



NCLB inspired cheating, says education expert
Bob Kellogg - OneNewsNow - 7/11/2011 4:40:00

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A scandal within the Atlanta Public Schools has surfaced, revealing teachers and administrators cheating and manipulating state standardized tests to enhance the perception of student performance.

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Neal McCluskey, associate director of the [Cato Institute](#), suspects the district was likely trying to avoid being sanctioned under the No Child Left Behind Act, which he thinks inspires cheating across the board.

"What many states did, what maybe most states did, was they just set really low standards to begin with and then told everybody, all parents, 'Don't worry; your kids are proficient,'" he infers. "So this is kind of just the most high-profile and illegal form of cheating we've seen."

The Atlanta schools were recently commended for posting double-digit gains in reading. But McCluskey points out that most schools, though doing nothing illegal, are finding other ways to get around the system.

"It is just the tip of the iceberg when we want to talk about the ways that schools have gotten around educating kids and assessing honestly how well kids are performing and how well the schools are teaching them," he laments.

An investigation into the scandal started when the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* published a newspaper report on the improbability of the proficiency gains released by the school.