classroom and improperly gave approximately 20 test answers to her students. Sutton did this before Akiyode's proctor, Victoria Jean Dorminey, arrived. Sutton told Akiyode that Brown directed Sutton to give the students answers on the math section of the exam.

Brown would move teachers to lower grades based on student's low test scores. She told teachers at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year that pupils could not get below a 60 on any schoolwork, even if a student scored below 60. Brown told teachers to return multiple-choice tests to students so they could correct their answers, even if the teacher had to do this several times.

3. *Robert Bowman (Teacher)*

Sutton came into Bowman's room and wrote the correct answers to the math portion of the 2009 CRCT on a presentation board at the front of the class. She showed Bowman the email from Brown that directed Sutton to enter Bowman's classroom. **Attachment A.**

On another occasion, Bowman went into Sutton's class and wrote the correct answers on the presentation board for Sutton's students for the social studies and science portions of the 2009 CRCT.

Bowman says he cheated because of pressure from Brown. Bowman did not have tenure and Brown would remark that teachers without tenure could be fired for any reason, including low test scores. Brown also told Bowman that tenured teachers would be moved to lower grades if their students' test scores were bad. Moving teachers to lower grades because of poor test scores was seen as a demotion and was a common practice at this school.

4. *Vernell Lowther (Part-Time Teacher)*

Lowther was a part-time teacher and says she cheated on the 2009 CRCT. She went into Tinisha Loud's classes and gave the answers to students. They

would ask her questions and she would nod her head to indicate whether or not the answer was correct. Lowther did this to help the students meet their promotional requirements. Lowther claims that she did not give answers to Kathy Williams' students, as indicated by our interview of student D, as noted below.

5. *Parent of Student in Tinisha Loud's Class*

A parent of a student in Tinisha Loud's fifth grade class was allowed to sit with her child while the child took the 2009 CRCT. The parent said that Vernell Lowther came in and gave students the answers. The parent also stated that Loud pointed out answers to the students, and proctor Valerie West gave students answers. This parent attempted to report the misconduct to Principal Brown.

In a monitored conversation, Brown told the parent "I don't know what you saw, and I don't want to know, because I didn't know before now so I don't want to know."

6. *Valerie Debette West (Proctor)*

West was the proctor for Vernell Lowther's fifth grade class. She said that Lowther entered Tinisha Loud's class and gave students answers to the 2009 CRCT by using an answer key. Loud was there when Lowther cheated. One student told Lowther "if I fail this test, I am going to tell you gave me the wrong answers." The other students laughed. West denied giving any students the answers.

7. *Faye Joan Ashley (Teacher)*

Ashley, a first grade teacher, says she prompted students during the 2009 CRCT when she noticed that the students answered incorrectly. Ashley told us that she did not do this often.

8. *Angela Aneshia Scott (Proctor)*

Scott was the 2009 CRCT proctor for Faye Ashley's class. She told us that she prompted students to look over particular questions when she noticed they answered incorrectly. However, she denied giving students the correct answers.

9. *Lelie Alice Green (Teacher)*

Green administered the 2009 CRCT to Jan Collins' first grade students. She noticed that Collins' students were answering the questions on the CRCT before Green read the answer choices. She asked the students if Collins had reviewed the

test with them and was told by the students that Collins went over it three times before the testing began. Green talked to Collins about this and Collins had no response.

Principal Brown moved Green out of positions where she was required to give academic grades because Brown thought her grades were too low. Green saw former teachers Patricia Kirk and Mary Green cheat on the unit tests by identifying the incorrect answers and returning the tests to the students so they could answer these questions again. She believed this was a district-wide practice on the unit tests, and saw evidence of this while reviewing records of transfer students.

10. *Dawn Murrell Gray (Speech Teacher)*

Gray was a speech teacher in 2009. She testified that a student tested by Lillie Zachary (identified as “Student A”) told Gray that she was given a list of correct answers by her teacher. This conversation took place during the week of the 2009 CRCT. Student A told Gray that Zachary “helped” her on the CRCT. While Gray did not report this conversation then, she does not believe that the student would have fabricated this information.

11. *Student A*

Student A was tested by Zachary on the 2009 CRCT, and said that she would help ESP students like her because Zachary believed those students “didn’t know nothing.” Zachary wrote the question numbers and the correct answers on the board for student A to copy, who was certain this occurred on the CRCT rather than some other test. The student described the differences between the CRCT and those exams.

12. *Student B*

Student B, in Tinisha Loud’s fifth grade class in 2009, said Lowther came into the classroom and gave students the answers to the CRCT. This student says she heard Lowther say that principal Brown told her to give students the correct answers. Loud also gave students answers on the 2009 CRCT.

13. *Student C*

Student C, in Tinisha Loud’s class in 2009, said that Lowther came into the classroom and gave students the answers, reading off a piece of paper she had in her hand. Loud was in the room when Lowther did this.

14. Student D

Student D was a student in Kathy Williams' fifth grade homeroom in 2009, and said that Lowther helped on the 2009 CRCT by giving the answers while being tested in Williams' classroom. Lowther did this after Williams left the room. Lowther assisted about five students in that class.

15. Dr. Lazoria Walker Brown (Principal)

Brown denied transferring teachers to lower grades based on test scores. She admitted that a student's parent attempted to report cheating to her but that she would not allow the parent to talk about the misconduct because the parent waited three years to do so.

She does not recall Sutton telling her that Sutton's students were having trouble with math. After we confronted Brown with emails contained in **Attachment A**, she admitted sending them to Sutton.

Brown denied instructing Sutton to cheat, but claimed she sent the emails only to encourage Sutton to "show her face" to her math students to help the children relax during the testing periods. Brown admitted that it was a testing violation for Sutton to enter Bowman's and Akiyode's classrooms during CRCT testing.

Brown denied pointing at a student's test to indicate the correct answer. She also claims that she did not direct Lowther to assist students with the test. At the conclusion of her interview, Principal Brown asked "am I going to jail?"

16. Tinisha Loud (Teacher)

Fifth grade teacher Loud admitted that Lowther came into her class during testing. She denied that she saw Lowther give students any answers to the test, claiming that she went to the bathroom when Lowther came into the room.

17. Sandra Masters (Teacher)

Masters says that if she saw that a student had marked two answers for a question, she would tell the student to only select one answer. Masters heard that second grade teachers returned unit tests to their students so the students could correct the answers they got wrong. She also heard a teacher whose name she could not recall say, "if you just give them [students] the answer in the first place, they would not have to erase."

18. Kathy E. Williams (Teacher)

Fifth grade teacher Williams denied giving any answers to students on the 2009 CRCT and denied seeing Lowther give answers to students.

19. Jan Collins (Teacher)

First grade teacher Collins denied improperly assisting any students on the 2009 CRCT. She stated that a teacher had previously accused her of cheating on the CRCT because she told the students that questions on the benchmark tests would be similar to what they will see on the CRCT.

20. Dr. Lillie Zachary (ESP Teacher)

Zachary was an Exceptional Student Program [ESP] teacher for first through third grades. After being confronted with the testimony of Student A, she denied giving any students the answers. Zachary admitted to putting correct answers on the board during other tests but denied doing this on the CRCT.

21. Victoria Smith (Teacher)

Smith, a fifth grade teacher in 2009, testified that a lot of pressure was placed on teachers countywide to pass the CRCT. She says she was demoted to teach kindergarten because her students received low scores on the science and social studies sections of that test.

22. Orson Dean Burton, Sr. (Proctor)

Burton served as a proctor during the 2009 CRCT. He says that he saw teachers placing check marks beside answers that were correct on unit tests, then returning the tests to the students so they could answer the incorrect questions again. He also saw this occur at other Dougherty County Schools and believes it is a common practice throughout the district.

23. Mary Green (Retired Teacher)

Green was a second grade teacher. She said that on unit tests, she would place a mark next to the right answers and then return the tests to her students so they could correct those answers not marked.

24. Valerie L. McKendrick (Proctor)

McKendrick worked in Loud's classroom during the 2008 - 2009 school year, but was moved into Lelie Green's room to proctor for the 2009 CRCT. McKendrick believed this was by design.

She was surprised by the high CRCT scores of many students in Loud's classroom. She heard about "erasure parties" occurring in the past. She saw teachers return unit tests to students after having identified only the correct answers. McKendrick was saddened by parents and teachers praising high CRCT scores of students that she did not believe were accurate.

25. Rina Miller (Proctor)

Miller was the proctor for Jan Collins in 2009. She did not witness Collins using voice inflection or witness any testing impropriety during the administration of the 2009 CRCT.

26. Geraldine Crawford (Proctor)

Crawford served as proctor for Robert Bowman in 2009. She denied seeing anything improper during the 2009 CRCT. Crawford made these denials even though both Bowman and Sutton admitted cheating during the 2009 exam.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

We conclude that Principal Lazoría Brown directed and participated in cheating on the 2009 CRCT. We further conclude that Tanza Sutton, Robert Bowman, Tinisha Loud, Rita Akiyode, Vernell Lowther and Valerie West assisted Brown in her cheating scheme. Lillian Zachary, Faye Ashley and Angela Scott also cheated by giving answers, or prompting students to change answers, from wrong to right.

Based on the evidence we found at this and other schools with similar statistical data, we believe other teachers cheated. We lack sufficient evidence to identify who else was involved.

It is also our conclusion from the statistical data and other evidence, that Principal Lazoría Brown failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT, and failed to adequately supervise testing and test security. This resulted in, and she is responsible for, falsifying, misrepresenting, or erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

ATTACHMENT A

You replied on 4/15/2009 10:15 AM.

Sutton, Tanza

From: Brown, LaZoria

Sent: Wed 4/15/2009 9:59 AM

To: Sutton, Tanza

Cc:

Subject: RE: DIVINE INTERVENTION

Attachments:

Keep going back and forth to check on them.

From: Sutton, Tanza

Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2009 9:57 AM

To: Brown, LaZoria

Subject: RE: DIVINE INTERVENTION

OK! I DID REVIEWS IN BOTH HR THIS MORNING. MOST OF THE QUESTIONS ARE LEVEL 3..THEY ARE VERY HIGH ORDER! I WILL CHECK WITH THEM AGAIN. THE BOYS AND AKIYODE'S CLASS WERE MOTIVATED THIS AM! MOST OF MY HR ARE FINISHED BUT I AM MAKING THEM CHECK OVER BECAUSE MOST THEIR ANSWERS WERE **WRONG!**

From: Brown, LaZoria

Sent: Wed 4/15/2009 9:51 AM

To: Sutton, Tanza

Subject: RE: DIVINE INTERVENTION

What?????????

Wait! Hold on. Don't give up, they will get it.

Please go to the other rooms and check on your students. Encourage your team to help motivate and keep students on track.

From: Sutton, Tanza

Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2009 9:50 AM

To: Brown, LaZoria

Subject: DIVINE INTERVENTION

NOW I AM SMILING TO KEEP FROM CRYING! JESUS THIS TEST!

10-0013-25-12

EXHIBIT _____

You replied on 3/11/2009 9:27 AM.

Sutton, Tanza

From: Brown, LaZoria **Sent:** Wed 3/11/2009 9:22 AM
To: Sutton, Tanza
Cc:
Subject: RE: agenda for March 13, 2009
Attachments:

Hang in there...this too shall pass. ☺

From: Sutton, Tanza
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2009 9:18 AM
To: Brown, LaZoria
Subject: RE: agenda for March 13, 2009

I am right there with you, but in scanning my homeroom (they have me so PROUD) if they continue, I really want to give them a pizza party. (I am so moved in looking at their answers). I pray the other two homerooms are just as successful. I know God is tired of listening to me. LOL! we shall see. Barkley is a soror-HOW COULD SHE DO THIS TO ME..THIS TEST IS SOMETHING ELSE! WOW (4TH GRADE ??????)

From: Brown, LaZoria
Sent: Wed 3/11/2009 9:08 AM
To: Sutton, Tanza
Subject: RE: agenda for March 13, 2009

I haven't slept in two nights. This is too stressful when you have to depend on others for success. These children don't really care because they don't have parents who set standards and high expectations for them. Sorry to say this but it is true.

From: Sutton, Tanza
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2009 9:04 AM
To: Brown, LaZoria
Subject: RE: agenda for March 13, 2009

somewhat! this test has me sick! (LOL) but the students say it i easy to them (we shall see)

10-0013-25-12

EXHIBIT

<https://exfront.dougherty.k12.ga.us/exchange/tanza.sutton/Inbox/RE:%20agenda%20for%...> 8/17/2011

IMMEDIATELY! Inclusive in this plan are weekly benchmark assessments. The first benchmark was to be administered on Friday; however, she advised that we could do it on Mon. due to fieldtrip. Please be advised that fourth grade has a math benchmark test beginning at 10 o'clock. All copies have been made, but I will need Mr. Robinson to give me the bubble sheets. These test (s) are to be scanned. Thanks in advance for any and all assistance that can be provided.

