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| ESE Logo  **Tiered Focused Monitoring Report**  **for Group A Universal Standards**  **Special Education and Civil Rights**  **District: Watertown Public Schools**  **Onsite Dates: May 14 & 15, 2019**  **Tier Level: 1**  State Seal of Massachusetts |

During the 2018-2019 school year, Watertown Public Schools participated in a Tiered Focused Monitoring Review conducted by the Department’s Office of Public School Monitoring. The purpose of the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review is to monitor compliance with regulatory requirements focusing on special education and civil rights.

Districts and charter schools are reviewed every three years through Tiered Focused Monitoring. This review process emphasizes elements most tied to student outcomes, and alternates the focus of each review on either Group A Universal Standards or Group B Universal Standards.

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

In addition, the Department has reserved a specific set of criteria, collectively known as Targeted Standards, employed when LEA or school-level risk assessment data indicate that there is a potential issue. 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 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.

Tiered Focused Monitoring allows for differentiated monitoring based on a district/charter school’s level of need, the Tiers are defined as follows:

LEAs in Tiers 1 and 2 have been determined to have no or low risk:

* Tier 1/Self-Directed Improvement: Data points indicate no concern on compliance and performance outcomes – meets requirements.
* Tier 2/Directed Improvement: No demonstrated risk in areas with close link to student

outcomes – low risk.

LEAs in Tiers 3 and 4 have demonstrated greater risk:

* Tier 3/Corrective Action: Areas of concern include both compliance and student

outcomes – moderate risk.

* Tier 4/Cross-unit Support and Corrective Action: Areas of concern have profound effect on student outcomes and ongoing compliance – high risk.

The phases of Tiered Focused Monitoring for Watertown Public Schools included:

Self-Assessment Phase:

* The district reviewed special education and civil rights documentation for required elements including document uploads.
* The district reviewed a sample of special education student records selected across grade levels, disability categories and levels of need.
* Upon completion of these two internal reviews, the district’s self-assessment was submitted to the Department for review.

On-site Verification Phase:

* Review of student records for special education: The Department selected a sample of student records from those the district reviewed as part of its self-assessment, as well as records chosen by the Department from the special education student roster. The onsite team conducted this review, using standard Department procedures, to determine whether procedural and programmatic requirements are being met.
* Review of additional documents for special education or civil rights.
* Surveys of parents of students with disabilities: Parents of students with disabilities were sent a survey to solicit information regarding their experiences with the district’s implementation of special education programs, related services, and procedural requirements.
* Interviews of staff consistent with those criteria selected for onsite verification.
* Interviews of parent advisory council (PAC) representatives and other telephone interviews, as requested, by other parents or members of the general public.

**Report: For Tier 1 & 2 Tiered Focused Monitoring Reviews**

Following the onsite visit, the onsite team holds an informal exit meeting to summarize its comments for the superintendent or charter school leader. Within approximately 20 business days of the onsite visit, the onsite chairperson forwards to the superintendent or charter school leader the findings from the Tiered Focused Monitoring Review. All districts/charter schools in Tiers 1 and 2, as part of the reporting process, 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 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. Districts and charter schools are expected to incorporate the CIMP actions into their district and school improvement plans, including their professional development plans.

**SUMMARY OF INDICATOR DATA REVIEW**

As part of the self-assessment process for districts or charter schools undergoing a review for Group A Universal Standards, the onsite team reviewed the results of Indicator data submissions for Indicators 11, 12 and 13. For any Indicator data noncompliance found, the district or charter school must develop and implement corrective action that includes correcting noncompliance for the individual students affected by it, addressing the root cause and underlying reasons for the identified noncompliance, and reviewing additional records as evidence that the issues have been corrected and that requirements are being met. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires correction of noncompliance within one year of the finding.

The results of the Department’s analysis regarding these Indicators are as follows:

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|  | **Compliant** | **Non-Compliant** | **Not Applicable** |
| **Indicator 11 – Initial**  **Evaluation Timelines** |  | X |  |
| **Indicator 12 – Early**  **Childhood Transition** | X |  |  |
| **Indicator 13 –**  **Secondary Transition** | X |  |  |

# **DEFINITION OF COMPLIANCE RATINGS**

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| **Commendable** | Any requirement or aspect of a requirement implemented in an exemplary manner significantly beyond the requirements of law or regulation. |
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| **Implemented** | The requirement is substantially met in all important aspects. |
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| **Implementation in Progress** | This rating is used for criteria containing new or updated legal requirements and means that 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. |
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| **Partially Implemented** | The requirement, in one or several important aspects, is not entirely met. |
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| **Not Implemented** | The requirement is totally or substantially not met. |
| **Not Applicable** | The requirement does not apply to the school district or charter school. |

