

**Dartmouth Public Schools**

**Tiered Focused Monitoring Report**

**For** **Group B Universal Standards**

**Tier Level** **1**

**Date of Onsite Visit:** **December 11, 2019**

**Date of Final Report:** **February 11, 2020**



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Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

During the 2019-2020 school year, Dartmouth 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 Dartmouth Public Schools included:

Self-Assessment Phase:

* District reviewed special education and civil rights documentation for required elements, including document uploads.
* Upon completion of this internal review, the district’s self-assessment was submitted to the Department for review.

On-site Verification Phase:

* 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.
* Observations of classrooms and other facilities: The onsite team visited a sample of classrooms and school facilities used in the delivery of programs and services to determine general levels of compliance with program requirements.

**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.

# **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. |

**Dartmouth 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 15, SE 32, SE 35, SE 36, SE 50, SE 51, SE 52, SE 52A, SE 54, SE 55 | CR 3, CR 7,  CR 7A, CR 7B, CR 7C, CR 10A, CR 10B, CR 10C, CR 12A, CR 16, CR 17A, CR 20, CR 21, CR 22, CR 23, CR 24 |
| **PARTIALLY**  **IMPLEMENTED** | SE 56 | CR 25 |
| **NOT IMPLEMENTED** |  |  |

The Tiered Focused Monitoring Toolkit, which includes 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/resources/default.html>.

| **Improvement Area** **1** |
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| **Criterion:** SE 56 - Special education programs and services are evaluated |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and staff interviews indicated that special education programs and services are not regularly evaluated. Specifically, the most recent evaluation of special education programs and services was conducted during the 2014-2015 school year. |
| **LEA Outcome:** The district will complete a special education program evaluation, which will initially be focused in the area of preschool special education. |
| **Action Plan:** By April 2, 2020, the district will research a variety of vendors who complete special education preschool program evaluations, and will create three guiding questions that will be addressed during the formal program evaluation.  By July 1, 2020, the district will select a vendor to complete the special education preschool program evaluation.  By July 1, 2020, the district will select dates with the chosen vendor to complete a comprehensive special education preschool program evaluation.  By October 30, 2020, the special education preschool program evaluation and report, with recommendations, will be completed. |
| **Success Metric:** The district will receive a written report of the special education preschool evaluation that includes recommendations for improvement. |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** The district will utilize the information from the evaluation report to create an action plan for continuous improvement in the special education preschool program.  The district will plan and schedule a review of special education programs and services to occur on a regular basis. |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 10/30/2020 |
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| **Improvement Area 2** |
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| **Criterion:** CR 25 - Institutional self-evaluation |
| **Rating:** Partially Implemented |
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| **Description of Current Issue:** A review of documents and interviews indicated that the district does not evaluate all aspects of its K-12 program annually to ensure that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities. |
| **LEA Outcome:** Create a self-evaluation tool and process to annually evaluate all aspects of our K-12 programs to ensure that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities. |
| **Action Plan:** By April 2, 2020, the district will review DESE's Institutional Self-Evaluation (CR 25) Toolkit.  By April 2, 2020, the district will gather data for self-evaluation through our SIS (Student Information System), including course reports, incident/discipline reports, civil rights complaints and findings, and enrollment reports of programs, activities, and athletics.  By September 29, 2020, the district will provide training for the administrative team on cultural responsiveness and equity and on employing the tools for self-evaluation during the district’s administrative summer retreat.  By September 29, 2020, central office administrators will train building administrators on employing the tools for self-evaluation during the district’s administrative summer retreat.  By September 29, 2020, the district will provide training for all staff on cultural responsiveness and equity during our first full day professional development at the end of August.  By October 30, 2020, the district will complete a self-evaluation of its K-12 programs to ensure that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities. The district will analyze both survey data and proportionality data, and devise a plan to make changes as indicated by the evaluation. |
| **Success Metric:** The district will complete an annual self-evaluation of all K-12 programs to ensure that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities. |
| **Measurement Mechanism:** The district will annually complete a self-evaluation of its K-12 programs.  The district will:  -develop data collection tools  -analyze the results to identify areas of need  -determine the root causes of the identified areas of need  -develop and implement an action plan to address the areas of need  -develop an ongoing process for continuous improvement |
| **Completion Timeframe:** 10/30/2020 |
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