Respectfully,

T. Sutton

10-0013-25-12

EXHIBIT _____

NORTHSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

901 14th Ave.
Albany, Georgia 31701

Principal: Angela Shumate
Testing Coordinator: Tinsley Dozier

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Cheating occurred on the CRCT at Northside Elementary School in 2009 and in other years. Sixty-four witnesses at this school were interviewed, some more than once. The evidence of misconduct at Northside is strong: a high number of flagged classrooms; a confession; witness testimony; the principal's complete refusal to cooperate with our investigation and the dramatic drop in wrong to right erasures from 2009 to 2010.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	52.2	18.5
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	36	14
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	13 (12)	6(4)
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	9.1	5.6
High Flagged Standard Deviation	27.2	10.5
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.4	3.0

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
PRICKETT	1 RD	10.41083
PRICKETT	1 LA	11.36089

PRICKETT	1 MA	12.66367
ROBINSON, LESLIE	1 RD	8.31031
ROBINSON, LESLIE	1 LA	11.24606
ROBINSON, LESLIE	1 MA	8.080101
ROBINSON, VICTORIA	1 RD	11.4611
ROBINSON, VICTORIA	1 LA	21.46566
ROBINSON, VICTORIA	1 MA	20.95774
SEAWELL	1 RD	4.536289
SEAWELL	1 LA	18.08881
SEAWELL	1 MA	12.4046
GOODDINE	2 RD	8.931101
GOODDINE	2 LA	7.62653
GOODDINE	2 MA	6.869942
WHATLEY	2 RD	26.33089
WHATLEY	2 LA	27.18194
WHATLEY	2 MA	15.55634
WILLIAMS	2 RD	7.575366
WILLIAMS	2 LA	3.698946
WILLIAMS	2 MA	4.835876
EDWARDS	3 RD	9.748342
EDWARDS	3 LA	4.074586
JAMES	3 RD	5.865953
JAMES	3 LA	8.643164
JAMES	3 MA	5.317588
JONES	3 RD	12.23092
JONES	3 LA	11.61781
JONES	3 MA	12.93522
KELLY	4 RD	3.426359
BROWN	5 RD	8.728823
BROWN	5 LA	6.081663

BROWN	5 MA	6.769765
RANDLE	5 RD	6.063686
RANDLE	5 LA	4.851646
RANDLE	5 MA	5.872241

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

A. Overview

The 2009 CRCT at Northside Elementary School was not administered in a way that ensured that the results were accurate and properly reflected the achievements of students at this school. That is reflected by the following:

1. The percentage of flagged classrooms is 52.2% for the 2009 CRCT;
2. Of the 1,857 schools in the state taking the 2009 CRCT, only 24 had a higher percentage of flagged classrooms than Northside Elementary School;
3. Removing from consideration the 84 Atlanta Public Schools taking the 2009 CRCT, there are only two non-DCSS schools that had a higher percentage of flagged classrooms than Northside Elementary School;
4. With state monitors present in 2010, the percentage of flagged classrooms dropped dramatically from 52% to 18.5%;
5. Of the 36 flagged classrooms at Northside Elementary School, 30 (83% of the total) had standard deviations that exceeded five, and 14 classrooms exceeded ten standard deviations. At five standard deviations, the probability that the number of erasures occurred by coincidence is only one in 1.7 million. At seven standard deviations the probability is only one in 390 billion;
6. In the individual student wrong-to-right (WTR) erasure analysis, 87.2% were produced by the flagged classrooms, which account for only 52.2% of the total classrooms in the school;
7. A teacher confessed to giving her students the answers while administering the 2009 CRCT;

8. The principal, Shumate, flatly and repeatedly refused to cooperate with our investigation by asserting her Fifth Amendment right to remain silent when asked numerous questions.

B. Narrative

Northside had extremely high numbers of WTR erasures on the 2009 CRCT. Several teachers said that students, who lacked the skills necessary to perform well on the test, met or exceeded standards. Teachers also said that Shumate encouraged them to improperly assist the students on the test.

C. Testimony of Witnesses

1. Tiffany Randle (Teacher)

Randle said she prompted students during the 2009 CRCT, by telling them to check their answers to specific questions. However, she says she did not provide the answers.

She improperly assisted students on the test because Principal Shumate indicated at a faculty meeting that teachers should prompt students when they answered a question incorrectly by telling them to go back and check their work. Randle helped the students because it was what Shumate directed her to do, and because it would help her school make AYP.

Randle believed she was allowed to tell students to “check their work” when they missed a specific question.

2. Student A

Student A said that Tiffany Randle assisted her on the 2009 CRCT by pointing to the correct answers, often before the student had marked the answer sheet. Furthermore, when students asked if their answers were correct, Randle would give them the answer. If a student said they did not understand the question, Randle would read the question aloud and then point to the correct answer. One hundred percent of Student A’s erasures in math and language arts were from wrong to right.

3. Student B

Student B said that Randle pointed to questions and told the students to look at the question again if the answer was wrong. Randle did that on at least two occasions with this pupil, and assisted other children in the same manner. One

hundred percent of Student B's erasures in language arts were from wrong to right, 80% from wrong to right in math.

4. Natalie Bustion (Proctor)

Bustion proctored in Tiffany Randle's class in 2009. She said that Randle would point at a student's test paper and tell the student to review an answer. It appeared to Bustion that Randle only pointed to the test if the child missed a question.

5. Priscilla Carter (Proctor)

Carter was a paraprofessional who proctored for Randle during the 2008 CRCT. She recalled that Randle told students to check their work during the administration of that test.

6. Student C

Student C said that fourth grade teacher Dubose assisted students during the CRCT by telling them to check a particular answer that had been marked incorrectly. This student's erasure statistics support this statement: in math, 100% of the student's erasures were from wrong to right; and in language arts, 64% of her erasures were from wrong to right.

7. Student D

Student D told us that in the classroom, Ford reviewed the tests and told the students which questions to go over again. Ford would lightly mark the questions that the student needed to review. She did this for all of the students.

8. Julie Walker (Counselor)

Walker did not administer or proctor the 2009 CRCT, but she was a counselor at Northside that year. Walker said that teachers felt undue pressure to meet CRCT passage rates set by the school.

Walker helped Assistant Principal Dozier with distributing and collecting the CRCT in 2009. She is not aware of any cheating, but recalls that Tia Ford and Jessica Edwards were late in returning their tests to Dozier's office one day during the CRCT.

9. Deborah Weldon (Teacher)

Weldon was the media specialist in 2009. Two students say that Weldon assisted them with answering questions on the 2011 CRCT. According to the students, Weldon told the pupils to check specific questions when she noticed they had marked the wrong answer.

Weldon said that she did not administer the CRCT to any classes and denied cheating. She had no explanation for why students would say that she improperly assisted them on the CRCT. Weldon said that she administered the ITBS to Brown's class in 2009, but that she did not improperly assist the students on that test either.

Weldon told us that Shumate told paraprofessionals at a faculty meeting to assist the students on the CRCT: "You know what our babies can do and what they can't do." Shumate told the paraprofessionals to walk around and if they saw that a student answered a question incorrectly, to say: "Is that what I taught you?" She felt that Shumate wanted the paraprofessionals to improperly help the students during the test.

Shortly after Weldon's meeting with the paraprofessionals, Tinsley Dozier told them that he knew what Shumate said, but that "we are going to do things the right way." Weldon felt that Dozier was referencing what Shumate said about improperly helping the students.

Weldon took a polygraph examination and there were no indications of deception noted.

10. Angela Shumate (Principal)

Shumate refused to answer our questions by asserting her Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate herself.

11. Vanessa Dubose (Teacher)

Dubose taught fourth grade in 2009. She was not flagged by the erasure analysis; however, as set forth in paragraph 6 above, she denied cheating.

12. Jessica Edwards (Teacher)

Edwards taught third grade and was flagged in two subject areas. She denied any form of cheating. However, Tia Ford told us that Edwards engaged in testing misconduct.

Edwards said that the teachers did not erase stray marks because Shumate had a “clean-up team” that would do this. Tinsley Dozier, Jane Hill, and Angela Hammock were on this “clean-up team.”

13. Tia Ford (Teacher)

Ford was not flagged by the erasure analysis but a student said she cheated. Ford denied cheating or having any knowledge of cheating. She explained that the student may be confused because she marked questions that students answered incorrectly on the unit, math and other classroom tests, but not on the CRCT.

She said that Shumate had a school policy that a teacher could not give a student any grade lower than a 60 on their report card. In 2009, Ford had three third-grade students who could not read, and when she put grades lower than 60 on their report cards, Shumate changed each grade to a 60. Ford reported the grade change to someone from “downtown,” and was told that the decision to give failing students at least a 60 was left to each school principal. She does not recall who she spoke with “downtown.”

Ford said that Edwards told her that she read benchmark test questions to her students.

She does not believe that Dozier was involved in altering test documents.

14. Tinley Dozier (Assistant Principal and Testing Coordinator)

Dozier was the assistant principal and testing coordinator in 2009. He denied cheating or having any knowledge of cheating. When asked about Shumate’s involvement in this misconduct, he stated that he has no reason to believe that Shumate encouraged anyone to cheat on the CRCT. Dozier took a GBI-administered polygraph examination and there was no deception noted.

15. Student E

While Student E told us that first grade teacher Virginia Seawell did not cheat during the administration of the CRCT, the erasure analysis for this student indicates that someone altered the answers. In language arts, this student had 27 answers erased and 20 were from wrong to right (74%). In math, this student had 18 answers erased and all were from wrong to right. In reading, this student had 6 answers erased and 4 were from wrong to right (67%).

16. Student F

Student F was in Helen Whatley's class and says that she did not improperly assist on the CRCT. However, the erasure analysis for this student indicates that the answers were altered. In language arts, this student had 26 answers erased and 25 were from wrong to right (96%). In math, this student had 17 answers erased and 14 were from wrong to right (82%). In reading, this student had 20 answers erased and 9 were from wrong to right (45%).

17. Student G

Student G was in Donna Brown's homeroom class in 2009, and says she did not improperly assist on the test. However, 100% of Student G's erasures in math and reading were from wrong to right.

18. Jane Hill (Teacher)

Hill is an Early Intervention Program ("EIP") teacher. She says she identified a number of students who had better results on the CRCT than their actual abilities would indicate they should have scored.

Teacher Helen Whatley once told her, "I do not see how these kids did this." Whatley was referring to the high scores of her students.

Hill also said that once this investigation began, Shumate told the teachers that if the GBI agents came to their house, they did not have to talk to them.

19. Winifred Mack (Proctor)

Mack proctored for Johnnie James, a flagged teacher, and said that she did not see her cheating on the 2009 CRCT.

20. Donna Brown (Teacher)

Brown taught fifth grade in 2009 and was flagged in three subject areas. A former student of Brown told the GBI that she did not improperly assist with the test. Brown denied cheating.

21. April Gooddine (Teacher)

Gooddine taught second grade in 2009 and was flagged in three subject areas. She denied cheating.

22. Angelyn Hammack (Teacher)

Hammack taught second grade in 2009. She had no flagged classes.

She told us that three students who were in Helen Whatley's class in 2009 struggled with class work, but passed the 2009 CRCT. Those children advanced to the next grade. Hammack did not believe that their CRCT scores in 2009 were accurate. Our review of those three students' answers on the CRCT indicates an unusually high number of WTR erasures.

23. Johnnie James (Teacher)

James taught third grade in 2009 and was flagged in three subjects. She denied having any knowledge of cheating.

24. Christopher Jones (Teacher)

Jones taught third grade in 2009 and was flagged in three subjects. He denied having any knowledge of cheating.

25. Danielle Kelly (Teacher)

Kelly taught fourth grade in 2009 and was flagged in one subject area. She denied having any knowledge of cheating.

She told investigators that in the fall of 2010, Shumate told the teachers they should "be careful" regarding the Governor's Investigation. She told the teachers that if a GBI agent came to their homes, they did not have to talk to them and that interviews should be conducted during school hours.

26. Leslie Prickett-Parham (Teacher)

Prickett-Parham taught first grade in 2009 and was flagged in three subjects. She denied cheating but had no explanation for the extremely high number of wrong-to-right erasures. There were pupils in her class who could not read but still passed the CRCT. She now believes there may have been cheating on that test.

Prickett-Parham saw Jane Hill, Angelyn Hammack, Marie Curry, and Yolanda Kendrick in Dozier's office with the test answer sheets. She believes this was the "crew" that cleaned up stray marks.

27. Victoria Robinson (Teacher)

Robinson taught first grade in 2009 and was flagged in three subjects. She denied cheating. She took a GBI-administered polygraph examination, and the results did not indicate deception.

28. Leslie Robinson (Teacher)

Robinson taught first grade in 2009. She was flagged in three subjects. She denied having knowledge of any cheating.

29. Virginia “Faye” Seawell (Teacher)

Seawell was flagged in three subjects. Seawell denied having any knowledge of cheating. She agreed to take a polygraph and the results did not indicate deception.

30. Helen Whatley (Teacher)

Whatley taught the second grade in 2009 and was flagged in three subjects. She denied having any knowledge of cheating, but was surprised by her students’ high CRCT scores. She thinks someone improperly altered her students’ tests because she did not observe her pupils erase as many times as the analysis indicates.

31. Tracee Williams (Teacher)

Williams taught second grade in 2009, was flagged in three subject areas and denied having any knowledge of cheating.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

Tiffany Randle said she prompted her students during the administration of the 2009 CRCT. Several students said Tia Ford and Vanessa Dubose prompted students and we conclude both cheated.

Based on the evidence we found at this and other schools with similar statistical data, we believe additional people but we lack sufficient evidence to identify who else was involved.

We conclude that answers were illegally changed at Northside Elementary School. We further conclude that Principal Angela Shumate knew that teachers were cheating, and, if she did not change answers herself, sanctioned the changing

of answers on the 2009 CRCT. Her refusal to cooperate with this investigation, by pleading the Fifth Amendment to every question we asked her, along with the other evidence, allows no other conclusion but that she was involved in cheating at this school.

Based on the evidence we found at this and other schools with similar statistical data, we believe additional teachers cheated. We lack sufficient evidence to identify who else was involved with this misconduct.

We also conclude that Principal Shumate failed in her ultimate responsibility for supervising testing activities and for ensuring the ethical administration of, and proper security for, the 2009 CRCT. It is our conclusion from the statistical data, and other evidence found in this investigation, that Principal Shumate failed to properly monitor the 2009 CRCT and failed to adequately supervise testing activities. This resulted in, and she is responsible for, falsifying, misrepresenting or erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

MARTIN LUTHER KING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

3125 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive
Albany, Georgia 31707

Principal: Carolyn Scott
Testing Coordinator: David Adams

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Cheating occurred on the 2009 CRCT at Martin Luther King Elementary (MLK). Fifty-four people were interviewed at this school, some more than once. Two teachers said they prompted their pupils, and another teacher was accused by five students of giving them the correct answers on that test.

