

Regents Exam Grades Were Changed, Teachers at S.I. School Say

By ELISSA GOOTMAN

The city's Department of Education is investigating accusations that administrators at a Staten Island high school improperly changed, or directed teachers to change, grades on Regents exams, officials said yesterday.

Officials at the United Federation of Teachers said that two weeks ago, 17 science teachers at the school, Susan E. Wagner High School, came forward to tell union representatives of their suspicions.

According to a person familiar with the teachers' accounts, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the inquiry is continuing, the teachers said that toward the end of the 2005-6 school year, some grades were changed by an assistant principal who had taken the exams home, and that others were changed by untenured teachers at the direction of administrators. It was unclear yesterday why the teachers waited to make the accusations.

The school's principal, Gary M. Giordano, did not return a telephone message left at his office yesterday afternoon. A spokesman for the prin-

cipals' union declined to comment.

Margie Feinberg, a spokeswoman for the Education Department, said the department's Office of Special Investigations and its Division of Assessment and Accountability were looking into "scoring irregularities" on English, social studies and science exams given at Wagner in June.

Tom Dunn, a spokesman for the State Education Department, said the state would also investigate.

This is not the first time that high school teachers have come forward to complain of grade-tampering on Regents exams, which are required for graduation. In May 2005, teachers at John F. Kennedy High School in

the Bronx said school administrators had exceeded their authority by improperly changing 16 students' grades to passing from failing on the English Regents exam that January. The city found that the administrators had the authority to change the grades, but is still examining whether the changes were warranted.