PSC Exonerates Principal after Extensive CRCT Probe

The principal of a metropolitan Atlanta-DeKalb area elementary school was exonerated by the Professional Standards Commission (PSC) after finding no probable cause in relation to CRCT testing irregularities. The district referred the principal to the Commission due to the high number of wrong-right erasures on the 2009 spring CRCT exams. Based on the erasure analysis, the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement listed the school in the “severe concern” category. Suspicion arose because the principal voluntarily stated that she went into her building during the weekend to prepare for an event. The school was going to be the location for an upcoming bill-signing ceremony through the governor’s office. The school was chosen for its hard work and dedication through a health initiative and was twice the recipient of a national award from former President Bill Clinton and the Robert Wood Foundation. Unfortunately, the test/answer sheets were present in the building during this time of preparation. Aside from the fact that many administrators (and teachers and support staff) routinely go to their schools during the weekend to perform their jobs, GAE’s network attorney demonstrated with overwhelming evidence that the principal was at school making preparations for a bill signing ceremony for Governor Perdue to be held the following Monday. Documentation submitted to the Commission included photographs of the signing ceremony; a statement by a school employee testifying as to the decorating and cleaning activities during the weekend in preparation of the Governor’s visit; copies of receipts from the store where decoration supplies were purchased; a letter from the painter that the principal had let in to school that weekend to paint parts of the building for the Governor’s visit; the painter also stated the principal was planting flowers in the front of school. The evidence clearly and convincingly showed the principal was innocent of any wrongdoing. To its credit, the PSC dismissed the case for lack of probable cause. GAE of course does not condone cheating. We appreciate the PSC’s efforts objectively in review of this matter.