Misconduct at MLK is indicated by high standard deviations in flagged classrooms, confessions, witness testimony and the refusal by the principal, Carolyn Scott, to cooperate in our inquiry by invoking her Fifth Amendment rights. It is also reflected in the dramatic drop in wrong to right erasures from 2009 to 2010 at this school. Her lack of cooperation obstructed this investigation.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	45.6	0
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	26	0
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	12 (8)	0
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	10.9	0
High Flagged Standard Deviation	36.1	0
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.2	0

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
DAVIS	4 MA	4.550983
HILL	1 LA	3.009137
SHAW	1 LA	3.55266
SHAW	1 MA	3.387401
BAKER	2 LA	3.979771
BARNES	2 RD	10.06579
BARNES	2 LA	3.036886
BARNES	2 MA	6.516814
FARR	2 MA	3.785829
MANSFIELD	2 RD	10.14843
MANSFIELD	2 MA	5.616854
LEE	3 RD	6.972211
LEE	3 LA	4.955832
DAVIS	1 RD	18.43268
DAVIS	1 LA	8.369227
DAVIS	1 MA	10.87496
WILLIAMS	1 LA	3.7065
FOSTER	2 LA	8.197024
FOSTER	2 MA	8.391163
HIGHTOWER	2 MA	3.210162
BRACKEEN	3 RD	4.618513
BRACKEEN	3 LA	4.1216
BRACKEEN	3 MA	4.64311
DASHER	3 RD	12.40585
DASHER	3 LA	5.101773
FARREY	4 RD	34.24936
FARREY	4 LA	36.13522
FARREY	4 MA	16.03006
ODOM	4 RD	11.06836
ODOM	4 LA	6.147511

ODOM	4 MA	3.888407
SMITH	4 RD	16.81551
SMITH	4 LA	6.465758
SMITH	4 MA	7.825243
CHESTER	5 RD	6.19245
LORTHRIDGE	5 RD	19.60024
MALLARD	5 RD	4.317707
MALLARD	5 LA	14.02387
MALLARD	5 MA	9.075596

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

A. Overview

Every “flagged” teacher was interviewed. Some of these teachers engaged in cheating inside the classroom. Others had no knowledge of any such misconduct.

Given the extraordinarily high number of wrong-to-right erasures resulting in standard deviations such as 18.4, 19.6, 34.2, and 36.1, the probability that those erasures could have occurred merely by prompting students is low.

We conclude that some of the erasing occurred outside the classroom after school hours. There was also an opportunity to cheat when the “clean-up” committee was erasing stray marks from the tests.

Assistant Principal David Adams and Principal Carolyn Scott had the only known keys to the vault.

B. Narrative

In 2009, cheating occurred at MLK both inside and outside of the classroom. Jennifer Smith, a fourth grade teacher, says she prompted her students to change incorrect answers by using eye contact and then pointing to specific questions. She admitted that the students were familiar with her nonverbal cues based on prior classroom experience. A fifth grade teacher, Tara Mallard, said she told her students when they had marked incorrect answers. Both teachers say they assisted their students because they had received a “Needs Improvement” on their teacher evaluations.

Another fourth grade teacher, Gracie Farrey, denied cheating on the CRCT. However, five students in her class said she cheated in the following ways: she told them when they had the wrong answers; she circled the right answers in the test booklet; and she pointed out answers.

Farrey's proctor, Vivian Howard, said that Farrey asked her what the correct answers were to some of the questions. Farrey called each student to her desk, where she kept each test at her desk for a few minutes and then handed the answer sheet to Howard to put in alphabetical order. Howard noticed a lot of erasures on the answer documents.

Principal Scott initially denied knowledge of cheating, and subsequently asserted her Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate herself. Assistant Principal Adams denied any knowledge of cheating, but refused to take a polygraph exam. Scott put pressure on the teachers to get scores up and gave some teachers a poor evaluation for low student performance on the CRCT. Scott also instructed the office manager to change student attendance records, presumably to help the school make AYP.

C. Testimony of Witnesses

1. Jennifer Smith (Teacher)

Fourth grade teacher Jennifer Smith said she walked around her classroom and prompted her students to change answers from wrong to right. She would signal to the students that their answer to a specific question was wrong by eye contact or by pointing to the question. Students understood what these signals meant because Smith used these same methods on general classroom work.

She said that she assisted her students on the CRCT to improve their scores because she had received a "Needs Improvement" on her annual evaluation.

2. Tara Mallard (Teacher)

Mallard said she assisted her fifth grade students on the 2009 CRCT by telling students to look at a particular question again if she saw that they had marked the incorrect answer. Mallard denied erasing any answers or giving students the correct answers.

Mallard said that she assisted her students because she had previously received a "Needs Improvement" on her evaluation. She believed that receiving

two “needs improvements” would result in notification to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

3. Student A

Student A said that fourth grade teacher Gracie Farrey helped students on the CRCT by calling them to her desk one at a time and helping them change their answers. She called Student A to her desk with the test booklet and answer sheet, after which Farrey pointed out which answers were wrong and pointed to the correct answers. This student then erased and marked the correct answer as instructed.

4. Student B

Student B said that Farrey assisted pupils on the CRCT by pointing out the answers and telling students to erase and go back over a particular question. This pupil also reported that Farrey erased some answers, then “bubbling-in” the answer sheet, but was not sure if she was changing the answers or merely darkening what had been marked.

5. Student C

Student C said that in 2009, Farrey, assisted pupils on the CRCT by walking around the classroom and pointing to correct answers. If an answer was incorrect, she would point to the question and shake her head “no” so that the students would be prompted to go back and change it.

6. Student D

Student D said that during the 2009 CRCT, Farrey assisted pupils on the CRCT by walking around the class and circling the correct answers on the test booklets. The students then would change the answer on the sheet as directed by Farrey.

7. Student E

Student E said that Farrey assisted pupils on the 2009 CRCT by indicating when they had a wrong answer. Students then erased the original answer and marked the sheet as directed. Farrey would confirm that they had the correct answer. Student E told Farrey that she was not supposed to help students, but she “shushed” this student and threatened to write this student up if they did not stay quiet.

8. Carolyn Scott (Principal)

Principal Scott initially answered our questions regarding the 2009 CRCT and denied having any knowledge of cheating or other test irregularities. She also said that a committee helped Assistant Principal Adams cleaning up stray marks on the tests.

However, during subsequent interviews, she invoked her Fifth Amendment rights and refused to answer our questions.

9. Gracie Farrey (Teacher)

Farrey denied any knowledge of, or involvement with, cheating on the CRCT. When confronted with the allegations from students A thru E, she said that “it could only be a case of mistaken identity.”

10. David Adams (Assistant Principal and Testing Coordinator)

Adams said that only he and Principal Scott had access to the tests after they were locked in the vault. He denied any knowledge of cheating. A “clean-up committee” would erase stray marks from answer documents after testing ended. If a student had marked two answers and it was apparent the student attempted to erase one, Adams would allow the teacher to erase the lighter one and leave the darker mark.

11. Cathy Clyde (School Counselor)

Clyde served as a hall monitor during the 2009 CRCT. After testing each day, paraprofessionals helped with cleaning stray marks from the tests in the conference room in the front office.

She said that teachers would be allowed to keep extra tests in the classroom for students who were tardy or absent to take when they returned to school.

12. Chinary Chester (Teacher)

Chester said that when she began teaching at MLK, some of her students asked her for answers on the test. They told her that other teachers had given them answers in previous years.

She agreed that the CRCT statistical data for her class in reading looked suspicious, but denied seeing her students erase excessively during the test. She was surprised at the high scores.

Principal Scott told Chester that Tara Mallard was going to “rub it in” because her reading scores were so high. Chester responded that Mallard was the reading teacher.

Many of the fifth graders at MLK could not read but performed well on their fourth grade CRCT. When they got to fifth grade, their scores would drop. Scott would admonish fifth grade teachers and question them as to why the students did so well in fourth grade, but not in fifth. She constantly told the teachers to get their test scores up.

Teachers were not required to have proctors during the administration of the 2009 CRCT. Assistant Principal Adams asked each teacher if they wanted a proctor. If a teacher did not have a proctor, it was because they declined one.

13. Valerie Dasher (Teacher)

Dasher was surprised at the high number of wrong to right erasures in her class. She said that she did not allow her students to erase during the CRCT. Students were required to raise their hands and either Dasher or the proctor would erase for the student. Because she and the proctor only erased between 50 to 100 times total for all five subjects, Dasher recognized that their erasures were not enough to account for the high number of wrong to right erasures in just her reading and language arts sections. She believes someone may have tampered with the tests. She said that she never filled-in an answer or indicated the correct answer to a student.

Dasher learned when the administration of the CRCT was concluded, that not all teachers had proctors, and thought that this was unusual.

Dasher stated that Principal Scott told teachers “many times” that their end-of-year evaluations would be based on CRCT results.

14. Cheryl Foster (Teacher)

Foster told us that for the 2009 CRCT, teachers were given the option of having a proctor. Foster thought this was unusual and 2009 was the first year that had occurred.

15. Peggy Odum (Retired)

Odom did not notice students erasing in her class during the 2009 CRCT, and agreed that the high number of wrong to right erasures seemed abnormal. She denied having any knowledge of cheating.

She stated that literacy coach Felita Lockett asked teachers if they wanted a proctor. 2009 was the first year that teachers were given this option. In the past, they had been assigned a proctor.

Principal Scott told teachers during group meetings on multiple occasions that the students' CRCT performance would be reflected on the teachers' end-of-year evaluations.

16. Felita Lockett (Literacy Coach)

Lockett testified that Principal Scott instructed her to ask teachers if they wanted a proctor for the 2009 CRCT. Lockett is unsure as to why teachers were being offered this option. In previous years, teachers had been assigned a proctor, even though the state rules only required one for classes with 30 or more students.

MLK received a Reading First Grant from the state, based on the school's low CRCT scores. Lockett believes that MLK had to report student CRCT reading scores to the state as a condition for receiving this grant.

17. Helen Carson (Office Manager)

Carson said that in 2009, a "clean-up committee" was responsible for removing stray marks from the tests after the testing period concluded each day. Carson, Felita Lockett, Cathy Clyde, Assistant Principal Adams and others were on this committee.

Principal Scott and Assistant Principal Adams had keys to the vault. Scott had twenty-four hour access to the building and often worked late and on weekends.

18. Juanita Reese (Former Office Manager)

For two or three years while employed as office manager at MLK, Reese altered student attendance records at Principal Scott's direction. Based on the timing of this order, Reese believes Scott instructed her to make these changes in order to meet AYP. Reese stated that she changed student attendance records in 2009 and possibly in 2007 and 2008.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

We conclude that Gracie Farrey, Tara Mallard and Jennifer Smith cheated on the 2009 CRCT by prompting students to change answers or indicating to their students when they had an incorrect answer.

We also conclude that Scott and Juanita Reese illegally altered official attendance records, that were submitted to the Georgia Department of Education, in violation of O.C.G.A. § 45-11-1.

Based on the evidence we found at this and other schools with similar statistical data, we believe additional people cheated. We lack sufficient evidence to identify who else was involved with this misconduct.

We further conclude that Principal Scott and Assistant Principal David Adams failed in their ultimate responsibility for testing activities and for ensuring the ethical administration of, and proper security for, the 2009 CRCT. It is our finding, from the statistical data and the other evidence found in this investigation, that Principal Scott failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT and failed to adequately supervise testing activities and test security. This resulted in, and she is responsible for, falsifying, misrepresenting or erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

TURNER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2001 Leonard Avenue
Albany, Georgia 31705

Principal: Dr. Linda Gail Solomon
Testing Coordinator: Carrie Kirkland

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Cheating occurred on the CRCT at Turner Elementary in 2009. Forty-three people were interviewed at this school, some more than once. Three people said they cheated on this test. Misconduct is reflected by confessions, witness testimony, statistical data and the sharp drop in CRCT erasures from wrong to right from 2009 to 2010. Principal Linda Gail Solomon failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	39.4	0
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	26	0
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	12(9)	0
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	9.7	0
High Flagged Standard Deviation	33.9	0
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.2	0

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
LOTT	1 RD	17.50932
LOTT	1 LA	15.21882

LOTT	1 MA	19.72189
PRICE	1 MA	7.974616
WEST	1 RD	3.937991
WEST	1 LA	3.226236
WILLIAMS	1 RD	4.528863
WILLIAMS	1 LA	5.820472
WILLIAMS	1 MA	8.472736
COVIN	2 RD	5.749052
COVIN	2 LA	5.023066
COVIN	2 MA	4.387625
JOLIVETTE	2 RD	19.21061
JOLIVETTE	2 LA	33.89302
JOLIVETTE	2 MA	25.16814
VANCE	2 MA	6.180627
ASKEW	3 RD	5.743036
ASKEW	3 MA	3.997514
COLLINS	3 RD	3.530522
COLLINS	3 LA	4.061934
JACKSON	3 RD	10.36916
JACKSON	3 LA	13.5966
JACKSON	3 MA	11.35206
LAMAR	4 RD	6.36945
LAMAR	4 LA	7.858689
LYONS	4 LA	3.51751

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

A. Overview

Several factors lead us to conclude that teachers at Turner Elementary School cheated on the 2009 CRCT and that the school was not managed to ensure the results of this test were accurately reported. This was determined by the following:

1. The percentage of flagged classrooms is 39.4% for the 2009 CRCT, but dropped to 0% in 2010, when there were state monitors in the schools.

2. Of the 26 flagged classrooms at Turner, 18 (69% of the total) had standard deviations that exceeded five, and nine classrooms exceeded ten standard deviations. At five standard deviations, the probability that the number of erasures occurred by coincidence is one in 1.7 million. At seven standard deviations the probability is one in 390 billion.
3. Three teachers said they prompted students to erase and change answers from wrong to right. A teacher and several students said that various proctors also cheated on this test.

B. Narrative

In 2009, 39.4% of the classrooms at this school were flagged for high wrong to right erasures. The entire first grade was flagged, as well as most of the second and third grade classes. Three teachers said they prompted their students by causing them to erase and change answers from wrong to right. When they noticed pupils with incorrect answers, they directed them to go back and check the questions they had missed. According to students, two of the proctors cheated by telling them the correct test answers.