**Watertown Public Schools**

**SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE CRITERIA RATINGS**

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|  | **Universal Standards**  **Special Education** | **Universal Standards**  **Civil Rights and Other General Education Requirements** |
| **IMPLEMENTED** | SE 1, SE 2, SE 3, SE 3A, SE 9,  SE 9A, SE 10,  SE 11, SE 12,  SE 13, SE 14,  SE 18A, SE 19,  SE 20, SE 22,  SE 25, SE 26,  SE 29, SE 34,  SE 37, SE 38,  SE 39, SE 40,  SE 41, SE 42,  SE 43, SE 48,  SE 49 | CR 13, CR 14 |
| **PARTIALLY**  **IMPLEMENTED** | SE 6, SE 7, SE 8, SE 17 | CR 18 |
| **NOT IMPLEMENTED** |  |  |

The review instruments, that include the regulatory requirements specific to the special education and civil rights criteria referenced in the table above, can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/default.html>.

| **Improvement Area** **1** |
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| **Criterion:** SE 6 - Determination of transition services |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of student records indicated that the IEP Team does not consistently review the Transition Planning Form (TPF) at the time of the IEP's development. Specifically, special education staff review and update the TPF with the student after the IEP Team meeting, but the contents of the TPF are not incorporated into the IEP. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Watertown Public Schools will ensure that IEP Teams consistently review and revise Transition Planning Forms for all transition-aged students prior to the development of the IEP. The Transition Planning Form will inform the development of IEP goals and services. |
| **Action Plan:** By November 22, 2019, Watertown Public Schools will train all relevant middle and high school staff on transition planning requirements.  By January 24, 2020, Watertown Public Schools will implement an internal monitoring and tracking system to ensure that IEP Teams consistently review the Transition Planning Form at the time of the IEP's development and the contents of the Transition Planning Form are incorporated into the IEP. |
| **Success Metric:** By April 2020, 100% of Watertown's transition-aged students will have their Transition Planning Form reviewed as part of the IEP Team meeting and the contents incorporated into the IEP.  Evidence:    \* Agendas, training materials, and attendance sheets for trainings  \* Results of internal record review |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Each trimester, the Director of Student Services will review at least five student files to ensure that IEP Teams reviewed the Transition Planning Form during the meeting and incorporated information into the IEP. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 01/24/2020 |
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| **Improvement Area 2** |
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| **Criterion:** SE 7 - Transfer of parental rights at age of majority and student participation and consent at the age of majority |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of student records indicated that the district does not consistently obtain consent from students with sole or shared decision-making rights to continue their special education program once the student reaches 18 years of age. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Watertown Public Schools will ensure consent from adult students with sole or shared decision-making authority is proactively obtained to continue his or her education programming. |
| **Action Plan:** By November 22, 2019, Watertown Public Schools will train the high school and out-of-district Team chairpersons on Age of Majority.  By November 22, 2019, Watertown Public Schools will provide a roster to Team chairpersons that identifies students who will be turning 18.  By January 24, 2020, Watertown Public Schools will implement an internal monitoring and tracking system to determine whether adult students have signed their current IEPs. |
| **Success Metric:** By April 2020, Watertown Public Schools will have obtained consent from 100% of the adult students with sole or shared decision-making authority to continue his or her special education program.  Evidence:  \* Agendas, training materials, and attendance sheets for trainings  \* Roster of students turning 18  \* Results of internal record review |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Each trimester, the Director of Student Services will review at least five student files to ensure that the district obtained consent from the adult student with sole or shared decision-making authority to continue his or her special education program. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 01/24/2020 |
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| **Improvement Area 3** |
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| **Criterion:** SE 8 - IEP Team composition and attendance |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of student records and staff interviews indicated that when a required IEP Team member is unable to attend the Team meeting, specifically general education teachers for students involved in the general education program and related service providers when the IEP meeting involves a modification or discussion of related services, the Team member is not consistently excused in writing by the parent. Record review also indicated that the required Team member does not provide written input for the development of the IEP to the parent and the IEP Team prior to the meeting. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Watertown Public Schools will ensure that all Team members listed on the Attendance Sheet (N3A) attend the Team meeting.  When a Team member cannot attend the meeting, the district will:  1. use alternative means, such as a video conference or a conference call, with the parent's agreement; or  2. agree with the parent, in writing, that the attendance of the Team member is not necessary because the member's area of the curriculum or related services is not being modified or discussed; or  3. agree with the parent, in writing, to excuse the required Team member's participation and the excused member will provide written input into the development of the IEP to the parent and the IEP Team prior to the meeting.  Watertown Public Schools will also ensure that written input from IEP Team members is provided prior to Team meetings, particularly general education teachers and related service providers, to support unanticipated absences. |
