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November 2, 2011

Freedom of Information Office
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
ATTN: FOIA Request

Re: State probes ISAT tests article/Southtown Star/October 26, 2011

Gentlemen:

The following information is being sought under the Freedom of Information Act. Kindly furnish me with the test irregularities for the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, an answer to my non-commercial request. Kindly furnish me with the compliant, investigation and discrimination as to alleged test irregularities committed at School District 162 in Park Forest, Illinois, Cook County, for the period from 2005 to 2009, regarding the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, as discussed in the above-referenced newspaper article.

Very sincerely yours,

SCARIANO, HIMES AND PETRARCA, CHTD.



ANTHONY G. SCARIANO

AGS:ksm
Enclosure
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State probes ISAT tests

2008 math results at Park Forest school among those under review

BY ART GOLAB AND ROSALIND ROSSI

Sun-Times Media

The Illinois State Board of Education is looking into whether disciplinary action should be taken because of "test irregularities" at 33 Illinois public schools, including Illinois Elementary School in Park Forest.

Board spokeswoman Mary Fergus wouldn't say if the irregularities, going back as far as 2005, involved cheating.

But she did say that the state board did not count scores from the affected tests toward the schools' overall performance.

Fergus said all the incidents being investigated were self-reported. All the irregularities occurred on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, given each year to elementary and middle school students statewide.

At Illinois School in Matteson District 162, questions arose concerning the math test given to seventh and eighth graders in 2008, according to the state board.

In each of the 33 cases, the state board told

schools the affected tests would not count. Now it is looking more closely to see if cheating occurred — and if discipline is warranted.

The state board got the power in 2009 to discipline teachers and administrators involved in cheating by yanking their educator certificates, but it has not done so yet. The review now under way will include both recent cases and those before 2009.

Besides looking at irregularities reported by the schools, the state board is for the first time also performing a computer analysis of test results to look for patterns indicating cheating.

The analysis will focus on ISAT tests and will look for unusual increases in scores.

It will also try to spot schools or classrooms in which an unusual number of difficult questions were answered correctly and look for atypical patterns in erasure marks, another possible cheating indicator.

Nine of the 33 schools are Chicago Public Schools, and the rest are in districts that serve Skokie, Hanover Park, Forest Park, Aurora, Geneva, Burr Ridge, Naperville and Wauconda.