Testing coordinator Carrie Kirkland was alerted that test tampering may have occurred in the past. She took steps to ensure that tests were secured and that stray marks were erased only under her supervision.

C. Testimony of Witnesses

1. *Lavonda Jolivette (Teacher)*

Jolivette admitted that she cheated on the 2009 CRCT. She says she prompted numerous students who had marked incorrect answers, by telling them to “check your work.” Jolivette said that she prompted students every 2 or 3 questions, and paid particular attention to students who had struggled academically. She said she believed that was why there were a high number of erasures in her class.

She says she did not point to answers or provide answers to students. Jolivette stated that no one directed her to prompt students and that she put a lot of pressure on herself. Her proctor, Diana Onyenwoke, mirrored Jolivette’s behavior whenever she told students to check their work. She says she did not observe Onyenwoke giving answers to students.

2. Fatimia Jackson (Teacher)

Jackson admitted that she cheated on the 2009 CRCT. She was a third grade teacher who had transferred from Alice Coachman when the former Assistant Principal, Linda Solomon, became Principal at Turner.

Jackson said that as she walked around her classroom during testing she would tell students to go back to particular questions she noticed they had answered incorrectly. Sometimes, Jackson indicated the correct answer to students. She admitted that she may have done the same while at Alice Coachman Elementary School.

Jackson said that no one told her to prompt students. She felt pressure from Solomon to have good test scores, since Jackson had always had good scores at Alice Coachman. Solomon asked her on more than one occasion how she thought her students would perform on the CRCT. She felt that Solomon brought her to Turner Elementary School with the expectation that Jackson would perform well, and she did not want to disappoint her. Jackson thought that it was important to Solomon to have good test scores in 2009 since it was her first year as Principal.

3. Nikki Lyons (Teacher)

Lyons was a fourth grade teacher and said she cheated on the 2009 CRCT. She says she prompted students by pointing to questions they had answered incorrectly and telling them to check those questions. She also admitted that she flipped back pages in students' test booklets and told them to go back over particular questions she saw had been incorrectly answered.

Lyons says she used positive reinforcement, such as a smile or pat on the back when a student got a correct answer. She did not provide answers. Lyons had been a student teacher at Alice Coachman in 2008.

4. Student A

Student A was in Jolivette's second grade class in 2009. This pupil said that during the CRCT, Jolivette provided two answers and also improperly helped other students with the test. Proctor Diana Onyenwoke walked around, checking to see if students marked the correct answers, and also improperly assisted students with the test.

5. Student B

Student B was in Jolivette's class in 2009, and said that Jolivette and Onyenwoke improperly helped during the CRCT. Student B's mother told us that Student B came home after the test and reported that Jolivette and Onyenwoke had improperly helped students with the test so that the pupils could catch up with everyone else.

6. Student C

Student C was a first grade student in Jancynthia Lott's class in 2009, and said that proctor Rosita Oliver had improperly helped during the CRCT by sitting next to the pupil during each section of the test. The proctor read the questions and pointed to the correct answers. Lott walked around the classroom, but Student C did not see Lott cheating with students.

7. Carrie Kirkland (Testing Coordinator & Assistant Principal)

Kirkland transferred to Turner Elementary as assistant principal in the 2007-2008 school year. The principal was Patricia Gilbert-Parker. Kirkland said she became concerned about security and testing protocol for several reasons. Before the administration of the 2008 CRCT, she received credible information that Principal Gilbert-Parker and others may have tampered with the CRCT tests in previous years while gathered in the administrative office after hours.

Additionally, teacher Susan Lowery approached Kirkland and asked if teachers could prompt students when they saw that they had marked wrong answers on the test. Lowery said that former Assistant Principal, Eddie Johnson, told teachers it was okay to do that. But Kirkland told Lowery that would be cheating.

Finally, Kirkland learned that Gilbert-Parker sometimes opened Kirkland's mail and entered her office when she was not there. Kirkland relayed her concerns about Gilbert-Parker to area testing coordinator Renee Bridges, who obtained a cabinet with a built-in lock for Kirkland's office where the test materials could be secured. Kirkland bought an additional padlock for the cabinet and kept the only key to that lock.

During the administration of the 2008 CRCT, at the end of each day's testing, Kirkland locked the tests in the cabinet and later in the day would take the cabinet --with the tests inside-- to Bridges' office for safekeeping overnight. Each morning Kirkland picked up the cabinet and returned to her school for testing. Due

to those precautions, Kirkland says that she believes cheating did not occur in 2008. Test scores dropped and Turner did not meet AYP that year.

Kirkland went to Bridges' office with teacher Doris Greene after the 2008 CRCT concluded and cleaned stray marks from the tests. Greene pointed out to Kirkland that first grade teacher Jancyntia Lott had a high number of erasures throughout her classes' test booklets. Kirkland approached Lott in the school parking lot and told her she could not prove Lott was cheating, but if she was, Kirkland would turn her in. Lott just stared silently at Kirkland.

In fall of 2009, Dr. Solomon replaced Gilbert-Parker as principal. During administration of the 2009 CRCT, Kirkland did not feel it necessary to take the storage cabinet to Renee Bridges at night. She kept the tests locked in the cabinet in her office during the day, and secured the cabinet at night with the secondary padlock. She did not believe that tests were altered outside of the classroom.

During the pre-test training session for the 2009 CRCT, Kirkland heard Solomon suggest to teachers that they could tell students, who had wrong answers, to go back and check over their work. This was contrary to Kirkland's instructions.

As Kirkland was checking to make sure all the tests had been returned, she realized that third grade teacher Lisa Askew was approximately 30 minutes late bringing the tests to be secured for the day. After contacting Askew, she walked toward her classroom. Kirkland met Askew coming up the hall with the tests. Askew told Kirkland that she had been "cleaning up the tests" in her room. Kirkland was disturbed because Askew knew that teachers were only permitted to erase stray marks under Kirkland's supervision in her office or in the multipurpose room.

8. Susan Lowery (Teacher)

Lowery was a third grade teacher in 2009. She said that it was not Eddie Johnson, but rather former Principal Gilbert-Parker who told teachers that students with wrong answers could be prompted to go back and check their work. Lowery said Gilbert-Parker was referring to unit tests, not the CRCT. She felt that Gilbert-Parker was implying that their teaching was ineffective, so teachers needed to help their students by prompting them.

Lowery heard that Principal Gilbert-Parker stayed late during testing and there was some suspicion about why she did this. Gilbert-Parker was difficult to work with and had hurt many people.

9. Doris Greene (Teacher)

Greene was a special education teacher in 2009. She went with Carrie Kirkland to Renee Bridges' office to erase stray marks from the 2008 CRCT tests. Greene recalled that Ms. Lott's test booklets had excessive erasures, but did not understand the significance of it then. The erasures stood out because she heard that Lott was not an effective teacher, but her students always passed the test.

When Greene learned that Turner's classes were flagged and saw the erasure data, she suspected cheating. She thought that the flagged teachers were probably under a lot of pressure because Turner had not made AYP the previous year when Gilbert-Parker was principal.

Greene attended CRCT training in 2009. She vaguely recalled Solomon making a comment about prompting students during the test, but could not specifically recall her words. Wendy Hall-Bass, another special education teacher, told Greene that Solomon said that when testing students with read-aloud accommodations in the same room with students without read-aloud accommodations, that Hall-Bass should read loud enough so that the students without those accommodations could hear her. Greene told Hall-Bass that was against protocol.

10. Stephanie Blount (Proctor)

Blount was told by Wendy Hall-Bass that Solomon told her to read the test loudly to ESP students with read-aloud accommodations, so that students without read-aloud accommodations could hear as well. Blount did not know whether Hall-Bass followed Solomon's instructions.

Solomon was very competitive. Blount says she thought it strange that Turner Elementary School had historically failed to make AYP, but managed to make AYP in 2009 with the same students and mostly the same staff.

11. Diana Onyenwoke (Proctor)

Onyenwoke was a proctor during the 2009 CRCT but said she could not recall whose class she proctored. She claimed to have great difficulty remembering anything about the 2009 CRCT and declared her mind was "a blank."

When we told her that students had said that she helped them during the test, Onyenwoke stated that if students said she did, then she did, but she did not recall doing so. She told us that she followed the teacher's lead – whatever the teacher

said to the students, Onyenwoke would repeat. For example, if the teacher said “look at number 6 again,” Onyenwoke would repeat it. Onyenwoke stated that it was a routine practice in the past to tell students to “check their work” on specific questions and she did not view that as a testing violation.

Onyenwoke was one of the least credible witnesses we found in over 2800 interviews in both the Atlanta and Dougherty County school cheating investigations, in that she claimed that she could recall absolutely nothing about anything. In essence, she refused to give any meaningful answer to us, except for her name.

12. *Rosita Oliver (Proctor)*

Oliver proctored for Jancynthia Lott during the 2009 CRCT. She denied cheating. When confronted with allegations that she sat next to a student during the test and gave answers, Oliver denied that she had done so. Oliver initially agreed to take a GBI-administered polygraph examination, then subsequently refused.

13. *Dr. Linda Gail Solomon (Principal)*

Solomon was Assistant Principal at Alice Coachman Elementary School for six years before transferring to Turner Elementary as principal in 2008-2009. She denied suggesting during 2009 CRCT training that teachers could prompt students who had marked wrong answers. She stated that you “cannot tell individual students to pay attention” to certain questions. Solomon also denied telling any special education teachers to read loudly so that students without read-aloud accommodations could hear them.

Solomon noticed that the test scores in 2009 had dropped from the previous year and assumed it was related to “poor classroom teaching.” She placed several teachers on a PDP (professional development plan), including flagged teachers Anita West, Jancynthia Lott, and Lisa Askew. When she learned Turner Elementary School was flagged, Solomon prepared charts and data concerning the flagged classes, which she shared with her teachers.

She met with the flagged teachers and solicited written explanations for their high erasures at the request of area testing coordinator Renee Bridges. Bridges was not satisfied with the teachers’ submissions and requested that they supplement their statements. We found these reports to be worthless.

Solomon agreed that the erasure data suggested cheating had occurred, and said that she was just as interested in finding the truth as we [Governor’s

investigators] were. She did not know why anyone would cheat and she did not direct anyone to cheat. Solomon had no reason to question the integrity of Kirkland or anyone else. She told her teachers that if they cheated she would not support them.

14. Patricia Gilbert-Parker (former Principal)

Gilbert-Parker was Principal of Turner Elementary School until 2008, when she was transferred by then-Superintendent Sally Whatley. Gilbert-Parker felt that her removal as principal was a “conspiracy” engineered by vindictive individuals at that school who wanted to get rid of her.

Before Kirkland became Assistant Principal at Turner, the tests were kept in the vault. She stated that the tests were never out of the vault after testing periods except when makeup tests were given. She denied tampering with tests or telling teachers to prompt students. She said that teachers were not allowed to do anything to prompt students or direct attention to questions they had wrong or had skipped. Gilbert-Parker refused to take a polygraph examination.

15. Wendy Hall-Bass (Teacher)

Hall-Bass was a special education teacher in 2009. She denied that Solomon told her to read loud enough during testing so that ESP students who did not have read-aloud accommodations could hear her.

16. Jancyntia Lott (Teacher)

Lott was a first grade teacher flagged with standard deviations of 17.5 in reading, 15.2 in language arts and 19.7 in math. Her 2009 proctor was Rosita Oliver. She denied improperly assisting students during testing and denied seeing Oliver sitting next to a student and assisting him. Lott refused to take a polygraph examination.

17. Lisa [Askew] Gadson (Teacher)

Askew was a third grade teacher in 2009. She was flagged in two subjects and denied cheating. She told us that students may have changed their answers when she told the class at the end of each section to go back and check their work.

She said that she did not turn-in her tests thirty minutes late and flatly denied telling Assistant Principal Kirkland that she was cleaning stray marks in her

classroom: “She is telling a lie. She’s wrong. That never happened. I never said that.”

She admitted that she might have turned in her tests five minutes late on one occasion, but could not recall why. She felt that she could not do anything right for Kirkland and that she was very strict.

18. Carol Price (Teacher)

Price was a first grade teacher flagged only in math. She says she was surprised by the statistics for her students and had no idea or explanation for how the erasures occurred. Price said that there was pressure from school administration to perform well and make AYP.

19. Anita West (Teacher)

West, a first grade teacher, was flagged in reading and language arts. In the statement she wrote to explain her students’ erasures, West essentially claimed the students marked answers before she finished reading and then erased their answers afterward.

20. Aletha Williams (Teacher)

Williams was flagged in all subjects and denied cheating. She said she was not surprised by her students scores, and attributed the high wrong to right erasures to “children just liking to use erasers.”

21. Gloria Covin (Teacher)

Covin, a second grade teacher, was flagged in all subjects. She denied cheating, and refused to take a polygraph examination. Covin also would not sign our voluntary statement form attesting that she did not participate in cheating and had no knowledge of cheating.

22. Yakarii Vance (Teacher)

Vance was flagged only in math, and had no explanation for her students’ erasures. She stated that her proctor, Stephanie Blount, “hovered over” students longer than Vance thought was proper, but she did not see Blount improperly assist students.

23. Fadara Collins (Teacher)

Collins was flagged in reading and language arts. She transferred from Alice Coachman Elementary School where she previously worked with Solomon. She denied cheating and explained her erasures by students being redirected for skipping questions or double-bubbling. She could not explain why some of her students were able to change their answers from wrong to right such a high percentage of the time.

24. Catherine Lamar (Teacher)

Lamar was a fourth grade teacher flagged in reading and language arts. Those were the subjects she taught to the entire fourth grade. Lamar denied looking at students' test documents or telling students to check their work. However, her testimony contradicted her written statement to Solomon explaining her wrong to right erasures. In this document, Lamar described incidents that would have required her to speak to specific students or look at their test materials during test administration. Lamar denied cheating.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

We find that cheating occurred at Turner Elementary School on the 2009 CRCT by the following persons: Lavonda Jolivette; Fatimia Jackson; Nikki Lyons; Diana Onyenwoke; and Rosita Oliver.

