

Watson Chapel School District

Overview of Findings

Background Information

During the week of September 1, 2023, the Standards and Systems Support Unit received two complaints from individuals indicating that students at Watson Chapel High School did not have class schedules. On September 5, 2023, the Department called the superintendent of the Watson Chapel Public School District to provide notification of the complaint and informed him that DESE would be making a site visit. The Superintendent stated that he was aware of the situation and that staff were currently working to correct student schedules.

On September 7th, 2023, a team from Public School Accountability (PSA) made a site visit to Watson Chapel High School and was able to confirm that many student schedules were still incorrect and that intensive support was needed to address the scheduling errors promptly. A team from DESE and Office of Coordinated Support and Service (OCSS) were on-site Friday, September 8 and Monday, September 11, 2023, to assist with correcting schedules and conducting scheduling audits.

Observations and Monitoring

- The team from WC confirmed that schedules were not correct for a large population of the students at the high school.
- The district had been working to create a new master schedule, but was having difficulty.
- Transcripts were not previously reviewed for 10th grade and many of the students were in previously completed courses or not in courses needed for graduation.
- The superintendent and assistant superintendent stated they were aware of the lack of correct schedules on August 9, 2023.
- It was found that seniors were scheduled for multiple study halls and allowed to leave campus for the day while still being counted present.
- It was also discovered that twenty-three (23) seniors from the 2022-2023 school year did not meet graduation requirements yet were included as graduates for the four (4) year cohort.

Findings

Finding 1 Standard 2-B.2

Each public school shall maintain accurate student attendance records in a format prescribed by the Division. (D/P)

Finding Standard 1-C.2

Each public school district shall adopt graduation requirements in accordance with the laws of the State of Arkansas and the rules of the Division and include the graduation requirements in the student handbook (D/P)

Finding Standard 1-C.2.1

Each public school district shall maintain accurate student records including graduation requirements (D/P)