



**CLARIFICATION STATEMENT – 2009 DC CAS INVESTIGATION
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What was Caveon’s Investigative Process?

Caveon received a list of DC Schools for which OSSE had requested an investigation of their 2009 DC CAS performance. The basis for schools being listed was a very high level of wrong to right erasures, plus high test score gains for various teachers.

Caveon prepared a 25 question interview protocol and went to all the schools that had been identified and interviewed the following individuals:

- Principal**
- Assistant Principal**
- School Test Coordinator**
- Teacher whose class had been flagged**
- Other teachers involved in testing at that school**

If someone was not in the designated role at the time of the 2009 DC CAS, they were not interviewed.

Each person was interviewed separately from others from the school and no DCPS Central Office staff members were present for any school interview.

The complete responses to each question for each educator interviewed were reported to DCPS along with a school summary and an overall review of all the interviews. In no instance did Caveon conclude that cheating had been revealed

by the process. Instead, plausible explanations were provided as to the reason for the high erasure rates.

Caveon had complete freedom to carry out the interviews and review data with strong encouragement to use our best professional judgment and experience to inform our results and conclusions. There was no encouragement to minimize problems or “sugar coat” our results.

What reasons could account for the high levels of erasures and gains?

It is not possible to know with certainty the reason for the high levels of erasures and gains, but these seem to be possible contributing factors:

- A great deal of attention was devoted within the schools on test taking strategies
- Students were strongly encouraged to review their work and to use well-defined strategies to consider alternative answers
- Many teachers employed a test-taking strategy where they instructed their students to complete all questions on the test, check-mark the questions they were unsure about, and then go back and correct the answers where they were not sure. The DC CAS allows students as much time as they need to complete the test. This correction-strategy would result in more erasures than would occur with a test that has time limits.
- Some students, particularly at lower grades may have initially mis-gridded their answer sheets or scannable booklets. When the students discovered their mistakes, erased the misaligned marks, and put their responses in the proper rows, many changes could well be from wrong to right
- More careful alignment of instruction with DCPS objectives would tend to raise scores. Many DC schools have implemented some of the following techniques, that have the potential to raise test scores:
 - data-driven decision making

- formative testing
- after school tutoring
- Saturday school
- new reading and math programs
- data walls, charts, and graphs to track student performance
- re-grouping of students for specialized instruction.

Did Caveon find cheating at any of the schools investigated for their 2009 CAS scores?

Caveon did not find evidence of cheating at any of the schools. For one school, we suggested further follow up by DCPS, but even in that case there was no definitive evidence of cheating.



Signature

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