Based on the statistical data, and other evidence we have found at schools with similar statistical data, we believe that other people also cheated, but we lack sufficient evidence to identify which specific employees were involved.

We do not believe that Assistant Principal Kirkland condoned or knew of cheating at this school in 2009. When she received information about possible cheating, she immediately alerted Renee Bridges and took measures to increase security of the tests.

We further find that Principal Linda Solomon failed in her responsibility for testing activities and for ensuring the ethical administration of, and proper security for, the 2009 CRCT. It is clear from the statistical data, and the other evidence with regard to cheating at this school, that Solomon failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT, and failed to adequately supervise testing activities and security. This resulted in, and she is responsible for, falsifying, misrepresenting or erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

ALICE COACHMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1425 W. Oakridge Drive
Albany, Georgia 31707

Principal: Patricia H. Victor
Testing Coordinator: Carla Malone

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Cheating occurred at Alice Coachman Elementary School on the 2009 CRCT. Thirty-five people were interviewed at this school, some more than once. Three people admitted that they cheated on that test. Cheating at this school is reflected by confessions, witness testimony, statistical data and the sharp decline in wrong to right erasures from 2009 to 2010.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	31.7	0
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	19	0
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	9(5)	0
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	8.1	0
High Flagged Standard Deviation	23.6	0
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.2	0

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
EVANS	1 RD	5.459598
EVANS	1 LA	6.193679
EVANS	1 MA	9.607957

WYATT	1 MA	3.823931
ANDERSON	2 RD	9.601525
ANDERSON	2 LA	15.40314
ANDERSON	2 MA	23.63117
FAULKNER	2 RD	10.47208
FAULKNER	2 LA	7.306809
FAULKNER	2 MA	9.002832
WILKERSON	2 RD	7.39741
WILKERSON	2 LA	4.596565
WILKERSON	2 MA	7.364456
WILSON	2 RD	3.18997
HAYNES	3 RD	6.972211
HAYNES	3 LA	7.637528
HAYNES	3 MA	6.260498
OLIVER	3 RD	3.161769
CAMBRON	5 RD	7.371265

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

A. Narrative

In 2009, test cheating occurred at Alice Coachman Elementary School. The majority of classes flagged for high wrong to right erasures were first and second grades.

The tests were stored in locked cabinets in a room inside the main office. Principal Patricia Victor and Assistant Principal Carla Malone had the reputation among the teachers at this school to be “strictly by the book.”

Malone was on leave during the second week of testing, but had already returned the first and second grade tests to the testing center the previous Friday. By this time, the bulk of the cheating at this school had already taken place, in the first and second grades.

The literacy coach was placed in-charge of packing and delivering the tests for third, fourth and fifth grades to the testing center during the second week.

Trina Faulkner, Deborah Anderson, and Lisa Bardge admitted that they prompted students after noticing the students had incorrect answers.

Witnesses said that special education teacher Debra Warren and her proctor, Angelia Allen, cheated by prompting students or giving correct answers. Some teachers' classes may not have been flagged for high wrong to right erasures but for Warren and Allen testing some of their pupils.

B. Testimony of Witnesses

1. Trina Faulkner (Teacher)

Faulkner cheated on the 2009 CRCT, by prompting her second grade students to erase and change answers from wrong to right. When she saw that a pupil had answered a question incorrectly, Faulkner told the student to "check your work." She claimed that she did not stay at the student's desk to see if that answer was changed. No one had ever instructed her to tell students to go back and check their work when they had wrong answers. Faulkner stated, "that's just what I did." Faulkner denied providing or erasing answers. She believes that the manner in which she administered the test accounted for the high number of wrong to right erasures in her class.

Faulkner is aware that all of the second grade teachers were flagged for high wrong to right erasures and believes that their erasures could also be explained by the way they administered the test.

2. Deborah Anderson (Teacher)

Anderson is a second grade teacher who cheated on the 2009 CRCT. She admits that she prompted her students to erase and change answers from wrong to right. When she saw that a student had a wrong answer, she would tell the student to "check your work" for that particular question. Anderson claimed that she would not wait to see what action the student took but would move on or read the next question. She said that she did not give answers or tell students to erase answers. Her standard deviation in math was 23.6, the highest of any teacher at this school.

3. Lisa Bardge (Proctor)

Bardge cheated on the 2009 CRCT. She says she prompted students while serving as a proctor for third grade teacher Ashlee Haynes. She says that when she noticed a student with several wrong answers, she would tell him to "check your work." By telling the student to check his work, she was indicating that the answers were incorrect. She did not give the correct answer or tell students to erase. Bardge did not feel that she was cheating. She thought that the students

were not focused and needed to take their time. Bardge was not sure if Ms. Haynes, for whom she proctored, also prompted students.

4. Student A

In 2009, student A was in the Exceptional Student Program (“ESP”) in Jordan Cambron’s fifth grade class. ESP teacher Debra Warren and proctor Angelia Allen administered the CRCT. Student A said that the question and answer choices were read to student A. This pupil was able to ask questions about test items. Warren and Allen would help students understand the questions and figure out the answers. If students got an answer wrong, Warren and Allen let them know the answer was wrong and went back over the question with the student. After the test, Warren and Allen went back over the test with the students and made sure they had the right answers. Student A said this was done during all five days of testing.

5. Student B

In 2009, student B was an ESP student in Cambron’s class and was tested by Debra Warren and Angelia Allen. Student B said that they did not assist this student during the test. However, Student B saw Allen indicating answers to another student. Student B also said that Student A said that Allen read the questions and answer choices to Student A and pointed out the correct answers.

6. Student C

Student C, a fifth grade student in Cambron’s class, was tested on the 2009 CRCT by Debra Warren and Angelia Allen. This student told us that after becoming frustrated on the math section, Allen pointed to the correct answers. Student C received answers to approximately five questions during the math test, and saw Allen providing answers to other students as well.

7. Debra Warren (Teacher)

Warren is an ESP teacher. She and proctor Angelia Allen administered the 2009 CRCT to ESP students in first, third and fifth grades. She was told that former ESP students said that she and Allen assisted them during the CRCT by providing, and pointing to, answers during the test. Warren did not explicitly state that the students were lying; however, she denied that she had cheated and also denied seeing Allen improperly assist students.

Certain teachers may not have been flagged for high standard deviations if the erasure data of the ESP students tested by Warren had not been incorporated into their homeroom classes' statistics.

8. Angelia Allen (Proctor)

Allen served as a proctor on the 2009 CRCT for Debra Warren. When confronted with testimony from former ESP students that she had cheated on the 2009 CRCT, Allen denied the accusations. She also denied that Warren had assisted students during testing.

9. Elicia Evans (Teacher)

Evans was a first grade teacher flagged for high WTR erasures and cheated on the 2009 CRCT. Evans said she does not think that anyone outside of the classroom changed her students' answers. She believes that her students' high number of erasures could be explained by the way she administered the test. Evans testified that she read the questions to the class twice and then stated "mark the best possible answer."

When we first asked her, Evans claimed that she did not speak to individual students. She later admitted that if she saw a student marking the wrong answer, she would say "mark the best possible answer" as she walked by the pupil's desk. As a result, she said, some students erased their answers.

She denied giving students any answers or using suggestive voice inflection. Evans admits that prompting students to "mark the best possible answer" was not a part of the test instructions, and violated testing protocol.

10. Ashlee Haynes (Teacher)

In 2009, Haynes was a third grade teacher who was flagged for high wrong-to-right erasures. She denied changing answers or encouraging students to change answers. Haynes says that she did not notice students marking wrong answers because she did not look at their tests as she walked around. She claimed that she did not speak to individual students during testing except to tell them to "wake up" and "stay on task." Haynes believes that her proctor, Lisa Bardge, did the same. She did not think that Bardge did anything improper during testing. Haynes did not suspect that anyone changed her students' answers.

11. Letecia Wyatt (Teacher)

Wyatt was a first grade teacher in 2009, with only one class flagged. She identified two students who were tested separately by ESP teacher Debra Warren. Wyatt said that she did not cheat on the CRCT.

12. Nahali Oliver (Teacher)

Oliver taught third grade and says she was shocked to learn that she had one class flagged with a standard deviation of 3.16. She also told us that she was surprised when two students passed the CRCT. Those pupils had been tested separately by the ESP teacher.

13. Jordan Cambron (Teacher)

Cambron was a fifth grade teacher who was flagged in one subject. He had no explanation for his students' erasures and denied cheating. Several of Cambron's students told us that they were tested separately by Debra Warren and Angelia Allen, who gave them answers or assistance with the test. The wrong to right erasure data for those students was reported under Cambron's name.

14. Carla Malone (Assistant Principal and Testing Coordinator)

Malone was the Assistant Principal and served as Testing Coordinator during the 2009 CRCT. The tests were stored in locked cabinets in a room inside the main office known as the "old clinic." Only she and Principal Patricia Victor had a key to the cabinet and a master key to the old clinic. Malone was absent the second week of testing for medical leave, leaving teacher Diane Hill in charge of packing up and returning the tests for third, fourth, and fifth grades. Malone had already packed and returned the first and second grade tests the previous Friday.

Teachers cleaned stray marks as a group, while under her supervision. Malone says she was shocked by the erasure data. She told us that she did not cheat and was not aware of any motivation to cheat by administrators or teachers.

15. Diane Hill (Teacher)

Hill was a literacy coach in 2009 and was assigned by Principal Victor to receive training as a back-up to testing coordinator Carla Malone. When Malone was absent the second week of CRCT testing, Hill became responsible for returning the tests for the third through fifth grade classes to Renee Bridges. Hill said that she organized and packed up the tests on the Tuesday of the second week,

under the supervision of former Assistant Principal Linda Solomon, who assisted Hill. The head custodian helped Hill to deliver the tests to Bridges.

16. Patricia Victor (Principal)

Victor was principal of this school. Only she and Assistant Principal Carla Malone had access to the cabinet where the tests were locked in the old clinic. Victor was absent most of the second week of the CRCT. Since Malone was on medical leave the second week, Victor assigned Diane Hill to return the third through fifth grade tests to Renee Bridges. Victor did not see how anyone had an opportunity to alter documents.

She did not believe an adult would erase students' answers and could not understand the motivation to cheat or what would be gained by altering test documents. Victor believed that "integrity is doing the right thing when no one is watching." She says she did not encourage anyone to cheat and was not aware of anyone cheating.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

In light of the statistical data, including the high number of flagged classrooms, the dramatic drop in flagged classrooms in 2010 and confessions, we conclude that there was cheating on the administration of the 2009 CRCT at this school.

We conclude that Trina Faulkner, Deborah Anderson, Lisa Bardge, Debra Warren and Angelia Allen cheated on the 2009 CRCT. Elicia Evans denied cheating, however, based upon her testimony and the statistical improbability of erasures in her classroom, we conclude that she also cheated.

Based on the evidence we found at this and other schools with similar statistical data, we believe additional persons cheated. We lack sufficient evidence to identify who else was involved.

We also conclude that there is no evidence that Principal Patricia Victor knew of the cheating. However, as set forth in the Georgia Department of Education Student Assessment Handbook for 2008-2009, which governs all standardized tests administered in the State of Georgia, the principal "Has ultimate responsibility for testing activities in the local school."

Therefore, we conclude that Patricia Victor failed in her ultimate responsibility for supervising testing activities and for ensuring the ethical administration of, and proper security for, the 2009 CRCT.

It is our conclusion from the statistical data and other evidence found in this investigation, that Patricia Victor failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT and failed to adequately supervise testing activities. This resulted in, and she is responsible for, erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

MORNINGSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

120 Sunset Lane
Albany, Georgia 31707

Principal: Jose Roquemore
Testing Coordinator: Maqueta Griswold

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Cheating occurred on the 2009 CRCT at Morningside Elementary School. Twenty-five people were interviewed, some more than once. Misconduct at this school is reflected by the high number of flagged classrooms, witness testimony and the dramatic drop in wrong to right erasures from 2009 to 2010.

Principal Jose Roquemore directed teachers to illegally alter students' grades. He also failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	31.6	6.4
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	18	5
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	8(6)	3(1)
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	7.1	3.6
High Flagged Standard Deviation	14.4	3.99
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.5	3.0

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
BULLARD	1 LA	5.199646
BULLARD	1 MA	3.466305

DUVALL	1 RD	6.774803
DUVALL	1 LA	14.41614
DUVALL	1 MA	8.911365
FILLINGAME	1 RD	7.361946
FILLINGAME	1 LA	6.916769
FILLINGAME	1 MA	3.972807
THORNTON	1 RD	4.989646
THORNTON	1 LA	6.674692
THORNTON	1 MA	7.423882
SMITH	2 LA	7.244741
SMITH	2 MA	11.03923
WATERS	2 MA	8.62143
MITCHELL	3 RD	12.0867
MITCHELL	3 LA	5.243704
MITCHELL	3 MA	3.466256
STOKES	4 RD	4.56493

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

A. Overview

Morningside Elementary School was not managed to ensure that the 2009 CRCT results were accurately reported as reflected by the following:

1. The percentage of flagged classrooms is 31.6% for the 2009 CRCT.
2. Of the approximately 1,835 non-DCSS schools in the state taking the 2009 CRCT, only 48 schools had a higher percentage of flagged classrooms than Morningside.
3. By removing from consideration the 84 Atlanta Public Schools where we found systemic cheating on the administration of the 2009 CRCT, there are only 14 non-DCSS schools that had a higher percentage of flagged classrooms than Morningside Elementary.
4. With state monitors present in 2010, the percentage of flagged classrooms dropped dramatically, from 31.6% to 6.4%.

