



Auburn Public Schools

Tiered Focused Monitoring Report

Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan

**For Group B Universal Standards
Tier Level 2**

**Date of Onsite Visit: January 31, 2022
Date of Final Report: April 21, 2022**



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**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING REPORT**

Auburn Public Schools

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MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION TIERED FOCUS MONITORING REPORT INTRODUCTION

During the 2021-2022 school year, Auburn Public Schools participated in a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review (TFM) conducted by the Department's Office of Public School Monitoring (PSM). The purpose of the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review is to monitor compliance with regulatory requirements focusing on special education and civil rights.

Each school district, charter school, vocational school, and virtual school undergoes a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review every three years. The statewide Tiered Focused Monitoring cycle is posted at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/6yrcycle.html>.

Regularly monitored standards are divided into two groups, known as Group A Universal Standards and Group B Universal Standards. Districts and schools are monitored on an alternate set of Universal Standards every three years.

Group A Universal Standards address:

- Student identification
- IEP development
- Programming and support services
- Equal opportunity

Group B Universal Standards address:

- Licensure and professional development
- Parent/student/community engagement
- Facilities and classroom observations
- Oversight
- Time and learning
- Equal access

The Department has also reserved a specific set of criteria, collectively known as Targeted Standards, employed if LEA or school level risk assessment data indicate there is a potential issue; the identified Targeted Standards are assessed in addition to the Universal Standards.

Universal Standards and Targeted Standards are aligned with the following regulations:

Special Education (SE)

- Selected requirements from the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-2004); the federal regulations promulgated under that Act at 34 CFR Part 300; M.G.L. c. 71B, and the Massachusetts Board of Education's Special Education regulations (603 CMR 28.00), as amended effective March 1, 2007.

Civil Rights Methods of Administration and Other General Education Requirements (CR)

- Selected federal civil rights requirements, including requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, together

with selected state requirements under M.G.L. c. 76, Section 5 as amended by Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011 and M.G.L. c. 269 §§ 17 through 19.

- Selected requirements from the Massachusetts Board of Education’s Physical Restraint regulations (603 CMR 46.00).
- Selected requirements from the Massachusetts Board of Education’s Student Learning Time regulations (603 CMR 27.00).
- Various requirements under other federal and state laws.

PSM Team:

Depending upon the size of a school district and the number of special education programs to be reviewed, a team of one to four Department staff members conducts onsite activities over one to five days in a school district or charter school.

Tier Level:

The level of monitoring varies based on tier designation, aligning supports to the level of need and ensuring that districts and schools with greater needs receive appropriate supports to make sustained improvements.

Tier	Title	Description	Level of Risk
1	Self-Directed Improvement	Data points indicate no concern on compliance and student outcomes.	Meets requirements
2	Directed Improvement	No demonstrated risk in areas with close link to student outcomes.	Low
3	Corrective Action	Areas of concern include both compliance and student outcomes.	Moderate
4	Cross-unit Support and Corrective Action	Areas of concern have a profound effect on student outcomes and ongoing compliance.	High

For the 2021-2022 school year, the tier assignments are based on:

- Five-year cohort graduation rate for students with disabilities
- Public School Monitoring compliance data from the previous review
- Problem Resolution System data, specifically findings of noncompliance
- Special education State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Reports (SPP/APR) compliance Indicator data for Indicators 11, 12, and 13 (Group A only)
 - Indicator 11: Child Find
 - Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition
 - Indicator 13: Secondary Transition
- Special education SPP/APR performance Indicator data for Indicators 5 & 6
 - Indicator 5: Education Environments (6-21)
 - Indicator 6: Preschool Environments
- Significant Disproportionality data 2019-2020 & 2020-2021

Tiering adjustments may be made for districts engaged in work with the Department's Statewide System of Support and have schools identified as requiring assistance and intervention. Tiering assignments may also be adjusted for schools and districts unable to remedy noncompliance within one year of the previous TFM review, as well as for charter schools requiring additional oversight based on conditions of their charter.

Report: For Tier 1 & 2 Tiered Focused Monitoring Reviews

Following the onsite visit, the PSM team holds an informal exit meeting to summarize the review for the superintendent or charter school leader. Within approximately 20 business days of the onsite visit, the chairperson forwards the TFM Feedback Summary that includes findings from the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review to the superintendent or charter school leader.

As part of the reporting process, all districts/charter schools in Tiers 1 and 2, then develop a Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan (CIMP) for any criteria receiving a rating of "Partially Implemented," "Not Implemented," and "Implementation in Progress." The CIMP is due to the Department within 20 business days after the issuance of the Feedback Summary and is subject to the Department's review and approval.

The CIMP outlines an action plan, identifies the success metric, describes the measurement mechanism and provides a completion timeframe to bring those areas into compliance with the controlling statute or regulation. Department staff provide support and assistance to districts and charter schools on the development of a CIMP.

