

Attachment 1: Summary of Proposed Changes to 603 CMR 2.00

Summary of Proposed Changes to 603 CMR 2.00: Accountability & Assistance for School Districts and Schools

Note: *Changes recommended by ESE based on input during the public comment period have not necessitated any changes to this summary, first provided to the Board in April, except for the elimination of the term “turnaround plan” to describe the improvement plans of Gill-Montague, et al. (to avoid confusion).*

Why amend these regulations?

- Levels 1-3: Alignment with approved ESEA flexibility waiver
- Levels 4-5: Alignment with current practice

What changes have we proposed?

A. Levels 1 & 2 (see 2.04(1))

- References to NCLB accountability status & AYP now removed
- Placement in and movement between Levels 1 & 2 now based on performance of students in aggregate and subgroups
- Regulations now indicate ESE will publish guidance regarding specific rules for placement in and movement between Levels 1 and 2

B. Level 3 (see 2.04(2))

- Regulations now allow Level 3 identification based on low performance of individual subgroups, as well as low performance in the aggregate.
- Regulations now indicate ESE will publish guidance regarding specific rules for placement in Level 3.

C. Level 4: Placement

- All districts with one or more Level 4 schools now automatically placed in Level 4. See 2.05(1)(a).
- Under 2.05(1)(b), the Board may place a district in Level 4 if it has serious deficiencies relating to one or more district standards that are likely if they are not addressed effectively and in a timely manner to have a substantial negative effect on student performance in the district, putting the district at risk of being placed in Level 5.
 - No longer need to be in the bottom 10% of districts to be placed in Level 4, but still need to be at risk of falling into the bottom 10% and being placed in Level 5.
 - Serious deficiencies may now be shown by a monitoring report or follow-up review in addition to a district review

D. Level 4: Improvement Planning

Attachment 1: Summary of Proposed Changes to 603 CMR 2.00

- For districts placed in Level 4 for serious deficiencies under 2.05(1)(b), regulations now require “Level 4 District Plans” for approval by the Department, rather than requiring revisions to the DIP. See especially 2.05(8)(b),(c), and (d).
- Regulations now give the Department discretion to require a Level 4 District Plan for any district with a Level 4 school (whether or not it has been found to have serious deficiencies, etc.) “in order to aid in turning around its Level 4 school or schools.” 2.05(8)(b); see also 2.05(8)(c) and (d).
- If the Department has not required it to develop a Level 4 District Plan, though, a district that is in Level 4 only because of having a Level 4 school fulfills the requirement for district improvement planning by making sure that the turnaround plans for its L4 schools include provisions for improvement of district systems for school support and intervention (in accordance with the first CSE in 2.03(4)(b)(1)). See 2.05(8)(a).

E. Level 4: Removal

- A district placed in Level 4 because it has one or more schools in Level 4 is automatically removed from Level 4 when it no longer has any Level 4 schools, unless it has a Level 4 district plan for which the commissioner has not yet made the determination described in the next bullet. See 2.05(12)(a).
- A Level 4 district with a Level 4 District Plan is removed from Level 4 by the commissioner when he has determined that it has satisfactorily achieved the goals and benchmarks in its Level 4 District Plan, and that it has the capacity to continue making progress on its own. The **exception** to this is that if it still has any Level 4 schools, the district remains in Level 4. See 2.05(12)(b).

F. Level 4: Gill-Montague, et al.

Gill-Montague, Holyoke, Randolph, and Southbridge are now covered by the regulations, and will remain in Level 4 until they have no schools in Level 4 and the commissioner determines that they have satisfactorily achieved the goals and benchmarks in their current plans for improvement (which serve as their Level 4 District Plans¹) and have the capacity to continue making progress on their own. The commissioner rather than the Board will make this determination. See 2.05(1)(d) and 2.05(12)(b).

G. Level 5: Turnaround plans for Level 5 districts

- Regulations now require the focus of Level 5 district turnaround plans to include district systems for school support and intervention. See 2.06(7.)
- Regulations now require a new turnaround plan for any Level 4 or 5 school in the district whose turnaround plan the district’s receiver deems inadequate. See 2.06(7).

¹ See definition of Level 4 District Plan in 2.02.