5. Of the 18 flagged classrooms at Morningside, 13 (72% of the total) had standard deviations that exceeded five, and two classrooms exceeded ten standard deviations. At five standard deviations, the probability that the number of erasures occurred by coincidence is one in 1.7 million. At seven standard deviations, the probability is one in 390 billion.
6. As reflected in the individual student wrong to right (WTR) erasure analysis, of the WTR erasures, 57% were produced by the flagged classrooms, which account for only 31.6% of the total classrooms in the school.
7. Principal Roquemore violated state law on changing students' grades. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.20 states that "[n]o classroom teacher shall be required, coerced, intimidated or disciplined in any manner by ... any local school administrator to change the grade of a student." None of the legal exceptions to this rule apply here. Based on the evidence which follows, Principal Roquemore violated this statute by requiring, coercing, intimidating or disciplining teachers for refusing to change students' grades.
8. Teachers at Morningside routinely cheated on unit tests by identifying the answers that students got correct, then returning the tests to the students so they could correct the answers they missed.

B. Testimony of Witnesses

1. *Dr. Maqueta Griswold (Assistant Principal and Testing Coordinator)*

Assistant Principal Griswold denied any knowledge of cheating. She said that in 2009, the tests were stored in the vault where student records were kept, not in a closet in her office. Only she and Principal Jose Roquemore had access to the tests. Dr. Griswold supervised the erasing of stray marks and never observed anyone changing answers. She believes that something improper happened with the tests, either in the classroom or by someone accessing the tests after hours.

She said that Principal Roquemore has a rule that no student would be given a report card grade below 60.

Griswold voluntarily agreed to take a GBI-administered polygraph examination. In the opinion of the polygraphist, no indications of deception were noted.

2. *Lucy Duncan (Teacher)*

Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, several years after Jose Roquemore became principal, Duncan began noticing that students' CRCT scores were higher than she thought their classroom ability indicated. She said that Roquemore told teachers they should not give low F's to students, and should change low F's to high F's. Roquemore spoke to Duncan several times about her students' low grades, saying "these scores, we just can't have this." Duncan denies changing any grades.

A few weeks later, Roquemore moved Duncan from third grade to teach kindergarten. Other teachers viewed Duncan's move to kindergarten as a demotion.

Duncan told us that on unit tests, teachers would identify which answers the students got correct, and then return the tests to the pupils so they could mark the correct answers. Teachers would administer unit tests as many times as it took for the children to pass.

3. *Carolanne Marie Duvall (Former Teacher)*

Duvall was a first grade teacher in 2009. She said that when she was cleaning stray marks on her students' CRCT answer sheets, she was shocked by the number of erasures she saw. She did not recall seeing her students erase to the extent she observed on the test booklets. The erasure analysis revealed that the number of wrong to right erasures in her language arts section was very high. Duvall was surprised to learn that the academically lowest achieving student in her class excelled on the math section.

4. *Priscilla Mamie [Smith] Hilson (Teacher)*

Hilson said she was surprised by some of her students' high CRCT scores. Principal Roquemore told teachers that they could not give a student "a grade below a 60." Hilson changed student's grades from what they earned, as directed by Roquemore. She said that some teachers voiced concerns about changing grades. Roquemore said giving a child "below a 60 hurts the child's morale."

5. Lynell Kelley Hubbard (Counselor)

Hubbard said that the CRCT materials were kept in a closet, located between her office and Assistant Principal Griswold's office.

Roquemore stressed that teachers should not give students a grade below a "60." He also ordered teachers not to give a "low F" because a "high F" would increase the chances that a child could pull the grade above failing.

6. Delois Marting (Teacher)

Marting said that students were allowed to correct their wrong answers on unit tests.

7. Elizabeth Wolfe (School Secretary)

Wolfe testified that Assistant Principal Griswold stored the tests in a vault where student records were kept. Principal Roquemore had a key to the vault.

8. Jose Roquemore (Principal)

Roquemore denied having knowledge of cheating. He told us that Assistant Principal Griswold handled all testing procedures and that she was astute and good at her job.

He denied having access to where the tests were stored in 2009. He also denied directing or coercing teachers to change grades. He further denied prohibiting teachers from giving "low F's." Roquemore stated that he only encouraged teachers to work with students to help them raise their grades above failing.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

We conclude that Principal Roquemore violated O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.20 by illegally ordering teachers to change students' grades, or by coercing, intimidating or disciplining teachers for refusing to change students' grades.

Based on the evidence we found at this and other schools with similar statistical data, we conclude that cheating occurred. However, we lack sufficient evidence to identify who was involved in this misconduct.

Principal Jose Roquemore also failed in his ultimate responsibility for testing activities and for ensuring the ethical administration of, and proper security

for, the 2009 CRCT. It is our conclusion from the statistical data, and the other evidence found in this investigation, that he failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT, and failed to adequately supervise testing activities and security. This resulted in, and he is responsible for, falsifying, misrepresenting or erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

SHERWOOD ACRES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2201 Doncaster Dr.
Albany, Georgia 31707

Principal: Eva Robinson
Testing Coordinator: Eddie Johnson

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Cheating occurred at Sherwood Acres Elementary in 2009. Forty-four people were interviewed at this school, some more than once. One person admitted cheating on the 2009 CRCT and there were four other educators accused of misconduct. Cheating at this school is reflected by the high standard deviations in flagged classrooms, a confession, witness testimony and a significant drop in wrong to right erasures from 2009 to 2010. Current Principal Eddie Johnson was the Assistant Principal and Testing Coordinator in 2009 and passed a GBI-administered polygraph examination.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	25	0.9
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	21	1
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	12 (5)	1
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	2.3	0.4
High Flagged Standard Deviation	21.9	3.5
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.1	3.5

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
AUSTIN	1 RD	5.305965
AUSTIN	1 MA	5.23867

HOWARD	1 MA	7.812729
MOREY	1 MA	4.030297
WILLIAMS	1 RD	3.520033
WILLS	1 LA	3.639765
KEGLER	2 RD	8.653977
KEGLER	2 LA	7.468359
KEGLER	2 MA	11.15982
PHELPS	2 RD	15.10285
PHELPS	2 LA	7.468359
PHELPS	2 MA	15.2013
SCOTT	2 RD	3.839409
SCOTT	2 LA	3.934935
SCOTT	2 MA	4.891243
WALLACE	2 RD	16.18291
WALLACE	2 LA	17.34773
WALLACE	2 MA	21.86639
HESTER	3 LA	3.279772
PIERCE	3 LA	3.39151
HILL, LAURA	4 LA	3.129451

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

A. Overview

Teachers at Sherwood Acres cheated on the 2009 CRCT and that school was not managed to ensure that the results of this test were accurately reported. This is reflected by the following factors:

1. The percentage of flagged classrooms is 25% for the 2009 CRCT, but drops to 0.9% in 2010 when there were state monitors in the schools during testing.
2. Of the 21 flagged classrooms at Sherwood Acres, 12 (48% of the total) had standard deviations that exceeded five, and six classrooms exceeded ten standard deviations. At five standard deviations, the probability that the number of erasures occurred by coincidence is one in 1.7 million. At seven standard deviations the probability is one in 390 billion.

3. A teacher confessed to prompting students using voice inflection. She also said other teachers did the same.
4. Based upon the extraordinarily high numbers of wrong to right erasures, resulting in standard deviations of 11, 15, 17, and 21 above the state norm, we conclude that the erasures were not done solely by the students. Teachers had the opportunity to erase and correct answers when they erased “stray marks” on their students’ tests. A number of teachers admitted to spending up to an hour darkening partially filled-in bubbles and erasing partially-erased bubbles. Because all of the teachers were erasing and darkening bubbles, some teachers could have used that opportunity to change answers from wrong to right.

B. Narrative

Teacher Alberta Wallace admitted to using voice inflection to help her pupils on the CRCT. She said three other teachers did the same. Assistant Principal Eddie Johnson called teachers to meet and erase “stray marks” by grade level. Some teachers referred to this as the “clean-up committee.” Six educators admitted that when they erased “stray marks” they would fill in partially-shaded bubbles, darken bubbles, erase partially-erased answer choices, and erase around answer choices that were filled in outside of the lines.

At least one teacher said that then-principal Eva Robinson wanted teachers to cheat and that Assistant Principal Johnson knew Robinson had encouraged teachers to cheat.

C. Testimony of Witnesses

1. *Alberta Wallace (Teacher)*

Wallace said she used voice inflection and facial expressions to tell her students the correct answers. She was flagged in reading, language arts and math. She told us that her students’ high rate of erasures may be explained because when her students got ahead of her on the test she would tell them to erase those answers.

According to Wallace, Tekeela Austin, Marguerite Williams, and Betty Phelps also prompted students by using voice inflection.

Wallace cleaned-up stray marks with the other first and second grade teachers and would sometimes fill in partially-shaded bubbles.

She told us that Candace Scott kept her tests a little later than the other teachers and she does not know the reason for this.

2. *Detrich Sanchez (Teacher)*

Sanchez told us that when Eva Robinson was principal she often said, when discussing the CRCT, “they gonna pass, you hear me, they gonna pass.” Sanchez understood Robinson’s words to imply that teachers should cheat. Johnson, the assistant principal at the time, would say, “y’all do what you need to do, but I’m not going down.” Sanchez felt that Robinson and Johnson put undue pressure on teachers to do well on the CRCT.

When GOSA released the 2009 CRCT erasure analysis, former Principal Eva Robinson called the office manager at this school, Cassandra Crawford. Robinson told Crawford that “no one” had come to talk to her about the erasure analysis and that she was not worried because Eddie Johnson was the one who signed off on the tests. Crawford called Johnson and told him what Robinson had said. Johnson said he was not worried because he had done what Robinson told him to do.

Sanchez said that Eddie Johnson told the teachers that if they said anything other than that they did not cheat, that they would be fools. He also volunteered to provide audio recorders for their interviews with the GBI.

3. *Patricia Pierce (Teacher)*

Pierce taught third grade in 2009 and was not flagged. She erased stray marks with Margaret Hatcher and Eddie Johnson and denied cheating.

When the scores for the CRCT came back one year, Pierce was in the front office talking to school secretary Betty Jean Wright. When discussing the low scores of Pierce’s students, Wright told Pierce that she should consider cheating on the CRCT like the other teachers. Pierce only told Alberta Wallace about her conversation with Wright.

Pierce said that teachers would be motivated to cheat because they are competitive about their test scores. The top four teachers and the bottom four teachers’ test scores were discussed in a faculty meeting. Pierce, Dorothy Everson, Paul Griffin, and Crystal Curry were the bottom four teachers. Alberta Wallace, Betty Phelps, Tekeela Austin, and Marion Wills would also have been singled out for having low test scores.

4. Betty Jean Wright (Records Clerk)

As discussed above, Patricia Pierce claimed that Wright told her she should consider cheating on the CRCT like the other teachers. Wright denied making that statement and any knowledge of cheating.

5. Eva Robinson (Principal)

Robinson denied having any knowledge of cheating. She was surprised by the results of the erasure analysis and accepted responsibility for any cheating that took place under her leadership.

6. Eddie Johnson (Assistant Principal and Testing Coordinator)

Johnson is now the Principal at Sherwood Acres, but for the administration of the 2009 CRCT he was the testing coordinator and assistant principal there. He says he kept the CRCT materials locked in his office and that only Principal Eva Robinson, the school police officers, and the facilities department had keys to his office.

When he was told in 2010 that his school was flagged, he asked the teachers for an explanation for their unusually high wrong to right erasures. He also told them to write letters to explain the erasures. Johnson forwarded those letters to the district office.

Johnson stated that there was a “stray mark committee” made up of first and second grade teachers. He was on the committee with Margaret Hatcher, Pam Grecko, and Kathy McCall. If one answer choice was marked and another had the appearance of an attempt of being erased, teachers would remove the partially-erased answer choice.

Johnson had no explanation, other than cheating, for the high number of wrong to right erasures. She agreed to take a polygraph examination and the polygrapher determined there was “no indication of deception.”

7. Tekeela Austin (Teacher)

Austin taught first grade in 2009. She was flagged in reading and math and denied cheating on the CRCT.

She recalled three students that either worked ahead or frequently got off track. A review of the student-level data for these students demonstrates that those

erasures would not have skewed the data. There were other students with unusually high numbers of erasures as well.

8. *Katrice Kegler (Teacher)*

Kegler taught second grade in 2009 and was flagged in language arts, math and reading. She denied cheating. Kegler told us teachers were called in by grade level to erase stray marks. She says she erased marks on the test booklet but not on the answer sheets.

Kegler had no explanation for her high erasure numbers. She refused to take a polygraph examination.

9. *Betty Phelps (Teacher)*

Phelps taught second grade in 2009 and was flagged in all three subjects. She denied using voice inflection. Phelps erased stray marks with other teachers in her grade level, but says she never erased “inside the bubble.”

Phelps suggested that the high number of wrong-to-right erasures were because young students often change their answers.

10. *Marguerite Williams (Teacher)*

Williams taught first grade in 2009 and was flagged in reading. She says she helped erase stray marks with Margaret Hatcher and Eddie Johnson. Williams would also darken, but not erase answers. She also denied erasing partially erased bubbles.

Williams said there was one student who worked ahead on the 2009 CRCT. Principal Robinson made that pupil erase answers that he had marked and go back to where the rest of the class was. Williams believed this student’s erasures may explain the wrong to right erasures in her class. A review of that particular student’s answer sheet indicates that he had a high number of wrong to right erasures. He was not the only student in Williams’ class that did so.

11. *Tammy Gregors (Teacher)*

Gregors was a second grade teacher in 2009 and helped erase “stray marks” with Carolyn Howard, Patricia Pierce, Detrich Sanchez, and Kristen Cook on the CRCT while Eddie Johnson supervised them. Gregors said that she only erased marks that were outside bubbled answers.

12. Margaret Hatcher (Counselor)

Hatcher did not administer the 2009 CRCT, but she was on the “clean-up committee” that helped to erase stray marks. If two answers were marked and one bubble was partially erased but was not completely erased, Hatcher would fully erase the bubble. She would also, if needed, darken a bubble. She said that if two answers were fully marked, she would not erase one. She denied changing any answers but would clean-up around bubbles that were “overly-bubbled.” The teachers “cleaned-up” the tests under the supervision of either Johnson or Hatcher.

