

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



Office of Data, Accountability and Research

September 4, 2015

Jami Dunham
Chief Executive Officer
Paul PCS
Washington, DC

Dear Ms. Dunham,

Please consider this letter as the official notification of final findings for the test integrity investigations for the 2013-2014 District of Columbia Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS) administration. We recognize that the test integrity results from the 2013-2014 school year are being released later than is typical, and note that the findings in this letter are in no way related to the 2014-2015 PARCC assessments and do not reflect any updates to test integrity that were made for the 2014-2015 school year.

Each year, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) reviews the state assessment (DC CAS in 2013-2014) to ensure the validity and reliability of the assessment results. As part of this process, OSSE reviews test security protocols and data to ensure the tests were administered with fidelity. OSSE takes breaches of test security very seriously, as violations of any nature can jeopardize confidence in the accuracy of our assessment results. At the same time, it is important to note that violations are intended to capture a broad range of issues in test administration and do not necessarily indicate wrongdoing or intentional misconduct. We appreciate the opportunity to work in partnership with LEAs to improve test integrity and we look forward to finding ways to better support LEAs in the future in this area.

OSSE identifies classrooms for investigation each year, through a combination of incident reports, statistical analysis for anomalies, and random sampling. OSSE contractor Alvarez and Marsal (A&M) completed comprehensive investigations of the classrooms identified, applying rigorous standardized processes involving site visits, document reviews and one-on-one interviews. Close attention was paid to the testing environment which included directly asking school staff and students about their participation in or knowledge of testing violations in the schools. Findings are then classified as minor, moderate or critical based on the nature of the action. In addition, findings in each category can vary in scope in terms of the number of students and/or classrooms impacted.

OSSE has reviewed the results of the 2013-2014 DC CAS investigations and found Paul PCS Middle School to have the following findings:

Critical: For entire middle school population, student answer documents were reviewed and modified (filling in incomplete bubbles, erasing stray marks) by three staff involved in test administration; and

Minor: Required documentation (test security and non-disclosure agreements for 5 staff members, affidavits for 2 staff members, and 2 incident reports) was missing and/or incomplete.

OSSE maintains the invalidation of middle school student scores for the 2013-2014 administration. At this point, no further action is required from you or your LEA, and OSSE now considers these investigations closed. OSSE appreciates your partnership in this process, and if you have any questions about the findings or the process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Jessica Enos
Director of Assessment
Office of the State Superintendent of Education