

Report: FBI Investigating D.C. Public Schools

By Corey Mitchell on February 2, 2018 1:27 PM

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and D.C. Office of the Inspector General [are investigating the District of Columbia public schools](#), The Washington Post reports.

Citing sources in D.C. government, the newspaper reports that the probe is focused on high school graduation practices in the district, which have come under scrutiny amid reports and investigations that have drawn national attention to schools in the nation's capital.

A report released earlier this week by the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent found that roughly one in three students who graduated from the city's high schools in 2017 were awarded those diplomas in error because they [missed too many classes or improperly took makeup classes](#).

The city commissioned the study in the wake of an [investigation by Washington public radio station WAMU](#), showing that Ballou High School, a long-troubled school in the district, awarded diplomas to many students last year despite the fact that they were chronically absent from class.

Amid the ongoing probe, the district's leadership has reassigned Ballou High's principal. A Ballou assistant principal and D.C.'s chief of secondary schools have been placed on administrative leave.

The report from the Office of the State Superintendent also found that teachers felt pressure from school administrators to find ways to graduate students, even those who did not come close to meeting the requirements to

earn a diploma.

While the district has vowed to step up monitoring of student graduation requirements in, it does remain unclear whether there was a deliberate effort by high-ranking school leaders to manipulate the district's graduation numbers.

Before the WAMU story shed light on the practices at Ballou, the district touted its record-high graduation rate as proof that education reforms in the system were yielding benefits. It's just the latest in a series of revelations that have called district practices into questions.

In the past year, the district has also come under fire for misrepresenting student suspension rates and faced questions about the former schools' chancellor skirting the school lottery system to help well-connected parents land their children spots in coveted city schools.

Related Links

[Absenteeism, Abuse of Credit Recovery Drive Bogus Graduations in D.C.](#)

[What Are the Top Districts for Supporting and Retaining Great Teachers?](#)

[Oakland Superintendent Antwan Wilson Tapped to Lead D.C. Schools](#)

[Former District of Columbia Chancellor Censured Over Donations](#)