13. Jennifer Hester (Teacher)

Hester taught third grade in 2009 and was flagged in language arts. She denied cheating.

14. Laura Hill (Teacher)

Hill taught fourth grade in 2009 and was flagged in language arts. She denied cheating but has no explanation for the high number of wrong to right erasures in her classroom.

15. Carolyn Howard (Teacher)

Howard taught first grade in 2009 and was flagged in math. She denied cheating and was on the “clean-up committee” to help erase stray marks. If more than one answer appeared to have been chosen, she would erase the lighter of the marks. She would erase around the bubble if they colored outside the lines. She thinks she did this to some 30 different answers. If there were two clearly marked answers, she would leave both marked.

Her first year of teaching was 2008-2009 and she did not realize she was doing anything wrong.

16. Jennifer Morey (Teacher)

Morey taught first grade in 2009 and was flagged in math. She denied cheating.

Morey was consistently surprised that Tekeela Austin’s students always exceeded expectations on the math portion of the CRCT. Morey said that on the benchmark tests, Austin would only read two of three answer choices to the students.

17. Candace Scott (Teacher)

Scott taught second grade in 2009 and was flagged in all three subject areas. She is no longer in the Dougherty County school system and was not interviewed.

18. Marian Wills (Teacher)

Wills taught first grade in 2009 and was flagged in language arts. She says she erased stray marks in the afternoons with Jennifer Morey, Carolyn Howard, Tekeela Austin, Marguerite Williams, and Connie Gaskins. Wills denied cheating.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

In light of the statistical data, including the high number of flagged classrooms, the dramatic drop in flagged classrooms in 2010 and a confession, we conclude that there was cheating on the administration of the 2009 CRCT at this school.

We conclude that Alberta Wallace cheated on the 2009 CRCT by both prompting students to change answers and indicating when they had a wrong answer. We believe that the statistical evidence and testimony of witnesses indicates that Tekeela Austin, Katrice Kegler, Marguerite Williams and Betty Phelps also cheated on the 2009 CRCT by assisting students.

We found no evidence that Principal Eva Robinson knew of the cheating. However, as set forth in the Georgia Department of Education Student Assessment Handbook for 2008-2009, which governs all standardized tests administered in the State of Georgia, the principal “Has ultimate responsibility for testing activities in the local school.”

Therefore, we find that Eva Robinson failed in her ultimate responsibility for supervising testing activities and for ensuring the ethical administration of, and proper security for, the 2009 CRCT.

It is our conclusion from the statistical data and other evidence found in this investigation, that Eva Robinson failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT and failed to adequately supervise testing activities. This resulted in, and she is responsible for, erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

LAMAR REESE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1215 Lily Pond Road
Albany, Georgia 31707

Principal: Valerie Thomas
Testing Coordinator: George Graham

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Statistical data indicates that cheating occurred during the administration of the 2009 CRCT at this school. We interviewed thirty-three people, some more than once.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	22.7	4.8
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	17	4
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	8(5)	3(1)
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	5.3	5.0
High Flagged Standard Deviation	10.5	5.5
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.2	3.6

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
BRYANT	1 LA	3.175346
BRYANT	1 MA	3.439102
GRADDIC	1 RD	3.150872

GRADDIC	1 LA	6.543435
GRADDIC	1 MA	6.134411
SHAVERS	1 RD	5.609636
SHAVERS	1 LA	4.241622
SHAVERS	1 MA	3.496533
BRADFORD	2 RD	10.54907
BRADFORD	2 LA	6.712665
BRADFORD	2 MA	4.231286
DICKERSON	2 RD	5.729666
DICKERSON	2 LA	6.939085
DICKERSON	2 MA	3.385414
FOWLER	2 MA	5.422473
WRIGHT	3 MA	4.811585
BENTLEY	5 RD	6.846739

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

With regard to the administration of the 2009 CRCT at Lamar Reese Elementary School, 22.7% of the classes exceeded three standard deviations from the state mean for wrong to right erasures. As shown above, eight teachers accounted for 17 classes exceeding three standard deviations. In 2010, the percentage of wrong to right erasures exceeding three standard deviations dropped significantly from 22.7% to 4.8% in 2010. In 2009, all but two of the flagged classes were in first and second grade.

While some teachers prompted students during the testing but denied doing so, no witnesses admitted to prompting students or changing answers. Principal Valerie Thomas and Assistant Principal/Testing Coordinator George Graham submitted to GBI-administered polygraph examinations and showed no deception.

A. Testimony of Witnesses

1. Dr. Valerie Thomas (Principal)

Thomas served as principal at Lamar Reese Elementary from 2002 until 2010, and is currently the principal at Monroe Comprehensive High School. She says she had minimal involvement with the 2009 CRCT, other than supervising testing coordinator George Graham, by helping him organize the testing process.

Thomas denied any knowledge of cheating. She voluntarily submitted to a GBI-administered polygraph and showed no signs of deception.

2. *George Graham (Assistant Principal and Testing Coordinator)*

Graham is currently the principal at Lamar Reese Elementary School, but served as the assistant principal and testing coordinator there in 2009. Graham said he followed all testing protocols and procedures. Thomas, and possibly teacher Angie Kelly-Gardener, assisted him in collecting test documents. Graham acknowledged that on the last day of the CRCT, he and a group of teachers “cleaned-up” the stray marks from the first and second grade test booklets. He denied knowledge of cheating on the 2009 CRCT. He voluntarily submitted to a GBI-administered polygraph and showed no signs of deception.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

In light of the statistical data, including the high number of flagged classrooms, and the dramatic drop in flagged classrooms in 2010, we conclude that there was cheating on the administration of the 2009 CRCT at this school. However, we are unable to conclude how the cheating occurred or by whom it was carried out, but it clearly existed.

We also conclude that there is no evidence that Principal Valerie Thomas knew of the cheating. However, as set forth in the Georgia Department of Education Student Assessment Handbook for 2008-2009, which governs all standardized tests administered in the State of Georgia, the principal “[H]as ultimate responsibility for testing activities in the local school.”

Therefore, we conclude that Valerie Thomas failed in her ultimate responsibility for supervising testing activities and for ensuring the ethical administration of, and proper security for, the 2009 CRCT.

It is our conclusion from the statistical data and other evidence found in this investigation, that Valerie Thomas failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT and failed to adequately supervise testing activities. This resulted in, and she is responsible for, erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

SYLVESTER ROAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2600 Trenton Lane
Albany, Georgia 31705

Principal: Deborah Jones
Testing Coordinator: Nancy Reimer

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Cheating occurred on the CRCT at Sylvester Road Elementary in 2009 and other years. Thirty-five teachers at this school were interviewed, some more than once. Misconduct at this school is indicated by a high number of flagged classrooms, one confession, witness testimony, and a significant decline in WTR erasures from 2009 to 2010 with state monitors present.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	22.2	4.6
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	14	4
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	9(4)	2(1)
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	6.4	9.3
High Flagged Standard Deviation	14.2	20.1
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.2	3.7

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
BONNER	1 RD	5.459598
HUFF	1 RD	9.462215
HUFF	1 LA	8.192774

HUFF	1 MA	10.72508
KNIGHTON-HARRIS	1 RD	4.382354
KNIGHTON-HARRIS	1 MA	5.126702
COXSON	2 RD	4.586853
COXSON	2 MA	5.732376
DANFORD	2 LA	14.1595
DANFORD	2 MA	8.982191
MARTIN	2 MA	3.213902
BLOCKER	4 RD	3.188283
BURROUGHS	4 MA	3.395325
CULLEN	4 RD	3.248371

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

A. Testimony of Witnesses

1. *Beverly Knighton-Harris (Teacher)*

Knighton-Harris taught first grade in 2009 and was flagged in two subject areas. She acknowledged that she used facial expressions and voice inflection when administering the CRCT. She observed that students would change their answers whenever her facial expression indicated whether the answer was right or wrong. She claimed that she tried to minimize her tendency to use facial expressions and voice inflection and that her actions were unintentional. We find this explanation absurd, but an admission of wrongdoing.

2. *Verona Fitzhugh (Teacher)*

Fitzhugh was the reading intervention teacher in 2009. Five students told her they had done well on the CRCT that year because their teacher gave them correct answers. Fitzhugh responded to one student with, “That can’t be true, the teacher did not give you any answers.” The student said, “Yes she did. She told us to change them.” Fitzhugh does not recall which teacher administered the CRCT to those particular students.

She testified that she saw Deborah Flood give students answers on a test, which may have been the CRCT. She overheard Flood tell students during testing:

“That’s not the right answer.” She later told Flood that what she did was against the law, to which Flood claimed that she was not testing when she said that.

3. Deborah Jones (Principal)

Jones was principal of Sylvester Road Elementary in 2009 and denied cheating or having any knowledge of cheating.

She told us that there are some students who have not performed in subsequent grade levels as well as their earlier CRCT scores indicated. She acknowledged that this may be attributed to cheating on the CRCT.

4. Lula Blocker (Teacher)

Blocker taught fourth grade and was flagged in reading. Blocker denied cheating. She attributed the WTR erasures in her class to test-taking strategies.

5. Laurie Bonner (Teacher)

Bonner taught first grade in 2009 and was flagged in reading. Bonner denied cheating or having knowledge of cheating.

6. Tijuana Burroughs (Teacher)

Burroughs taught fourth grade in 2009 and was flagged in math. Burroughs denied cheating but does recall a student telling her that their teacher had helped them on the CRCT. She does not remember which year or which student told her that.

7. Sandra Coxson (Teacher)

Coxson taught second grade in 2009 and was flagged in reading and math. She is no longer with DCSS and was not interviewed.

8. Rudella Cullen (Teacher)

Cullen taught fourth grade in 2009 and was flagged in reading. Cullen denied cheating.

9. Olympia Danford (Teacher)

Danford taught second grade and was flagged in language arts and math. During the 2009 CRCT, Jacqueline Stokes administered most of the CRCT to

Danford's class. Danford administered only the math portion. She stated she has no knowledge of cheating.

She was one of two teachers flagged again in 2010. She was flagged in one subject area with a standard deviation of 5.4.

10. Monica Huff (Teacher)

Huff taught first grade in 2009 and was flagged in language arts, reading, and math. She denied cheating.

She said that teachers erased stray marks in front of Nancy Reimer in the front office where the tests were picked up and dropped off. Huff denied erasing anything other than stray marks.

11. Kamina Martin (Teacher)

Martin taught second grade in 2009 and was flagged in math. Martin denied cheating.

She said she did not erase stray marks. She believed there was a "stray mark committee" but does not know who erased stray marks.

12. Nancy Reimer (Assistant Principal and Test Coordinator)

Reimer denied cheating. She said that only Principal Jones and Kathy Adams, the school's office manager, had access to the vault where the tests were kept. Reimer had to ask Adams for a key during testing.

13. Jacqueline Stokes (Teacher)

Stokes is an Early Intervention Program ("EIP") teacher. She administered the language arts and reading portions of the 2009 CRCT to Danford's second grade class. Danford's class was flagged in language arts. Stokes denied cheating.

14. April Turner (Teacher)

Turner administered the test in 2009 but was not flagged. She stated that there was a team responsible for erasing stray marks but she does not know who was on the team.

15. *Deborah Flood (Teacher)*

Flood taught third grade in 2009 and was not a flagged teacher in 2009 but was accused by Fitzhugh cheating. In 2010, Flood was the only teacher flagged in all three subject areas with standard deviations of 20.1, 3.7, and 8.1.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

We conclude that Beverly Knighton-Harris prompted students to change their answers on the 2009 CRCT. We further conclude that Deborah Flood cheated on the 2009 CRCT, and likely the 2010 CRCT as well. Verona Fitzhugh stated that she witnessed Flood cheating on a test, and while Fitzhugh is not certain it was the CRCT, that witness account combined with Flood's statistically improbable WTR erasures in 2010, lead us to conclude that Flood likely cheated on the CRCT in 2010.

Based on the evidence we found at this and other schools with similar statistical data, we believe others cheated. We lack sufficient evidence to identify who else was involved in this misconduct.

We also conclude that there is no evidence that Principal Deborah Jones knew of the cheating. However, as set forth in the Georgia Department of Education Student Assessment Handbook for 2008-2009, which governs all standardized tests administered in the State of Georgia, the principal "Has ultimate responsibility for testing activities in the local school."

Therefore, we conclude that Deborah Jones failed in her ultimate responsibility for supervising testing activities and for ensuring the ethical administration of, and proper security for, the 2009 CRCT.

It is our conclusion from the statistical data and other evidence found in this investigation, that Deborah Jones failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT and failed to adequately supervise testing activities. This resulted in, and she is responsible for, erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

RADIUM SPRINGS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2400 Roxanna Road
Albany, Georgia 31707

Principal: Linda Gail Griffin
Testing Coordinator: Yvette Simmons

I. INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

Statistical evidence and the dramatic drop in wrong to right erasures from 2009 to 2010 indicates that cheating occurred during the administration of the 2009 CRCT at Radium Springs Elementary School. Twenty-two people were interviewed there, some more than once.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

A. 2009 vs. 2010

	2009	2010
Percentage of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	21.4	5.7
Number of Classrooms Flagged for WTR Erasures	18	12
Number of Teachers Flagged for WTR Standard Deviations above 3.0 (Number of Teachers Flagged in Multiple Subjects)	7(6)	10(2)
Mean Flagged WTR Standard Deviations from State Norm	8.3	3.7
High Flagged Standard Deviation	14.2	6.4
Low Flagged Standard Deviation	3.2	3.0

B. Flagged Classrooms

Teacher	Grade & Test	Standard Deviation
BUSH	1 RD	9.734247
BUSH	1 LA	9.095456
BUSH	1 MA	6.158487

STAMPS	1 RD	8.07671
STAMPS	1 LA	8.811517
STAMPS	1 MA	8.20114
WILLIAMS	1 LA	4.011852
WILLIAMS	1 MA	3.167556
FRAZIER	2 RD	11.66452
FRAZIER	2 LA	12.25893
FRAZIER	2 MA	9.905486
HOUSTON	2 RD	14.21651
HOUSTON	2 LA	10.98161
HOUSTON	2 MA	8.197753
WILLIAMS	2 RD	7.938921
WILLIAMS	2 LA	8.605145
WILLIAMS	2 MA	13.45703
HAYNES	4 MA	3.816562

III. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

In 2009, 21.4% of the classes at this school were flagged for standard deviations above three for wrong to right erasures. Most of the classes flagged were in the first and second grades, where questions and answer choices are read aloud to the students. This suggests that students were prompted to change their answers during test administration. Paraprofessionals cleaned stray marks from the tests under the supervision of assistant principal Yvette Simmons. No witnesses admitted to prompting students or changing answers.

