



Avon Public Schools

Tiered Focused Monitoring Report

Continuous Improvement and Monitoring Plan

**For Group B Universal Standards
Tier Level 1**

Dates of Onsite Visit: March 1, 2023

Date of Final Report: June 2, 2023

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

Avon Public Schools

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

During the 2022-2023 school year, Avon 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 September 20, 2022.

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.

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

For the 2022-2023 school year, the tier assignments are based on:

- Annual drop-out rate for students with disabilities
- 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 SPP/APR compliance Indicator data for Indicators 4B, 9 & 10
 - Indicator 4B: Significant discrepancy by race or ethnicity in removal of students with IEPs greater than 10 days
 - Indicator 9: Overall disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups identified as eligible for special education
 - Indicator 10: Disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups within specific disability categories
- Special education SPP/APR performance Indicator data for Indicators 5 & 6
 - Indicator 5: Education Environments (6-21)
 - Indicator 6: Preschool Environments
- Significant Disproportionality data 2021-2022 & 2022-2023

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. **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 for Avon Public Schools

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conducted a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review in Avon Public Schools during the week of February 27, 2023, 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.
- Interviews of parent advisory council (PAC) representatives.
- 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.) 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.

Avon Public Schools

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 54	CR 3, CR 7, CR 7A, CR 7B, CR 7C, CR 8, CR 10B, CR 10C, CR 12A, CR 16, CR 21, CR 20, CR 22, CR 23, CR 25
PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED	SE 55, SE 56	CR 10A, CR 17A, CR 24
NOT IMPLEMENTED	None	
NOT APPLICABLE	SE 52A	

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: SE 55 - Special education facilities and classrooms
Rating: Partially Implemented
<p>Description of Current Issue: Facilities observation and staff interviews indicated that classrooms provided for eligible students are not always at least equal in all physical respects to the average standards of general education classrooms. Specifically, the Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy services at Butler Elementary School are provided on a stage in the cafeteria that is only accessible by a small staircase.</p> <p>In addition, special education pull-out services at Butler Elementary School are provided in a classroom that is shared with Title 1 Reading services and two desk/office spaces for electives teachers. The different sections of the shared space are separated only by bookshelves, creating increased auditory and visual distractions when used concurrently.</p>
<p>LEA Outcome: All special education instructional spaces in Avon Public Schools will be equal in all physical respects to the average standards of general education classrooms. Specifically, the district will ensure that occupational therapy, physical therapy, and special education pull-out services at Butler Elementary School are provided in easily accessible locations that are comparable to spaces provided to general education students. Furthermore, shared spaces will not be used concurrently by multiple groups of students.</p>
<p>Action Plan: By June 28, 2023, the district will provide proposed instructional space locations and schedules for the 2023-2024 school year.</p> <p>By September 26, 2023, a representative of the Department will conduct an onsite verification visit to confirm the new locations of the physical therapy, occupational therapy, and special education pull-out services at Butler Elementary school.</p>
<p>Success Metric: By September 2023 and beyond, the district will ensure that all special education facilities and classrooms at Butler Elementary School are equal in physical respects to the average standards of the general education classrooms.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated 2023-2024 floor plan • Updated 2023-2024 service schedule Onsite verification visit
<p>Measurement Mechanism: Every trimester, the administrative team will walk through all special education facilities and classrooms to ensure spaces are equal in all physical respects to the average standards of the general education classrooms. Furthermore, the administrative team will review schedules to ensure that shared spaces are not used concurrently by multiple groups of students.</p>
Completion Timeframe: 09/26/2023

Improvement Area 2
Criterion: SE 56 - Special education programs and services are evaluated
Rating: Partially Implemented
Description of Current Issue: A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that the district does not regularly evaluate its special education programs and services.
LEA Outcome: Avon Public Schools will regularly evaluate its special education programs and services to identify areas of strength and growth.
<p>Action Plan: By June 28, 2023, district leadership will develop procedures for ensuring that special education programs and services are regularly evaluated.</p> <p>By September 26, 2023, district leadership, in cooperation with the SEPAC, will identify a focus area for the evaluation and create a plan for conducting the 2023-2024 special education program evaluation.</p> <p>By January 31, 2024, district leadership, in cooperation with the SEPAC, will complete the evaluation and share the findings with district staff and other stakeholders, along with an action plan to address any identified areas of growth.</p>
<p>Success Metric: By January 2024 and beyond, the district will ensure that all special education programs and services are regularly evaluated.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District procedures for special education program evaluation 2023-2024 special education program evaluation summary that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Description of stakeholder engagement ○ Findings, recommendations, and proposed action plan • Evidence of dissemination to stakeholders
Measurement Mechanism: The district will ensure that special education services and programs are evaluated every two years and evaluation reports, findings, and proposed changes to programming and services are disseminated to all stakeholders.
Completion Timeframe: 01/31/2024