Once the CIMP is approved, it is issued as the Final Report.

Department staff also provide ongoing technical assistance as the school or district is implementing the approved CIMP or CAP. **School districts and charter schools must demonstrate effective resolution of noncompliance identified by the Department as soon as possible but in no case later than one year from the issuance of the Department's Feedback Summary.**

For more information regarding the TFM Review Process, including district and parent resources, please visit < <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/default.html> >.

TIERED FOCUSED MONITORING FINAL REPORT

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The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review at Auburn Public Schools during the week of January 31, 2022, to evaluate the implementation of Group B Universal Standards in the program areas of special education, civil rights, and other related general education requirements. The team appreciated the opportunity to interview staff and parents, to observe classroom facilities, and to review the programs underway in the district.

In preparing this report, the team reviewed extensive written documentation regarding the operation of the district's programs, together with information gathered by means of the following Department program review methods:

Self-Assessment Phase:

- District review of special education and civil rights documentation for required elements including document uploads.
- Upon completion of the self-assessment, the district submitted the data to the Department for review.

On-site Verification Phase:

- Interviews of administrative, instructional, and support staff consistent with those criteria selected for onsite verification.
- Interview of a parent advisory council (PAC) representative.
- Review of additional documents for special education and civil rights.
- Surveys of parents of students in special education: Parents of students in special education were sent a survey that solicited information regarding their experiences with the district's implementation of special education programs, related services, and procedural requirements.
- Observations of classrooms and other facilities: The onsite team visited a sample of classrooms and other school facilities used in the delivery of programs and services to determine general levels of compliance with program requirements.

The Tiered Focused Monitoring Report includes those criteria that were found by the team to be implemented in a "Commendable" manner, as well as criteria receiving a rating of "Partially Implemented," "Not Implemented," and "Implementation in Progress." (Refer to the "Definition of Compliance Ratings" section of the report.) The Tiered Focused Monitoring Reports do not include criteria receiving a rating of "Implemented" or "Not Applicable." This will allow the district/school and the Department to focus their efforts on those areas requiring corrective action. Districts are expected to incorporate the corrective actions into their district and school improvement plans, including their professional development plans.

DEFINITION OF COMPLIANCE RATINGS

Commendable	Any requirement or aspect of a requirement implemented in an exemplary manner significantly beyond the requirements of law or regulation.
Implemented	The requirement is substantially met in all important aspects.
Implementation in Progress	This rating is used for criteria containing new or updated legal requirements; the district has implemented any old requirements contained in the criterion and is training staff or beginning to implement the new requirements in such a way that the onsite team anticipates that the new requirements will be implemented by the end of the school year.
Partially Implemented	The requirement, in one or several important aspects, is not entirely met.
Not Implemented	The requirement is totally or substantially not met.
Not Applicable	The requirement does not apply to the school district or charter school.

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SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE CRITERIA RATINGS

	Universal Standards Special Education	Universal Standards Civil Rights and Other General Education Requirements
IMPLEMENTED	SE 15, SE 32, SE 35, SE 36, SE 50, SE 51, SE 52, SE 52A, SE 54, SE 55, SE 56	CR 3, CR 7, CR 7A, CR 7B, CR 7C, CR 8, CR 10A, CR 10C, CR 12A, CR 20, CR 21, CR 22, CR 23, CR 24, CR 25
PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED		CR 10B, CR 16, CR 17A
NOT IMPLEMENTED	None	
NOT APPLICABLE	None	

The full list of criteria and information regarding the requirements can be found in Appendix B of the Tiered Focused Monitoring Toolkit available at < <https://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/resources/tfm-toolkit.docx> >.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN

Improvement Area 1
Criterion: CR 10B - Bullying Intervention and Prevention
Rating: Partially Implemented
Description of Current Issue: Document review and interviews indicated that the district's staff conduct policy does not contain the relevant sections of the Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan, including the responsibilities of staff when responding to instances of bullying and addressing the bullying of students by a school staff member. Additionally, the student handbooks for Auburn Integrated Preschool, Swanson Intermediate School, Auburn Middle School, and Auburn High School do not explicitly address the bullying of students by members of the school staff.
LEA Outcome: The district will update the staff conduct policy so that it contains the relevant sections of the Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan, including the responsibilities of staff when responding to instances of bullying and the bullying of students by a school staff member. The updated policy will be shared with all staff at the start of each school year and with all new staff members upon their employment with the Auburn Public Schools. The district will also revise the student handbooks for Auburn Integrated Preschool, Swanson Intermediate School, Auburn Middle School, and Auburn High School to ensure they explicitly address the bullying of students by members of the school staff.
<p>Action Plan: By June 10, 2022, the district will submit updated staff conduct policy and student handbooks that include the appropriate sections of the Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan.</p> <p>By September 9, 2022, the district will submit evidence of school committee approval of the staff conduct policy.</p> <p>By September 9, 2022, the district will submit evidence of training on the updated staff conduct policy and make the policy available to school staff. Additionally, the district will submit evidence of dissemination of the updated student handbooks to students and families.</p>
<p>Success Metric: By September 2022 and beyond, the staff conduct policy and all student handbooks will contain the relevant sections of the Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan. The staff conduct policy will include sections relating to the responsibilities of faculty and staff and the bullying of students by a school staff member. All the student handbooks will explicitly address the bullying of students by members of the school staff.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated staff conduct policy • Updated student handbooks • Minutes of school committee meeting documenting approval of updated staff conduct policy • Training agenda and attendance • Evidence of dissemination of the staff and school handbooks
Measurement Mechanism: Annually, the Civil Rights Coordinator will review the staff conduct policy and school handbooks to ensure consistency with the regulations. Additionally, the district will provide parents, guardians, and staff annual written notice of the Plan.
Completion Timeframe: 09/09/2022

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Improvement Area 2
Criterion: CR 16 - Notice to students 16 or over leaving school without a high school diploma, certificate of attainment, or certificate of completion
Rating: Partially Implemented
Description of Current Issue: Document review and staff interviews indicated that the district does not currently send annual notice to students who have left school without earning their competency determination to inform them of the availability of publicly funded post-secondary school academic support programs and to encourage them to participate in such programs.
LEA Outcome: The district will always send annual notice to students who have left school without earning their competency determination to inform them of the availability of publicly funded post-secondary school academic support programs and to encourage them to participate in such programs.
<p>Action Plan: By June 10, 2022, the district will submit outreach procedures for students who have left school without earning their competency determination and develop an internal monitoring system to ensure implementation. The district will also provide a sample annual notice that includes all required information.</p> <p>By June 10, 2022, the district will submit evidence of training of staff responsible for implementing outreach procedures.</p> <p>By December 9, 2022, the district will submit evidence of an internal review of applicable student records to ensure that the notices were sent. The district will conduct a root cause analysis and implement appropriate corrective actions for any identified noncompliance.</p>
<p>Success Metric: By December 2022 and beyond, the district will ensure that procedures for outreach to students who left school without earning their competency determination are implemented. The district will also ensure that training is provided to the staff responsible for implementing outreach procedures.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach procedures • Internal monitoring system • Annual notice • Attendance sheets, agendas, and training materials • Results of internal monitoring review, root cause analysis, and corrective action steps, as appropriate.
Measurement Mechanism: Continuing after the completion deadline, the Assistant Superintendent will implement the internal monitoring system to ensure that annual notice is sent to students who leave school without earning their competency determination. All relevant staff will be provided with training on the outreach procedures at least annually.
Completion Timeframe: 12/09/2022

Improvement Area 3

Criterion: CR 17A - Use of physical restraint on any student enrolled in a publicly-funded education program

Rating: Partially Implemented

Description of Current Issue: Document review and staff interviews indicated that the district has not developed written restraint prevention and behavior support procedures consistent with 603 CMR 46.00. Specifically, the district's procedures do not include methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior and suicide; methods for engaging parents and youth in discussions about restraint prevention and use; a description and explanation of the program's alternatives to physical restraint; and procedures for receiving and investigating complaints.

LEA Outcome: The district's written restraint prevention and behavior support procedures will include methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide; methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure; a description of the program's alternatives to physical restraint and method of physical restraint in emergency situations; and a procedure for receiving and investigating complaints regarding restraint practices as required by 603 CMR 46.04. All staff will be trained annually on physical restraint prevention, behavioral supports, and reporting requirements.

Action Plan: By June 10, 2022, the district will submit the revised physical restraint and behavior support procedures that include all required elements.

By September 9, 2022, the district will submit evidence that all staff have received training on the revised physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures. Additionally, the district will submit evidence of dissemination of the revised procedures to members of the school community.

Success Metric: By September 2022 and beyond, the district's restraint prevention and behavior support procedures will be consistent with 603 CMR 46.00. Additionally, all district staff will be trained annually on the physical restraint prevention and behavior support procedures.

Evidence:

- Revised restraint prevention and behavior support procedures
- Evidence of dissemination of the revised procedures to the school community
- Attendance sheets, agendas, and training materials

Measurement Mechanism: Continuing after the completion deadline, the Assistant Superintendent will ensure that the restraint prevention and behavior support procedures are reviewed and updated annually for consistency with the current regulations. The Assistant Superintendent will also ensure that all mandated training materials are updated, and all staff are trained annually on the most current restraint regulations.

Completion Timeframe: 09/09/2022