A. Testimony of Witnesses

1. Kimberly Bush (Teacher)

Bush taught reading and language arts in 2009 for the five first grade classes. Bush was flagged in reading, language arts, and math for high wrong to right erasures. She had no explanation for the high number of erasures, and says she did not prompt her students during testing, and had no suspicion that anyone changed her students' answers. She further says that there would be no reason for anyone to cheat on the CRCT.

2. Aksana Stamps (Teacher)

Stamps taught math to first grade students and was flagged in all three subjects. She said that neither she nor her proctor did anything to improperly assist students during testing. She claims that teachers were not left alone with the tests, because the testing coordinator, Yvette Simmons, delivered the exams while the students, teachers and proctors were present in the classroom before testing started and picked them up promptly afterward. There was no pressure exerted by administrators to improve test scores or to have particular students pass.

3. Lolica Williams (Teacher)

Williams says that her first grade students in 2009 were neither particularly gifted nor challenged in academic ability. She had no idea why she was flagged in math and language arts. She told us she did not use voice inflection and that neither she, nor her proctor, did anything to prompt students. Williams had no reason to believe that either Principal Linda Griffin or Assistant Principal Simmons would cheat.

4. Deborah Frazier (Teacher)

Frazier taught second grade and was flagged in all three subjects. She says there were five second grade classes and three were departmentalized. Frazier taught reading and language arts, and rotated students with Monica Ward and June Houston. Frazier had no explanation for her students' high wrong to right erasures. She speculated that rotating among three teachers somehow caused those students to erase more frequently. The two teachers who did not rotate classes were not flagged for high wrong to right erasures.

5. June Houston (Teacher)

Houston was flagged in all three subjects. She taught science and social studies to the three departmentalized second grade classes. Houston was astonished when shown the individual student erasure data because she did not recall seeing her students erase to that extent.

She was certain neither she nor her proctor did anything in administering the test that would account for the high erasures. Houston told us that someone might have changed her students' answers, and it only seemed logical that the clean-up committee had the best opportunity to do so. However, she did not believe that anyone at that school would do anything unethical. Principal Griffin and Assistant Principal Simmons were strict and "by the book."

6. Monica Williams Ward (Teacher)

Ward taught math for the second grade departmentalized classes. She was flagged in all three subjects and realized that the high wrong to right erasures for her class put her “in a bad spot.” Ward denied using voice inflection, or doing anything improper, in administering the test. She did not suspect that anyone tampered with tests after they left her classroom.

7. Yvette Simmons (Assistant Principal and Testing Coordinator)

Simmons told us she was “very security conscious” and aware that she would be held accountable if anything happened to the tests. In 2009, the tests were locked in her office, and only she and the secretary had a key. Simmons and an assistant used a hand truck to deliver the tests to the teachers a few minutes before testing began each day. When teachers finished testing, they called the office and the tests would be picked up moments later. Teachers accounted for each test as they were distributed and returned.

Paraprofessionals cleaned the tests of stray marks in the conference room under her supervision. She says the door was open and no one was left alone with the tests. Stray marks in the bubble area of the answer sheet could only be erased after Simmons reviewed the document. She was methodical about organizing, storing and sealing the tests in such a way that any tampering would be evident. Simmons had no idea what happened to cause the high number of wrong to right erasures at this school.

Simmons could not think of any opportunity for someone to change answers. Security cameras were overhead that she says would have detected anyone entering her office. She never came back to the school after hours or on weekends during the testing period. Simmons was certain nothing had happened to the tests on her watch.

8. Linda Gail Griffin (Principal)

Griffin has been principal of Radium Springs Elementary School since 2004. She trusted and relied on her assistant principal to handle testing administration. Griffin selected the groups of paraprofessionals that assisted with test preparation and cleaning stray marks.

Testing irregularities brought to her attention would have been reported to Renee Bridges, the area test coordinator. She was at a loss to explain the erasure statistics, particularly the concentration of high wrong to right changes in the first

and second grades. Griffin said that there was no motivation for anyone to cheat to make AYP in those grades, as opposed to others.

She did not observe anything unusual when she circulated through the classrooms during testing. She says she did not tamper with the tests and did not believe Simmons would have done so. She had no reason to question the integrity of her faculty and staff.

IV. ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

In light of the statistical data and the dramatic drop in flagged classrooms from 2009 to 2010, we conclude that there was cheating on the administration of the 2009 CRCT at this school. However, we are unable to conclude how the cheating occurred or by whom it was carried out, but it clearly existed.

We also conclude that there is no evidence that Principal Linda Gail Griffin knew of the cheating. However, as set forth in the Georgia Department of Education Student Assessment Handbook for 2008-2009, which governs all standardized tests administered in the State of Georgia, the principal “Has ultimate responsibility for testing activities in the local school.”

Therefore, we conclude that Linda Gail Griffin failed in her ultimate responsibility for supervising testing activities and for ensuring the ethical administration of, and proper security for, the 2009 CRCT.

It is our conclusion from the statistical data and other evidence found in this investigation, that Linda Gail Griffin failed to properly monitor the administration of the 2009 CRCT and failed to adequately supervise testing activities. This resulted in, and she is responsible for, erroneously reporting the results of the 2009 CRCT to the Georgia Department of Education.

SCHOOL	CLASSROOM FLAGGED # / %	RANK IN STATE FOR % OF FLAGGED CLASSROOMS (Less APS) (1,772 schools)	TEACHERS FLAGGED (Multi Subj.)	% of CLASSROOMS FLAGGED 2009 / 2010	CONFESSIONS	MISCONDUCT/ CHEATING/ FAILURE OF DUTY
West Town	44 / 77.2%	1	19 (17)	77.2 / 3.7	1	3 *
New Jackson Heights	33 / 57.9%	3	16 (10)	57.9 / 6.0	6	11 **
Northside	36 / 52.2%	5	13 (12)	52.2 / 18.5	1	3 *
Martin Luther King	26 / 45.6%	8	16 (10)	45.6 / 0.0	2	6 *
Turner	26 / 39.4%	16	11 (9)	39.4 / 0.0	3	6 ****
Alice Coachman	19 / 31.7%	19	9 (5)	31.7 / 6.4	3	7 ***
Morningside	18 / 31.6%	21	8 (6)	31.6 / 6.4	0	1 ****
Sherwood	21 / 25.0%	29 (tie)	12 (5)	25.0 / 0.9	1	6 ****
Lamar Reese	17 / 22.7%	37	8 (5)	22.7 / 4.4	0	1 ****
Sylvester Road	14 / 22.2%	40 (tie)	9 (4)	22.2 / 4.6	1	3 ****
Radium Springs	18 / 21.4%	47	7 (6)	21.4 / 2.2	0	1 ****
TOTALS					18	48

* Includes principal who pled 5th Amendment.

** Includes principal who sent e-mail during CRCT directing teacher to help students.

*** Includes principal who failed in testing duties.

**** Includes principal who made grade changes. Current principal found to have daughter on free lunch program.

GLOSSARY

TERM	DEFINITION
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress. Part of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, AYP is a measure of year-to-year student achievement on statewide assessments. Schools, school districts, and states must demonstrate a certain level of performance on reading and/or language arts and mathematics assessments. Schools that do not “meet AYP” for two consecutive years in the same subject area are designated as schools in “Needs Improvement.”
Certified educator	Individuals trained in education who hold teaching, leadership, service, technical specialist, or permit certification issued by the PSC.
Classroom level data	CRCT erasure analysis data for specific teacher or homeroom, including the subject tested, number of students, total number of wrong to right erasures, and resulting standard deviation.
Confessed	Admitted to the truth of a charge or accusation.
CRCT	Criterion-Referenced Competency Test. A standardized test used by Georgia as the AYP assessment tool for elementary and middle schools. Tests grades 1-8 in reading, English/language arts, and math. In addition, grades 3-8 are tested in science and social studies.
CRCT subject areas	Subjects tested on the CRCT. First and second grades are tested in Reading, English Language Arts, and Math. In addition to those subjects, grades three through eight are tested in Social Studies and Science. One subject is tested per day.
Departmentalize	Where a specific subject is taught by one teacher to students from different homerooms on the same grade level. The students may rotate among classrooms during the day to learn different subjects from designated teachers.
EIP	Early Intervention Program – a program designed to serve students in grade K-5 who are at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level, to help them to obtain the necessary academic skills to reach

	grade level performance in the shortest possible time.
ELA	English /language arts
Fifth (5 th) Amendment	The privilege against self-incrimination grounded in the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, providing that no person will be compelled to be a witness against himself. In a criminal case, if a defendant invokes the 5 th Amendment and refuses to testify, he may not be presumed guilty based on that refusal. However, in a civil case, if a witness invokes the 5 th Amendment and refuses to answer questions concerning whether he or she committed a particular act, “it creates an implied admission that a truthful answer would tend to prove that the witness had committed the act.” <i>Perez v. Atlanta Check Cashers, Inc.</i> , 302 Ga. App. 864, 870 (2010).
Flagged	Designated as being more than three (3) stand deviations outside of the state norm for wrong-to-right (WTR) erasures, as determined by the GOSA erasure analysis. A school was considered “flagged” when more than 20% of its classes had greater than three standard deviations above the norm on WTR erasures on the CRCT.
GOSA	G overnor’s O ffice of S tudent A chievement. State agency which provides accountability for Georgia's schools, pre-K through postsecondary levels. The intent is to improve student achievement and school completion in Georgia.
GTR ID#	Unique identification number assigned to each student.
IEP	I ndividualized E ducation P rogram. Free, appropriate, public special education services which students with certain disabilities or impairments are eligible to receive. An IEP is a written plan developed by a team of teachers, other qualified personnel, parents, guardians, and the student if appropriate.
Implicated	Shown to be also involved, usually in an incriminating manner.
ITBS	I owa T est of B asic S kills – a national standardized test given to grades K-12, testing students in different subject areas. Each student is given a percentile score

	comparing them to overall national results, and a grade equivalent indicating the student's progress in a hypothetical academic curriculum
LA	Language arts
MA	Mathematics
Meets, exceeds	Refers to a measurement, usually expressed as a percentage, of students who "met" or "exceeded" state standards in certain core curriculum subjects (math, reading, English/language arts, science, and social studies) as measured by the CRCT.
Monitors	Persons assigned to a school to observe test administration procedures; e.g. test distribution, test collection, storage of test materials. Observes testing sites to see that schedules are being followed, reports unusual activity.
Names of Students and Parents	We have not used the actual names of students and parents who have provided information to us during our investigation in order to protect their privacy.
Parapro/paraprofessional	A person who may have less than professional-level certification, who relates in role and function to a professional and does a portion of the professional's job under the professional's supervision, and whose decision-making authority is limited and regulated by the professional. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-204. Georgia paraprofessionals must be certified by the PSC.
PDP	Professional Development Plan. A plan developed and implemented to correct perceived deficiencies in performance of teachers and administrators, used to encourage and support improvement in specific areas.
PEC	Program for Exceptional Children. Program offering specialized, educational testing, evaluation and other services to eligible children with certain disabilities or impairments. Each eligible student must have an IEP.
Preponderance of the evidence	A standard of proof in civil cases. Evidence which is of greater weight or more convincing than the evidence which is offered in opposition to it; that is, evidence which as a whole shows that the fact sought to be proved is more probable than not.
Proctors	Persons assigned to monitor classrooms or other specific

	areas during testing; circulate to observe students and discourage misconduct; assist test examiner to maintain testing security; report unusual activity or irregularities.
Prompting	Assisting students during testing by use of verbal or nonverbal cues. Examples include voice inflection, pointing to answers, repetition or rephrasing of words or passages, physical cues, movements, sounds, or signals meant to suggest or convey the answer or encourage students to erase and change an answer.
PSC	Georgia Professional Standards Commission. A state agency created “to set and apply high standards for the preparation, certification, and continued licensing of Georgia public educators.” The PSC also handles the investigation and due process of cases referred for disciplinary action.
RD	Reading
Read Aloud Accommodation	Accommodation provided during testing for students with certain disabilities. A “standard” read aloud accommodation calls for oral reading of test questions in English by a reader or other assistive technology. A “conditional” read aloud accommodation applies to the Reading CRCT (where reading passages are read aloud), but there are stricter eligibility requirements and may not be used for 1 st and 2 nd grade students according to Ga. DOE.
Social promotion	The practice of promoting a student from one grade level to the next on the basis of age rather than academic achievement.
Standard deviation	A measure of the variability or dispersion of a distribution of scores that represents the average difference between individual scores and the mean. The more the scores cluster around the mean, the smaller the standard deviation.
Student level data	CRCT erasure analysis data for each individual student for each subject tested (RD, ELA, MA) showing the total number of erasures made on that test, and the number of those erasures that changed from wrong to right.
Stray marks	Pencil markings made on answer sheets that are visible

	outside of the “bubble” or oval area where answer choices are to be marked.
Testing accommodation	A change in a test administration that modifies how a student takes or responds to the assessment. Accommodations are designed to provide equity and serve to level the playing field for students with disabilities and English Language Learners.
Totality of the evidence	Finding or conclusion based on all of the circumstances of a particular case, rather than any one factor.
Unit Test	Test given to measure performance in a specific subject or unit of instruction.
WTR	Wrong To Right = an incorrect answer choice is erased and changed to a correct answer choice on an answer sheet, as detected by erasure analysis using high speed optical scanners.