| **Action Plan:** Watertown Public Schools reviewed IEP Team composition and attendance with all Team chairpersons on September 13, 2019.  By January 24, 2020, Watertown Public Schools will train all district staff on IEP Team composition and attendance procedures.  By March 27, 2020, Watertown Public Schools will implement internal monitoring to determine whether absent required Team members were excused in writing by the parent, and these Team members provided written input for the development of the IEP prior to the meeting. |
| **Success Metric:** By April 2020, 100% of Watertown Public Schools' Team meetings will have all required Team members in attendance or all members will be excused, in writing, with written input for the development of the IEP provided to the parent and the IEP Team prior to the meeting.  Evidence:  \* Agendas, training materials, and attendance sheets from trainings  \* Results of internal record review |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Each trimester, the Director of Student Services will review at least five records to determine if Team meetings had all required Team members in attendance or all members were excused in writing and provided written input for the development of the IEP. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 03/27/2020 |
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| **Improvement Area 4** |
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| **Criterion:** SE 17 - Initiation of services at age three and Early Intervention transition procedures |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of student records indicated that when the parent's consent is received prior to the student's third birthday, the district does not consistently ensure the development and implementation of an IEP for eligible children by the date of the student's third birthday in accordance with federal requirements. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Watertown Public Schools will ensure that the district accepts referrals from the Department of Public Health, other agencies, and individuals for young children when or before the student turns two-and-one-half years old to ensure continuity of services and the development and implementation of an IEP for eligible children by the student's third birthday. When a referral is received after the student is two-and-one-half years old, the district will expedite the evaluation process to provide services for eligible children by his or her third birthday. |
| **Action Plan:** Watertown Public Schools reviewed the regulation with the Director of Early Childhood Education and Evaluation Team Chairperson on September 13, 2019.  By November 22, 2019, Watertown Public Schools will establish written procedures to support transition from Early Intervention and the initiation of services at age three. These will be shared with the Director of Early Childhood Education and other relevant staff.  By November 22, 2019, Watertown Public Schools will establish a communication plan to ensure the Director of Early Childhood Education communicates with Early Intervention providers on at least a monthly basis with the intention of managing referrals. This will be shared with the Director of Early Childhood Education and other relevant staff.  By March 27, 2020, Watertown Public Schools will implement internal monitoring to ensure that when the parent's consent is received prior to the student's third birthday, the district develops and implements an IEP for eligible children by the date of the student's third birthday. |
| **Success Metric:** By April 2020, 100% of Watertown's eligible students will have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthday when parental consent is received before the student turns three.  Evidence:  \* Procedures  \* Written record of sharing procedures and communication plan  \* Communication plan  \* Results of internal record review |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Each trimester, the Director of Student Services will review student records to determine whether the district consistently develops and implements an IEP for eligible children by the date of the student's third birthday when parental consent is received before the student turns three. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 03/27/2020 |
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| **Improvement Area 5** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 18 - Responsibilities of the school principal |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that the district has a district curriculum accommodation plan (DCAP) that was developed in 2011. However, interviews indicated that the DCAP is inconsistently implemented across schools, as not all staff are aware of the plan or understand what supports are available to meet the needs of diverse learners in the general education classroom. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Watertown Public Schools will ensure that the district's curriculum accommodation plan is implemented across all Watertown schools to meet the needs of diverse learners in the general education classroom. |
| **Action Plan:** By January 24, 2020, Watertown Public Schools will revise the district's curriculum accommodation plan.  By March 27, 2020, Watertown Public Schools will train all staff on the 2019 curriculum accommodation plan and make the curriculum accommodation plan electronically available to all teachers, students, families, and community members on the district website.  By May 22, 2020, Watertown Public Schools will conduct meetings with district and building administrators to assess the implementation of the curriculum accommodation plan referencing observations and events occurring during the 2019-2020 school year. |
| **Success Metric:** By June 2020, 100% of Watertown's schools will ensure all efforts have been made to meet the needs of diverse learners in the general education program by utilizing the district's curriculum accommodation plan and consistently implementing applicable supports across schools.  Evidence:  \* Revised DCAP  \* Agendas, training materials and attendance sheets from training  \* Agenda from meeting of administrators |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** Each trimester, the Director of Student Services will review at least five student records where an initial evaluation was conducted to determine if the student received interventions and accommodations within the general education setting before being referred for testing. Twice a year, district and building administrators will assess the implementation of the curriculum accommodation plan referencing observations and events occurring during the school year. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 05/22/2020 |
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