

Commissioner Randy Watson



Dr. Randy Watson was appointed Kansas Commissioner of Education by the Kansas State Board of Education in November 2014, while serving as Superintendent of McPherson USD 418. Since then, he has become widely recognized for his visionary leadership and his commitment to reimagining education to ensure student success both in school and beyond graduation.

Under Dr. Watson's leadership, Kansas has emerged as a national leader in student-focused learning. He has championed initiatives that while targeting traditional academics, also noting the importance of employability skills and real-world readiness — values identified by Kansans as critical for long-term student success. His work has helped shape the Kansas State Board of Education's bold vision for education in the 21st century, earning him national recognition.

A lifelong Kansan, Dr. Watson grew up in Coffeyville and is a proud graduate of Kansas State University, where he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as a doctorate in secondary administration. His distinguished career in education spans nearly every role — from teacher and coach to principal, superintendent, and part-time university faculty — always focused on improving outcomes for Kansas students.

Among his numerous honors, Dr. Watson was named Kansas Superintendent of the Year in 2015 and received the Outstanding Service Award from the United School Administrators of Kansas in 2020.

As Commissioner, Dr. Watson has made it a priority to stay connected to educators and students across the state. He has personally visited all 286 Kansas school districts multiple times and continues to engage directly with school communities throughout the year, reinforcing his belief that strong relationships and local voices are at the heart of effective education.

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.