Improvement Area 3
Criterion: CR 10A - Student handbooks and codes of conduct
Rating: Partially Implemented
Description of Current Issue: A review of documents indicated that while the district handbooks state that the district will comply with the appropriate discipline procedures for students with disabilities, the handbooks do not contain a description of the procedures.
LEA Outcome: All Avon Public Schools' handbooks will contain the appropriate discipline procedures for students with disabilities.
<p>Action Plan: By September 26, 2023, the district will update all handbooks to include a description of the discipline procedures for students with disabilities.</p> <p>By September 26, 2023, the district will disseminate the updated handbooks to the school community and post digital copies on the district website.</p>
<p>Success Metric: By September 2023 and beyond, all district handbooks will contain a description of the discipline procedures for students with disabilities.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated handbooks • Link to website
Measurement Mechanism: The district will annually review all handbooks prior to the start of each school year to ensure compliance with the regulations, including discipline regulations. The handbooks will be updated, as necessary, to address any inconsistencies with the regulations.
Completion Timeframe: 09/26/2023

Improvement Area 4

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

Rating: Partially Implemented

Description of Current Issue: A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that the district's physical restraint policy and procedures are inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00. Specifically, the district's written physical restraint procedures do not include the following:

- Methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide;
- Methods for engaging parents and youth in discussions about restraint prevention;
- A procedure for receiving and investigating complaints; and
- A procedure for conducting periodic review of data and documentation on the program's use of restraint.

In addition, document review indicated that the district's restraint reporting procedures include the following guidance that is inconsistent with regulations:

- Allowing parental consent to waive the requirement to notify parents of restraints that do not result in serious injury and are not considered an extended restraint;
- Reporting only those restraints that last more than five minutes or result in an injury; and
- Including restraints as part of a student's IEP or intervention plan.

LEA Outcome: Avon Public Schools' physical restraint policy and procedures, including reporting procedures, will be consistent with 603 CMR 46.00.

Action Plan: By June 28, 2023, the district will update the physical restraint policy and procedures to include all requirements and address the identified inconsistencies.

By September 26, 2023, the district will update all policy manuals and handbooks with the revised physical restraint policy and procedures and notify the school community of the updates. Additionally, the district will conduct training for district staff and administrators on the revised policy and procedures.

Success Metric: By September 2023 and beyond, the district's physical restraint policy and procedures will be consistent with 603 CMR 46.00.

Evidence:

- Updated physical restraint policy and procedures
- Evidence of dissemination to the school community
- Training materials, agenda, and attendance

Measurement Mechanism: The district will annually review district policies and procedures, including those for physical restraint, for consistency with the current regulations prior to the start of each school year. The district will notify the school community of any changes. Furthermore, the district will conduct staff training within the first month of each school year and, for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment.

Completion Timeframe: 09/26/2023

Improvement Area 5
Criterion: CR 24 - Curriculum review
Rating: Partially Implemented
Description of Current Issue: A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that district curriculum coordinators at each building review educational materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations, lacking intellectual merit, on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation. However, the district does not ensure that individual teachers review educational materials and use appropriate activities, discussions, and/or supplementary materials to provide balance and context for any stereotypes depicted in such materials.
LEA Outcome: Avon Public Schools will ensure that individual teachers review all educational materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations, lacking intellectual merit, on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation. Furthermore, teachers will use appropriate activities, discussions, and/or supplementary materials to provide balance and context for any stereotypes depicted in such materials.
<p>Action Plan: By September 26, 2023, a representative of the Department will conduct a training for district leadership addressing the requirements of educational material review. District leadership will develop and/or identify appropriate procedures and tools to support educational material review and the provision of balance and context.</p> <p>By October 31, 2023, the district will provide training to all individual teachers and other relevant staff on the procedures and tools.</p> <p>By January 31, 2024, the district will conduct internal monitoring to determine whether all individual teachers are consistently implementing the district's curriculum review procedures for bias. For any identified noncompliance, the district will submit a root cause analysis and a corrective action plan.</p>
<p>Success Metric: By January 2024 and beyond, all teachers in the district will review curriculum materials for bias and stereotyping and provide balance and context for any identified biases using appropriate activities, discussions, and/or supplementary materials.</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District curriculum review procedures and tools • Training materials, agenda, and attendance • Data analysis from the internal monitoring activity • Root cause analysis and action plans, if applicable
Measurement Mechanism: The district will conduct annual training for all teachers and relevant staff on the district's curriculum review procedures. The district will also conduct quarterly internal monitoring for compliance with curriculum review requirements and provide additional training and/or coaching to address any identified noncompliance.
Completion Timeframe: 01/31/2024