50+ Ways Schools "Cheat" on Testing:
Manipulating High-Stakes Exam Scores for Political Gain
(compiled from government and media reports by FairTest: National Center for Fair & Open Testing)

Pre-Testing

Fail to store test materials securely
Encourage teachers to view upcoming test forms before they are administered
Teach to the test by ignoring subjects not on exam
Drill students on actual test items
Share test items on internet before administration
Practice on copies of previously administered "secure" tests
Administer "practice" version(s) or real test to pepare selected students
Exclude likely low-scorers from enrolling in school
Hold-back low scorers from tested grade
"Leap-frog" promote some students over tested grade
Transfer likely low-scoring students to charter schools with no required tests
Push likely low scorers out of school or enroll them in GED programs
Falsify student identification numbers so low scorers are not assigned to correct demographic group
Urge low-scoring students to be absent on test day
Leave test materials out so students can see them before exam
Set up classroom desks and chairs to facilitate answer copying

During Testing

Let high-scorers take tests for others
Overlook "cheat sheets" students bring into classroom
Post hints (e.g. formulas, lists, etc) on walls or whiteboard
Write answers on black/white board, then erase before supervisor arrives
Allow students to look up information on web with electronic devices
Overlook calculator use where prohibited
Encourage reliance on special calculator programs that can answer questions
Ignore test-takers copying or sharing answers with each other
Permit students to go to rest room in groups
Shout-out correct answers
Use thumbs-up/thumbs down signals to indicate right and wrong responses
Tell students to "double check" erroneous responses
Pass out notes with correct answers
Read questions aloud to students not allowed this accommodation
Urge students who have completed sections to work on others
Allow class extra time to complete test
Reclassify native English speakers as English Language Learners to give them additional time
Leave classroom unattended during test
Warn staff if test security monitors are in school
Refuse to allow test security personnel access to testing rooms
Cover doors and windows of testing rooms to prevent monitoring
Give unnecessary accommodations to students without disabilities

<u>Post-Testing</u>

Allow students to "make up" portions of the exam they failed to complete

Invite staff to "clean up" answer sheets before transmittal to scoring company

Permit teachers to score own students' tests

Fill in answers on items left blank

Rescore borderline exams to "find points" on constructed response items

Erase erroneous responses and insert correct ones

Provide false demographic information for test-takers to assign them to wrong categories for AYP

Fail to store completed answer sheets securely

Destroy answer sheets from low-scoring students

Report low-scorers as having been absent on testing day

Fraudulently withdraw likely low-scorers from school

Share content with educators/students who have not yet taken the test via email, text, Facebook or Twitter

Fail to perform data forensics on unusual score gains

Ignore "flagged" results from erasure analysis

Refuse to interview personnel with potential knowledge of improper practices

Threaten discipline against testing impropriety whistleblowers

Fire staff who persist in raising questions

Fabricate test security documentation for state education department investigators

Lie to law enforcement personnel

Bob Schaeffer 07/07/14